

Who of Many Faces

God, Life, and the Human Journey

by

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Preface

He said, "Who is at my door?"
I said, "Your simple servant."
He said, "What business do you have?"
I said, "To greet you, O Lord."

He said, "How long will you journey on?"
I said, "Until you stop me."
He said, "How long will you sore in the fire?"
I said, "Until I am pure.....(*Jalaluddin Rumi*)

From the moment humanity became aware of its place in the limitlessness of existence, a single question has lingered in the collective mind: *Who decides?*

Every decision, from the simplest to the most thoughtful, is shaped by an understanding of what is considered best. In families, parents often guide the choices. In towns or cities, leaders take on the responsibility. States and provinces defer to governors, senators, or similar representatives. For entire nations, decision-making rests with presidents, monarchs, or other heads of state, depending on the system of governance. But on a global scale, when the world itself is at stake, who holds authority?

And beyond human structures, the question expands. Is there a force greater than humanity? A higher authority that governs the natural order, the cosmos, or even the moral fabric of existence. This question has led to intense debates across disciplines, philosophy, religion, science, and beyond, each struggling to make sense of the same paradox: Is there a God?

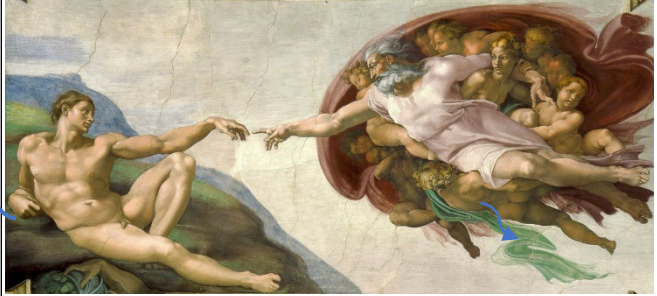
What, then, is God? Across time and cultures, the idea of God has been expressed in countless ways. Some see it as an omniscient creator, others as an abstract force, an energy, a principle, or an unknowable power that binds the universe together. Humanity has given this concept many names; *God, Allah, Yahweh, the Big Bang, the Divine Essence*, yet none seem to fully capture its essence. Despite these differences, one truth remains universal: the question of God has been central to the human experience, shaping our understanding of life, purpose, and the cosmos.

For centuries, this question has driven humanity's search for meaning. It has inspired the construction of temples and laboratories, encouraged the writing of sacred texts and scientific papers, and forged bridges between logic and faith. Whether through theological reflection, philosophical reasoning, or experimental investigation, humanity's quest to understand the divine has always been, at its heart, a quest to understand itself.

This book begins with that question, not to provide definitive answers, but to explore its depth and allegations. What role does the idea of God play in human society, in shaping moral frameworks, political systems, and scientific inquiry? How has this concept influenced the route of civilizations and the stories we tell about ourselves? And perhaps most importantly, in a world facing thoughtful challenges, what does the search for God reveal about our shared humanity?

As we started on this exploration, the journey is not just about uncovering what God might be, but also about examining the ways this persistent question continues to shape our world. For in seeking the divine, we inevitably find a reflection of ourselves and the values that guide us.

The image of young Adam sitting directly on the ground, naked, reminds the notion that humanity is born of the soil, created from the earth itself. This underlines Adam's essential connection to the earth and his role as a vital part of nature.



God is portrayed as an aged, gray-bearded man surrounded by several human figures. While many interpret these figures as angels, the Virgin Mary, or Eve, it invites a deeper consideration. Across various religious traditions, divinity is often described as originating from a singular source. From this one supreme God, other Gods emerge, and eventually, humanity is created. Could this suggest that these figures represent other gods coming from the source, with God filling humanity with a fragment of each divine being? This would suggest that humans, as carriers of divine essence, possess unparalleled intellect and creativity, surpassing all other creatures.

*Michelangelo - Creation of Adam,
(Public Domain)*

What is God?

*In every choice we make, a question stands, still and band
A question old as shifting sands.
higher still, above all lands,
Who rules the seas, the skies, the strands?
Is there a voice, a mighty hand,
Or just the drift of wind and sand?
For centuries, our souls inquire:
What stirs the stars, the heart's desire?
Is God the mind, the soul, the flame,
Or just the quest we dare to name?
So, ask we must, and search we might,
Through days of dark, through endless light,
For in that quest, we come to be,
Alive in wonder, wild, and free. (FAZ)*

What or Who is God

“What guards you most is the love within your soul, gentle yet fierce.”

