

# بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

[www.fazlurrahmanansari.org](http://www.fazlurrahmanansari.org)

## **Response to questions on: Darwinism, birth control and taqdir (predestination)**

By Dr Muhammed Fazlur Rahman Ansari (ra)

Sourced from:

**Islam to the Modern Mind**

Lectures in South Africa: 1970 & 1972

by Maulana Muhammed Faz-urRahman

Transcribed by: Mahdie Kriel & Edited by Yasien Mohamed

isbn: 0-9584176-8-7

“My Lord! I ask You for beneficial knowledge, and I seek refuge with You from non-beneficial knowledge.”

## **DARWINISM**

Regarding the concept of evolution, the Holy Qur'an is the first book in known history that has brought out the concept of evolution and affirmed it in the different dimensions of existence. According to the Qur'an, the human being is evolutionary, life on earth - whether plant or animal - is evolutionary, and the entire universe itself is evolutionary. One of the excellent names of Allah (S.W.T.) is: Rabb. According to the commentators of the Holy Qur'an, for example Imam Al-Raghib Al Isfahani, defines it as: "One who leads a thing by maintaining and nourishing it from one stage of growth to another and leads it to its goal".

The theory of evolution was worked out long before Darwin; Ibn Miskawaye, for example wrote the book called Kitab-al-Hayawan - "The Book on Animal life", wherein he evolved the theory of evolution scientifically and on the basis of the Qur'an and Hadith. In his discovery, he was inspired by the Qur'an and he collected all the data and formulated the scientific theory. This book, ("n~kitab-al-Hayaw") was translated into Latin and was taught in Latin for centuries. If you compare Ibn Miskawaye's book with that of Darwin's "Origin of Species", you'll find that there are numerous passages which are literal translations of the book of Ibn Miskawaye. Darwin, like many other Western scholars does not acknowledge their indebtedness to the Muslim scholars.

Darwin's theory, the basis of which is the principle of the natural selection and transmutation of species and the survival of the fittest, however he propounded on the basis of subjective feelings, rather than on objective research. There is a subjective bias in it, for at the time when Darwin appeared, and since Muslims went to Europe and Europe started to learn science, there arose a great conflict between the leaders of the Church and the leaders of Enlightenment. The leaders of Enlightenment who acquired Muslim education of science, mathematics, etc. were burnt at the stake or cast into prisons and killed.

Consequently, that antagonism developed between the Church and the leaders of the Enlightenment. Finally, the Church could not suppress them, and their cause was taken up by Darwin. The mission before Darwin was to crush the Church and all that it stood for. In this connection, Darwin thought that if he could devise a theory where the principle of divine intervention can be refuted, then the entire structure of religion will fall to the ground. If God can be considered as unnecessary for the existence and working of nature in the world, then belief in God becomes redundant. Darwin worked on this theory beautifully and gave us the theory of Mechanical Causation in biology. And as all mankind and Christians believed that God created all human beings, Darwin said there was no God as there is only the principle of Mechanical Causation, and on this basis, all things in this world came into existence.

He started with the theory of the Amoeba, the unitary cell, and said that through fission, the cell multiplies, (this is a fact in biology) and turns itself into more complex organisms, etc. Then he formulated the principles of mutation, whereby he said that life on earth has emerged from simpler forms, starting from the amoeba and at the apex stands Man, who is the mutation of the ape, which appeared before Man. And it is here where people feel insulted. Akbar Ilahabadhi said: "Mansur said, 'I am god' and Darwin said, 'I am an ape', and my friend said everybody thinks according to his calibre or level of comprehension." Let me speak on the basis of scientific knowledge itself.

If Allah (S.W.T.) planned it in the manner that different species on this earth should come into existence in the way Darwin said, there is no harm. After all, the human body, before it comes into this world, it is an embryo that takes different forms. It is ugly, like a lizard, and it continues to change form until it becomes a normal human baby, and then it is graceful. Every human being changes form in the mother's womb, and if the species changed their forms like that, then there is no insult here. Therefore we should not take it from that point of view.

