



Research Article

Can a Muslim Reject Evolution? A Theological Refutation of Common Ancestry

Nazir Ahmad Zargar

Assistant Professor, Department of Religious Studies, Central University of Kashmir;
nazir.zargar@cukashmir.ac.in

Copyright © 2025 by Authors, Published by **Al-Bunyan: Interdisciplinary Journal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies**. This is an open access article under the CC BY License
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Received : March 19, 2025
Accepted : May 15, 2025

Revised : April 17, 2025
Available online : June 22, 2025

How to Cite: Nazir Ahmad Zargar. (2025). Can a Muslim Reject Evolution? A Theological Refutation of Common Ancestry. *Al-Bunyan: Interdisciplinary Journal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies*, 3(1), 99–110.
<https://doi.org/10.61166/bunyan.v3i1.58>

Abstract. This paper critically examines Caner Taslaman's argument that the Qur'an is silent on Darwinian evolution and that Muslims can remain theologically neutral regarding human evolution. Taslaman contends that Ādam's creation was a gradual process and that evolution does not conflict with Islamic teachings. In his chapter "Can a Muslim be an Evolutionist?" he claims that the creation of Ādam was 'processive', not instantaneous. The author further argues that Muslims should not have any reason to refute Darwinian evolution because the Qur'an itself is silent about it. In contrast, this study argues that the concept of evolutionary common ancestry, especially human descent from animals, contradicts explicit Qur'ānic Āyāt, authentic Ḥadīth, and Ijmā' (unanimous scholarly consensus). Drawing upon classical and modern Qur'ānic Tafsīr, Ḥadīth interpretations, and scientific critiques of Darwinian gradualism, the paper affirms Ādam's unique, instantaneous creation. It further highlights the theological and moral ramifications of rejecting this doctrine within Islam.

Keywords: Evolution; Common Ancestry; Ādam, Creation, Tafsīr, Ḥadīth; Islamic Theology

Abstrak. Hadits, yang juga sering disebut dengan sunnah, di samping membahas tentang aturan-aturan, petunjuk yang berkaitan dengan kehidupan akhirat, di dalamnya juga mencakup tentang pembahasan keduniawian, misalnya hadits-hadits tentang kewirausahaan atau entrepreneurship. Rasulullah menjelaskan bahwa sebaik-baiknya pekerjaan adalah yang dilakukan dengan tangannya sendiri, yaitu berwirausaha. Melihat kenyataan yang terjadi pada saat ini, pelaku wirausaha di Indonesia masih sangat sedikit, padahal mayoritas masyarakat dari Indonesia kebanyakan beragama Islam, artinya, masih sedikit yang memahami bahwa berwirausaha merupakan sebaik-baik pekerjaan. Rasulullah SAW sangat menyanjung umatnya yang mau bekerja dengan keterampilannya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui hadits-hadits tentang keterikatan Islam dan kewirausahaan serta bagaimana memahami hadits tersebut, untuk mengetahui bagaimana implikasi berwirausaha pada sekarang ini. Metode yang digunakan dalam mengumpulkan data menggunakan metode kajian library research atau studi kepustakaan, dengan memaparkan hadits-hadits tentang pendidikan entrepreneurship, kemudian data diolah dan dianalisis dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif. Penelitian ini menghasilkan beberapa kesimpulan, bahwa Nabi di dalam haditsnya menjelaskan bahwa bekerja merupakan suatu keniscayaan serta kewajiban dan berwirausaha merupakan pilihan, dalam berwirausaha seorang wirausahawan harus mempunyai beberapa karakter yang harus dimiliki, yaitu menghargai waktu, istiqomah, pekerja keras dan bertanggung jawab. Nabi juga menjelaskan dalam haditsnya, bahwa setiap wirausahawan dalam menjalankan usahanya, harus mempunyai etika-etika yang baik, seperti, jujur, amanah, toleransi, serta profesional. Dalam berwirausaha juga harus diniati serta bertujuan baik, yaitu untuk kepentingan ibadah agar meraih ridha Allah, untuk memenuhi kebutuhan hidup dan untuk memenuhi kepentingan sosial.

Kata kunci; Islam, pendidikan, hadits, entrepreneur, dan wirausaha.

