2:1

Unit: 2
Lesson: 1

Time Length: 45–50 min

The Islamic Narrative of Creation

Evolution and God's Special Creation

NGSS Instructional Outcomes

Next Generation Science Standards

Life Sciences

HS-LS4–1: Communicate scientific information that common ancestry and biological evolution are supported by multiple lines of empirical evidence.

HS-LS4–2: Construct an argument supported by empirical evidence that changes in physical or biological components are caused by environmental factors.

HS-LS4–5: Evaluate the evidence supporting claims that changes in environmental conditions may result in changes in traits of a population over successive generations.

CCSS Instructional Outcomes

Common Core State Standards

English Language Arts Standards for High School

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.11–12.7: Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., quantitative data, video, multimedia) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11–12.9: Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Content Learning Outcomes:

- Demonstrate the Islamic narrative of human creation.
- Describe and explain the theological account of non-humans and humans.

Materials:

- Instruction/Teacher Facilitation: Slides 2.1–2.18
- Triple-Entry Vocabulary Journal (Student responsibility)
- Activity: Entry and Exit Tickets: or 3”x5” index cards or online survey tool
- Supplemental Material: Prehistoric Timeline
- Lesson 2.1 Assessment

Instruction/Teacher Facilitation: Slides for Lesson 2.1

- **Slide 2.1.** How Old is the Cosmos?
- **Slide 2.2.** How Old is the Cosmos?
- **Slide 2.3.** The Islamic Narratives on Creation
- **Slide 2.4.** *Insān, Bashar, Banū ādam*
- **Slide 2.5.** *Insān, Bashar, Banū ādam*
- **Slide 2.6.** The Creation of Humans in the Qurʾan
- **Slide 2.7.** Who is the Father of Mankind?
- **Slide 2.8.** Who was the First Human Being?
  Slide 2.9. Who was the First Human Being?
- **Slide 2.10.** Doctrines Regarding Ḥawwāʾ
- **Slide 2.11.** What is Man’s Place in the Cosmos?
- **Slide 2.12.** Were there Living Beings before the Creation of Humans?
- **Slide 2.13.** Were there Living Beings before the Creation of Humans?
- **Slide 2.14.** Were there Living Beings before the Creation of Humans?
- **Slide 2.15.** Did Humans Evolve from prior Living Beings? Did the Human Form Evolve?
- **Slide 2.16.** Did Humans Evolve from prior Living Beings? Did the Human Form Evolve?
- **Slide 2.17.** Does Man Belong to the Anthropological Classification of Homo?
- **Slide 2.18.** As Muslims, What do We Believe to be True Regarding Humans?