What is God? This timeless question echoes through the records of religion, philosophy, and science, inviting wonder and debate. Across cultures and generations, humanity has pursued to understand the essence of the divine, merging collection of ideas as varied as the stars in the sky.

In monotheistic traditions, God is the Creator, the Sustainer, the Alpha and Omega, limitless in power, wisdom, and compassion. This divine presence is seen as the foundation of all existence, a mystery so vast that many believe it cannot be fully grasped. The Bible, for instance, describes God as spirit, infinite, and eternal (John 4:24; 1 Timothy 1:17). He is the One who creates, sustains, and redeems, existing as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:16-17). His nature is

unchanging (Malachi 3:6), His knowledge boundless (Psalm 147:5), and His power supreme (Revelation 19:6).

“Where can I go from your Spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence?
If I go up to the heavens, you are there;
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.”
(*Psalm 139:7-8*)

The Bible paints a vivid portrait of God’s character through His attributes. He is just (Acts 17:31), loving (Ephesians 2:4-5), truthful (John 14:6), and holy (1 John 1:5). God’s compassion shines through as He comforts (2 Corinthians 1:3), shows mercy (Romans 9:15), and extends grace (Romans 5:17). Though He judges wrongdoing (Psalm 5:5), His forgiveness is always within reach (Psalm 130:4). These qualities are not abstract concepts, they are brought to life through His actions: creating the universe (Genesis 1:1), sustaining it (Colossians 1:17), and offering redemption to humanity (Galatians 3:13-14). He calls people to Christ (John 6:44), disciplines those He loves (Hebrews 12:6) and will ultimately judge the world with fairness and wisdom (Revelation 20:11-15).

In Islam, God, known as Allah, is viewed as utterly unique, beyond comprehension, and distinct from creation. The Qur’an beautifully encapsulates His nature in Chapter 112:

“Say: He is God, the One,
The Everlasting Refuge,
He does not give birth, nor was He born,
And there is none equal to Him.”

Meanwhile, polytheistic traditions offer a rich diversity of deities, each symbolizing specific qualities or overseeing distinct kingdoms.

In Hinduism, Brahman represents ultimate reality, formless and infinite, while gods like Vishnu and his avatars such as Krishna reflect the divine's personal, approachable aspects. Similarly, in Greek mythology, gods like Zeus, Athena, and Apollo govern the heavens, wisdom, and the arts. Across all these traditions, the divine reflects humanity's desire to explain life's mysteries and connect with a higher power.

While some religions discourage inquiries into God's essence, viewing such questions as beyond human capacity, philosophers have pursued to bridge the gap between faith and reason. The ontological argument suggests that the very idea of a perfect being suggests its existence. The cosmological argument points to a cause behind the universe's origin, often identifying it as God. The teleological argument, or the argument from design, marvels at the complexity of the cosmos, attributing it to a purposeful Creator.

Yet, these arguments face challenges. Critics point to the anthropical principle, which suggests the universe appears fine-tuned for life simply because we exist within it. Others caution against the "God of the gaps" myth, explaining the unknown by attributing it to divine intervention. Still, the search continues, as humanity yearns for answers that science alone cannot provide.

Across cultures, the names of God reflect diverse understandings of the divine existence. In Judaism, Yahweh signifies a personal, covenantal God. In Sikhism, Waheguru conveys awe and respect for the Creator as the "Wonderful Teacher." Zoroastrians honor Ahura Mazda, the personification of wisdom, while Chinese spirituality admires Shangdi, the maintainer of cosmic order. Each name is a display into how people relate to the sacred, a bridge between the human and the divine. Even science joins this grand dialogue. While religion often seeks the *why* of existence, science explores the *how*.

