

God as the Metaphysically Necessary Being: A Contingent Universe in Islamic and Christian Perspective

Abstract: This article presents a thematic analysis of a video discussion on whether God's existence is *metaphysically necessary* and our universe *contingent*, drawing from both Islamic and Christian thought. We summarize the video's key themes – particularly the *contingency argument* – and bolster the argument with insights from Islamic sources (the Qur'an and Muslim scholarship) and Christian philosophical perspectives. We argue that the universe, with all its physical laws and abstract structures, is not self-sufficient; it is a *contingent* reality that points toward a *necessary* ultimate cause. By examining the idea that “nothing comes from nothing,” the insufficiency of quantum cosmology to truly explain creation ex nihilo, and the ontological status of abstract objects, we conclude that belief in God as a *necessary being* is both philosophically and theologically sound in the Abrahamic traditions. Selected quotations from the video and related writings support each theme, illustrating the convergence between Islamic and Christian reasoning on this fundamental question.

Introduction

Why is there *something* rather than *nothing*? This profound question lies at the heart of the **contingency argument** for God's existence. In philosophical terms, the universe and everything within it are often described as **contingent** – they exist but could conceivably have not existed, and thus they require an explanation beyond themselves. In contrast, God is traditionally conceived as a **necessary being** – one whose non-existence is impossible and who contains the explanation of His own existence. Thinkers in both Islamic and Christian traditions have long advanced this distinction. For example, medieval Islamic philosopher Avicenna spoke of God as the *wājib al-wujūd* (Necessary Existent), and Thomas Aquinas in the Christian West formulated a “Third Way” arguing that all contingent beings must trace back to a being that exists by its own necessity ¹ ² . Both traditions, despite doctrinal differences, converge on the notion that the reality we observe cannot be self-originating or self-sustaining – it points to a transcendent source.

This article explores the theme of God's necessity versus the universe's contingency, following the structure of a video discussion moderated by Robert Lawrence Kuhn (host of *Closer To Truth*). The video features several scholars weighing whether anything in reality must exist *necessarily* – be it God, the universe itself, or perhaps abstract principles. We will present a thematic summary of the video's content, interwoven with an expanded essay that draws on Islamic and Christian perspectives. Key arguments are supported by direct quotes from the video and relevant writings. In doing so, we aim to show that modern debates echo ancient wisdom: that the cosmos, however described by physics or mathematics, is contingent and points beyond itself to a necessary, uncaused cause – understood by Muslims and Christians alike to be God.

Thematic Overview of the Video Discussion

In the video “Is God Necessary (or Who Made God)?”, a panel of philosophers and theologians examines whether God’s existence is required as the ultimate explanation for reality. The discussion, as summarized by Kuhn in the concluding segment, revolves around three possible candidates for a *necessary* reality or foundational existence:

1. **Mathematical laws or equations** – the abstract truths of mathematics or physics.
2. **Some form of consciousness** – a necessary mind or mental reality behind existence.
3. **God** – the traditional God of theism, endowed with aseity (self-existence).

Kuhn presents these options explicitly as “three choices for what may be necessary” ³. Notably, the scholars on the panel have diverse views. Some explore whether the **universe** itself (or the space-time fabric and laws governing it) could exist by a necessity of its own nature – in other words, could the cosmos be the “necessary being” instead of God? Others question if abstract objects like mathematical principles could exist necessarily and serve as the foundation. The video features insights from prominent thinkers such as Alvin Plantinga, Peter van Inwagen, Richard Swinburne, Bede Rundle, and others, each bringing a perspective shaped by their religious or philosophical stance ⁴ ⁵.