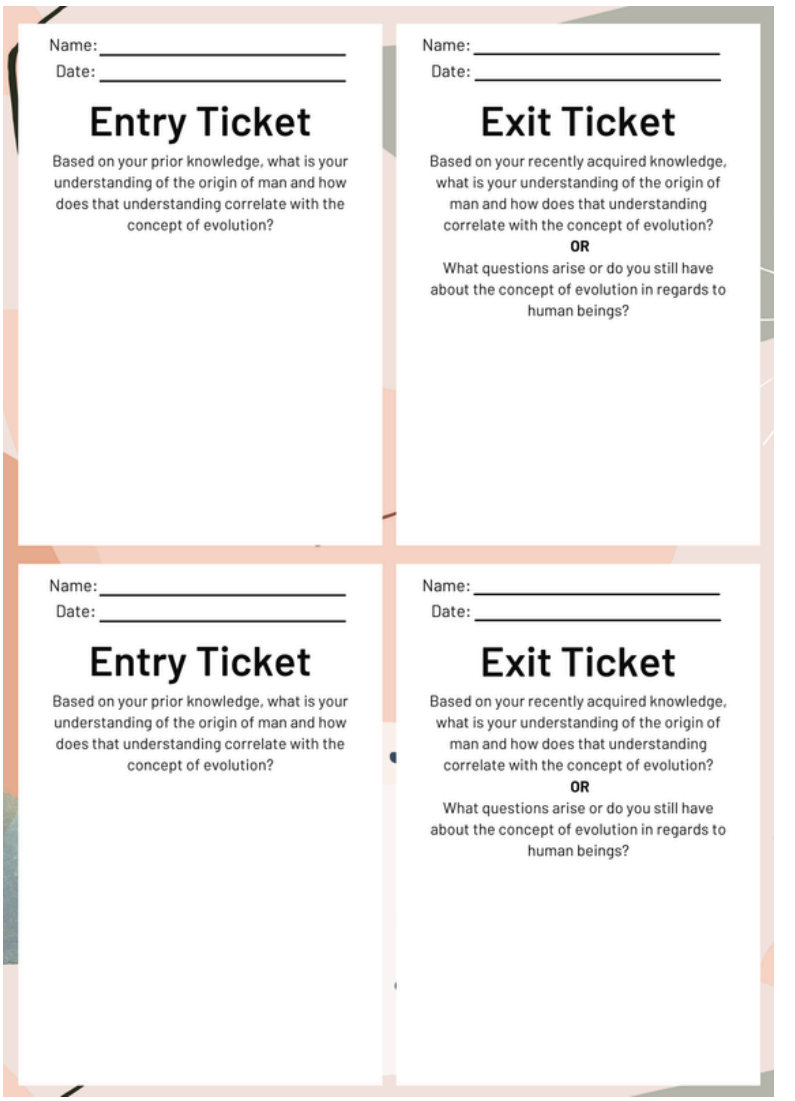
2:1 Instruction/ Teacher Facilitation

Entry Tickets

This activity focuses students' attention and asks students to recall background knowledge relevant to the lesson.

On the **Entry Ticket** (use formal entry ticket [See p.104], index card, or an online survey tool like Slido or Nearpod), ask students to respond to the question: "Based on your prior knowledge, what is your understanding of the origin of man and how does that understanding correlate with the concept of evolution?"

If using index cards as the Entry Ticket, the teacher can collect them or allow students to keep them until the end of class so that the back can be used as the Exit Ticket. If using an online survey tool, close the survey or stop accepting any more responses (re-open for Exit Ticket question).


Name: _____
Date: _____

Entry Ticket

Based on your prior knowledge, what is your understanding of the origin of man and how does that understanding correlate with the concept of evolution?

Name: _____
Date: _____

Exit Ticket

Based on your recently acquired knowledge, what is your understanding of the origin of man and how does that understanding correlate with the concept of evolution?

OR

What questions arise or do you still have about the concept of evolution in regards to human beings?

Name: _____
Date: _____

Entry Ticket

Based on your prior knowledge, what is your understanding of the origin of man and how does that understanding correlate with the concept of evolution?

Name: _____
Date: _____

Exit Ticket

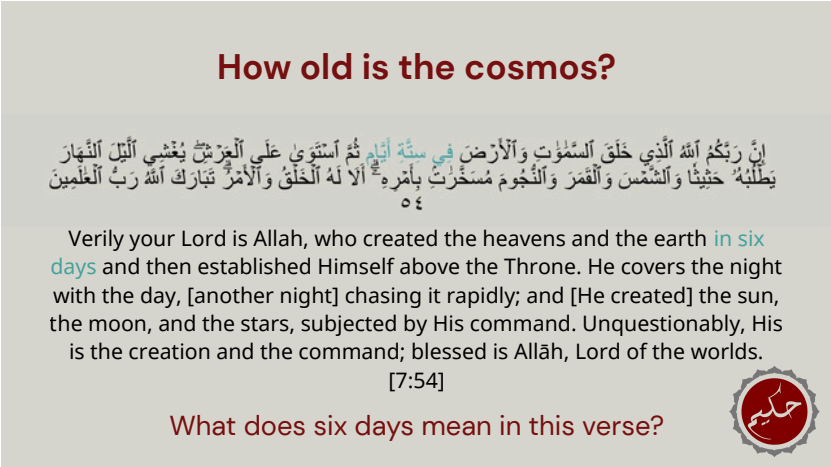
Based on your recently acquired knowledge, what is your understanding of the origin of man and how does that understanding correlate with the concept of evolution?

OR

What questions arise or do you still have about the concept of evolution in regards to human beings?

Two key issues discussed in the concept of evolution are deep time, i.e. the age of the Earth and the origin of man.

