

# Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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## The Mind Of God

(Jerry Fite)

We heard this week of the death of Stephen Hawking. Mr. Hawking, a renowned theoretical physicist and cosmologist, died Wednesday morning in his home in Cambridge, England. He was 76 years old. The fact he lived into his 70's is remarkable in that at the early age of 21, he was diagnosed with ALS, the neuromuscular wasting disease. In his last years, he was only able to twitch his right cheek muscle in order to activate a digitized program of letters and words with which he could communicate his thoughts.

Stephen Hawking was driven to discover the complete theory of the universe. He wanted all to be able to know why we and the universe exist. In his 1988 best-selling book “A Brief History of Time,” Stephen Hawking writes, “...if we find the answer to that, it would be the ultimate triumph of human reasoning – for then we would know the mind of God.”

Stephen Hawking did not believe in the existence of God. He used the word “God” in a figurative sense. What he meant by “know the mind of God” is, “we would know everything that God

would know, if there were a God...” then he added, “which there isn't, I'm an atheist.”

No understanding of the existence of the universe is complete without knowing how the universe came into existence. Mr. Hawking believed space, matter and time were essential elements for the existence of the universe. The Bible reveals in the first verse that space, matter and time came into being at the same time. “*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth*” (Genesis 1:1). “In the beginning” – (time) “the heavens” (space) and “the earth” (matter) came into existence when “God” (the source) “created” (the force) the universe. Mr. Hawking affirmed the necessity for space, matter and time. He believed the universe had a beginning. He also believed the “big bang” was the singular event for the universe's beginning. But He refused to acknowledge God as the reason for its existence.

In Hawking's mind, “God” was not needed to explain the reason for the existence of the universe. In terms of an Englishman, Hawking opined, “*It is not necessary to invoke God to light the blue touch paper and set the universe going.*” “Blue touch paper”

to the people in England is the fuse of the firecracker. If not God, who lit the fuse?

Steven Hawking replaced God with “science.” He observed that “*God is the name people give to the reason we are here. But I think that reason is the laws of physics rather than someone with whom one can have a personal relationship.*” His impersonal “God” was the collective laws of physics. The problem with this reasoning, is that laws are observable after something begins, not “the force” bringing the universe into existence. The belief in the creative force of the eternal omnipotent God does not contradict the laws observable after the beginning of the universe. The reality of God fills in the important gap of the “first cause” that observable laws of physics cannot fill.

The New York Times honored Mr. Hawking with, “*His Mind Roamed the Cosmos.*” But sadly, this brilliant mind had no room for God, the Creator, nor the hope of heaven in the afterlife. He lived life roaming the cosmos in his mind, but he entered the afterlife without excuse for not perceiving the power and wisdom of God behind the existing universe (cf. Romans 1:20, Psalm 19:1).