Despite this variety, a thematic consensus emerges: **our material world is contingent** – it doesn’t explain its own existence – whereas **God is the best candidate for a metaphysically necessary reality**. One participant points out that “our material world is contingent and would need an explanation,” whereas a necessary entity would exist *as a brute fact*, not requiring an external cause ⁶. In the Abrahamic view, only God fits that description. As one Muslim commentator on the video observed, the second and third options (a necessary “Consciousness” vs. God) ultimately collapse into the same idea – since a fundamental conscious reality with power over the universe would effectively have the attributes of God ⁷. The video also addresses the common rejoinder “If everything needs a cause, who or what caused God?” by clarifying a key point: the contingency argument does **not** say *everything* needs a cause – rather, everything that *begins* or *could fail to exist* (everything contingent) needs a cause or explanation. A truly necessary being, by definition, exists eternally and without external cause. Thus, asking “Who made God?” is a category mistake if God is the uncaused, necessary foundation ⁸ ⁹.

Toward the end of the discussion, Kuhn weighs the alternatives and, in the last two minutes, sums up the reasoning. He notes that while some might propose ultimate mathematical laws or a form of cosmic consciousness as the necessary ground of reality, these still do not evade the classical idea of God. Mathematical equations by themselves seem insufficient – they are descriptive, not creative – and a disembodied “consciousness” that is eternal and creative is effectively what theists mean by God. As Kuhn recounts, even renowned physicist **Stephen Hawking** once poignantly asked, “*What puts the fire in the equations?*” ¹⁰ – meaning, what actualizes mathematical laws into a living universe. The consensus in the video is that neither abstract equations nor an impersonal cosmos can answer that question adequately. Instead, a necessary **Creative Mind** – God – “breathing fire” into the equations is the more coherent explanation ¹⁰ ¹¹. In sum, the video’s theme reinforces a classic cosmological intuition: the universe, full of wonder yet contingent, points to something beyond itself – an eternal, self-sufficient deity affirmed by both Islamic and Christian thought.

“Created from Nothing, or their Own Creators?” – The Universe as Contingent

A central premise in arguing for God’s necessity is that the universe is **contingent** – it depends on factors beyond itself and could have been otherwise or not existed at all. Both the Qur’an and Christian philosophers underscore this contingency. The Qur’an, in a striking verse, challenges skeptics by asking:

“Have they been created from nothing, or are they their own creators? Have they created the heavens and the earth? In truth they put no faith in anything.” (Al Quran 52:35-36) ¹²

In this Quranic rhetorical question, we find a terse formulation of the contingency argument. It invites us to consider the absurdity of the universe popping into being uncaused (“created from nothing”) or of something causing itself to exist (“their own creators”). The only logical alternative the verse implies is that the universe and humans *were created by something other than themselves* – pointing to a transcendent Creator. Classical Islamic scholarship often referenced this verse when debating atheists; it encapsulates the principle that **ex nihilo nihil fit** – “out of nothing, nothing comes” ¹³. If there were ever absolutely nothing, not even a cause or a potential, nothing could ever arise ¹³. The universe, which had a beginning (per modern cosmology, a finite past), cannot be its own originator nor spring from sheer nothingness. It must be contingent on a cause beyond itself.

Christian theologians and philosophers have made similar arguments. Leibniz’s formulation of the **Principle of Sufficient Reason** asks why there is something rather than nothing, concluding that there must be a *sufficient reason* (explanation) for the universe’s existence, which must lie in a necessary being (God). Thomas Aquinas argued that because we observe things that come into and go out of existence, there must exist at least one thing that exists *by its own nature* (otherwise nothing would exist now) ¹⁴. In everyday terms, everything in the universe – every star, every particle – exists *conditionally*. The universe as a whole is essentially a collection of conditional, dependent entities and thus is itself conditional or dependent. It does not have to be here; there could have been no universe at all. This line of reasoning leads to the conclusion that the **universe requires an external explanation**. As one contemporary Muslim author put it, “Our material world is contingent and would need an explanation” ¹⁵ – its existence calls for a cause that is not contingent.