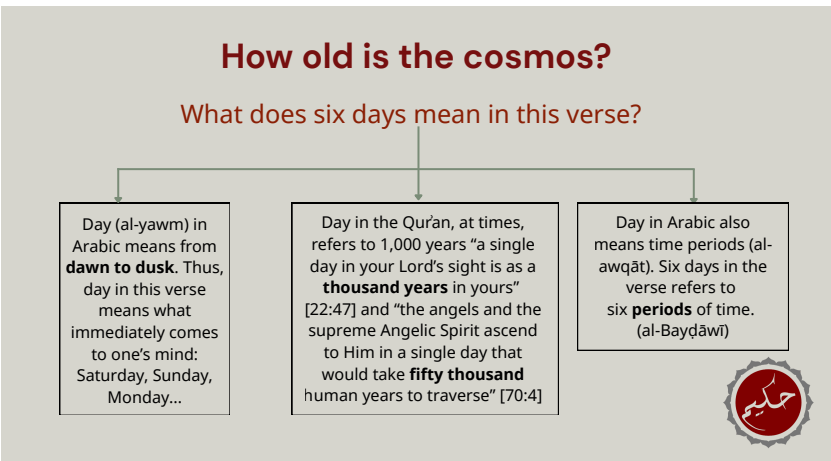
Slide 2.1: How Old is the Cosmos?



Of the two key issues, let us first look at time:

- The reason time is a major factor in evolutionary concepts is, in order for evolution to take place, immensely long periods of geological time are necessary to account for the possibility of small changes/adaptations to occur, resulting slowly into major changes.
- Within this concept of an extremely long stretch of time, we can start with the age of the earth. Let us look at the Qur'an and see what is the revelatory evidence for this:
  - *"Verily your Lord is Allah, who created the heavens and the earth in six days" (Sūrah al-A'rāf, 7:54).*
- What does "six days" mean in this verse? This leads to the question about the cosmos and how we understand time.

Slide 2.2: How Old is the Cosmos?



How old is the cosmos then? ("cosmos" includes the sky, solar system, and the earth)

- Option 1: Day (*al-yawm*) in Arabic means from **dawn to dusk**. Thus, day in this verse can mean what immediately comes to one's mind: like Saturday, Sunday, Monday; a 24-hour period.

- Option 2: Day in the Qurʾan, at times, refers to 1,000 years, *"a single day in your Lord's sight is like a thousand years of what you count"* (Sūrah al-Ḥajj, 22:47), or more *"The angels and the Spirit [i.e., Gabriel] will ascend to Him during a Day, the extent of which is fifty thousand years"* (Sūrah al-Maʾārij, 70:4), that is, a distance that would take **fifty thousand** human years to traverse. So a "day" can be anywhere from 1,000 years to 50,000 years.

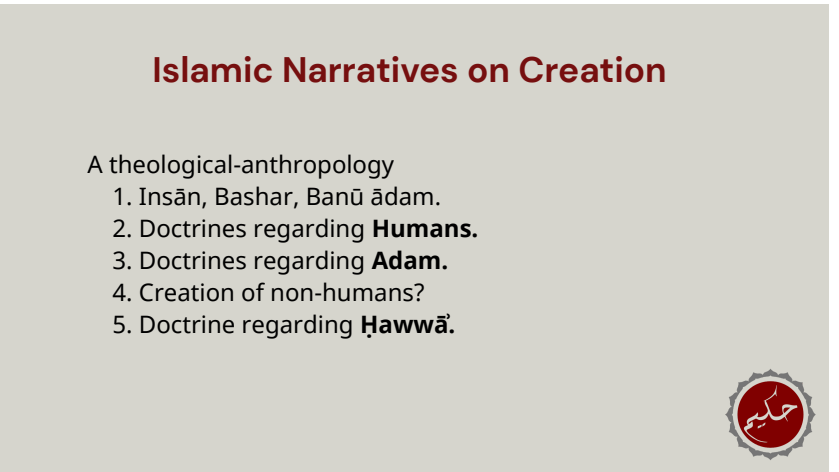
- Option 3: "Day" in Arabic also refers to time periods (*al-awqāt*). "Six days" in the verse can refer to six periods of time. (al-Bayḍāwī)—could be similar to the concept of deep time.

Biology Connection – prehistoric periods of time: for example, we divide it into eons, eras, periods, or epochs. This can help students understand the concept of "periods of time" to give them a frame of reference (for more details, refer to **Supplemental Material: Prehistoric Timeline** on p.104).