Figures like Stephen Hawking have questioned whether God is necessary to explain the universe, while others, such as theologian Alister McGrath, suggest that science and faith illuminate different aspects of reality. Stephen Jay¹ Gould proposed the concept of “non-overlapping *magisteria*,” arguing that science addresses the natural world, while religion explores questions of meaning and morality. These boundaries, however, often blur, inspiring both wonder and debate. To me, what Stephen Jay said makes more sense, and that is what I aim to address in this book. I am working to build a connection between science and religion, as they both share similar, if not identical, concepts of life’s creation and God. In this sense, they overlap rather than oppose one another. They run parallel but approach these ideas in different ways.



Popular culture also reflects this quest for understanding. In the animated film *Ice Age: Collision Course*, characters humorously tackle with the idea of a higher power:

Who's "him"? Your leader?
 He is our everything.
 BOTH: He sees all.
 He knows all.

ICE AGE
 COLLISION COURSE

And smells amazing!
 Okay, okay. He sounds great.....
 I have a good feeling about this.
 Maybe he'll be able to help us.
 She did say he knows all. And all's
 a lot!
 Here he is. The Master of Meditation,
 the Supreme Serene...the four-time
 Heavy Thoughts champion of the
 world..... (Ice age; collision course)



Though spoken in jest, these lines capture a universal yearning: the desire to connect with something greater, to find guidance and purpose amid life's challenges.

Whether one speaks of God, the Big Bang, or some other force, the pursuit of understanding binds humanity together. Beneath the surface-level differences in belief and expression lies a shared hunger for meaning, a fascination with the mysteries of existence. This book aims to explore those commonalities, celebrating the diversity of thought while illuminating the unity of our search. For in seeking the divine, we find not only answers but also each other, connected by our curiosity, wonder, and shared humanity.

*I'm seeking You,
 O infinite, superior God, my Father.
 I'm a child with a childish mind, yet
 I seek Your light, Your spark,*

*To illuminate my endless darkness,
Boundless as my thoughts.*

*My mind is small, but my heart is big,
Yearning for warmth to fill my cold spirit,
To expand my little mind and fill it with grace.
In the quiet whispers of the night,
I seek the One who gives us light.*

*God, the Creator, perfect and grand,
A silent force I struggle to understand.
Yet I seek You, O my Father, O my
Mother,
A carpet woven in colors divine,
Each thread a question, a sacred sign.*

*Some speak of Allah, the All-Knowing,
All-Wise,
Others call Yahweh, where truth never
dies.
Or Brahma, Shangdi, or Pangu divine,
In the heart of the cosmos, where stars intertwine,
We seek a design, a spark to inspire,
A meaning that lifts us, sets our souls afire.*



*With each breath of mercy, compassion unfolds,
A love that connects us, more precious than gold.
In beauty and chaos, in joy and in pain,
The essence of faith runs through our veins.*

*I seek in silence, in moments of grace,
In chaos, in conflict, I long for Your face.
I seek You, my God, my true One,
In every heartbeat, beneath every sun. (FAZ)*



*God is formless, beyond
gender, race, and color,
He is the all-and One.*

*Venus/Aphrodite rose
from the sea foam, fully
formed as an adult*

*Noah boards religious
leaders on his ark,
Ganesha, Buddha,
Adam, and Eve.*

*Abraham journeyed with his
kin,
From Ur to the Promised Land's
hymn.
Zoroaster, a light to ignite,
A guiding flame through darkest
night.
Jesus gave Himself, a sacrifice
true,
For the sins of mankind, His
love to renew.
Muhammad rode with purpose
divine,
On a camel's back, for
humanity's sign.*

*Jonah was
resurrected
after being
swallowed by
a whale,*

Divine wisdom, watercolor, 24x18, 2021, Author

Science or Religion: Two Sides of the Same Coin

Science and religion have long sought to explain the most thoughtful mysteries of existence: life, humanity, catastrophic events, death, afterlife, resurrection, reincarnation, heaven, and hell. These topics continue to captivate our minds, largely because neither science nor religion has provided clear or definitive answers to many of them. Even scientific evidence, at times, can seem unbelievable or incomplete. From the earliest days of human history, people have followed higher powers, gods, divine figures, or supernatural forces, in search of answers and a promised better life. Across cultures and civilizations, these divine journeys have shaped the human experience.

