

Published:
November 09, 2025

The Mystery of the Universe in Quranic Perspective: Analytical Study of Stephen Hawking's Views

Shahzad Shafique

Ph.D Scholar, Islamic Thought and Culture, National University of Modern
Languages, Islamabad

Email: drshahzadshafiquemughal@gmail.com

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-5426-8881>

Prof. Dr. Mustafeez Ahmad Alvi

Professor, Islamic Thought and Culture, National University of Modern
Languages, Islamabad

Email: mustafeez.alvi@numl.edu.pk

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9047-3391>

Abstract

This research critically explores the tension between scientific explanations and Quranic theology regarding the mystery of the universe with a particular focus on the case study of Stephen Hawking. As human knowledge has advanced through the discovery of natural laws and cosmological phenomena, many scientists have sought to explain the universe through empirical reasoning alone, often concluding that creation does not require a divine being. Stephen Hawking, as one of the most influential cosmologists, argued for a self-contained universe that could emerge spontaneously without invoking God. In contrast, Quranic Theology presents Allah as the ultimate Creator and Sustainer, offering a revelatory framework that transcends the limits of empirical inquiry. This study critically examines these competing perspectives, analyzing their scientific, philosophical, and theological dimensions to assess their coherence and explanatory power.

Keywords: Scientific Atheism, Quranic Theology, Universe, Creation, Stephen Hawking, Cosmology, Revelation

Introduction

Living in the age of logic and science it's very natural that the belief system of religion which is formulated centuries ago will be checked according to modern research systems either they are combined with the phenomenon of nature or they are opposed. Because science is based on fact and systematic numbers which could be tested by anyone on reality-based evidence while religion believe the system is based on a specific source which is only given by some extra human beings, we call them Prophets. Those Prophets gives us divine books and their teachings. Religion demand faith whether you understand it or not while science could only be trusted by simple human logic and research evidences.

In our 21st century science made many great contributions for humanity and many great scientists in the field of solving the mystery of the universe. Stephen Hawking was theoretical physicist and had many contributions in the field of Physics. Hawking not only uncoded the phenomenon of cosmology, the being of the universe but also challenged the religious belief system of creation of the universe. In our study we are critically analyzing the facts and evidences which are given by science especially Stephen Hawking as the criteria by Noble Quran.

Philosophy Is Dead

Stephen Hawking said that philosophy has no concern with reality and modern research whether they are in the field of science or theology. Because these philosophies did not gain their part in new technical research and these questions could only answered by science.

"Traditionally these are questions of philosophy, but philosophy is dead. Philosophy has not kept up with modern development in science, particularly physics. Scientists have become the bearers of the torch of discovery in our quest for knowledge."¹

¹ Hawking, Stephen. The Grand Design. Bantam books. London. 2011. page 13

In the above-mentioned paragraph Hawking clearly mentioned that these questions and problems are always solved by scientists, this is their responsibility to find the answer and solve the mystery of the universe.

Basic Questions Arise in the Human Mind

According to Stephen Hawking these are the basic questions which are arising in the human mind about the mystery of the universe. 'That from where we come, how we are created, how the universe came into existence, either it has the creator or it is created by itself.

"How can we understand the world in which we find ourselves? How does the universe behave? What is the nature reality? Where did all this come from? Did the universe need a creation? Most of us do not spend our time worrying about these questions, but almost all of us worry about them some of the time."²

These are the basic questions which arise in the human mind and should be addressed and answered, but according to Hawking these are only answered by science and modern research techniques.

Model-dependent Realism

Stephen Hawking says that there are new research techniques to find the truth except the old blind faith of religion and it also would be researched by many new scientists. After studying quantum theory there is more than one reality of this universe.