- When or how long ago exactly the creation of Adam falls into this time spectrum is up for speculation and interpretation.

- Connect back to the Spectrum of Certainty and explain that this information is all *ẓannī*, probabilistic in nature, and not certain.

Slide 2.3: Islamic Narratives on Creation



Let us now look at the question of the Origin of Man.

- Ask students how human beings are addressed in the Qur'an: What names/words did Allah (swt) use to speak about or call upon human beings?

Slide 2.4: Insān, Bashar, Banū ādam

Insān, Bashar, Banū ādam

1. ***Insān*** and ***bashar*** both refer to mankind and apply equally to male and female.
   a. ***Insān*** refers to our rational soul operating through its cognitive and active powers.

2. ***Bashar*** refers to man considered in his bodily aspect.
   a. His biological nature, physical life, shape, and construction.
   b. Lexically, the term *bashar* signifies the surface of the skin upon which hair grow.
   c. In his biological nature as *bashar*, man is different in kind from animals.

1. *Insān*
2. *Bashar*
3. *Banū Adam*
4. *Al-nāss*

Let us now analyze each of these to understand the human being better and why we are called as such.

Insān – refers to our rational soul operating through its cognitive and active powers

- A term that refers to both males and females and can apply to both equally.
- Lexically, a term that stems from *nisyān*, which means "to forget" or "forgetfulness."

Bashar – refers to man with his bodily aspect, an anatomical being.

- A human's biological nature, physical life, shape, and construction.
- Lexically, the term bashar signifies the surface of the skin upon which hair grows (Connect this to how we classify/define mammals in biology: a warm-blooded vertebrate animal that is distinguished by the possession of hair or fur. Again, pointing to the difference between animals and humans, even the way the hair grows is unique in the fact that humans have concentrated hair growth, like on their head and certain areas more than the rest of the body, whereas animals have full body hair/fur).

In his biological nature, man is different from animals. Humans have the ability for complex thoughts and are motivated by their instincts, intellect, and logic. Animals are simply motivated by their instincts. Human beings are bipedal, which means that they walk on two legs (humans are intellectually, spiritually, and physically different).

Slide 2.5: *Insān, Bashar, Banū ādam* (continued)

Insān, Bashar, Banū ādam

1. ***Banū ādam*** refers to:
   a. Mankind that includes Adam, Ḥawwāʾ, and all male and female progeny. This meaning is synonymous with the word al-nāss.
   b. The progeny of Adam and Ḥawwāʾ. This usage includes all of mankind except Adam and Hawwāʾ.
   c. The male progeny of Adam. This is the literal usage of the term.

2. Muslim scholars define a human being as a rational animal (al-ḥayawān al-nāṭiq):
   a. al-ḥayawān: living being
   b. al-nāṭiq: speaking
   c. Thus, a human is a living being that speaks.

Banū Adam
Synonymous with *Al-Nāss* (three different uses in the Qurʾan)

- Refers to mankind, including Adam (pbuh) and Ḥawwāʾ (pbuh), and all male and female progeny.
- Refers to just the progeny of Adam (pbuh) and Ḥawwāʾ (pbuh); this usage includes all of mankind, except Adam (pbuh) and Ḥawwāʾ (pbuh).
- Refers to only the male progeny of Adam (pbuh)—this is the strict literal usage of the term.

(These four terms have been used in the Qurʾan, including *al-Nāss*.)

Al-Ḥayawān al-Nāṭiq
(logical/rational term) Muslim scholars define a human being as a "rational animal."

- *Al-Hayawān:* linguistically meaning "living being," a being that has a body and grows. This can be connected to the definition of "life" from a biological standpoint. In biology, a living being must possess 7 properties:

1. Order
2. Reproduction
3. Growth and development
4. Energy processing
5. Regulation
6. Response to the environment
7. Evolutionary adaptation

> *Al-Nāṭiq:* literally means to articulate, "speaking," also defined as rational because one can only articulate if one possesses rational ability (*ʿaql*). Speaking denotes specifically the ability to name something and have names for things.

> Thus, a human is a living being that speaks; the only living being that speaks (which is what distinguishes us from other animals). As Allah (swt) mentions in (Sūrah al-Raḥmān, 55:3–4), that He "Created human beings" using the word *insān* here, and "taught them speech."