Abraham's journey, as depicted in religious scriptures, symbolizes deep faith and resilience. He is a valued figure shared by Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Scholars estimate Abraham's birth around 2,166 years before Jesus, near the Mesopotamian city of Ur, approximately 200 miles southeast of present-day Baghdad. His father, referred to as "Aazar" in Islamic texts and "Terah" or "Terakh" in the Bible, was an idol worshipper from the descendants of Shem, Noah's son. Some scholars propose that "Azar" (Aazar) might have been the name of an idol that his father worshipped. It is believed that Abraham was likely of Akkadian descent, a Semitic people from the Arabian Peninsula who settled in Mesopotamia in the third millennium BCE.



Abram's Journey to Canaan²

According to the Book of Genesis, Abraham (originally named Abram) received divine instruction in his seventies to leave his homeland and went on a



journey toward a promised land. Starting from Ur in Mesopotamia, now part of modern Iraq, he traveled to

Haran in the north and eventually to Canaan, covering more than 2,600 miles. This journey, as mapped by the Bible Journey Institute, was physically demanding, and involved traversing difficult terrains, a significant feat for that time.

The Qur'an also narrates several important episodes in Abraham's life, including his journey to the promised land (Qur'an 21:71-73), the announcement of his son Isaac's birth (Qur'an 11:69-74, 15:51-56, 51:24-30), God's command for the sacrificial act involving his son (Qur'an 37:99-113), the symbolic sacrifice of soul (Qur'an 2:260), and his interactions with Lot and the angels (Qur'an 11:74-83, 29:28-35, 51:31-37).

In Islamic teachings, Abraham is celebrated as a model of absolute devotion to God. The Qur'an instructs believers to "follow the religion of Abraham" (Qur'an 3:95), referring to him as the "friend of God" and a benchmark of faith, declaring that none can exceed him in devotion

(Qur'an 4:125). Because of Abraham's steadfast faith, the Qur'an designates the true path as the "Path of Abraham," even though earlier prophets like Noah also advocated monotheism. Abraham was uniquely honored with the title "*Khaleel*," meaning beloved servant. His descendants, including significant prophets like Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob (Israel), and Moses, continued to guide people according to divine teachings.

The journey intended by divine command is not solely the story of Abraham; it resounds across cultures, nations, and religions, manifesting in countless parallel narratives. These journeys, though unique in their details, share a common thread, a thoughtful pursuit of purpose, identity, and connection to the divine. It's the path of God, to higher power.

Similarly, to Abraham journey to promise land is In Aztec tradition, the god Huitzilopochtli, deity of war, sun, and fire, guided the Mexica people from their mythical homeland of Aztlán to the Valley of Mexico. Huitzilopochtli, whose name means "Hummingbird of the South," appeared to the Mexica leaders with a divine command: to leave their homeland and seek a new city. He promised them a sign, a vision of an eagle perched on a cactus, devouring a serpent, to reveal their destined land.



Huitzilopochtli, as depicted in the Codex Tovar, By Tovar, Juan de, circa 1546-circa 1626, Public Domain³

Following this vision, the Mexica went on a long, challenging journey, crossing deserts and mountains just like Abraham and his trib. They finally arrived in the Valley of Mexico, where they saw the prophesied eagle on a cactus on an island in Lake Texcoco. This symbolized the sun's victory over its enemies and marked the location of their future capital. Originally named *Cuauhmixtitlan*, the city was later called *Tenochtitlan*, meaning "Among the Prickly Pear Cactus," in honor of their leader Tenoch.



The flag of Mexico

Tenochtitlan became a powerful, sophisticated capital, with temples and canals connected by causeways. Its layout and central temple, the Templo Mayor, were aligned with the sun's movement, symbolizing the Mexica's cosmic beliefs. As Huitzilopochtli's chosen people, the Mexica felt it was their sacred duty to expand their empire and nourish their god through sacrifices. This belief fueled their conquests and solidified their place as a dominant power in the region.

In both the Abrahamic and Aztec traditions, a divine command set monumental journeys into motion, each promising a land destined to fulfill a divine purpose. For Abraham, it began with God's call: "Leave your country, your people, and your father's household and go to the land I will show you" (Genesis 12:1). This call, brimming with hope and promise, led Abraham to the land of Canaan, a place meant to be

a fertile inheritance for his descendants. Yet, the journey's reality was far from straightforward. When Abraham arrived, the land was stricken by famine and drought, forcing him to change course and seek refuge in Egypt, the land of the Pharaohs (Genesis 12:10).