Critically, calling the universe “contingent” also means that one cannot stop the chain of explanations **within** the universe. Posing that some prior physical state (say, a quantum vacuum or an oscillating cosmos) caused our universe only shifts the question back: what caused that prior state? Ultimately, unless one accepts an infinite regress of causes (which many philosophers find problematic), there must be a first cause that itself requires no cause. Both Islamic and Christian thinkers identify this first uncaused cause as God. The Qur’an describes God as *al-Awwal* (The First) and *al-Qayyūm* (The Self-Sustaining, or “Ever Self-Subsisting”), implying that God alone exists without dependence (Qur’an 2:255) ¹⁶ ¹⁷. In the Bible, God’s self-disclosed name “**I AM THAT I AM**” (Exodus 3:14) has been interpreted to signify His self-existence – God as the one being who *must* exist and whose essence is existence itself ¹⁸ ¹⁹.

From the video discussion, one expert succinctly noted that some realities are “**necessary**” – they exist as brute facts needing no further cause – whereas others (like our world) are “**contingent**” and *do* need a cause ⁶. The universe, with its specific laws and constants, looks contingent: it might have been different;

it might not have existed. The fine-tuning of physical constants for life, for instance, suggests the cosmos is not a logically necessary structure – rather, it sits amid a space of many possible universes that *could* have been, or none at all, which again cries out for explanation ²⁰. As Dr. William Lane Craig explains in the context of Leibniz's argument, it is *implausible* to claim the universe exists by a necessity of its own nature, because any such claim runs contrary to both science and reason – our spacetime, with all its contingent properties and laws, “seems to be contingent in its properties” and thus not logically compelled to exist ²¹. The universe could have been otherwise (or not at all), which makes it contingent, not necessary.

To illustrate this in plain terms: imagine absolute nothingness – no energy, no matter, no space, no time, not even abstract principles. In such a scenario, *nothing could ever originate* ¹³. Yet we undeniably have something – a vast cosmos. Therefore, something other than the universe must account for its being. And that “something” cannot be like the universe (contingent or physical), otherwise we haven't answered the riddle. It must be fundamentally different: non-contingent, uncaused, and creative. That is essentially what theists call God. As the Qur'an declares: “*He is the Originator of the heavens and the earth. When He decrees a matter, He only says ‘Be,’ and it is*” (Qur'an 2:117) ²². This portrays God as the free, necessary originator – bringing contingent reality into existence by fiat, without any precursor.

God as a Metaphysically Necessary Being

What does it mean for God to be *metaphysically necessary*? In classical theism, it means that God's non-existence is impossible – or put differently, God does not merely happen to exist, but exists *by the very nature of what God is*. In philosophical terms, every contingent entity has an **essence** (what it is) distinct from its **existence** (the fact that it is). A necessary being, however, is the one entity whose essence *is* existence – it cannot not exist. Christian theologians sometimes speak of God's *aseity*, from the Latin *a se* (meaning “from oneself”), to denote that God exists inherently, needing no external ground. The Islamic tradition similarly emphasizes that God is *Self-Subsisting*. In the Ayat al-Kursī (the famous “Throne Verse”), the Qur'an describes God as “**Al-Ḥayy al-Qayyūm**” – the Ever-Living, the Self-Sustaining Reality upon whom all else depends ¹⁶ ²³. It goes on to say that “*all that is in the heavens and the earth belongs to Him,*” and that sustaining creation causes Him no fatigue ¹⁶. This is a powerful scriptural depiction of necessary existence: God alone is uncaused and independent, whereas the entire cosmos is owned, sustained, and contingent upon Him.