Slide 2.6: The Creation of Humans in the Qurʾan

The Creation of Humans in the Qur'an

Who began the origin of Man from moist clay (*ṭīn*) [32:7]	ٱلَّذِيٓ أَحۡسَنَ كُلَّ شَيۡءٍ خَلَقَهُۥۖ وَبَدَأَ خَلۡقَ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنِ مِن طِينٖ ٧
They themselves were created from clinging clay [37:11]	فَٱسۡتَفۡتِهِمۡ أَهُمۡ أَشَدُّ خَلۡقًا أَم مَّنۡ خَلَقۡنَآۚ إِنَّا خَلَقۡنَٰهُم مِّن طِينٖ لَّازِبِۭ ١١
Truly We created Man of a finished blank of hardened clay made of black mud or decayed mud [15:26]	وَلَقَدۡ خَلَقۡنَا ٱلۡإِنسَٰنَ مِن صَلۡصَٰلٖ مِّنۡ حَمَإٖ مَّسۡنُونٖ ٢٦
He created mankind from a tinkling hard blank of clay like baked pottery, and jinnkind He created from a pure flickering flame of fire [55:14 – 15]	خَلَقَ ٱلۡإِنسَٰنَ مِن صَلۡصَٰلٖ كَٱلۡفَخَّارِ ١٤ وَخَلَقَ ٱلۡجَآنَّ مِن مَّارِجٖ مِّن نَّارٖ ١٥

Along the same lines, let us look at what Allah (swt) mentions in the Qurʾan about the material/physical creation of humans and the different stages of creation.

> *"Who has perfected everything He created. And He originated the creation of humankind from moist clay."* (Sūrah al-Sajdah, 32:7)

> *"So ask them O Prophet, which is harder to create: them or other marvels of Our creation? Indeed, We created them from a sticky/clinging clay."* (Sūrah al-Ṣāffāt, 37:11)

- *"Indeed, We created man of a finished blank of hardened clay made of black mud."* (Sūrah al-Ḥijr, 15:26)
- *"He created humankind from 'sounding' hard clay like baked pottery."* (Sūrah al-Raḥmān, 55:14)
- All of these examples talk about the *bashari*/physical aspect of human beings.

Slide 2.7: Who is the Father of Mankind?

Who is the father of mankind?

Prophet Adam (Allah grant him peace) is the father of all humankind

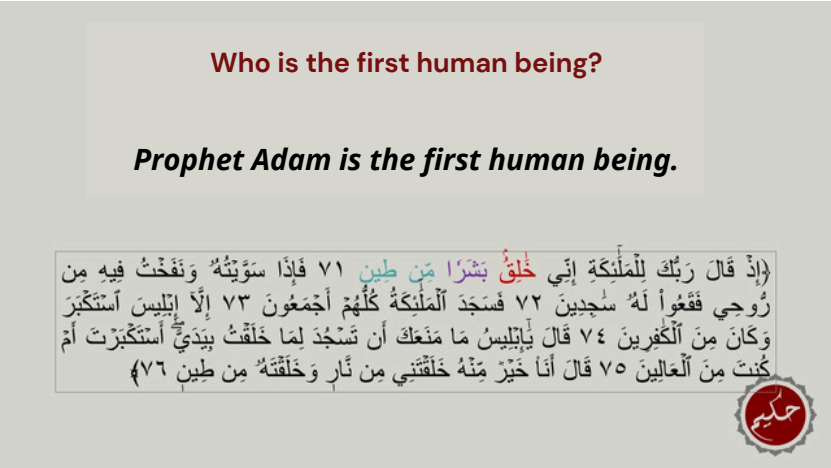
"Then people will come to Adam and say, "You are the **father of mankind** (abū al-bashar), Allah created you with His own two hands and breathed into you of His spirit..." (Sahih Muslim)

These verses describe the general creation and development of human beings. What about the first human being? Who is the father of mankind and how was he created? The creation of the first human being, Adam (pbuh), is notably different.