INTRODUCTION

The dialogue between contemporary hermeneutical interpretations, bereft of *Ḥadīth* as a primary source for *Tafsīr*, next only to the Qur'ān itself, and classical *Tafsīr* of the Qur'ān is fraught with methodological tensions. Sidelining authentic *Ḥadīth* in favour of Qur'ānic exclusivity—as advocated by Taslaman—overlooks the integrative epistemology of Islamic theology, rooted both in the Qur'ān and Sunnah. In his chapter “Can a Muslim be an Evolutionist?” (2002), Taslaman dismisses *Ḥadīth* narrations about the creation of Ādam, arguing that exclusive reliance on the Qur'ān suffices for theological discourse. He writes:

But the Hadith contains some fabricated statements (*hadith mawdu*) that are falsely attributed to the Prophet. Some of these fabrications came from Judeo-Christian narratives (referred to as *Israiliyyah* and *Masehiyyah*). There is an abundance of Hadiths related to the creation of the universe and life, details which are not given in the Quran. Since many of these Hadiths are rightly disputed, I will restrict my discussion of whether or not the theory of evolution conflicts with Islamic beliefs to the Quran.¹

¹ Taslaman, Caner. 2002. “Can a Muslim Be an Evolutionist?” In *Abrahamic Reflections on Randomness and Providence*, 116. Istanbul: Yildiz Technical University. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-75797-7_6.

He further proposes that the Qur'ān neither affirms nor contradicts evolutionary theory and thus theorises a stance of “theological agnosticism,” which he explains as this:

Theological agnosticism does not imply scientific agnosticism—while Muslim theology does not tell us the number of planets or continents, various sciences do. And theological agnosticism does not imply that a Muslim should be scientifically agnostic about evolution. A Muslim should carefully consider the relevant sciences to determine their rational belief. A Muslim, then, can consider evolution with either prejudice or fear. She has no theological stake on the issues. Muslims should reach their opinions about evolution on the basis of scientific evidence and without any religious concerns, just as they do when assessing theories of light, fluid dynamics, or Einstein's general theory of relativity. What does the scientific evidence say about the theory of evolution? While there are still issues outstanding, it is the most successful scientific theory of all its alternatives. Indeed, there is a marvelous beauty in this theory as it relates all living beings to each other and reveals a kind of unity in life. If God has not revealed an issue to us, it is best to say, “I do not know” (theologically) and turn, again without prejudice or fear, to the relevant sciences.²

Taslaman's “theological agnosticism” towards evolution overlooks numerous Qur'ānic *Āyāt* that explicitly narrate the miraculous and instantaneous creation of Ādam' without progenitors, thereby conflicting with the Darwinian gradualism and common ancestry proposal. Moreover, rejection of this view contravenes *Ijmā'*, the consensus of Muslim scholars regarded as a secondary source of *Sharī'ah* after the Qur'ān and Sunnah. Renowned classical and contemporary scholars (e.g., al-Ghazzālī, Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn Kathīr, al-Shīnqītī) consistently reject evolutionary ancestry notions. Secular scientific critiques of evolutionary gradualism and irreducible complexity further corroborate scriptural portrayals of instantaneous creation.

It becomes, therefore, all the more necessary to establish that Islamic theology is grounded equally in the Qur'ān and Sunnah, and that sidelining *Ḥadīth* on matters of cosmogony undermines the tradition's epistemic integrity. It is also crucial to note that there are many Qur'ānic *Āyāt* that unambiguously assert the instantaneous, miraculous creation of Ādam without progenitors, thus contradicting evolutionary gradual descent.

Furthermore, as the mainstream Islamic position asserts that the conception of common ancestry is a myth, it, therefore, it amounts to negation of *Ijmā'*, which serves as one of the sources of the *Sharī'ah*, only after the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. For instance, classical Islamic scholars like al-Ghazzālī (d. 505 AH / 1111 CE), Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 AH / 1328 CE), Ibn Kathīr (d. 774 AH / 1373 CE), Al-Qurṭubī (d. 671 AH / 1273 CE), and contemporary authorities like al-Shīnqītī (d. 1393 AH / 1973 CE), al-Qarḍāwī (d. 1444 AH / 2022 CE), in line with the mainstream Islamic position, have rejected human common ancestry with animals. As a scientific critique, a secular scientific analysis is introduced that challenges Darwinian gradualism and irreducible complexity, showing consonance with the scriptural portrayal of instantaneous creation.

² Taslaman, Caner, 107–108.

