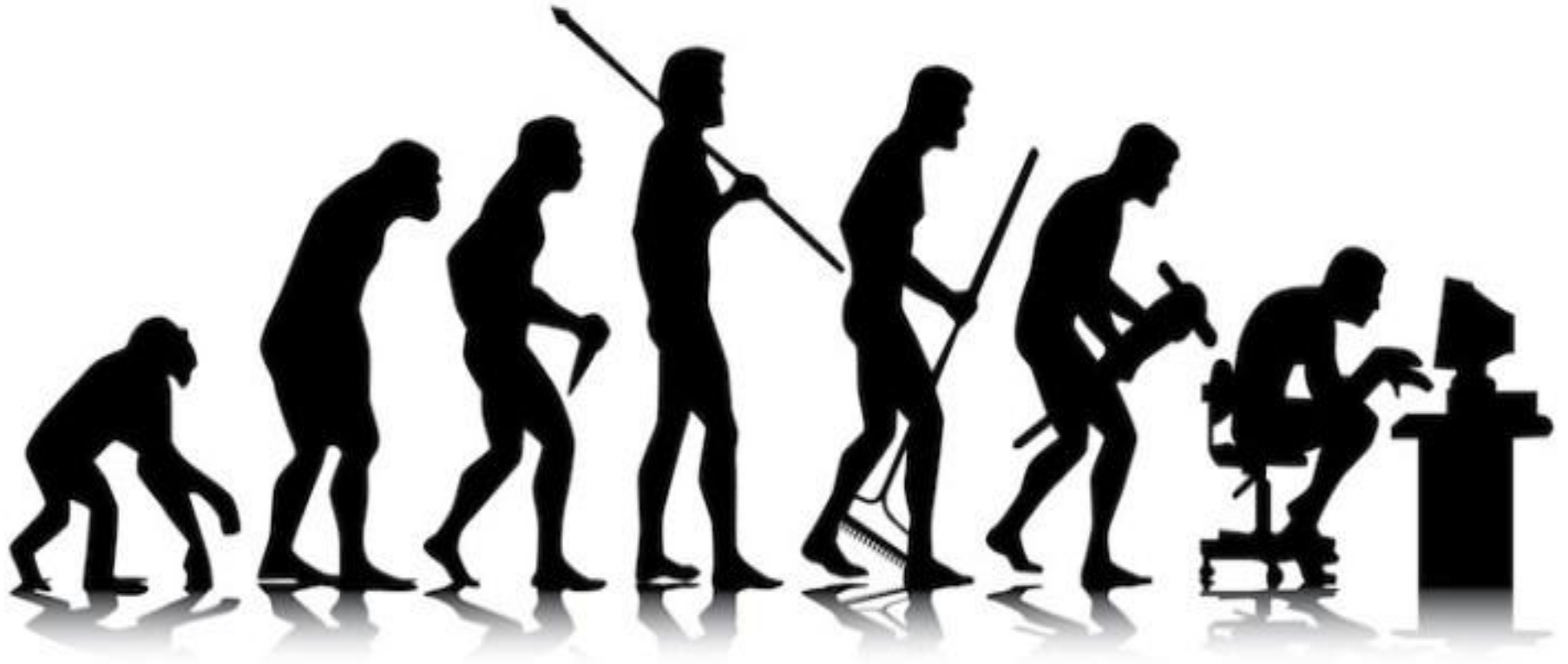




# Module 11

## Miscellaneous Matters

# EVOLUTION



## WHAT IS FARD 'AYN ABOUT EVOLUTION?

Because evolution is taught worldwide in such a way that it undermines core Islamic beliefs, one must know the correct position(s) about it, or what of it may be believed and what of it must be discarded.

## DEFINING EVOLUTION

Evolution, as a scientific theory viewed by scientists, consists of three core concepts:

1-Deep Time

2-Common Ancestry

3-Causal Mechanics

## DEFINING EVOLUTION

- 1 – Deep Time:** A long period (millions to billions of years) has occurred for evolution to take place and is not sudden.
- 2 – Common Ancestry:** All living entities go back to a common ancestor.
- 3 – Causal Mechanics:** This describes *how* common ancestors evolved into different species over deep time. Neo-Darwinism, which is the dominant accepted version of the theory, says that [a] **random mutations** and [b] **natural selection** are the driving forces of this process.

## DEFINING EVOLUTION

**A—Random Mutations:** Mutations in the gene which cause the variations in the species. The theory states that when genes mutate over billions of years after being passed down generation after generation, it leads to *variation in species*.

There are various reasons discussed in scientific literature over why mutations occur and include things like exposure to radiation or chemicals, copying errors from one generation to the next, etc. and they can be small or big changes.

**B—Natural Selection:** Environmental factors play a part in deciding what types of animals remain and what types die out. For example, giraffes with relatively shorter necks will not survive if they cannot reach the tall trees as their food source. By contrast, the giraffes with longer necks will have a higher chance to survive because they have the necessary trait to endure in that specific context. Over time, the longer neck giraffes will pass on their genes to their children and we will no longer see giraffes with shorter necks in that environment.