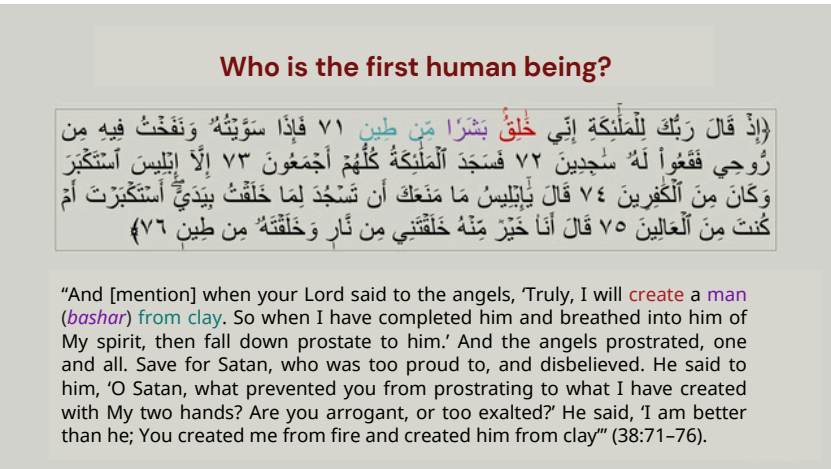
- "Then people will come to Adam and say, 'You are the father of mankind (*Abulbashar*/أبو البشر), Allah created you with His own hand and breathed into you of His spirit...'" (Sahih Muslim).

- Allah (swt) Himself created Adam (pbuh), an honor given only to Adam (pbuh). (Background of *ḥadīth*: This *ḥadīth* is about the Day of Resurrection when all people would gather and wait for Judgment Day to begin, and so the people will go to each Prophet to try to find someone who can intercede. And only Muhammad, Rasullullah (pbuh) would be able to do so).

Slide 2.8: Who is the First Human Being?



Slide 2.9: Who is the First Human Being?

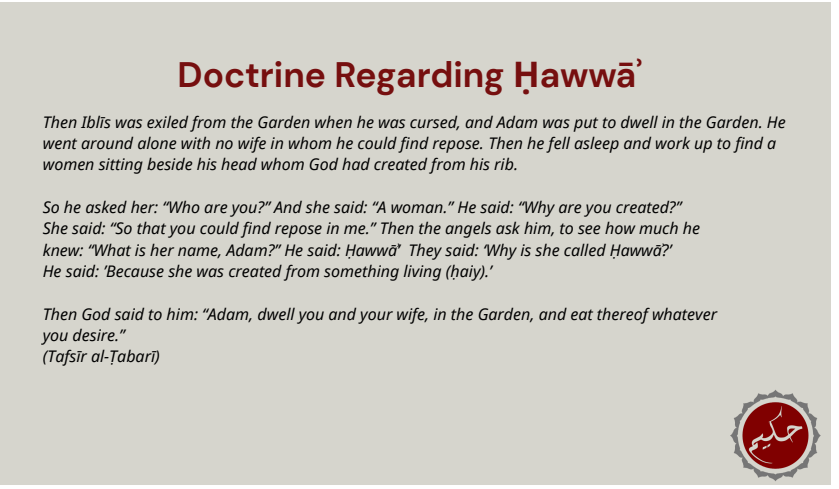


"And [mention] when your Lord said to the angels, 'Truly, I will create a man (*bashar*) from clay. So when I have completed him and breathed into him of My spirit, then fall prostrating to him.' And the angels prostrated, one and all. Except Iblīs (Satan), who was too proud to, and disbelieved. He said to him, 'O Iblīs/Satan, what prevented you from prostrating to what I have created with My hand? Are you arrogant, or too exalted?' He said, 'I am better than he; You created me from fire and created him from clay'" (Sūrah Ṣād, 38:71–76).

- **Note:** this is not to be understood in an anthropomorphic view of Allah (swt), but to signify that Allah (swt) created Adam (pbuh) personally.

Through revelatory evidence, we have established that the origin of man dates back to when Allah created Adam (pbuh).

Slide 2.10: Doctrines Regarding Ḥawwāʾ



Doctrine Regarding Ḥawwāʾ (pbuh)—Adam (pbuh) is the first human being and the first man. Let us look at the first woman.

> "Then Iblīs was exiled from the Garden when he was cursed, and Adam was put to dwell in the Garden. He went around alone with no wife in whom he could find repose. Then he fell asleep and woke up to find a woman sitting beside his head whom God had created from his rib."