"It is based on the idea that our brain interprets the input from our sensory organs by making a model of the world. When such a model is successful at explaining events, we tend to attribute to it, and to the elements and concepts that constitute it, the quality of reality or absolute truth.....If two such physical theories or model accurately predict the same events, one cannot be said to be more real than the other; rather, we are free to use whichever model is most convenient"³

² Hawking, Stephen. The Grand Design. Bantam books. London. 2011. page 13

³ Abid

Published:
November 09, 2025

According to Stephen Hawking we intend to find better theories in their sequence. From the age of Pluto to Newton, It may combine each other.

"In the history of science, we have discovered a sequence of better and better theories or models, from Pluto to the classical theory of Newton to modern quantum theory. It is natural to ask. Will this sequence eventually reaches an end point, an ultimate theory of universe, that will include all forces and predict every observation we can make, or will we continue forever finding better theories".⁴

M- theory – Model

M-theory according to Hawking is only the way to answer these questions and find the mystery of being and creation of this universe. This theory is the collection of whole theories which are based on evidences and proofs according to scientific ways. This theory is the way to find the truth behind this universe. It is a bit like a map which shows the region with different maps and all maps are made by scientific discoverers. Based on facts we can clearly understand all regions and its aspects. Maybe some parts are hidden by one and elaborated by others, in this way we can make a clear and most effective theory which is the collection of all researchers and theories based on scientific evidence.

"M-theory is the only model that has all the properties, we think the final theory ought to have and it is the theory upon which much of our later discussion is based. M-theory is not a theory in the usual sense. It is a whole family of different theories, each of which is a good description of observations only in the same range of physical situations. It is a bit like a map, as is well known, one cannot show the whole earth's surface on a single map".⁵

There is no single theory that seems to be a good representation of situations and understanding of all universes.

⁴ Abid, page 16-17

⁵ Hawking, Stephen. The Grand Design. Bantam books. London. 2011. page 17

Existence of Multiple Universes

Hawking came to the assessment that according to M-theory there are more than one universe, and all of them are like baby universe, some of them creates and remains while most of them destroyed like the bubble in water.

"According to M theory, ours is not the only universe. Instead, M-theory predicts that a great many universes were created out of nothing. Their creation does not require the intervention of some supernatural being or God. Rather, these multiple universes arise naturally from physical law".⁶

And some of the universes are suitable for life while most of them are not.

"Most of these states will be quite unlike the universe we observe and quite unsuitable for the existence of the form of life. Only a very few would allow creatures like us to exist. Thus, our presence selects out from this vast array only those universes that are compatible with existence".⁷

No Need for the Supernatural Being

These universes are created by their own and no need for any creator, they need not any intervention of any God or Supernatural being. Only proper physical laws are governed by these phenomena. Each universe has its own history. Humans want to believe in God or Supernatural beings because they are very small in this universe and want to solve this mystery whether it is correct or not, based on evidence or only the creation of mythologies.

"Although we are puny and insignificant on the scale of the cosmos, this makes us in a sense the Lords of creation."⁸

⁶ Abid, page 18

⁷ Hawking, Stephen. The Grand Design. Bantam books. London. 2011. Page 19

⁸ Abid

Quranic Theology: An Analysis

The last and final divine book from God clearly mentions its phenomena against the creation of the universe. According to the Quranic theme all the creation was made by only one divine God which is mentioned in Islamic terminology 'Allah'. Allah is the only one who created this whole universe and governed it. All the material and non-material things are created by Allah. It is all mentioned in a divine book that all the laws of nature and the phenomena of this universe are not only created but also governed by Almighty Allah.

All the source of energy and all the beginning of the universe from nothing to something is by the divine authority of Allah. He had created this great universe in six days. After Adam and Eva came into this world from them all the human species came into existence. He also sent messengers for His divine guidance and make people understand what is right and what is wrong. There are thousands of messengers whom are guide to Almighty Allah and this all prophet hood procedure was finished to Mohammed peace be upon him and final book the 'Nobel Quran'.

Quranic Philosophy of Creation 'AL KHALIQ'

Quran clearly mention its instance that the only divine authority who created the whole universe is only Allah the beginner and creator.