From a Christian perspective, the notion of God as “Being itself” (in Latin, *Ipsium Esse Subsistens*) was articulated by Aquinas under the influence of Exodus 3:14 and Aristotelian metaphysics ²⁴ ²⁵. Aquinas argued that only a being whose essence is existence (i.e. God) could be the ultimate cause of all other beings. In modern philosophy of religion, Alvin Plantinga has framed God as a “necessary being” existing in all possible worlds, and the *ontological argument* famously hinges on the idea that if God's existence is even possible, His necessary nature means He must exist. Even philosophers like Richard Swinburne – who intriguingly suggests that God's existence, though without cause, might be a “brute fact” rather than logically necessary – agree that if God exists, He exists eternally and without any external explanation ²⁶ ²⁷. In other words, the buck stops at God.

The video discussion underscores that if anything is truly necessary, God is the most plausible candidate. One participant (Robert Kuhn) outlined the options and essentially concluded that a “**necessary consciousness**” with the power to create would in effect be God ²⁸. Any lesser candidate for necessity runs into problems. For instance, could **mathematical truths** or **laws of physics** be the necessary foundation of reality? Some have speculated that perhaps the laws of nature exist in a Platonic realm of abstract necessity

and somehow *produce* the universe. But this seems incoherent on closer inspection. Laws and equations are descriptions; by themselves they have no agency. As the Muslim Times editor remarks, “mathematical formulae on a piece of paper or blackboard have no creative power” ²⁹. They cannot cause a universe to leap into existence any more than the equations written in a physics textbook can push a rock off a table. The late Stephen Hawking, after deriving elegant equations describing cosmology, rhetorically asked, “*What is it that breathes fire into the equations and makes a universe for them to describe?*” ³⁰. The answer cannot be “more equations” – it has to be something or someone that transcends the abstract description. As Dr. Craig explains, laws of nature, considered as abstract objects or mathematical propositions, “**have no causal powers and so cannot be the cause of anything.**” ³¹ They are *causally effete*. Reality is not literally caused by mathematics; rather, mathematics is our mental map of how real causation operates in the universe.

The idea of God’s necessity also entails uniqueness. Theism traditionally holds there can only be **one** metaphysically necessary being. The existence of two or more self-existent, supreme sources of reality would invite contradiction and chaos. Islamic theology is particularly emphatic on this point: “*If there had been in [the heavens and earth] other gods besides Allah, then surely both [heavens and earth] would have gone to ruin*” (Qur’an 21:22) ³². Two omnipotent, independent beings would conflict – an elegant Quranic argument for divine unity. Christian philosophy similarly reasons that the concept of a “greatest possible being” (as in Anselm’s ontological argument) implies singularity; there cannot be two “all-powerful, necessary” beings because to distinguish them, one would lack something the other has, contradicting their maximal greatness. Thus, the universe’s contingency doesn’t point to a pantheon or an abstract ensemble of necessary principles – it points to one **necessary God**.

From the video’s standpoint, after examining the options, the participants recognize that positing an impersonal necessary entity (like a mathematical law or a vacuous “nature”) leaves too much unexplained – whereas positing a personal God who is free, conscious, and omnipotent provides a more coherent explanation for a created, contingent order. In fact, the notion of a necessary being with will and intellect helps to explain why contingent reality is the particular way it is. A math equation or “law of nature” has no ability to choose one world over another; it just *is*. It cannot answer “*Why this world?*” or “*Why any world at all?*” because, as abstract objects, laws are inert. A necessary **Creator**, on the other hand, could choose to create this particular universe for a purpose. As one writer put it: without an eternal consciousness behind them, even supposed necessary truths would sit idle – “how can mathematical equations or formulae exist, except in a mind?” ³³. If one accepts that abstract objects (like numbers or propositions) exist, it is very reasonable to think they reside in an eternal mind (namely God’s mind), rather than floating in a Platonic void independent of any intellect ³³. This view (sometimes called “Divine conceptualism”) is attractive to both Christian and Muslim theists, as it preserves God’s status as the locus of all reality – concrete and abstract.