> "So he asked her: 'Who are you?' And she said: 'A woman.' He said: 'Why are you created?' She said: 'So that you could find repose in me.' Then the angels ask him, to see how much he knew: 'What is her name, Adam?' He said: 'Ḥawwāʾ They said: 'Why is she called Ḥawwāʾ?' He said: 'Because she was created from something living (*ḥaiy*).'" [*Ha-waya*, to live]

> "Then God said to him: 'Adam, dwell you and your wife, in the Garden, and eat thereof whatever you desire.'" (Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī)

> These narrations describe the creation of the first man and woman according to the Islamic scripture.

Slide 2.11: What is Man's Place in the Cosmos?

What is man's place in the cosmos?

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِيٓ ءَادَمَ وَحَمَلْنَٰهُمْ فِي ٱلْبَرِّ وَٱلْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَٰهُم مِّنَ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتِ وَفَضَّلْنَٰهُمْ عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا

Indeed, We have dignified/honored the children of Adam, carried them on land and sea, granted them good and lawful provisions, and favored them far above many of Our creatures. [17:70]

Humans are the most superior and honorable of all creation.

Putting the cosmos and the creation of human beings together, human beings have a very high status in the universe.

- In Sūrah al-Isrā: "Indeed, We have dignified/honored the children of Adam, carried them on land and sea, granted them good and lawful provisions, and favored them far above many of Our creatures." (Q.17:70).

- Therefore, humans are the most superior and honorable of all creation. Humans are said to occupy a higher status than angels because angels were created to obey Allah (swt) and they have no option, while humans are granted free will to obey or disobey, so their free choice of obedience allows them to earn a rank higher than angels.

Slide 2.12: Were There Living Beings Before the Creation of Humans?

Were there living beings before the creation of humans?

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً ۖ قَالُوٓا۟ أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ ٱلدِّمَآءَ
وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ ۖ قَالَ إِنِّيٓ أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ٣٠

Will you place thereon one who will work corruption there and shed blood? [2:30]

Slide 2.13: Were There Living Beings Before the Creation of Humans?

Were there living beings before the creation of humans?

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً ۖ قَالُوٓا۟ أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ ٱلدِّمَآءَ
وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ ۖ قَالَ إِنِّيٓ أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ٣٠

Will you place thereon one who will work corruption there and shed blood? [2:30]

How did they know?

Were there living beings before the creation of humans?

> In Sūrah al-Baqarah, the conversation between Allah (swt) and the angels is mentioned: *"Remember when your Lord said to the angels, 'I am going to place a successive human authority on earth.' They asked Allah (swt), 'Will You place in it someone who will spread corruption there and shed blood while we glorify Your praises and proclaim Your holiness?' Allah (swt) responded, 'I know what you do not know.'"* (Q.2:30)

Slide 2.14: Were There Living Beings before the Creation of Humans?

Were there living beings before the creation of humans?

Will you place thereon one who will work corruption there and shed blood?

How did they know?

Opinion 1

God informed the angels that among the children of Adam are those who will work corruption and shed blood.

Opinion 2

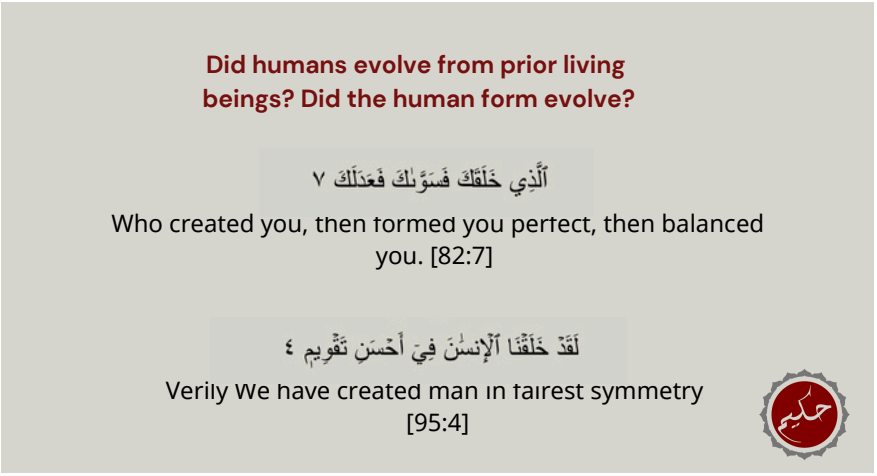
There were previous inhabitants on the Earth, namely jinn-kind who worked corruption and shed blood. The angels were assuming humankind will be like jinn-kind.