أَمَّنْ يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ وَمَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَلِلَّهِ مَعَ اللَّهِ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ⁹

“Or, who originates Creation, then repeats it, and who gives you sustenance from heaven and earth? (Can there be another) God Besides God? Say, “Bring forth Your argument, if ye Are telling the truth!”

And said

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعَ طَرَائِقَ وَمَا كُنَّا عَنِ الْخَلْقِ غَافِلِينَ¹⁰

⁹ Al Quran. 27: 64

Published:
November 09, 2025

“And We have made, above you, seven tracts; and We Are never unmindful of (Our) Creation”.

In the above verse the Quran clearly mentioned that it's all about the creation we are all known about and said

أَمْ مَنْ يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ وَمَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَلِلَّهِ مَعَ اللَّهِ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ¹¹

“Or, who originates Creation, then repeats it, and who gives you sustenance from heaven and earth? (Can there be another) God Besides God? Say, “Bring forth Your argument, if ye Are telling the truth!”

In these above-mentioned words, it is the clear instance of Quran with Allah not only created but He also the absolute provider of His creation. In the proper procedure of creation, it is mention that there is only one creator who created the whole universe in six days after that He went on His throne and created day and night, sun and moon, stars and sky.

إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ يُغْشِي اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ يَطْلُبُهُ حَثِيثًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ وَالنُّجُومَ مُسَخَّرَاتٍ بِأَمْرِهِ أَلَا لَهُ الْخَلْقُ وَالْأَمْرُ تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ¹²

“Your guardian-Lord is God Who created the heavens and the earth in six days and is firmly established on the throne (of authority): He draweth the night as a veil O’er the day each seeking the other in rapid succession: He created the sun the moon and the stars (all) governed by laws under His command. Is it not His to create and to govern? Blessed be God the cherisher and sustainer of the worlds!”

Quranic Philosophy on the Basic Questions of Humanity

Quran always encourages that human logic and human wisdom should search for truth and seek what is right. It is common behavior that all human beings are curious to ask the questions of these mysteries.

¹⁰ Al Quran. 23: 17

¹¹ Al Quran. 27: 64

¹² Al Quran. 7: 54

- Where did I come from?
- Where do I go after death?
- What is the main reason behind this universe?
- What is good what is evil?

These are all basic questions which arises in common human being, as per we discuss before that Stephen Hawking's theory to answer them in scientific manner, we are now answering them in Quranic instances.

All human beings came from Adam and Eve and this is the planning of Allah as per said.

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِن بَنِي آدَمَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ ۖ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ ۖ شَهِدْنَا ۚ أَن تَقُولُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَذَا غَافِلِينَ ۝¹³

“When thy Lord drew forth from the children of Adam from their loins their descendants and made them testify concerning themselves (saying): “Am I not your Lord (who cherishes and sustains you)?” They said: “Yea! we do testify!” (This) lest ye should say on the Day of Judgment: “of this we were never mindful.”

And humans are created by 'Al Tin' the clay-by Allah Almighty as per said.

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ قَالَ أَأَسْجُدُ لِمَنْ خَلَقْتَ طِينًا ۝¹⁴
“Behold! We said to the angels: “Bow down unto Adam”: They bowed down except Iblis: He said, “Shall I bow down to one whom Thou didst create from clay?”

Allah Almighty has created all human beings by the creation of a first man named as 'Adam' and 'Adam' was created by the hands of Almighty as per said.

قَالَ يَا إِبْلِيسُ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَنْ تَسْجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقْتُ بِإِيْدِي ۖ أَسْتَكْبَرْتَ ۖ أَمْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْعَالِينَ ۝¹⁵
“(God) said: “O Iblis! what prevents thee from Prostrating thyself to one Whom I have created With My hands? Art thou haughty? Or art thou one of the high (and mighty) ones?”

