

## WHERE DID GOD COME FROM?

Bert Thompson, Ph.D.

### How do I respond when I am asked the question “Where did God come from?”

This question often is asked by sincere, well-meaning people. It rarely is far from the minds of youngsters as well. On occasion, it is asked in the creation/evolution debate by those who deny God’s existence. When pressed to explain where the matter/energy of the Universe originated, the atheist more often than not responds with the statement, “You tell me where God came from and I’ll tell you where matter/energy came from.” The atheist intends for this response to produce a “stalemate” that will prevent him from having to answer the question of the origin of matter/energy. He reasons thusly: “Christians cannot answer the question of the origin of God; therefore I will not have to answer the question of the origin of matter/energy.”

This attempt at subterfuge will not work, however. First, the atheist is comparing, to use a colloquial expression, “apples and oranges.” He is equating matter/energy (something proven to require an origin in time/space) with God (Who has no origin). The atheist thus is equating the non-eternal and temporal (matter/energy) with the eternal (God). That is both illogical and impossible. Such a comparison (in terms of “origin”) has no validity. Second, as a result of his mistake, the atheist has posed what is termed in philosophical terms a “nonsensical” question. That is to say, he has asked a question that makes no sense, and as everyone knows, nonsensical questions cannot be answered because of that very fact—they make no sense. The atheist has asked, “Where did God come from?” This, of course, implies that God “came from” somewhere—that is, He had an origin. But by definition, God is **eternal**. He has no origin, because eternal entities do not have origins; they are eternal. Not only has the atheist erred in making an invalid comparison (eternal vs. temporal), but he also has erred in ascribing some kind of “origin” to an eternal entity (God). God did not “come from” anywhere, nor is He “going to” anywhere. That would posit an origin, and possibly an end, for God when, in fact, He has neither.

The Scriptures speak clearly to God’s eternal nature. Deuteronomy 33:27 speaks of “the eternal God.” The psalmist referred to God as He who is “from everlasting”

to everlasting” (90:2). Isaiah observed that it is God Who inhabits eternity (57:15). In Psalm 102:24, the writer spoke of the Earth and heavens, and noted that “they shall perish, but thou shalt endure.... [T]hy years have no end.” God Himself told Moses, “I AM THAT I AM” (Exodus 3:14)—the formula for self-existence. God is the Eternal One Who always has existed, and Who always will exist. He lives in the ever-present. One may not describe God legitimately as a Being Who “has been” or “will be”; rather, He is described as without beginning or end, thereby precluding any “origin.” Likewise, He has no destiny. How, then, can one ask the question, “Where did God **come from**?” It is—in the truest sense of the word—a nonsensical question. It is right and proper to inquire regarding the origin of matter/energy (or any other temporal, non-eternal entity), because such entities do, in fact, have origins. But one cannot inquire logically regarding the origin of an entity that is defined as eternal, for such a question is meaningless. Granted, finite minds struggle to understand completely the infinite. But that is why God gave us His Word. If we “rightly divide the word of truth,” we will find that it contains “all things that pertain unto life and godliness” (2 Timothy 2:15; 2 Peter 1:3).

Originally Published In  
*Reason & Revelation*  
August 1989, 9[8]:29

### ARTICLE REPRINT

Distributed by  
Apologetics Press, Inc.  
230 Landmark Drive  
Montgomery, AL 36117-2752  
(334) 272-8558