Similarly, the Aztec people, guided by their god Huitzilopochtli, endured trials as they sought their promised land. Just as Abraham faced hardships in his quest, the Mexica tested many lands before discovering the prophesied eagle perched on a cactus in the Valley of Mexico. Their journey, like Abraham's, was a test of resilience, faith, and patience.

Abraham's time in Egypt was complicated. Facing potential danger due to Sarah's beauty, Abraham made the questionable decision to present her as his sister. Pharaoh, deceived by this claim, brought Sarah into his palace, unaware of her marital ties. The situation quickly spiraled as God intervened, causing plagues upon Pharaoh's household until Sarah was safely returned to Abraham. While this episode revealed Abraham's human fragility, it also demonstrated God's unwavering protection over his chosen servant.

As Abraham retraced his steps back to Bethel, "The House of God," he came full circle. There, he renewed his fellowship with God, calling upon His name and restoring the bond of faith that had momentarily faltered. His journey underscores a thoughtful truth: even when faith wavers and missteps are made, there is always a way back to divine guidance.

Parallels abound in the story of Jacob and his twelve sons. Centuries later, another famine in Canaan forced Jacob's sons to journey to Egypt for sustenance. There, they found themselves face-to-face with Joseph, their long-lost brother, who had risen to power in Pharaoh's court (Genesis 42:5-6). This move ultimately led to the Israelites'

enslavement in Egypt, showing once more how the trials of famine and migration shaped the destiny of a people.

Abraham's journey, Joseph Journey and the Aztec migration reveal the thoughtful human quest for purpose and promise. Though they traversed different landscapes, one through the arid terrains of the Near East, the other across the deserts and mountains of Mesoamerica, their journeys reflect a shared reliance on divine guidance. For both, the path was as much about spiritual transformation as it was about physical destination, fixing their identities in faith and resilience against life's uncertainties.

As they traveled, both encountered foreign lands and cultures where natural events, such as droughts, floods, and famines, were interpreted through unique cultural and religious perspectives. Abram, driven by drought and famine in Canaan, journeyed to Egypt, where he witnessed the fertile lands of the Nile Delta. The Nile's annual flooding, rich with nutrient-laden soil from the African highlands, symbolized fertility and prosperity for the Egyptians, a natural rhythm of life. For Semitic's people, however, this cycle, with its unusual intensity and seasonal color changes, could seem unfamiliar or even ominous.

This interpretation of natural phenomena as divine or supernatural continued in both traditions. A 2008 study in the *Yale Journal of Biology and Medicine* noted that many of the Ten Plagues described in the Book of Exodus resemble natural events known in the Middle East, yet their succession and intensity made them remarkable. These plagues, beginning with water turning to blood and followed by frogs, lice, flies, livestock pestilence, boils, hail, locusts, darkness, and finally the



death of the firstborn, represented not only physical calamities but also divine judgment. In both traditions, natural events took on spiritual meaning, reinforcing the sense of divine purpose guiding their paths.



In Abrahamic religions, frogs are often depicted as symbols of divine punishment. In the Bible, *Revelation 16:13* describes frogs as unclean spirits associated with evil, while *Exodus 8:1-11* (NIV) recounts the plague of frogs as one of the ten calamities God sent upon Egypt when Pharaoh refused to let the Israelites leave. Similarly, in the Qur'an, Chapter 7 (*Al-A 'rāf*, "The Heights"), frogs are mentioned as a divine sign sent to a people who rejected God's guidance. In both religious texts, frogs symbolize divine retribution.

Historically, the perception of frogs as ominous may have also been influenced by foreign groups residing in or conquering Egypt. For example, the Hyksos, a Semitic people from regions such as Syria and Canaan, ruled Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period (1783–1540 BCE, spanning the Fourteenth to Seventeenth Dynasties). To such groups, the sudden proliferation of frogs might have been interpreted as an ill omen.