Interestingly, for the sake of argument, even if we set aside the *Ḥadīth*, which unequivocally refutes the idea of a processive creation of Ādam, the Qur'ān alone provides sufficient clarity and does not leave the nature of Ādam's creation open to ambiguity.

Moreover, the *Ijmā'* (consensus) of Muslim scholars, from al-Ghazzālī³ and Ibn Kathīr⁴ to contemporary authorities such as al-Shīnqītī⁵ —uniformly rejects the idea of human common ancestry with beasts. As part of this study, we also introduce secular scientific perspectives on irreducible complexity and gaps in the fossil record that align with the scriptural portrayal of miraculous creation.

DISCUSSION

Qur'ānic Evidence for Instantaneous Creation

The Qur'ān likens Ādam's creation to that of 'Īsā (Jesus), highlighting direct divine creation from dust followed by the command “Kun fa-yakūn” (Be, and it is), implying immediate actualisation rather than gradual evolution (Qur'ān 3:59; 5:110). Eminent *Mufasssīrūn* (Ibn Kathīr, al-Ṭabarī, al-Baghawī, Ibn Taymiyyah) emphasize that this divine command reflects instantaneous creation without intermediate biological stages, firmly opposing evolutionary gradualism.

The Parallel of Ādam and 'Īsā

The Qur'ān states:

إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

Indeed, the example of Jesus to Allah is like that of Ādam: He created him from dust, then He said to him, ‘Be,’ and he was.”⁶

The sequential verbs *khalāqa* (created) and *qala* (said), joined by *thumma* (then), indicate a single, sequential, completed act rather than a gradual process spread over generations. Ibn Kathīr observes that no intermediary agents are implied in this verse, emphasising direct divine intervention for both Ādam and 'Īsā. Hence, if Jesus's miraculous birth without involving a biological fatherhood is portrayed as instantaneous, the analogy compels the same interpretation for Ādam. This is substantiated by what al-Ṭabarī writes in his Tafsīr, *al-Jāmi' al-Bayān*:

قد خلق آدم من تراب بتلك القدرة من غير انثى ولا ذكر، فكان كما كان عيسى لحما ودمًا وشعرا و بشرا، فليس خلق عيسى من غير ذكر باعجب من هذا

³ Al-Ghazālī, *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah* (The Incoherence of the Philosophers), ed. and trans. Michael E. Marmura (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2000), 224–225

⁴ Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm*, vol. 3 (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1992), 29, commentary on Sūrat al-A'rāf 7:11

⁵ Muḥammad al-Amīn al-Shīnqītī, *Adwā' al-Bayān fī Īdāḥ al-Qur'ān bi-l-Qur'ān*, vol. 1 (Riyadh: Dār 'Ālam al-Fawā'id, 1995), 232–234

⁶ Qur'ān (3:59)

Indeed, Ādam was created from dust by the divine power without a mother and a father. So, he became just as Jesus was—flesh, blood, hair and a human. So, the creation of Jesus is not (in fact) more wonderous than this.⁷

Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān Qannoḡī (1307 AH), in his Tafsīr, *Fath al-Bayan*, writes:

﴿ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ﴾ بشرا اى انشاء خلقا بالكلمة

Then He said to him, 'Be' — a human being, meaning He brought him into existence by the word.⁸

This indicates the creation of Ādam was instantaneous by divine will, like that of 'Īsā, not a gradual or processive development. Although there are certain Ayat in the Qur'an (e.g., 15:28, 29, and 32:7) which suggest that although the command "kun" may signify the moment of origin which was instant by the divine word, the material formation (clay shaping, breathing of the spirit, etc.) might have unfolded in stages. Nevertheless, the Qur'an does not indicate that Ādam, from his initial stage, passed through earlier forms of living beings which, though complete in their own right, lacked the perfection attributed to him.

Al-Biqā'ī, Burhān al-Dīn Ibrāhīm ibn 'Umar (d. 885 AH / 1480 CE)

﴿ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ﴾ أَي بَشَرًا كَامِلًا رُوحًا وَجَسَدًا، وَعَبَّرَ بِصِيغَةِ الْمُضَارِعِ الْمُقْتَرِنِ بِالْفَاءِ فِي ﴿فَيَكُونُ﴾ ذَوْنَ الْمَاضِي وَإِنْ كَانَ الْمُتَبَادِرُ إِلَى الذَّهْنِ أَنَّ الْمَعْنَى عَلَيْهِ حِكَايَةُ لِلْحَالِ وَتَصْوِيرًا لَهَا إِشَارَةً إِلَى أَنَّهُ كَانَ مَعَ الْأَمْرِ مِنْ غَيْرِ تَخَلُّفٍ وَتَنْبِيْهَا عَلَى أَنَّ هَذَا هُوَ الشَّأْنُ دَائِمًا، يَتَجَدَّدُ مَعَ كُلِّ مُرَادٍ، لَا يَتَخَلَّفُ عَنْ مُرَادِ الْأَمْرِ أَصْلًا