## THE CREATION OF ADAM AND EVE

### Quran

- “I created him [i.e. Adam] with My two hands.” (38:75)
- “I proportioned him [i.e. Adam] and blew into him from My spirit.” (15:29)
- “O mankind! Be vigilant of your Lord Who created you from one soul, and created from it its mate (i.e. Hawwa).” (4:1)
- “O mankind! We created you from a single male and female, and made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another.” (49:13)

## THE CREATION OF ADAM AND EVE

### Hadith

- “Angels were created from light, *Jinns* were created from a smokeless flame of fire, and Adam was created from that which you have been told.”  
(Muslim)
- “Allah created Adam from a handful which he took from the whole of the earth; so the children of Adam are in accordance with the earth: some red, some white, some black, some a mixture, also smooth and rough, bad and good.” (Abu Dawud)



## **THE THREE PRIMARY POSITIONS**

There are three primary positions on evolution within the Muslim world:

- 1] no exceptions (NE)**
- 2] creationism (C)**
- 3] human exceptionalism (HE)**

## POSITION #1: NO EXCEPTIONS (NE)

This group wholeheartedly accepts evolution as a matter of fact for all living organisms including human beings, including Adam. They interpret all the verses in the Qur'an speaking about the creation of Adam and Hawwa as *metaphorical* and not literal.

The NE position is commonly held by those who reject miracles, so they don't believe in the unique creation of Adam.

**This is a theologically invalid position.**

## POSITION #2: CREATIONISM

This group rejects evolution as a theory in its totality and believes Allah created all things *as they are* without the **process of evolution**.

They acknowledge micro-evolution but not macro-evolution. Microevolution is evolutionary change on a small scale, such as evolution or selection occurring on a single gene or a few genes in a single population over a short period of time. Macroevolution, in contrast, is evolutionary change on a large scale that happens over a longer period of time.

Examples include a species diverging into one or more different species, or the formation of brand-new groups of organisms.

**This is a theologically valid position.**

### **POSITION #3: HUMAN EXCEPTIONALISM**

This group believes that evolution may be accepted on the surface, except for human beings. The verses and hadith are explicit that the creation of humans is unique and derive from the miraculous creation of Adam and Hawwa.

**This is a theologically valid position.**

## WHERE IS OUR CERTAINTY?

The legal maxim states, “Certainty is not removed by doubt (اليقين لا يزول بالشك).” This means certainty regarding a given matter is not removed if doubt falls upon it. The only way to remove this certainty is by something similar to it, i.e. with surety.

If a person was certain about something and doubt comes over him, he does not take this doubt into consideration. The only time he should consider or rethink about the certainty of that matter is when there is surety.

## SUMMARY

1] It is rationally possible, conceptually, for Allah to create humans through an evolutionary process which He shapes at every stage.

2] But it is extrinsically impossible (*mustahil 'aradi*) because Allah has informed us that Adam was created directly without such a process. Allah created Adam in Janna, not earth, and in a particular way He described to us in the Quran.

3] There are two premises of evolution that can be characterized as disbelief (*kufr*):

*A-Random Mutation*

*B-Natural selection, when interpreted in a materialist sense.*

## 'RANDOM' MUTATION?

- 1] Allah alone is Master of Existence.
- 2] He alone causes all that is to be and not to be.
- 3] To ascribe efficacy to anything but His action, whether believing that causes (a) bring about effects in and of themselves; or (b) bring about effects in and of themselves through a capacity Allah has placed in them, is to ascribe associates to Allah.

Such beliefs seem to be entailed in the literal understanding of 'natural selection' and 'random mutation,' and other evolutionary concepts, **unless we understand these processes as figurative causes, while realizing that Allah alone is the agent.**

## 'RANDOM' MUTATION?

As for claim that man has evolved from a non-human species, this is disbelief (*kufr*) no matter if we ascribe the process to Allah or to 'nature,' because **it negates the truth of Adam's special creation that Allah has revealed in the Quran.** Man is of special origin, attested to by revelation.



## PROBLEMS WITH EVOLUTION

Science can only describe the physical. It cannot operate outside of its limited domain and address **metaphysical questions**. Physical science is the lowest order of knowledge. The highest science is the knowledge of God, Being, Metaphysics, etc.



## PROBLEMS WITH EVOLUTION

1] **The greater cannot come from the lesser** (the acorn gives rise to the oak tree precisely because it is 'already' an oak tree)

2] **Physical entropy**; the second law of thermodynamics. Complexity tends towards degradation. Systems naturally move to a greater degree of 'randomness'. Things run down, not up; they proceed from a state of order to a state of disorder. Order does not arise from disorder. Order is conferred on disorder by the input of 'information' (intelligence) and cannot arise by chance. **Nothing contravenes this law except the evolution hypothesis.**

## PROBLEMS WITH EVOLUTION

3] **Teleological** (the argument from design). It is impossible that blind, deaf, and dumb evolution could have given rise to eye, ear, and voice. The miracle of consciousness did not rise from a heap of pebbles.

4] **Relativism**—man, who is said to be evolving (and therefore relative), cannot all of the sudden step out of the evolutionary process, take a stationary position, and make absolute statements regarding a continuing process.

## CONCLUSIONS

The neo-Darwinian claim that random damage to DNA has been the driving force behind the emergence of stunningly beautiful, complex, and meaningful life forms is self-evidently absurd.

As Muslims, we know that the world of space, time, and matter — the *dunya* — is only a small part of the picture. There is also the *Akhira*. The realm that is available to inquiry based on our senses, '*Alam al-Shahdada*, is just one small part, and the '*Alam al-Ghayb*' is much greater and impervious to such inquiry.

## CONCLUSIONS

If existence is not primarily materialistic, neither is it random. On the contrary, it is unfathomably rich in order and meaning.

The very notion of ‘randomness’ is false: “*Behold, Allah does not disdain to make a metaphor of a gnat, or of something [even] less than that*” (2:26). This ayah suggests that the tiniest and seemingly most insignificant things are created to **convey meaning**. Indeed, in the Qur’anic view, all of existence is made up of ayat, the power demonstrations of Allah.