In the context of ancient Egyptian culture, however, frogs held a more nuanced and predominantly positive symbolism. The annual flooding of the Nile brought an abundance of frogs, signifying the renewal of life, agricultural fertility, and the sustenance of civilization. Frogs symbolized the concept of *hefnu*, representing either "100,000" or a vast, incalculable number. Frogs were also connected to the goddess Heqet (alternatively spelled "Heqat" or "Heket"), a deity associated with childbirth, creation, and the germination of grain. Depicted as a frog or a woman with a frog's head, Heqet symbolized fertility, water, and renewal. She was revered as the goddess who shaped human life

on her potter's wheel, further cementing the frog's sacred status in ancient Egyptian belief systems.



The god Khnum, accompanied by Heqet, moulds Ihy in a relief from the mammisi (birth temple) at Dendera Temple complex, By Roland Unger, Public Domain⁴

What one culture may perceive as plagues or uncleanness; another may respect as vital signs of renewal. This contrast reflects a thoughtful connection between environmental phenomena and human spirituality, rooted in the observation of nature. In their earliest forms, many religious beliefs grew out of attempts to explain and adapt to the natural world. These narratives, recorded as sacred traditions, often arose from environmental realities shaped by climate, geography, and ecological changes.



Over time, as human understanding of the environment deepened, so too did the layers of symbolism and meaning assigned to natural events. What began as practical knowledge, tracking the seasons, interpreting the migration

of animals, or understanding the cycles of growth and decay, became rooted in myth, ritual, and law. Visionaries and scholars, acting as custodians of this wisdom, wove these observations into powerful stories and belief systems that guided communities. These traditions offered not only explanations for the world but also a sense of order, morality, and purpose.

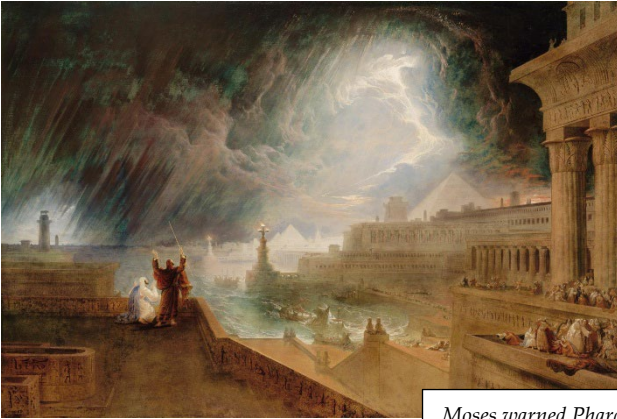


Take, for instance, the journeys of Abram in the ancient Near East and the Mexica peoples of Mesoamerica. Though separated by vast distances and distinct experiences, they shared a striking similarity: a worldview in which divine will was revealed through the natural world. Their interactions with their environments were not just practical but spiritual, each event carrying thoughtful significance. Rain, drought, famine, or abundance were seen as messages from higher powers, reinforcing the sacredness of their connection to the land.



In modern times, advancements in science and technology have allowed us to investigate and verify many of these natural phenomena. What were once perceived as divine signs or mysterious forces, such as eclipses, floods, or locust swarms are now understood through the lens of atmospheric science, biology, and geology. Yet, the urge to seek meaning remains unchanged. Religion, in its many forms, continues to provide a framework for interpreting the human experience, balancing the factual precision of science with the existential questions of purpose and honor. Thus, the relationship between nature, science, and religion reveals a shared human quest, “to make sense of the world and our place within it”. Whether through the scientific method or through the sacred, this quest underscores humanity's lasting curiosity and resilience. Across ages and cultures, we see that the

stories we tell about the forces of nature, whether rooted in divine inspiration or empirical observation, ultimately bind us together in the search for meaning.



The Seventh Plague:

John Martin (1823)

By John Martin – www.mfa.org,

The Seventh Plague,

Public Domain⁵

Moses warned Pharaoh of a devastating hailstorm, urging the Egyptians to seek shelter and protect their livestock.

While some obeyed, others ignored the warning. When Moses stretched his staff, hail, thunder, and lightning wreaked havoc, killing exposed humans and animals and destroying crops and trees. However, the land of Goshen, home to the Israelites, was spared.

Stricken by the destruction, Pharaoh admitted his guilt and begged Moses to end the storm, promising to release the Israelites. Moses prayed, and the storm ceased, but Pharaoh's heart hardened once again, refusing to let them go.