In summary, to call God *metaphysically necessary* is to say that God is the ultimate reality that explains itself. Unlike the universe, which is full of **conditions** and **dependence**, God simply is. As the Christian philosopher Norman Geisler quipped, God is not just a being that happens to exist; rather, if God exists at all, He is the being that *cannot not exist*. The harmony between Islamic tawḥīd (absolute monotheism) and classical Christian theology on this point is notable: both affirm a single, eternal, uncaused Creator described in Scripture as the source and sustainer of all that exists.

Modern Challenges: Quantum Cosmology and Abstract Objects from “Nothing”

A visualization of abstract forms. Just as an artist's design precedes the artwork, the patterns and laws of mathematics and logic require a mind. In the theistic view, God has “created everything and all the propositions, abstract objects and mathematics that He needed to create the universe” ³⁴. Such abstract truths do not float independently – they reflect the wisdom of a necessary divine intellect.

In recent decades, some scientists and philosophers have proposed ways to explain the universe without invoking God, often by appealing to physics – especially **quantum mechanics** – or to the idea that the universe might be “necessary” in some impersonal way. A well-known example is physicist Lawrence Krauss's claim that quantum fluctuations in a primordial “nothing” could produce a universe. Others, like cosmologist Alexander Vilenkin, have described the universe emerging via a quantum tunneling event from a state of “no classical space-time.” Such proposals are intriguing, but they often trade on equivocations of the word “nothing” and leave the fundamental question untouched. As one observer dryly noted, many of today's top scientists “allow the magical powers of Quantum mechanics” to conjure universes: in their speculative moments, “we can have a universe from nothing and it can be biophilic with amazingly large number of coincidences to make our universe habitable.” ³⁵ When in an especially speculative mood, some even countenance “not one universe but an infinite number of universes” springing forth – “ 10^{500} to be precise” – via quantum cosmology ³⁶. This multiverse idea is often intended to explain the extraordinary fine-tuning of our cosmos without design: if zillions of universes pop out of a quantum vacuum, perhaps one by chance will have the right conditions for life.

However, these hypotheses do not actually eliminate the need for a necessary being; they merely push the question back **one level**. Quantum mechanics itself presupposes an elegant mathematical structure and laws of nature. A quantum vacuum is *not* literally “nothing” – it is a sea of fluctuating energy governed by specific physical principles (fields, uncertainties, etc.). So one must still ask: why do those quantum laws exist at all? Why do the underlying mathematical structures (like the Hamiltonian of a field, or the laws of gravity) hold? Appealing to a “quantum void” as the origin of the universe only transfers the mystery to the existence of the quantum void and its laws. As the Muslim author of the *Quantum Mechanics: Magical Wand...* article observed, when scientists are pressed on certain phenomena like consciousness or free will, they suddenly admit quantum physics *itself* cannot furnish an explanation – revealing a kind of **selective metaphysical appetite** ³⁷ ³⁸. In other words, some use quantum theory as a miraculous “wand” to get a universe from nothing when it suits them, but they acknowledge its inadequacy to account for mind, morality, or other aspects of reality. This inconsistency (labelled a “paradox par excellence” ³⁸) suggests that purely physical explanations are being stretched beyond their competence.

A careful analysis shows that **quantum cosmology still requires a cause or explanation** outside the system. The very possibility of a universe-generating quantum vacuum relies on there being an applicable *mathematical law*. As one essayist quipped, “mathematical formulae on a blackboard have no creative power” ²⁹. There needs to be something that actualizes potential into reality. Hawking's challenge – *who or what “breathes fire” into the equations to make a real cosmos?* – remains unanswered by physics alone ³⁰. Indeed, Hawking himself, despite his atheistic leanings, recognized that a law like gravity could describe the universe's emergence, but the **law itself** just exists – he famously wrote, “*Even if there is a law like gravity, that law does not explain who set up the law. [The law] can't tell you what to breathe fire into the equations.*”

Theists happily agree: the laws of nature are not agents. They are more like instructions or recipes, which are impotent without a chef to use them.

