

al-Akhira, the new higher evolved universe

A scientific approach to the Hereafter



By Arnold Yasin Mol

In the traditional Islamic concept, the Afterlife was approached using the ancient understandings of the universe. Because of this, most views on the afterlife are mythological using metaphorical expressions and viewing it as something not linked to a natural system within the universe. With the emergence of the materialistic Western science, the concept of a Hereafter was ridiculed since it concerned spirituality, something that is believed to lie outside empirical knowledge and thus improvable. But with new theories coming from the fields of cosmology and quantum physics, the universe shows to be far more complex and far less material. On the lowest levels of existence, all matter turn into quanta-energy and information and follow laws and systems very different from the higher levels where energy is in the forms of light and matter.

The Qur'an constantly reminds us that we must understand this universe to understand God's system:

ان فى خلق السموت والارض واختلف الليل والنهار لءايت لاولى الالبب 3:190-191
يذكرون الله قيما وقعودا وعلى جنوبهم ويتفكرون فى خلق السموت والارض ربنا ما خلقت الذين
هذا بطلا سبحنك فقنا عذاب النار

Verily, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the succession of night and day, there are indeed messages for all who are endowed with insight, [and] who remember God when they stand, and when they sit, and when they lie down to sleep, and [thus] reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth: "O our Sustainer! Thou hast not created [aught of] this without meaning and purpose. Limitless art Thou in Thy glory! Keep us safe, then, from suffering through the fire (as we burn away our potential for further development)!"

The Qur'an itself uses, next to allegorical expressions, the current natural universe as an example for the new universe, and refers to it being part of the same system, but on different levels. The human psyche or self (nafs in the Qur'an), is determined as something that exists apart from a biological body, but uses a biological body as a vehicle to interact with the universe. The human psyche and all its deeds and thoughts are part of the information storage of the universe on the quanta level. As explained by professor Seth Lloyd:

*"The Universe is made of bits. The way in which the Universe registers and processes information determines what it is and how it behaves. It has been known for more than a century that every piece of the Universe - every electron, atom, and molecule - registers bits of information."*¹

And science philosopher Ervin Laszlo:

*"There is no evident limit to the information that interfering vacuum wavefields could conserve. In the final count, they could carry information on the state of the whole Universe."*²

وما من غائبة فى السماء والارض الا فى كتب مبين 27:75

And there is nothing hidden in the heaven and the Earth but it is in a clear Record (Kitab from kataba=to write/record/dictate/register).

So all the information processed by the universe, everything that developed and happened in this universe is stored on the quanta level. When this universe dies out due to a Big Crunch where the Big bang will reverse and the universe implodes, or by the Big freeze whereby all energy will be scattered that it cannot interact anymore and most likely will be sucked into black holes, the universe will start out freshly again. And all the information gathered in this universe will be used for the next, and so the next universe will be on a higher developed level.

*"While life in each local Universe must end, it can evolve again in the Universes that follow. If evolution in each local Universe starts with a clean slate, the evolution of life in local Universes is a Sisyphean effort; it breaks down and starts again from scratch, time after time. But local Universes are not subject to this ordeal. Each Universe in-forms the next Universe. Thus in each Universe life evolves further and further, toward coherence and complexity. Cosmic evolution is a cyclical process with a learning curve. Each Universe starts without life, evolves life when some planets become capable of supporting it, and wipes it out when planetary conditions pass beyond the life-supporting stage. But the vacuum shared by all the Universes is more and more informed, and it created more and more favorable conditions for the evolution of life. Cyclically progressive evolution in the Metaverse offers a positive prospect for the future of life: it can continue in one Universe after another. And it can evolve further and further, in Universe after Universe."*³

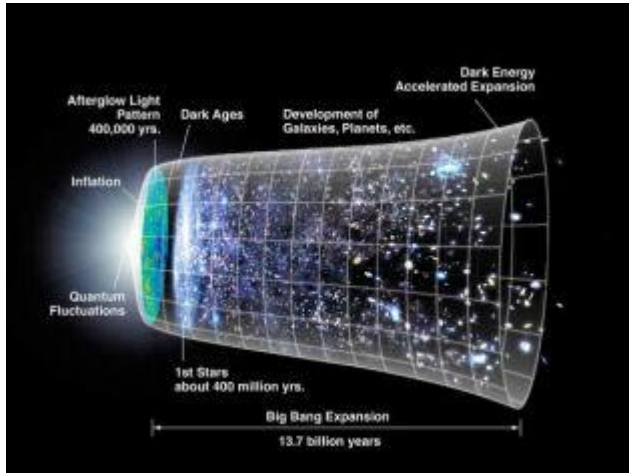
The way this universe will end due to implosion or through drainage into black holes, both motions of energy resemble a circling or wrapping motion. After this a new universe will emerge. All these natural systems of recycling and evolving universes are expressed in the Qur'an:

يوم نظوى السماء كطى السجل للكتب كما بدانا اول خلق نعيده وعدا علينا انا كنا فاعلين 21:104
On that Era (Yawma=period/era/stage/time period/day) We shall roll up/fold (natwi=we roll up/fold/shut/close/wrap up) the Universe (as-Sama'a=sky/above the earth/beyond the earth/space/heavens/heights/highest/upper) as written scrolls (sijill=scroll/record/register) are rolled up. Then, just as We initiated the first creation (khaalqin=creation coming of present material), We shall repeat it (nu'idu=revert/resume/repeat) (i.e. create a new Universe). This is a promise binding upon Us. For, We are Able to do all things.

