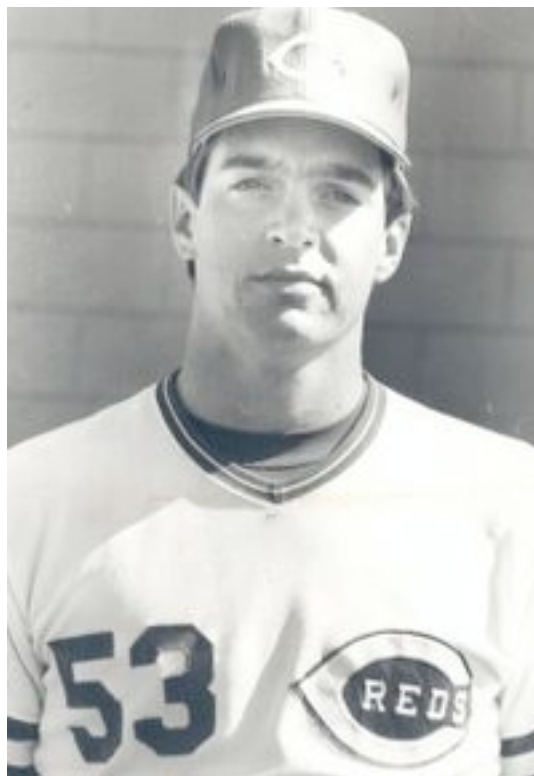


Some of you baseball fans might remember the name Frank Pastore. He was a pitcher for sixteen years for the Cincinnati Reds, and finished his career with a year in Minnesota and finally in Texas. He was also a confirmed atheist.



Frank Pastore as a Cincinnati Red

In Cincinnati, he was challenged by some teammates to read some religious books and point out where they were, in his opinion, wrong. This led him to an interest in religion. After his baseball career, he earned a master's degree in Philosophy of Religion and Ethics. He became a born-again Christian. I recently heard an interesting talk from him, making a new case for the existence of God as Creator.

As I showed in a sermon not so long ago, proving that God even exists is impossible to do. In the sermon, I posited that God Himself could not prove His own existence, that if God appeared to everyone in the world at the same time and spoke to every individual in his or her own language and said, "OK, you wanted

proof that I exist, so here I am, proving it by showing myself to you,” far more people would insist it was some sort of technological special effect and not a theophany, which is what pompous theologians call it when God makes a personal appearance. And even if some did believe it, that would be of little comfort to me, given that there are Americans who insist that the landing on the moon was staged, but Elvis Presley was recently sighted buying a bagful of Whoppers at some Burger King.

We all know the scientist’s answer to the question, “Why is there something and not nothing?” That answer is the Big Bang, and I have no argument with scientists about it. I think the more science teaches us about the origins of the universe, the more we learn about how God created it. So there was no evolutionary process at the beginning of time, there was a revolutionary process, a massive explosion giving birth to time, energy and matter.

But there is a problem. Astrophysicists (think Raj in *The Big Bang Theory*) say that the cosmological Big Bang yielded only a small number of fundamental elements. They say it would take billions of years for trillions of nuclear furnaces—we call them stars—to produce the 118 elements in the periodic table. That is as far as the Big Bang can take us. It can’t take us to life. Even today, with all we know about the human genome and DNA, we can’t take non-life—elements—and create life. The Torah is correct when it says humanity was formed from the dust of the earth. Everything we are made of can be found in nature and can be purchased at a chemical supply house, but you can’t take it all home and make it come alive.

So we would require a second revolutionary event, a biological big bang, if you will, to take us from energy and matter to the point where life exists, from no life to life.

Are two Big Bangs enough? No—we are now at the point at which Darwin began, trying to account for the incredible diversity in life forms like bacteria, plants, and animals. Darwin did answer many questions about this diversity, but he could never answer the most fundamental question of them all: How did evolution begin? So now we are in need of a third big bang, an anthropological big bang to begin the process of evolution.

But even these three big bangs are insufficient. We now have the animal mind, but how do we go from the animal mind to Shakespeare, Mozart, and Da Vinci? You know the famous theory about giving enough monkeys enough time at typewriters, one of them would type Hamlet? It's been tested, and the results are in. The monkeys did very little typing, and none of them produced a single real word, not even "the." What was proven was that given enough monkeys enough time with keyboards, the monkeys excelled at covering the keyboards with monkey poop.

So what takes us from the mechanistic animal brain to the self-reflective, creative human mind? We need a psychological big bang. Four big bangs, each producing an off/on effect. We have no proof of gradual development in any of the areas of these four big bangs.

And so, my friends, this is our choice. We must acknowledge that one Big Bang wasn't enough. We must accept that there were four *something-from-nothing* big bangs: cosmological, biological, anthropological, and psychological. Or instead of

believing that something came from nothing four times, absolutely by chance and by nothing but chance, we can believe that at the bottom of the cup of the atheist's explanation of how the universe came into being, we find God has been waiting for us there all along.