Then He said to him, 'Be' — that is, a complete human being, in both soul and body. The use of the present tense form linked with the particle *fa* in '*fa-yakūnu*' (so he becomes), rather than the past tense, even though the immediate meaning in the mind might suggest a past event, is a stylistic depiction of the moment and a portrayal of its reality. This implies that the becoming occurred instantly with the command, without any delay. It also serves to emphasise that this is always the nature of the divine command — it is renewed with every intended act and never fails to bring about what the Commander wills.⁹

Al-Baghawī (506 AH/1122 CE), in his Tafsīr, *M'ālim al-Tanzīl*, writes:

⁷ Tabarī, Ibn Jarīr, *al-Jāmi' al-Bayān*, al-Baḥīth al-Qur'ānī, digital application, under Qur'an (3:59).

⁸ Khān, Nawāb Ṣiddīq Ḥasan, *Fath al-Bayan*, al-Baḥīth al-Qur'ānī, digital application, under Qur'an (3:59).

⁹ Al-Biqā'ī, Burhān al-Dīn Ibrāhīm ibn 'Umar, *Naẓm al-Durar fī Tanāsub al-Āyāt wa al-Suwar*, al-Baḥīth al-Qur'ānī, digital application, under Qur'an (3:59).

فَإِنْ قِيلَ مَا مَعْنَى قَوْلِهِ ﴿خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ﴾ وَلَا تَكْوِينَ بَعْدَ الْخَلْقِ؟ قِيلَ مَعْنَاهُ ثُمَّ خَلَقَهُ ثُمَّ أَخْبَرَكُمْ أَنِّي قُلْتُ لَهُ: كُنْ فَكَانَ مِنْ غَيْرِ تَرْتِيبٍ فِي الْخَلْقِ كَمَا يَكُونُ فِي الْوِلَادَةِ وَهُوَ مِثْلُ قَوْلِ الرَّجُلِ: أَعْطَيْتُكَ الْيَوْمَ دِرْهَمًا ثُمَّ أَعْطَيْتُكَ أَمْسَ دِرْهَمًا أَيُّ ثُمَّ أَخْبَرْتُكَ أَنِّي أَعْطَيْتُكَ أَمْسَ دِرْهَمًا. وَفِيمَا سَبَقَ مِنَ التَّمَثِيلِ دَلِيلٌ عَلَى جَوَازِ الْقِيَاسِ لِأَنَّ الْقِيَاسَ هُوَ رَدُّ فَرْعٍ إِلَى أَصْلِ بَنُوْعٍ شَبَّهِهُ وَقَدْ رَدَّ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى خَلْقَ عِيسَى إِلَى آدَمَ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ بَنُوْعٍ شَبَّهِهُ.

If it is asked: What is the meaning of His saying, ‘He created him from dust, then said to him: Be! – and he is’, even though there is no coming into being (*takwīn*) after creation? It is said: its meaning is – then He created him, then informed you that He said to him: Be! – and he was, without implying a sequential order in creation, as occurs in childbirth. It is like a man saying: I gave you a dirham today, then I gave you a dirham yesterday – meaning: then I inform you that I gave you a dirham yesterday. And in this example is evidence for the permissibility of *qiyās* (analogical reasoning), because *qiyās* is returning a branch to its root based on a type of similarity – and indeed, Allah the Exalted has returned the creation of ‘Īsā (Jesus) to that of Ādam (peace be upon them) based on a type of resemblance.¹⁰

The above passage also explains the instantaneous creation of Ādam.