Purely from the scientific point of view, the Darwinian theory of evolution is not the only theory. There are the Vitalists, the Fundamentalists, the Creative evolutionists and the Telefinalists. So Darwin's school of thought is not the only one. The people of the West tried to cling to it because of the atheistic content that it has, and also, because the main trend of

the West has been to develop the materialistic outlook only and give support to atheism, and that antagonism which is there against the Church. Thus it is all a subjective aim.

In the West, other theories have emerged. That great biologist, Gaius Haldane and others who are alive, they challenge Darwin's theory outright. The modern scientists say: "If we establish mutations in our experiments, we always find that mutations are harmful to the organisms. (i.e. for it to develop through mutations)"

On this basis they say that if this is the principle of Mutations, how could healthy organisms have developed in nature? So to them, this principle is inconceivable and consequently, the theory of Darwin falls to the ground.

For a theory to be scientific, it must have all the links traceable, verifiable and established. In the case of the Darwinian theory, the missing link has not yet been found, therefore it is mere fiction, baseless and unscientific.

When we study evolution from the side of the Qur'an, according to Islam, you get a positive guidance. Here we have the principles of Tawheed or organic unity. If we view the evolution of species from the point of unity, we'll see that this principle permeates everything in this universe. Then we'll accept the Telefinalist theory. It is as follows:

There is a unitary tree of life, and as conditions evolved for the emergence of certain species, that species evolved as branches on the stem of that tree, all different branches. There is no mutation. It is not that one branch changes into another - each is an independent branch. So as conditions on the earth evolved and matured, to an extent that the highest being, i.e., man could emerge and come into existence and stay here, at that stage human beings came into existence.

According to the Holy Qur'an, the basis of existence of all animal life is ONE - whether that animal is an amoeba, ape, cat or human being. The Holy Qur'an says:  
**"I have created every animate thing from water." (Q 21:30)**

About the human species, the Qur'an says:  
**"Allah has caused you to grow out of the earth as plants grow." (Q 71:17)**

Nabata, this spacio human personality has emerged from the earth, and this is also what Darwin and all other evolutionists say. The Qur'an says that the first man appeared from black stinking mud.  
**"Verily, I have created man from black (stinking) mud." (Q 15:26)**

This is exactly what modern scientists say. Black mud is to be found on the shores of the sea, and the shore of that sea is probably that shore where - symbolically or really - is the grave of our grandmother Eve in Jeddah.

Regarding the human personality, here Islam differs with Darwinists and other evolutionists. According to the modern scientists, they proclaim that they do not know what "soul" is, and talk only in terms of the body. According to Islam, all human beings were created at the "Dawn of creation". Created in what form? He created them in the form of Al-ruh - the essential personality or the essential being. The Holy Qur'an tells us:

Almighty Allah gathered the entire progeny of Adam and asked:

"Am I not your Lord?" and all answered: " Yes, Thou art our Lord." Where was the entire humanity then? It means that it was the Ruh (essential personality), and the question and answer was between Allah (SWT) and Al-ruh at that stage. As Moulana Jalaluddin Rumi (R.A.), the great philosopher and Sufi of Islam said:

*"This essential being (personality) has been passing through billions of years and passed through different stages of existence in its unfolding"*

*It comes into this world - penetrated the soil, gathered around it a nucleus of all those earthly materials in the form of fundamental particles wherewith its body was to be built up. Then it started manifesting itself."*

Thus, it grew out of the earth but it was created in Al-Jannah. Here this problem is resolved in this manner. Therefore, it can be clearly conceived that Sayyidina Adam (A.S.) and Sayyidituna Hawa (A.S.) were created in Al-Jannah, but were born on the earth, Recall the verse which is read in the Nikkah:(Q 4:01)

This Nafsin-wahidah, is a conscious integrated entity which is the first unitary cell which came into being, that unitary cell of the human constitution. This unitary cell multiplied through fission, and when it divided, it was divided into two cells - the one always larger than the other - as biologists know. The larger cell became Adam and the smaller cell became Eve.  
**" and created out of itself, its pair."**

This is possible if we consider the fission of cells. And then the male cell became a male baby and the female cell a female baby and under the care of the Angels of Allah (SWT), in a groove or grove which was like the womb of the mother. They were brought up by the Angels and they became the first parents.

