

Name _____

Cosmological Argument – Study Guide

1. Why is the question of the origin of the universe important?

2. What has been referred to as “the fundamental philosophical question”?

3. What are the three possible alternatives for the universe?

4. Write out the Kalam cosmological argument.
 - a.

 - b.

 - c.

- Premise 1**
5. What intuitive principle is this premise based on?

6. Why can't *nothing* cause anything to exist?

Premise 2

7. What do we mean by the *universe*?
8. The second premise of the kalam argument is grounded in what two points?
- a.
 - b.
9. What is the difference between an *actual* infinite and a *potential* infinite?
10. We could never get to the _____ moment if we had to cross an _____ infinite number of moments in the _____. Yet, since the present moment is real, it must have been preceded by a _____ past that includes a _____ or first event.
11. How does the second law of thermodynamics point to the beginning of the universe?

Conclusion

12. The kalam argument _____ demonstrate that the Bible is _____, that Jesus is _____, or that Christianity is _____. What the kalam reveals is that the _____ was made and that someone made it. Further, the kalam helps _____ the range of possible causes to a being that is nonphysical, _____, timeless, _____, and powerful.

13. What characteristics of the first cause can be drawn out from the kalam argument and why?

14. How do you make a case for the *personal* cause of the universe?

15. What worldviews or religions are in jeopardy if the cosmological argument is sound?

Objections

Answer the following objections:

1. “One day scientists will discover a natural cause of the universe.”
2. “If everything that begins to exist has a cause, then what caused God?”
3. “If actual infinities can’t exist, then how can God be infinite?”

4. “Quantum mechanics prove that particles pop in and out of existence without a cause.”

5. “Science shows that the universe actually came from *nothing*.”

6. “What about multiple universes (multiverse)? What caused those?”

Name _____

Cosmological Argument – Study Guide

1. Why is the question of the origin of the universe important?
This question has been asked for millennia, and every worldview must have an account of where everything comes from. A better worldview will have greater explanatory scope regarding this question.
2. What has been referred to as “the fundamental philosophical question”?
“Why is there something rather than nothing?”
3. What are the three possible alternatives for the universe?
Beginning or no beginning
Caused or uncaused
Personal cause or impersonal cause
4. Write out the Kalam cosmological argument.
 - a. Everything that begins to exist has a cause
 - b. The universe began to exist
 - c. Therefore, the universe has a cause

Premise 1

5. What intuitive principle is this premise based on?
From nothing, nothing comes
6. Why can't *nothing* cause anything to exist?
Nothing is no-thing. It is the absence of anything. *Nothing* has no causal powers.

Premise 2

7. What do we mean by the *universe*?
All of space, time, and matter.
8. The second premise of the kalam argument is grounded in what two points?
 - a. Second law of thermodynamics

b. Impossibility of existence of actual infinities

9. What is the difference between an *actual* infinite and a *potential* infinite?
Potential infinite is a collection which is increasing toward infinity as a limit, but never gets there.

Actual infinite is a collection in which the number of members really is infinite. It is complete.

10. We could never get to the present moment if we had to cross an actual infinite number of moments in the past. Yet, since the present moment is real, it must have been preceded by a finite past that includes a beginning or first event.
11. How does the second law of thermodynamics point to the beginning of the universe?
 The second law of thermodynamics shows that the universe is running out of usable energy. This means that one day in the future the amount of usable energy will reach zero. We can conclude then that there is a finite amount of energy, which points to a beginning.

Conclusion

12. The kalam argument does not demonstrate that the Bible is the word of God, that Jesus is God, or that Christianity is true. What the kalam reveals is that the universe was made and that someone made it. Further, the kalam helps narrow the range of possible causes to a being that is nonphysical, uncaused, timeless, changeless, and powerful.
13. What characteristics of the first cause can be drawn out from the kalam argument and why?
 Uncaused, spaceless, timeless, changeless, extremely powerful, and personal
14. How do you make a case for the *personal* cause of the universe?
 The only way to have an eternal cause but a temporal effect would seem to be if the cause is a personal agent who freely chooses to create an effect in time. Only minds have causal power.
15. What worldviews or religions are in jeopardy if the cosmological argument is sound?
 Polytheism (Mormonism)
 Pantheism/Panentheism (Buddhism, Hinduism)

Objections

Answer the following objections:

1. “One day scientists will discover a natural cause of the universe.”
This is similar to the “god of the gaps” argument, where a theist would simply posit a god to fill in a gap in our knowledge. In this case, the atheist is positing “science” instead of God. It is an appeal to the future. Why not deal with the evidence at hand instead of immediately dismissing it because it doesn’t agree with your worldview?

2. “If everything that begins to exist has a cause, then what caused God?”
God is defined as the greatest conceivable being and the uncaused cause. It makes no sense to ask this question. It is a categorical mistake. Besides, we cannot have an infinite regress of causes/effects. There must be a first cause. The atheist has historically asserted that the universe has existed eternally. Why disagree with God as the first cause?

3. “If actual infinities can’t exist, then how can God be infinite?”
When we say “God is infinite” we are using “infinite” in a *qualitative* sense instead of a *quantitative* sense. We are saying that God is the full embodiment of the characteristics typically associated with Him, such as goodness, all-knowing, loving, etc. We are not saying that God has an infinite number of goodness parts or beliefs about reality (knowledge).

4. “Quantum mechanics prove that particles pop in and out of existence without a cause.”
Quantum mechanics mentions no such thing. Experiments at most show the unpredictability of particles. The idea of a cause of the particle’s position is not dismissed. What’s more, the experiments take place in space-time reality, not *nothing*. As we mentioned, dismissing the principle of cause/effect would undermine the scientific method altogether!

5. “Science shows that the universe actually came from *nothing*.”
If you look closely at what scientists say about “nothing”, you will notice that it has properties such as energy, and that certain physical laws govern the behavior in this field of energy. This is nothing more than a redefinition of *nothing*. Nothing is the absence of anything. It is “no thing.” No energy. No laws. No thing at all. Why use the word “nothing?”

6. “What about multiple universes (multiverse)? What caused those?”
The idea of multiple universes, although logically possible, has not one shred of evidence for it. Besides, even if there were evidence for multiple universes, this would only push the question of a first cause back one more step. We could always ask, “What caused *those* universes?” Rather than speculate about a plethora of universes, why not deal with the evidence before us that points to a beginning of the universe we live in?