¹³ Al Quran. 7: 172

¹⁴ Al Quran. 17: 61

¹⁵ Al Quran. 38: 75

Published:
November 09, 2025

So, this is mentioned clearly that humans are not only simply created, but the first human was created by the hands of Allah.

After the death of humans, this life is finished while another life will be started and that is the recreation of all humans in their old forms. Believers reward with good and non-believers will reward accordingly. As per said.

مِنْهَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ وَفِيهَا نُعِيدُكُمْ وَمِنْهَا نُخْرِجُكُمْ تَارَةً أُخْرَى ۖ ¹⁶

“From the (earth) did We Create you, and into it Shall We return you, and from it shall We Bring you out once again”.

and said

يَوْمَئِذٍ يَصُدُّرُ النَّاسُ أَشْتَاتًا لِّیُرَوُّاْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ۖ ¹⁷ فَمَنْ یَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ ۖ وَمَنْ یَعْمَلْ
مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ ¹⁷

“On that Day will men Proceed in companies sorted out, to be shown the Deeds That they (had done). Then shall anyone who Has done an atom’s weight of good, see it! And anyone who Has done an atom’s weight of evil, shall see it”.

So, all human beings are responsible for answering the Almighty for their deeds and the Almighty will reward them. It is totally contradicted to the philosophy of Stephen Hawking. When we study that what is the main reason behind the universe, we came to know that it is all the worship of Allah Almighty.

As per said.

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ۚ ¹⁸ مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ رِّزْقٍ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ يُطْعَمُوا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ ¹⁸

“I have only created Jinns and men, that They may serve Me. No Sustenance do I require of them, nor do I Require that they should Feed Me. For God is He Who Gives (all) Sustenance, —Lord of Power, —Steadfast (forever)”.

¹⁶ Al Quran. 20: 55

¹⁷ Al Quran. 99: 6,7,8

¹⁸ Al Quran. 51: 56,57,58

Quranic Philosophy on only one Truth

As compared to Stephen Hawking, Quran said there is only one truth and it would be accepted by all people. Who accepted it they will become believers while others became non-believers. As per said

وَيَسْتَنْبِئُونَكَ أَحَقُّ هُوَ قُلُوبِي وَإِي وَرَبِّي إِنَّهُ لَحَقٌّ مِمَّا أَنْتُمْ بِمُعْجِزِينَ¹⁹

“They seek to be informed by thee: “Is that true?” Say: “Aye! by my Lord! It is the very truth! And ye cannot frustrate it!”

According to Quranic philosophy there is only one truth and that is the last message of Allah. As per said

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ النَّبِيِّ الْأُمِّيِّ الَّذِي يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَكَلِمَاتِهِ وَاتَّبِعُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ²⁰

“Say: “O men! I am sent unto you all as the apostle of God to Whom belong the dominion of the heavens and the earth: there is no god but He: it is He that gives both life and death. So, believe in God and His apostle the unlettered Prophet who believed in God and His words: follow him that (so) ye may be guided.”

While in Quranic perspective there is only one creator of all universes, who created life and death, as well as sent his messengers to mankind to save from Hell and grant them Paradise. If anyone who obeys they will be rewarded and anyone who disobeys they will be punished.

Quranic Philosophy on Allah the Governor 'AL MUDABIR'

Quranic philosophy not only declare the authority of Allah as creator but also claims that He is the only Governor of all universe. Every act in this whole universe is perhaps only from the will of Allah. Anybody either who is weak or strong, it is from the will of Allah. Anyone who becomes wealthy and poor is from the will of Allah. Even these grate laws of the universe are all by the will of

¹⁹ Al Quran. 10: 53

²⁰ Al Quran. 7: 158

Published:
November 09, 2025

Allah and if He wants, He will stop them immediately. All the things and all the events either are small or big from the will of Allah.

As per said.

إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ مَا مِنْ شَفِيعٍ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ إِذْنِهِ ۚ ذَلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ ۚ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ²¹

“Verily your Lord is God, who created the heavens and the earth in six Days, and is firmly established On the Throne (of authority), Regulating and governing all things. No intercessor (can plead with Him) Except after His leave (Hath been obtained). This Is God your Lord; Him therefore Serve ye: will ye not Receive admonition?”

He is the only authority who gives all kinds of necessities to humanity, gives life and death. He is the absolute.

قُلْ مَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَمَّنْ يَمْلِكُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَمَنْ يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَمَنْ يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ ۚ فَسَيَقُولُونَ اللَّهُ ۚ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ²²

Say: “Who is it that Sustains you (in life) From the sky and from the earth? Or who is it that Has power over hearing and sight? And who Is it that brings out the living from the dead and the dead from the living? And who is it that rules and regulates all affairs?” They will soon say, “God”. Say, “Will ye not then Show piety (to Him)?”

Allah is the only deity who creates heaven and earth, sun and moon and guides them by proper law which is said by Stephen Hawking the physical laws.

اللَّهُ الَّذِي رَفَعَ السَّمَاوَاتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا ۚ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ ۚ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ ۚ كُلٌّ يَجْرِي لِأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ يُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ بِلِقَاءِ رَبِّكُمْ تُوقِنُونَ²³

“God is He Who raised the heavens without any pillars That ye can see; is firmly Established on the Throne (of Authority); He has subjected the sun and the moon (to His Law)! Each one runs (its course) For a term appointed. He doth regulate all affairs, Explaining the Signs in detail, that ye may believe with certainty in the meeting with your Lord”.

²¹ Al Quran. 10: 3

²² Al Quran. 10: 31

²³ Al Quran. 13: 2

And also said

○²⁴ يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ يَعْرُجُ إِلَيْهِ فِي يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ مِّمَّا تَعُدُّونَ²⁴
“He rules (all) affairs from the heavens to the earth: in the end Will (all affairs) go up To Him, on a Day, the space whereof will be (As) a thousand years of your reckoning”.

Conclusion

As an expert in science, scientists want to solve the mystery of the universe. Many of them came to an end that there is Supreme Being as per Issac Newton, but many of them came to believe that there is not any deity and this universe has the ability to create its selves as per Stephen Hawking's believes. Both scientists have their own arguments, but there is also a third group whom says that being human they have not any type of capability to find that is there a God or not they are known as 'Agnostic'.

So being a human being we have limitations and our research procedure is undergone. Over senses and logic has also some limitations. So, we have to know another type of knowledge which tells us the authority of all this grand design. And that type of knowledge is from the creator of this universe and that knowledge claims "Ilm-ul-Wahi". So that type of knowledge is beyond from human senses and limitations. So, if a person wants to check the authenticity, he can check it by the authority of divine literature.

Bibliography

*The Nobel Quran

1. Craig, William Lane. The Kalam Cosmological Argument. Bloomsbury Academic, Chennai. 2018
2. Hawking, Stephen. A Brief History of Time. Bantam Press. London. 2008.
3. Hawking, Stephen. Brief Answers to the Big Questions. John Murray Publishers. 2020.
4. Hawking, Stephen. The Grand Design. Bantam book. London. 2011.
5. Hawking, Stephen. The Illustrated a Brief History of Time. Bantam Press. London. 2018.
6. Hawking, Stephen. The Universe in a Nutshell. Bantam Press. London. 2011.
7. Meyer, Stephen C. Return of the God Hypothesis. Harper Collins. New York. 2021.
8. Craig, William Lane. The Kalam Cosmological Argument. Bloomsbury Academic, Chennai. 2018
9. Lennox, John C. God and Stephen Hawking. Lion Hudson. Oxford. 2011.
10. Polkinghorne, John. Beyond Science. University of Cambridge. Cambridge. 1996

²⁴ Al Quran. 32: 5