يوم تبدل الارض غير الارض والسموت وبرزوا لله الواحد القهار 14:48

The Era will come when this earth will be replaced/exchanged (tubaddalu = changed /altered/substituted/exchanged) with a new earth, and the Universe too will be replaced, and they will come forth/emerge to God, the One, the Dominating.

*"According to the big bounce, in both scenarios the universe will eventually collapse until it reaches the highest density allowed by the theory. At this point, the universe will rebound and begin expanding again - the ultimate in cosmic recycling."*⁴



And mankind will emerge again in this new universe through a natural system whereby the human psyche is merged with a new vehicle or body so it can interact again with the new universe. This is expressed in the comparison of the new life in the new universe with the emergence of human life in the present universe:

يايها الناس ان كنتم في ريب من البعث فانا خلقناكم من تراب ثم من نطفة ثم من علقة ثم 22:5
 م نخرجكم من مضغة مخلقة وغير مخلقة لنبين لكم ونقر في الارحام ما نشاء الى اجل مسمى ثم
 طفلا ثم لتبلغوا اشدكم ومنكم من يتوفى ومنكم من يرد الى اذل العمر لكيلا يعلم من بعد علم
 شيئا وترى الارض هامدة فاذا انزلنا عليها الماء اهتزت وربت وانبتت من كل زوج بهيج

O people! if you are in doubt about the raising/resurrection (ba'th=resurrection/raising from death or sleep), then surely We created you from dust, then from a small seed, then from a clot, then from a lump of flesh, complete in make and incomplete, that We may make clear to you; and We cause what We please to stay in the wombs till an appointed time, then We bring you forth as babies, then that you may attain your maturity; and of you is he who is caused to die, and of you is he who is brought back to the worst part of life, so that after having knowledge he does not know anything; and you see the earth sterile land, but when We send down on it the water, it stirs and swells and brings forth of every kind a beautiful herbage.

The comparison is not only to remind us that the possibility of a new life after death is similar to you existing now. But the comparison goes further as it mentions all the steps used in this universe, which gives a reflection on the possibly used system in the next universe. In the Qur'an, the word *Akhira* is used for the Hereafter. It means the second, that which comes after. It can be used for the future in this universe as the next, and also for new generations.

In the Qur'an, the different stages of process and development are represented by two archetypical symbols, that of *Jannah* and *Jahannam*. *Jannah* means a garden which so much growth, the ground cannot be seen⁵. Thus it represents continuous growth and development. In this universe it represents a stable and progressive society. In the next universe, *Akhira*, it represents those humans that will develop further in the continuous evolution of cosmic development. This is why the human experience of *Jannah* is expressed in allegories, since it represents both the current and next universe, and thus uses human feelings of bliss and peace as examples of what we will experience in both versions of *Jannah*. *Jahannam* comes from the Hebrew *Gihinnom* and refers to an ancient valley near Jerusalem which was used a place for human sacrifice, later on it was used as execution ground and as garbage dump. To take away the stench, it was kept constantly burning⁶. Thus *Jahannam* represents any stage of

human level where it cannot develop. In this universe it represents times of ignorance, war, hunger, inequality, oppression. In the next universe it represents the lack of further development or existence which is experienced as agony. You are literally thrown into the garbage dump of the universe, and if we can understand verses 11:108-110 in this way, will stop existing all together. Connected to the word Jahannam is Jahim, Nar, Saqara and a few others, which all represent Fire, but also the higher stages of war as with Saqara. Jahim by itself means something that is stopped, and was also used for fire since anything thrown into fire stops existing⁷.

The persons who acted beneficially as part of the human species will develop further, those who acted harmfully will not develop further.

ومن خفت موزينه فاولئك الذين خسروا انفسهم بما كانوا بآيتنا يظلمون والوزن يومئذ 7:8-9
الحق فمن ثقلت موزينه فاولئك هم المفلحون

The scales on that Day will be truly equitable. Those whose constructive deeds are heavy, will prosper. And those whose scales are light, will be the ones who have put their own 'self' in loss because they disbelieved/were unjust/misplaced the purpose (yazlimuna= they do wrong/misplace/act unjustly) in Our Signs.

يناموز ثقلت فمن ومن خفت موزينه فاولئك الذين خسروا انفسهم فى جهنم خالدون 23:102-103
المفلحون هم فاولئك

Then those whose scales (of good deeds) are heavy, they are the successful. And those whose scales are light, it is those who have wasted their own 'self', and abide in Jahannam, the state where further development is no more possible.