In this manner, the concept of evolution is an established fact in the light of the Qur'an. As explained, Darwin's theory is unacceptable on scientific grounds and also on the grounds of Islamic theology and Islamic fundamental concepts.

The only theory in modern science which can be acceptable in the Light of the Qur'an and Hadith is the TELEFINALIST theory, which is now gaining ground and Darwinism is receding into the background.

### **BIRTH CONTROL IN ISLAM**

The Holy Prophet (S.) said that whether you practice it or not, those souls that are to come to this world, will come. But if there is a need to practice birth control, then it is an obligation on Man to make the effort only. The consequences lie in the "Hands" of God. Man does not know the consequences, and Islam has laid down the conditions where birth control becomes an obligation. Mind you, birth control is not a virtue, for the principle of marriage in Islam is procreation and not lust. If birth control is necessary, then it becomes an obligation and Man has to do his job, and God does His. The consequences never lie in the hands of any human being - in everything whatsoever.

Man works according to the Law. Whether he fails or succeeds, God Almighty will judge him in accordance with his motive:

And God Almighty will judge him in accordance with his efficiency of his labour and effort.

### **TAQDIR. (PRE-DESTINATION)**

This question has been the headache of all thinkers of the world, in Christianity, Islam, etc. Of course, there are religions that preach absolute taqdir, like Buddhism and Hinduism. They preach the Law or the immutable Karma - to them everything is absolutely predetermined.

In the history of Islam, there are different schools of thought. There are the QADRIYAH and the JABRIYAH. The Qadriyah says that Man is absolutely free. The Jabriyah says that Man is absolutely under compulsion - he is not free in any way whatsoever. The Ahli - Sunnah wal Jama cat says that the position of Man is Arabic)... - between compulsion and freedom.

When you read the Qur'an, you'll find that both these conditions have been mentioned, i.e. freedom and compulsion. Regarding freedom:

**"Whoever wishes to be a mu'min, he is free" (Q64:02), and "whoever wishes to be a kafir, let him be one, he is free." (Q 18:29)**

Here, freedom has been mentioned. Regarding compulsion, we are told :

**"Proclaim to them that whatever befalls us in this world has already been ordained by Allah." (Q 9:51)**

It is pre-ordained. Here the problem is the problem of the highest realm of philosophy, and this is a problem on which great thinkers have stumbled.

Man is morally free but physically determined. The physical world is a world of determination. It is a world of causal chain (causal nexus), i.e. one event giving rise to the other. The entire physical world is a series of cause and effect and once the cause has taken place, the effect is bound to happen. So it is a world of compulsion. All the physical actions that take place, take place in this fashion, and over them no human being has any control. What is freedom then?

Freedom is freedom of the Will, not freedom of action. It is the freedom of the Will which Allah Almighty, through the fiat or decree of His own Will, has conferred on Man. This is restricted to the domain of Will alone, and that is why the Holy Prophet (S.) has clarified the issue when he said that:

*" the value of the action lies in the motive."*

When you analyse any action psychologically into its component factors, there are three factors in every action, i.e. the motive, the form and the consequence of the action, but their motives may be poles apart. For example, a person "A" is driving a car, knocks down a passer-by and that person is killed. Another person, "B" is driving a car, knocks down a person, and this person is also killed. The form of the actions and the consequences of both actions are the same, but what about the motive? The motive of "A" might not have been to kill the person, and it was just an accident.

The motive of "B" might have been to kill that person in such a manner that he can get the benefit of the doubt and escape the gallows.

The motives (niyabs) are different, therefore the value of the action lies in the motive and not in the consequence. Thus, what Man is accountable for, is his motive, his intention. It is the motive that will be weighed in the Balance, not the action. In this motivation, somehow, Allah knows best how that mechanism is contained. The freedom of the Will of the human being in the Absolute freedom of God - how is it contained? But this is what Islam affirms - and this freedom has been given.

If we do not accept this point of view, then Allah (SWT) emerges as the most unjust and arbitrary being in which we might believe. If He has given me no freedom, then what right has He to take account from me? If everything is being done by Him and the motive also belongs to Him and I am just a tool? How can the tool be questioned about its actions? Therefore we believe in this freedom which is limited to the Will.