(Exodus 9:27)

Who is at my Door, (*Jalaluddin Rumi*)

He said, "Who is at my door?"

I said, "Your humble servant."

He said, "What business do you have?"

I said, "To greet you, O Lord."

He said, "How long will you journey on?"

I said, "Until you stop me."

He said, "How long will you boil in the fire?"

I said, "Until I am pure."

"This is my oath of love.

For the sake of love

I gave up wealth and position."

He said, "You have pleaded your case
but you have no witness."

I said, "My tears are my witness;
the pallor of my face is my proof."

He said, "Your witness has no credibility;
your eyes are too wet to see."

I said, "By the splendor of your justice
my eyes are clear and faultless."

He said, "What do you seek?"

I said, "To have you as my constant friend."

He said, "What do you want from me?"

I said, "Your abundant grace."

He said, "Who was your companion on the journey?"

I said, "The thought of you, O King."

He said, "What called you here?"

I said, "The fragrance of your wine."

He said, "What brings you the most fulfillment?"

I said, "The company of the Emperor."

He said, "What do you find there?"

I said, "A hundred miracles."

He said, "Why is the palace deserted?"

I said, "They all fear the thief."

He said, "Who is the thief?"

I said, "The one who keeps me from -you.

He said, "Where is there safety?"

I said, "In service and renunciation."

He said, "What is there to renounce?"

I said, "The hope of salvation."

He said, "Where is there calamity?"

I said, "In the presence of your love."

He said, "How do you benefit from this life?"

I said, "By keeping true to myself

Now it is time for silence.

If I told you about His true essence

You would fly from yourself and be gone,

and neither door nor roof could hold you back!

Ex Nihilo: Creation from Nothing

Before there was time, space, or even a glimmer of a star, there was nothing. And when I say “nothing,” I don’t mean the kind of empty space you imagine inside a balloon or the feeling of looking into your wallet after a Costco trip for food shopping. I mean absolutely, thoughtfully, utterly, NOTHING. Not even the “absence” of something. Just God. That’s where the story of everything begins.

And when you stop to think about it, isn’t that mind-blowing? What kind of Creator makes something out of nothing? That’s like an artist painting with no canvas or colors, or a chef making up a feast without ingredients. Yet, that’s exactly what the Bible teaches about creation. God, out of sheer love, spoke the universe into existence. No materials. No prep. Just the power of His word and the overflow of His love. The result? Everything.



The fancy Latin phrase *creatio ex nihilo* translates to "creation from nothing," and it's the idea at the very heart of the Bible's opening sentence: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth" (*Genesis 1:1*). Boom. That's it. No raw materials, no leftover cosmic dust. Just God's word shaping light, water, land, stars, and everything in between. The psalmist captures it beautifully: "By the word of the Lord, the heavens were made" (*Psalms 33:6*). God spoke, and suddenly, everything came alive.

But let's pause for a second. If you think too hard about this, your brain might hurt. How does something come from nothing?

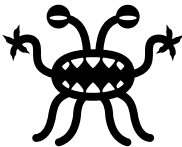
Philosophers like Aristotle tried wrestling with this. His famous joke? "*Nothing is what rocks dream about.*" (Which, by the way, is his way of saying rocks don't dream. Clever, huh?) Ancient thinkers like Plato and Aristotle believed matter might have always existed, like a kind of eternal clay for the gods to shape. But the Bible flips that idea upside down, God didn't need clay. He didn't even need space for the clay to exist in. Everything; "matter, space, and time", came from God's pure creativity.

The Judeo-Christian view is unique. Most ancient cultures, from the Babylonians to the Greeks, imagined their gods shaping the universe from chaotic, pre-existing materials. For example:

- The Babylonians believed Marduk created the heavens and earth by slicing the primordial sea goddess, Tiamat, in half.



- Ancient Egyptians thought the universe emerged from chaotic, swirling waters.
- The Greeks told stories of Chaos (a kind of cosmic soup) birthing everything.



But the Bible? It offers a dramatically different picture. God didn't need chaos or soup. He didn't wrestle sea monsters or mold the world from some cosmic leftovers. He simply spoke, and everything that wasn't became what is.