Christian philosophers echo this point. Dr. William Lane Craig responds to these speculations by noting that if one considers the “fundamental laws of nature” as *necessary abstract entities* (as a Platonist might), you still haven’t found a creative source. “Such laws are mathematical equations... and as mathematical objects they **have no causal powers**... they don’t determine which world is actual,” Craig writes ¹¹ ³¹ . They cannot pull the trigger to bring any physical reality into being. Similarly, even a hypothetical quantum vacuum that “necessarily exists” would be just a cold, eternal stage unless something *utilizes* it to produce universes. It is telling that many attempts to craft a cosmos from “nothing” smuggle in assumptions – e.g. a pre-existing time in which fluctuations happen, or a law like quantum tunneling. These are not *nothing*; they are part of the contingent framework needing explanation. Thus, modern physics has not in fact dispensed with the need for a transcendent cause – it has only described the mechanisms by which a universe *could* evolve, given certain initial conditions and laws. The question of why those laws and conditions exist in the first place (and why they are life-permitting) points right back to what Leibniz called *the sufficient reason* – which, theists maintain, lies in God ³⁹ ⁴⁰ .

Another modern consideration is the existence of **abstract objects** like numbers, logical truths, or moral values. Are these things *eternal and uncreated*, or are they products of a divine mind? This debate, while abstract, ties into God’s necessity. If one is a strict Platonist, one might say that the truths of mathematics (e.g. $2+2=4$, or the properties of prime numbers) exist necessarily and independently of anyone – perhaps even independently of God. Some philosophers (even Christian ones, like Peter van Inwagen as mentioned in the video’s related content) lean toward this view of abstracta. However, other theistic philosophers (like William Lane Craig or the Muslim author Zia Shah) argue for **Divine conceptualism**: abstract objects are not entities floating in a Platonic heaven, but rather ideas in the mind of God. The article “Did God Create Abstract Objects?” asserts that God “has created everything and all the propositions, abstract objects and mathematics that He needed” as a blueprint for the universe ³⁴ . This implies that even numbers and geometrical truths ultimately stem from the Creator’s intellect. A key argument here is that abstract objects are causally inert (the number 7 doesn’t cause anything by itself) ⁴¹ ¹¹ ; and if we imagine a scenario of absolutely nothing, not even minds, it’s hard to see how abstract truths would “exist” – “if nothing exists at all, no universe, no consciousness, no God – a total blank – then abstract objects cannot exist” ¹³ . Conversely, if one posits an eternal God, one has a ready explanation for these truths: they reflect the structure of His necessary being. Thus, acknowledging the reality of abstract truths can be seen as *supporting* the necessity of a divine mind ⁴² ³³ . Indeed, as the Muslim writer points out, a majority of mathematicians and many philosophers lean toward Platonism (believing in a sort of “mathematical heaven” of necessary truths) – but if one believes in a **mathematical heaven**, then believing in a **divine heaven** (i.e. an actual God who is the locus of these truths) “is not too far” a step ⁴² . In other words, robust realism about abstract objects arguably makes the case for God’s existence even more compelling, lest we accept an infinite array of necessary but mindless abstractions.

In summary, modern attempts to explain the universe “from nothing” – whether through quantum physics or appeals to necessity of laws – have not succeeded in removing God from the equation. **Quantum cosmology** still begs the question of why quantum laws exist at all (and why those laws yield a life-friendly cosmos). **Abstract objects** considered in isolation cannot cause a world, and it’s unclear how they “exist” apart from minds. Both lines of inquiry, when followed to their logical end, point back to a necessary Mind that grounds reality. The Quranic challenge “Were they created by nothing?” remains unanswered by physics alone ¹² . As one analysis concluded: “Platonism or nominalism, the necessity of God is inescapable.” ⁴³

Whether one thinks abstract realms exist independently (Platonism) or not (nominalism), one winds up needing God – either to serve as the foundation for the abstract realm or to author the concrete realm of nature without pre-existing forms.