Let us look at the other aspect - which is the beauty of Islam. If everything is to happen in my life is pre-ordained, then an effort on my part to lead a righteous life is not going to change my destiny here on earth. Here Man gets frustrated, because Man's eyes are focussed on this earth immediately. He wants the Good in this life first, and that is what the Holy Qur' an teaches. We have been taught to pray:

**"O' lord, give us the good of this life and the next life." (Q 2:201).**

First the good of this Life, then the next.

How do we achieve this? Also, there is an intense desire in Man to avoid failure and achieve success, to avoid pain and achieve pleasure. That is in human nature. How does Islam fulfil this condition in human nature? The great Muslim philosopher, Imam Al Ghazzali and Shah Waliyullah (R.A.) have mentioned a theory of the functioning of the world which is called, tajaddu- dil amth "repetition of forms."

For instance, an event has already taken place in the history of this universe, numberless times and at numberless levels. It is not taking place here for the first time. To explain this further: when a person dreams of an event, and that event takes place in actual life, 5 years

later. What has that person seen? Imagine it - an event that has not taken place yet is a non-existent thing, and true dreams are a fact of life. Numerous people have experienced it. What is it that a person sees in a true dream? He sees it at a "distance" of 5 years from the time of its occurrence in the spatio-temporal experienceable dimension. This I.~is what is called, tajaddudil amth

Try to conceive it in this way, all events that are to take place are pre-ordained and they are taking place at different levels of existence. When those events arrive at this level of the spatio-temporal dimension, then we experience them happening on a concrete or physical level.

The main thing is that it is not the event but the experience one gets from that event that counts. He is not interested in the form of the event, but in the experience, for Man is a creature of experience and he lives in the world of experience. Experience makes him sad, experience makes him happy, experience makes him pleased or angry. Of course, there may be stimuli of different types - physical or psychical.

Those events which are to take place in human experience take place when we are awake and also take place when we are asleep, i.e. in a dream. When one sees an event in a dream - something good or a nightmare - as far as the emotional side of life is concerned, he gets the full impact, so the impact of the experience is there; what is not there is the material consequence.

Now, Islam says that you can change your destiny and Allah (S.W.T.) is not a slave to what He has ordained. Islam does not believe in what Hinduism and Buddhism believes in. Hinduism says that Brahma or Vishnu is the slave of Karma. He cannot change it. The Qur'an says:

**"Allah can efface anything that has emerged at the tablet for he is the master of the Ummul Kitab." (Q 13:39)**

He can affirm or erase anything. He is not the slave of Law, He is the Creator of Law and with infinite power and wisdom. What we have been asked to do is to purify our motives. Tazkiyah, the goal of Islam, i.e. purification of the motive. If the niyyah (motive) is pure, then your actions, thoughts and works will be pure. Islam demands the following: This purification in the motive relates to the Will, and in the Will we have been given freedom. Therefore, perform the Tazkiyah in your motive and then the different ugly things or bad things that should happen to you will be transformed to dreams or channelled in the form of a dream.

These happenings have been ordained, so it will come into your experience, but the material or physical consequence will not take place and because Allah (S.W.T.) is, **"of infinite bounty"** (Q57:21) He is not only Just, but He gives more than what we deserve. So, whatever effort we are doing for our purification in becoming godly or for becoming true slaves of Allah (SWT), that effort bears fruit on the positive side.

Whatever good was to come to us in the universal scheme of things, at any step Almighty Allah can add anything to it, for He is the Creator and Originator of everything. His real attribute is RABB. In Surah Fatiha, He is 5 times the bestower of mercy and grace, and then only is He going to take account. And in taking account, he says:

**"My Mercy pervades everything - here in this world and on the day of judgement." (Q 7:156).**

So, this Loving, Merciful Allah, what He does is as the Hadith says,: *"If you walk one step towards Allah, He takes ten steps towards you."*

It is this attribute of Allah (SWT) - of Mercy and Fadl - which transform even the ugliest things into good things in one's life and gives the human life the success, and Man can be the Master of his own destiny - in spite of the fact that this world is a world of compulsion. By exercising the prerogative of freedom in the domain of Will whereby he is to purify his motive! That is what we have to do and the rest is taken care of by Allah, Almighty.

All thanks and praise belongs to Allah, Lord of all the worlds.