The Big Bang and Ex Nihilo

Fast forward a few millennia, and we get to modern science. Many scientists believe the universe began with the Big Bang, a kind of cosmic "kaboom" where all matter and energy suddenly appeared and started expanding. Sounds kind of like creation ex nihilo, right? But here's the catch: The Big Bang explains what happened after the universe began but doesn't explain what caused it. Physicist Edward P. Tryon once suggested it could've been a quantum fluctuation, an idea some scientists have explored. But even a "quantum fluctuation" isn't true nothingness. It still involves energy, rules, and a vacuum (which isn't empty, by the way).



Physicist Lawrence Krauss took this a step further in his book *A Universe from Nothing*, claiming the universe could've come from a quantum vacuum⁶. But critics like Luke Barnes quickly pointed out the flaw: Krauss's "nothing" still isn't nothing. It's something dressed up as nothing, a vacuum with laws, properties, and energy. The Bible, in contrast, speaks of absolute nothingness, no energy, no particles, no quantum fields, just "God".

Now, let's zoom in on the why of it all. Why did God create everything? The answer isn't necessity (He didn't need anything) or boredom. The answer is love. Before anything existed, God existed as a triune being; "Father, Son, and Spirit", in perfect love and community. Creation wasn't a cosmic accident; it was an intentional act of love. God didn't need us, but He wanted us. And when He spoke, He brought forth a world filled with beauty, life, and meaning.

Think about this: Every person you pass on the street is a wanted person, a loved person. The trees, the oceans, the stars? All created with purpose. As the New Testament reminds us: "All things were

made through Him" (*John 1:3*), and "in Him all things hold together" (*Colossians 1:17*). Creation is, at its core, an act of love spilling out into reality.

Here's the thing: Creation ex nihilo isn't just a theological idea; it has massive implications for how we see the world and our place in it:

- Purpose and Meaning: If the universe were created intentionally, then life isn't random, it's meaningful. Your existence isn't an accident; it's a masterpiece.
- Worship and Wonder: Recognizing God as the Creator inspires awe. The world isn't just a collection of atoms; it's a canvas painted by a loving God.
- Gratitude and Hope: A Creator who brings beauty out of nothing can also bring hope out of despair. If He can create the stars, He can rewrite our stories.

So, here we are, at the edge of nothingness, marveling at the somethingness of it all. Before time began, there was God, teeming with love and imagination, and from nothing, He made everything. As the psalmist said: "For He spoke, and it came to be", He commanded, and it stood firm" (*Psalms 33:9*).

But don't miss this: The same God who created the cosmos out of nothing can create something new in you. Out of chaos, He brings order. Out of emptiness, He brings fullness. And out of nothing, He creates everything. Why? Because He's a God of love and love always creates.

Alright, let's put on our lab coats and telescopes for a moment. If creation ex nihilo is the theological mic drop of "God spoke, and everything happened," then science comes in with its own curious version of the story, looking through the cosmic telescope and asking,

"Wait, so... *how* did everything start from nothing?" And while science and faith sometimes seem like they're on opposite sides of the discussion club, they both share one big idea: The universe has a beginning.

So now, let's mingle a little. What does science actually say about creation from "nothing"? And is there any proof out there, maybe floating in space or tucked inside quantum mechanics, that lines up with this fascinating idea?

Let's fire up our imaginations, crank open the physics books, and see what the universe itself has to say about its origins.

I am not a scientist, but as someone deeply fascinated by the science of life, I often turn to scientific discoveries to bridge the gap between science and religion, seeking to ground spiritual ideas in concrete evidence. This book is my attempt to explain these concepts in a way that is both easy to hold and enjoyable to read.

Life's story on Earth reveals like an intricate painting, colors and elements merged together through two major processes: microevolution and macroevolution⁷.

- **Microevolution** captures the small, everyday changes in life forms, such as how bacteria develop resistance to antibiotics or how pests adapt to pesticides. These are quick changes we can observe directly today.
- **Macroevolution**, by contrast, looks at the grander scale of change, how life diversifies over millions of years into the vast array of plants, animals, and other forms of life. Although we can't witness this process firsthand, scientists use remarkable tools to reconstruct and understand it.