

# Science & Faith

By Joseph Tkach

What is happening at the leading edge of science is fascinating. Why shouldn't it be? There is a paradox in scientific investigation and achievement today. As we push the frontiers of scientific knowledge further into outer space and deeper into inner space, we begin to realise the limits of what we currently know.

The very last sentence of Stephen Hawking's book, *A Brief History of Time*, says: 'If we find the answer [to why the universe exists], it would be the ultimate triumph of human reason—for then we would know the mind of God'.

This does not mean that Hawking is looking for God. He uses the term 'God' as a metaphor for what science does not yet understand. Hawking, along with many of the world's leading physicists, is investigating what is called the Grand Unified Theory, the underlying principle that links all forces in the universe.

Although I am not a scientist, I find what is happening at the leading edge of science fascinating. And why shouldn't it be? As the first verse of Psalm 19 says: 'The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands'. That was written about three thousand years ago, in a time when we had a very rudimentary understanding of the workings of the cosmos. How much more fascinating is it today when we have an even greater grasp of the nature of our universe?

Even scientists who are atheists admit that the magnificence of the creation fills them with awe, even if it

does not lead them to acknowledge its creator. But what it should do, at the very least, is to make them think twice before making bold statements about there being no God. And their reflections may even lead them to a more profound discovery about what, or who, transcends nature.

There is an active paradox in scientific investigation and achievement today. As we push the frontiers of scientific knowledge further into outer space and deeper into inner space, we begin to realise the limits of what we currently know. Things we thought to have nailed down, may no longer be the case. We discovered the universe was expanding, but believed the rate of expansion was slowing down. Now, scientists believe it is actually speeding up. The scientists working at the Hadron Super Collider in Geneva may be on the verge of discovering things that could turn our understanding of physics on its head. The creation does seem to be, as various astronomers and physicists have observed, not only stranger than we had imagined, but stranger than we could ever imagine. There is a mystery even to creation itself that transcends human knowing.

Of course, this, of itself, neither proves nor disproves that God exists. That is a question beyond science. God cannot be measured by scientific instruments. There is no microscope, no telescope, no micrometre, no measuring device that can measure God. God transcends his creation. God is not a created thing, and creation is not an extension of God's being. Real knowledge of God himself depends upon God's own self-revelation.

Long before the scientific age, the writer of the Book of Job shrewdly observed: 'We'll never comprehend all the great things he does; his miracle-surprises can't be counted'. (Job 9:10 The Message)

To those who know him, like the Psalmist, even God's actions in creation remain a mystery beyond human comprehension. However, that does not mean we should not try to understand the mysteries of creation. It is sad that many Christians see scientific discovery as a threat. But why should they regard it as a danger? Yes, some may use certain selective bits of scientific information about creation to counter Christian beliefs about God. But God, by his Spirit, may use someone's desire to look into the mysteries of creation to open them up to searching for the mystery behind creation. And for those who know God in Christ, appreciating the wonders of creation will help us, like Job, recall the wisdom, power, and creativity of our Lord. Truth is truth, and something that is true about creation cannot ultimately contradict something that is true about its Creator.

Scientific discovery, when properly interpreted, can show us more of God's handiwork. And faith in that God, when properly understood can show us that the Creator is not only powerful beyond our imagination, but has a love for us that is not only greater than we understand, but greater than we can even imagine.

This is a transcript of the weekly 'Speaking of Life' radio programme by Joseph Tkach, president of Grace Communion International. For more information visit [www.gci.org](http://www.gci.org).