But the details and specifics of our existence in the new universe are unknown as through the current universe we can only know that the new universe, Akhirah, will be a higher stage of existence:

*"What can we say about the super-evolved forms of life that would come about in the mature stages of mature Universes? Since the course of evolution is never predictable, we can actually say very little. All we can surmise is that mature organisms in mature Universes will be more coherent and complex than the forms of life familiar to us. In most other respects they could be as different from the organisms we know on Earth as humans are different from the protozoan slime that once populated the primeval seas of this planet."*⁸

قَدِيرٍ شَيْءٍ كُلِّ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ لَعَلَّ آخِرَةَ لِنَشْأَةِ اللَّهِ تَمَّ خَلْقًا بَدَأَ كَيْفَ نَظَرُوا آفَ لَأَرْضًا فِي سِيرُوا قُلْ 29:20
Say, "Travel in the earth and find out how He originated creation. And how afterward, Allah brings forth entirely new forms. Verily, Allah is the Designer of all things."

لَتَرْكَبُنَّ طَبَقًا عَنْ طَبَقًا 84:19

That you shall most certainly enter one state after another, from one stage to the other. (Tabiq=phase/stratum/level/stage).

م يقولون ربنا اتم لنا نورنا واغفر لنا انك على كل شىء قدي 66:8

...."Our Developer, keep perfecting our light for us, and protect us; You are able to do all things."

32:17 فلا تعلم نفس ما اخفى لهم من قرة اعين جزاء بما كانوا يعملون

And no human being can imagine what blissful delights are kept hidden for them as a reward for what they used to do.

Footnotes:

1. Backcover. Programming the Universe by Seth Lloyd, 2006.
2. Page 71. Science and the Akashic Field by Ervin Laszlo, 2007 2nd edition.
3. Page 102. Science and the Akashic Field by Ervin Laszlo, 2007 2nd edition.
4. <http://www.newscientist.com/article/mg20026861.500-did-our-cosmos-exist-before-the-big-bang.html?full=true>
5. Page 104-105 under the root Janna. Dictionary of the Holy Qur'an by Abdul Mannar Omar, 2006 4th edition. Page 35, Exposition of the Holy Qur'an, Mafhum Al-Qur'an by G.A. Parwez. 1990. He quotes 2 dictionaries: "A garden of dates and grapes was called "Jannah"; if a garden had other fruit-trees, but not those of dates and grapes, then it was called Hadeeqa (Taj). Raghīb says that every garden whose ground could not be seen because of under-growth of bushes was called Jannah."
6. Page 32. Exposition of the Holy Qur'an, Mafhum Al-Qur'an by G.A. Parwez. 1990. See also page 72 explanation on Jahannam. Al-Qur'an, A Contemporary Translation by Ahmed Ali, 2001 9th edition. Page 114 Volume 2. Arabic-English Lexicon by Edward William Lane, based on Taj-UI-Roos, 2003 2nd reprint. Page 116 Biblical Dictionary by prof. Snijders, 2nd edition 2005. "Gehenna is taken from the Hebrew geehinnoom, valley of Hinnom, a sinister area south of Jerusalem, where children and other things were burn offerings to the god Moloch (2 Chron; Jer 7:31)." Page 476 under Gehenna Encyclopedie van de wereldreligies, deel I, 2006. Translated from Dutch into English: "Greek name of Gehinnom, the dwelling of the damned, south of Jerusalem, mentioned in Jeremia in 2 Chronicles 23:10 as the valley where children-sacrifices were given to Molech. After the destruction of Jerusalem (587 BCE), the valley was also named "Murdervalley". After which the word also gained next to its topographic meaning, also an eschatological meaning as place of punishment."
7. Page 33. Exposition of the Holy Qur'an, Mafhum Al-Qur'an by G.A. Parwez. 1990. It quotes the dictionaries: "Aj-Hama 'Anhu means he got stopped. Al-Jahh-Amo means a miser who stops all the wealth from circulating (Taj). Jahama means: the fire bursts into flames. The Holy Qur'an has used Al-Jaheem in the meaning of Jahannam (44/47, 37/55-64-68). The Holy Qur'an has also described the result of misdeeds as the torturing fire. As the fire burns everything, so the bad deeds burn the human personality and stop its growth." Page 20 Volume 2, Arabic-English Lexicon by Edward William Lane, based on Taj-UI-Roos, 2003 2nd reprint. It gives: "To kindle a fire, make to burn, burn up, burn brightly or fiercely, open the eye, to abstain/refrain/desist/forbear, advance or go forward, recede or draw back [This verb bears contradictory significations], near to destroying or killing, burn with vehemence of desire/covetousness and niggardliness, straitened in disposition, tenacious or stingy, blazing or flaming, vehemently hot."
8. Page 102-103. Science and the Akashic Field by Ervin Laszlo, 2007 2nd edition.