Ibn Kathīr states:

وهذا من باب التنبيه على العجز، أي: إذا كان آدم عليه السلام قد خلق من تراب لا من أب ولا أم، فإن عيسى أولى أن يكون كذلك، لأنه خلق من أم بلا أب، والمخلوق من أب وأم أولى بالإمكان ممن خلق من أم بلا أب، فكيف بمن لا أب له ولا أم؟! ولهذا قال: (إن مثل عيسى عند الله كمثل آدم خلقه من تراب ثم قال له كن فيكون)

This is meant to demonstrate Divine power: If Adam, peace be upon him, was created from dust—without a father or a mother—then ‘Īsā (Jesus) is even more deserving of being so, since he was created from a mother without a father. And one created from both a father and a mother is even more naturally possible than one from a mother only, let alone someone from neither. Thus, Allah says: ‘Indeed, the likeness of ‘Īsā to Allah is like that of Ādam: He created him from dust, then said to him, Be, and he was.’¹¹

¹⁰ Al-Baghawī, Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn ibn Mas‘ūd ibn Muḥammad al-Farrā’, *M‘ālim al-Tanzīl*, al-Baḥīth al-Qur’ānī, digital application, under Qur’ān (3:59).

¹¹ Ibn Kathīr. *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Azīm*. Edited by Sāmī b. Muḥammad al-Salāmah. 2nd ed. Riyadh: Dār Tayyibah, 1999. Vol. 2, p. 34.

The Divine Command “Kun fa-yakūn”

The phrase **كُنْ فَيَكُونُ** (Be, and it is) recurs throughout the Qur’ān to signify immediate divine actualisation. Ibn Taymiyyah explains:

قوله تعالى: {كُنْ فَيَكُونُ} دليل على أن إيجاد الله للموجودات ليس تدريجياً، بل بأمر واحد

The statement ‘Be, and it is’ indicates that God’s creation of things is not gradual but occurs by a single command... reflecting perfect divine power.”¹²

This *Tafsīr* principle directly refutes the possibility that *kun* denotes any evolutionary or incremental development.

Only a few *Tafāsīr* have been quoted above as the purpose is not to exclusively survey the entire corpus of *Tafsīr* literature. Rather, the aim is to demonstrate that there is a clear consensus among Qur’ānic scholars regarding the nature of Adam’s creation, as described in the Qur’ān. This refutes the claim that the Qur’ān is silent on the matter, or that a Muslim may remain ‘theologically agnostic’ regarding the theory of creation. On the contrary, our intention is to show that such a conception is misguided—the Qur’ān does, in fact, explicitly address the nature of Adam’s creation, leaving little room for neutrality on this fundamental theological issue.

HADITH TESTIMONY ON ĀDAM’S UNIQUE CREATION

Prophetic traditions affirm Ādam’s full, adult form created directly by Allah, with details such as Ādam’s height (sixty cubits) and formation from clay into a complete human before receiving *Rūḥ* (the divine spirit). These narrations, authentic and widely accepted, negate any pre-human evolutionary forms. The *ḥadīth* that Allah created Ādam from earth encompassing all soil types symbolically supports the unity and diversity of mankind without implying biological evolution.

Material Composition and Full Form

The Prophet ﷺ said:

خَلَقَ اللَّهُ آدَمَ عَلَى صُورَتِهِ، طُولُهُ سِتُونَ ذِرَاعًا

Allah created Ādam in His image; his height was sixty cubits.¹³

In al-Bāḥith al-Ḥadīthī, the above *ḥadīth* has been explained in the following words:

وبعد أن أتمَّ الله خَلْقَ آدَمَ وتكوينه، ونفخَ فيه الرُّوحَ، وأصبح بشراً سوياً، أمره عزَّ وجلَّ أن يذهبَ إلى نَفَرٍ -وهم الجماعة- من الملائكةِ ويُسلِّمَ عليهم

¹² Ibn Taymiyyah. *Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā*. Edited by ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad b. Qāsim al-‘Āsimī al-Najdī. 37 vols. Riyadh: Mujaḥma‘ al-Malik Fahd li-Ṭibā‘at al-Muṣḥaf al-Sharīf, 1416 AH / 1995 CE. Vol. 6, pp. 569–571.

¹³ al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. Book of Prophets, Hadith no. 6227. Translated by Muhammad Muhsin Khan. Riyadh: Darussalam, n.d. Also, Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. Book of Paradise, Hadith no. 2841. Translated by Abdul Hamid Siddiqui. Riyadh: Darussalam, n.d.

