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**Stephen Hawking:**

**God was not needed to create the Universe**

The Big Bang was the result of the inevitable laws of physics and did not need God to spark the creation of the Universe, Stephen Hawking has concluded.

**by**

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Published

02 September 2010; 06:15AM BST

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/science/science-news/7976594/Stephen-Hawking-God-was-not-needed-to-create-the-Universe.html>

(2010)

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The scientist [Stephen Hawking] has claimed that no divine force was needed to explain why the Universe was formed.

In his latest book, *The Grand Design*, an extract of which is published in *Eureka* magazine in *The Times*, Hawking said: "Because there is a law such as gravity, the Universe can and will create itself from nothing. Spontaneous creation is the reason there is something rather than nothing, why the Universe exists, why we exist."

He added: "It is not necessary to invoke God to light the blue touch paper and set the Universe going."

In *A Brief History of Time*, Prof Hawking's most famous work, he did not dismiss the possibility that God had a hand in the creation of the world.

He wrote in the 1988 book: "If we discover a complete theory, it would be the ultimate triumph of human reason -- for then we should know the mind of God."

In his new book he rejects Sir Isaac Newton's theory that the Universe did not spontaneously begin to form but was set in motion by God.

In June this year Prof Hawking told a Channel 4 series that he didn't believe that a "personal" God existed. He told *Genius of Britain*: "The question is: is the way the universe began chosen by God for reasons we can't understand, or was it determined by a law of science? I believe the second. If you like, you can call the laws of science 'God', but it wouldn't be a personal God that you could meet, and ask questions."

Until his retirement last year Prof Hawking was Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at the University of Cambridge, a post previously held by Newton.

The book, co-written by American physicist Leonard Mlodinow, is published on September 9 [2010].

"*The Grand Design*", by Stephen Hawking and Leonard Mlodinow, is available from Amazon (UK and US)

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