Convergence of Islamic and Christian Perspectives

It is fascinating that on the question of contingency and necessity, Islamic and Christian theists find substantial common ground. Both traditions affirm a creation *ex nihilo* (from nothing) by the will of a transcendent God. Both read their scriptures as asserting God's self-existence and the utter dependence of the universe on God. For instance, we saw how the Qur'an (52:35–36, 2:255, 21:22) compellingly makes these points in an Arabic idiom. The Bible likewise contains passages that imply God's necessary being and role as sustaining cause: "*All things were made through Him*" (John 1:3), "*in Him all things hold together*" (Colossians 1:17), "*from Him and through Him and to Him are all things*" (Romans 11:36), to cite a few. The philosophical underpinnings – distinguishing contingent from necessary, seeing the absurdity of infinite regress, etc. – were developed by both Muslim and Christian scholars in the Middle Ages (often in conversation with each other's works). The 11th-century Muslim theologian al-Ghazali and the 13th-century Christian Aquinas, for example, would both agree that the cosmos requires a sustaining cause that itself depends on nothing.

One concrete convergence is the reliance on **reason and observation**: both faith traditions teach that rational reflection on the world can lead one to acknowledge a Creator. The contingency argument is not rooted in special revelation alone; it is a *rational* argument available to all. A Christian philosopher might invoke the **Leibnizian cosmological argument** – which is essentially a formalization of "*Have they been created from nothing, or are they their own creators?*"⁴². A Muslim scholar might cite the same Quranic verse and then employ a logical disjunction: either the universe is necessary or it is contingent; if contingent, it must trace to a necessary being (Allah). Both would then examine whether anything within the universe could plausibly be necessary by itself. As we discussed, modern science tends to reinforce the contingency: the universe had a beginning (per Big Bang cosmology), its structure could have been different (laws and constants are not fixed by logic alone), and even scenarios like a multiverse only push the need for explanation up one level. In the words of a Muslim commentator on recent scientific attitudes: "When [atheist scientists] are in a good mood, they allow [for] infinite universes from nothing... When not in so good a mood, they admit quantum mechanics cannot account for consciousness or free will"⁴⁴ ³⁷. The tongue-in-cheek observation highlights that dismissing God often requires greater leaps of faith – believing in countless unobservable universes or in ontologically creative equations – which ultimately ring hollow. Both Christians and Muslims argue that it is far more reasonable to believe in one God than in an infinity of self-causing universes or an impersonal set of "necessary" laws.

Another point of agreement is in rejecting what might be called **scientism** – the idea that physics alone can answer metaphysical questions. The video discussion included the notion of a "*biophilic universe*" (a universe seemingly fine-tuned for life)⁴⁵. Instead of concluding design, some propose a multiverse to avoid the implication of a Designer. Yet, as Islamic scholar Zia Shah writes, this move creates a cognitive dissonance: on one hand, "infinite number of universes... from nothing" are entertained, but on the other hand, basic features of reality like mind and free will are declared insoluble by the same physics⁴⁶ ³⁷. The upshot is a tacit admission that **physical law by itself is insufficient** to explain reality completely – a point both Christian and Muslim theists seize upon. If physics cannot even account for *mind* (our capacity for reason, consciousness, intentional action), how can it account for the existence of *matter* from absolute non-existence? The necessity of a reality beyond blind physical law becomes apparent. In Christian terms, one

might quote C.S. Lewis's argument that if the whole show was mindless, we would not trust our own reasoning about the show – implying mind is fundamental (ultimately the Mind of God). In Islamic terms, one might quote the Quran (67:3–4) which invites us to observe the flawless order of creation and asks us to consider that this order is not self-standing: *"You will not see any flaw in what the Lord of Mercy creates... Look again! Your sight will return to you weak and defeated."* ⁴⁷ .