And after Allah completed the creation and formation of Ādam, and breathed into him the soul, so that he became a fully formed human being, He – Exalted and Glorious – commanded him to go to a group of angels and greet them with peace (*Salām*).¹⁴

This ḥadīth from *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Muslim* affirms that Ādam emerged fully formed, negating any gradual morphological evolution. While the ḥadīth describes the creation of Ādam as a processive event — occurring in successive stages (from clay to formed body to the breathing of the soul) — this does not imply that Ādam evolved through different kinds of beings before becoming a complete human being. It, instead, explains that Ādam's creation involved distinct phases — creation from clay — shaping into form — and finally the breathing of the soul into him, making him a complete human being.

These stages reflect the vertical development of Ādam as a single being into a complete human, not an evolutionary process involving multiple species or pre-human forms.

It is crucial to understand that while the creation was successive in terms of stages, it was direct and divine. Ādam did not pass through a series of different beings or stages of life; instead, he was created distinctly and uniquely by Allah's will. The process was like his creation, not the result of biological evolution. This distinction is vital in clarifying that Adam's creation was a special act of divine will, and not a process of gradual evolutionary development.

Universality of the Dust

The Prophet ﷺ said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَلَقَ آدَمَ مِنْ قَبْضَةٍ قَبْضُهَا مِنْ جَمِيعِ الْأَرْضِ، فَجَاءَ بَنُو آدَمَ عَلَى قَدَرِ الْأَرْضِ، جَاءَ مِنْهُمْ الْأَحْمَرُ وَالْأَبْيَضُ وَالْأَسْوَدُ وَبَيْنَ ذَلِكَ، وَالسَّهْلُ وَالْحَزْنُ، وَالْحَبِيثُ وَالطَّيِّبُ

Allah created Ādam from a handful which He took from all the earth, so the children of Ādam came according to the earth: some red, some white, some black, and some a mixture; also smooth and rough, bad and good.¹⁵

This ḥadīth symbolises human unity and universality, but does not refer to biologically inherited traits passed through evolutionary lineage.

Spiritual Infusion

The Qur'an says that when Allah fashioned Ādam, He breathed into him His spirit.¹⁶

Bukhārī records a ḥadīth that comments on this concept of divine spirit:

فَنَفَخَ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِهِ

¹⁴ *Al-Bāḥith al-Ḥadīthī*, under explanation of *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, ḥadīth no. 6227.

¹⁵ Abū Dāwūd, Sulaymān ibn al-Ash'ath. *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*. Book of Sunnah, Hadith no. 4693. Translated by Nasiruddin al-Khattab. Riyadh: Darussalam, n.d.

¹⁶ Qur'an (15:29, 38:72, 32:9)

...then He breathed into him of His spirit...¹⁷

The infusion of Allah's *Rūḥ* marks a categorical ontological distinction between humans and animals, reinforcing a non-evolutionary creation.

IJMĀ' (Scholarly Consensus)

Both classical and modern *Mufasssīrūn* and *Mujtahidūn* consistently confirm that Ādam was created directly without any biological ancestors. Ibn Kathīr, al-Ṭabarī, and al-Rāzī specifically interpret *نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ* (single soul) in (4:1) and (3:59) as referring solely to Ādam, with Eve originating from him. Contemporary scholars like Muqbil al-Wādī'ī and al-Shīnqīṭī uphold this view, considering any theory of common ancestry between humans and animals to be inconsistent with *Ijmā'* and *Sharī'ah* teachings.

Classical Tafāsīr on *Nafs Wāḥidah*

In his *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Azīm*, Ibn Kathīr explains:

وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا" حواء، خلقها الله من ضلع آدم الأيسر من خلفه وهو نائم،
فاستيقظ فرآها فأعجبته فأنس إليها، وأنست إليه

Allah created all people from a single person, Ādam (peace be upon him). Then He created from him his wife, Ḥawwā' (Eve), who was created from Ādam's left rib while he was asleep. When Ādam woke up and saw Ḥawwā', he liked her and had affection for her.¹⁸

In *Jāmi' al-Bayān*, al-Ṭabarī states:

خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ" يعني بذلك جل ثناؤه: أنه ابتداء خلقكم أيها الناس من نفس واحدة،
وهي آدم، وخلق زوج آدم منه

The meaning of 'from a single soul' is that Allah created Ādam, the father of mankind, from clay, and from him He created his wife Ḥawwā', from his rib.¹⁹

In *Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, al-Rāzī notes:

قال الجمهور: المراد بالنفس الواحدة آدم عليه السلام، وزوجها حواء، خلقها الله من ضلعه

The majority of scholars agree that the term '*nafs wāḥidah*' refers to Ādam. The feminine form of '*nafs*' is due to the grammatical gender, not the gender of the person. The phrase 'and from it He created its mate' refers to the creation of Ḥawwā' from Ādam's rib.²⁰

¹⁷ al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. Book of the Prophets, Hadith no. 3191. Translated by Muhammad Muhsin Khan. Riyadh: Darussalam, n.d.

¹⁸ Ibn Kathīr, Ismā'īl ibn 'Umar. *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Azīm*. Edited by Sāmī ibn Muḥammad al-Salāmah. Riyadh: Dār Ṭayyibah, 1999. Vol. 1, p. 574.

¹⁹ al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad ibn Jarīr. *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān*. Edited by Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākīr. Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1955. Vol. 4, p. 226.

²⁰ al-Rāzī, Fakhr al-Dīn. *Tafsīr al-Kabīr (Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb)*. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, n.d. Vol. 10, p. 6

Contemporary Scholars on Human Evolution and Islamic Teachings

Shaykh Muqbil al-Wādi'ī (d. 1422 AH / 2001 CE), a Yemeni scholar known for his staunch opposition to evolutionary theories that propose a common ancestry between humans and animals, upheld the belief that Ādam was created directly by Allah without any evolutionary process, aligning with the traditional Islamic understanding of human creation. He emphasised the literal interpretation of the Qur'anic account of human creation.²¹ He referenced verses such as:

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ

Verily, We created man in the best stature.²²

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ مَا غَرَّكَ بِرَبِّكَ الْكَرِيمِ الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّاكَ فَعَدَلَكَ

O mankind! What has made you careless concerning your Lord, the Most Generous? Who created you, fashioned you perfectly, and gave you due proportion?²³

Shaykh Muqbil also cited *aḥādīth*, such as the one found in *Sahih Muslim*²⁴, describing how Iblīs observed Ādam while he was still in his clay form, to support the view that Ādam was created directly by Allah. He argued that the theory of evolution contradicts the clear texts of the Qur'ān and Sunnah, and therefore, cannot be reconciled with Islamic teachings. He maintained that accepting such theories undermines the foundational beliefs about human origin as presented in Islamic scripture. He emphasised the literal understanding of the Qur'ānic account of human creation. He rejected evolutionary theories that suggest a common ancestry between humans and animals, considering such views inconsistent with Islamic teachings and *Ijmā'*. He maintained that Ādam was created directly by Allah without any evolutionary process.

Similarly, in his tafsīr *Aḍwā' al-Bayān*, al-Shinqīṭī (d. 1393 AH / 1973 CE) asserts:

The Qur'an explicitly states that Allah created Ādam from clay and breathed into him His spirit. Any claim that humans evolved from other species contradicts the clear texts of the Qur'an and the consensus of the Muslim scholars.²⁵

SCIENTIFIC CRITIQUES OF DARWINIAN GRADUALISM

While scientific analysis is secondary to revealed sources in Islamic theology, certain secular critiques of evolution resonate with the scriptural portrait of instantaneous creation.

²¹ Muqbil ibn Hādī al-Wādi'ī. *The Theory of Evolution That Says That the Origin of Man Is an Ape*. Available at: [AbuKhadeejah's Website](http://AbuKhadeejah.com)

²² Qur'ān (95:4)

²³ Qur'ān (82:6-7)

²⁴ *Sahih Muslim*, Book 45, Hadith 146 (USC-MSA web reference: Book 32, Hadith 6319). Available at: Sunnah.com.

²⁵ Al-Shinqīṭī, Muḥammad al-Amīn. *Aḍwā' al-Bayān fī Ḍaḥ al-Qur'ān bil-Qur'ān*. Riyadh: Dār 'Ālam al-Fawā'id, 1995. Vol. 1, p. 253. This tafsīr is accessible online via Al-Maktaba al-Shāmila

Michael Denton highlights molecular systems like ATP synthase, whose components must function in concert, challenging stepwise evolutionary explanations. In this seminal work, Michael Denton, a molecular biologist, challenges the adequacy of Darwinian evolution to explain the complexity of life. He highlights molecular systems like ATP synthase, whose components must function in concert, arguing that such irreducible complexity cannot be adequately explained by stepwise evolutionary processes. Denton's critique extends to the molecular level, questioning the gradualistic assumptions of evolutionary theory.²⁶