In the end, both traditions circle back to **worship** of the Necessary Being. The academic arguments have existential consequences. The Islamic source we examined concludes that with the advance of science highlighting a life-friendly universe and the mystery of consciousness, "humanity has to come back to the worship of God of Abrahamic faiths" ⁴⁸ . Rather than science having killed God (a premature 19th-century assumption), the deeper scientific discoveries of the fine-tuned cosmos and the enigmatic origin of existence are pointing back to God. A Christian could wholeheartedly agree: the heavens declare the glory of God, and our increased knowledge only magnifies that glory. In fact, the shared heritage of Abrahamic monotheism means Muslims and Christians are referring, ultimately, to the same concept: an eternal, unbounded, purposeful Creator. Although Christian theology adds concepts like the Trinity or Incarnation, when it comes to God's **necessary existence and role as creator**, there is no disagreement. A Muslim and a Christian can stand together and say to the atheist or skeptic: *Look at contingent nature, follow the chain of causation, and reason without prejudice – you will be led to acknowledge the one God, the ḥayy al-qayyūm (ever-living, self-subsisting), who alone explains why anything exists at all.*

Conclusion

Both Islamic and Christian theistic perspectives converge on a powerful conclusion: **God is metaphysically necessary, whereas the universe is contingent**. The thematic exploration of the video discussion and the supporting insights from Quranic verses and philosophical writings have reinforced each step of this argument. The universe – with its beginning in time, its finely-tuned laws, and its myriad dependent parts – does not contain within itself the reason for its existence. It could conceivably not have been, or have been radically different. It does not have to exist – which means it *needs* an explanation beyond itself ⁶ ¹² . God, by contrast, as conceived in classical theism, *must* exist. He is the ultimate reality – eternal, uncaused, unchanging – upon which the existence of everything else is contingent.

We saw that attempts to avoid God by appealing to science or abstract principles fall short. Quantum cosmology, multiverse hypotheses, and appeals to the "laws of nature" being necessary all encounter the same problem: they assume a framework that itself calls for an explanation (quantum laws, an ensemble of universes, etc.). As one source succinctly put it, *"Nothing comes out of absolute nothing: ex nihilo nihil fit!"* ¹³ . If one denies a Creator, one ends up attributing almost god-like creative powers to something else (be it a physical law or a platonic abstraction) – a move that is neither scientifically warranted nor philosophically satisfying. In truth, explaining the existence of **anything** ultimately requires a being that simply exists of itself, eternally and freely. The God of Islam and the God of Christianity both fit that description. Indeed, one might argue that the very coherence of the contingency argument helped the spread of monotheism: it resonated deeply with the human mind's search for a first cause.

In closing, the argument that "God is necessary and the universe is contingent" is not merely a piece of armchair speculation – it is a synthesis of logical reasoning and spiritual insight that has been refined over centuries. It invites both the mind and the heart to recognize dependence and seek the Source. As the Qur'an reminds in another verse, *"Allah is the First and the Last, the Evident and the Hidden – He has knowledge of all things"* (57:3). And as the Bible similarly proclaims, *"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the*

end” (Revelation 21:6). Both scriptures, in their own idioms, testify that God alone is the ultimate reality by which all else subsists.

The convergence of Islamic and Christian perspectives in this regard provides a powerful united front in contemporary discourse: it is a reminder that faith and reason together can lead us to profound truth. The universe, in all its grandeur and mystery, is a sign – a contingent sign – pointing beyond itself. In the final analysis, recognizing God as the metaphysically necessary being not only resolves an intellectual quest for explanation but also fulfills a spiritual longing: to find that our existence is grounded in a perfect and purposeful Reality that *always was, is, and will be*. Such a recognition has been the wellspring of worship and philosophical wonder in both Islam and Christianity. As rational inquiry and revelation concur, we are compelled to acknowledge: **God is, and without Him, nothing else could be** 6 13 .

Sources:

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