Phillip Johnson demonstrates that methodological naturalism presupposes evolutionary conclusions, leading to interpretive circularity. Phillip E. Johnson, a law professor and prominent critic of evolutionary theory, argues that the scientific community's adherence to methodological naturalism—restricting explanations to natural causes—presupposes evolutionary conclusions. He contends that this approach leads to interpretive circularity, where the evidence is interpreted within a framework that already assumes the truth of evolution, thereby undermining objective scientific inquiry.²⁷

Jonathan Wells, a molecular and cell biologist, examines key examples often cited as evidence for evolution, such as the peppered moth and the Miller-Urey experiment. He documents persistent gaps in the fossil record, particularly in transitional forms, questioning the completeness of Darwinian narratives and suggesting that these gaps challenge the robustness of evolutionary theory.²⁸

THEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Denying Ādam's unique creation undermines key theological doctrines:

1. Human Dignity

The Qur'ān testifies to human dignity in the following words:

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ وَحَمَلْنَاهُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى كَثِيرٍ مِمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا

And We have certainly honored the children of Ādam and carried them on the land and sea, and provided for them of the good things, and preferred them above many of those whom We created with definite preference.²⁹

2. Prophetic Status:

Prophethood presupposes a lineage of dignity that is uninterrupted by animal ancestry; analogies to corrupt human ancestors (e.g., Pharaoh) fail to justify attributing animal descent to the first human.

3. Ontological Distinction:

Only humans possess *nafs insāniyyah* (rational soul); animals possess *nafs ḥayawāniyyah* (life soul) without moral agency.³⁰

²⁶ Denton, Michael. *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*. Bethesda, MD: Adler & Adler, 1986.

²⁷ Johnson, Phillip E. *Reason in the Balance: The Case Against Naturalism in Science, Law, and Education*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995.

²⁸ Wells, Jonathan. *Icons of Evolution: Science or Myth? Why Much of What We Teach About Evolution Is Wrong*. Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, 2000.

²⁹ Qur'ān (17:70)

³⁰ Qur'ān (38:72)

CONCLUSION

The clear consensus of Qur'ānic exegesis, authentic Ḥadīth, and Muslim scholarly consensus firmly rejects evolutionary common ancestry as incompatible with Islamic orthodoxy. Therefore, Muslims adhering to the integrity of revelation must reject human evolution hypotheses that conflict with the direct, instantaneous creation of Adam as depicted in the Qur'ān and Sunnah.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Al-Baghawī, Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn ibn Mas'ūd. *Ma'ālim al-Tanzīl*. Beirut: Dār Tayyibah, 1993.
- Al-Biqā'ī, Ibrāhīm ibn 'Umar. *Naẓm al-Durar fī Tanāsub al-Āyāt wa al-Suwar*. Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1995.
- Al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. Beirut: Dār Ṭūq al-Najāh, 2001.
- Al-Qarḍāwī, Yūsuf. *Fī Fiqh al-Dawlah fī al-Islām*. Cairo: Maktabat Wahbah, 1997.
- Al-Qurṭubī, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad. *Al-Jāmi' li-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*. Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, 1964.
- Al-Rāzī, Fakhr al-Dīn. *Tafsīr al-Kabīr (Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb)*. Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 2000.
- Al-Shinqīṭī, Muḥammad al-Amīn. *Aḍwā' al-Bayān fī Īdāḥ al-Qur'ān bi-al-Qur'ān*. Riyadh: Maktabat al-'Ubaykān, 1995.
- Al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad ibn Jarīr. *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Āy al-Qur'ān*. Edited by Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākīr. Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1954.
- Denton, Michael. *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*. Bethesda, MD: Adler & Adler, 1986.
- Ibn Kathīr, Ismā'īl ibn 'Umar. *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm*. Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 2000.
- Johnson, Phillip E. *Darwin on Trial*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991.
- Muqbil ibn Ḥādī al-Wādi'ī. *Al-Muqaddimah fī Mabādi' al-Taḥṣīl*. Dammam: Dār al-Athar, 1998.
- Muslim, Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 1991.
- Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān al-Qannawjī. *Fath al-Bayān fī Maqāṣid al-Qur'ān*. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1992.
- Taslaman, Caner. "Can a Muslim Be an Evolutionist?" In *The Quran and the Modern Science*, 2022.
- The Qur'ān. Translated by M.A.S. Abdel Haleem. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Wells, Jonathan. *Icons of Evolution: Science or Myth? Why Much of What We Teach About Evolution is Wrong*. Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, 2000.