How did they know that this new creation, human beings, will shed blood and spread corruption?

> Option 1: God informed the angels that among the Children of Adam (pbuh) are those who will cause corruption and shed blood. (Ṭabarī mentions this in his *tafsīr*.)

Option 2: There were previous inhabitants on the Earth, namely, jinn-kind who caused corruption and shed blood. So the angels assumed that humankind would act like jinn.

Slide 2.15: Did Humans Evolve from Prior Living Beings? Did the Human Form Evolve?



Did human beings evolve from prior living beings? Did the human form evolve? - Let us look at the revelatory text:

In Sūrah al-Infiṭār, Allah (swt) states about Himself that He is the One: *"Who created you, fashioned you, and perfected your design/balanced you."* (Q.82:7) This refers to the physical form of the human being. This does not indicate that humans were created in an evolutionary manner, starting with a primitive form and then evolving into a more developed, perfect form. Allah (swt) is saying that from the beginning, human beings were designed in a perfect form.

In Sūrah al-Tīn, Allah (swt) also mentions: *"Indeed, We created humans in the best form (fairest symmetry)."* (Q.95:4) This reiterates the creation of human beings as *aḥsan attaqwīm.*

Slide 2.16: Did Humans Evolve from Prior Living Beings? Did the Human Form Evolve?

Did humans evolve from prior living beings? Did the human form evolve?

Humans are created from the outset in the complete physical form and fairest symmetrical form (aḥsan al-taqwīm).

Humans did not evolve, over the course of time, from another species. Humans are a living being distinct in essence, not in terms of degree, from other living beings.

﴿ٱلَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّىٰكَ فَعَدَلَكَ ٧﴾
Who created you, then formed you perfect, then balanced you even out. [82:7]

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ فِيٓ أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ ٤
Verily We have created man in fairest symmetry [95:4]

- Therefore, we can say that humans are created from the outset in the complete physical form and the best symmetrical form (*aḥsan al-taqwīm*).
- Humans did not evolve over the course of time from another species. Humans are a living being distinct in essence from other living beings.

Slide 2.17: Does Man Belong to the Anthropological Classification of Homo?

Does man belong to the anthropological classification of Homo?

Man does <u>not</u> belong to the anthropological classification of Homo

- Does man belong to the anthropological classification of Homo?
  - In terms of biological classification, we would say that humans do not belong to the anthropological classification of homo (sapiens).

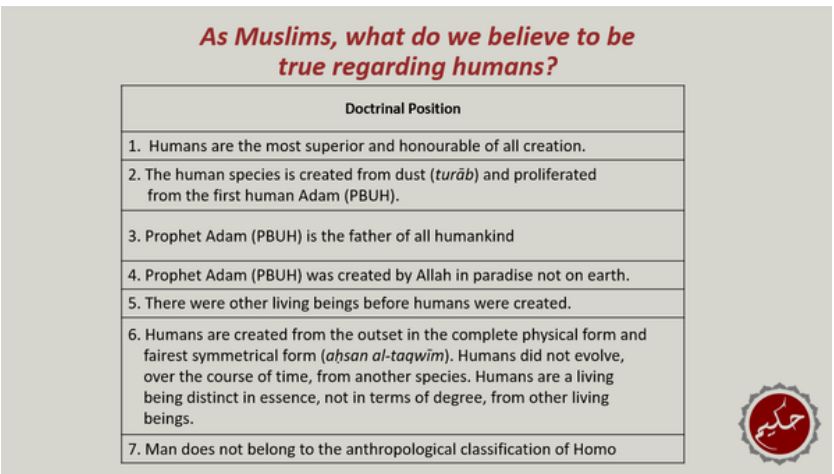
- If we say that they are homo sapiens, then we are saying that they are related to homo neanderthalensis, and have a common ancestor, and when you go down they are related to chimpanzees through ancestry/family. This would commit us to a framework with many philosophical assumptions, including a relationship to animals/common ancestors and an evolutionary process, which goes against the Qurʾanic account.

The proof lies in the Qurʾanic account of human creation, AND observable biological differences that are present.

Exit Ticket [See p.104]: Using the formal exit ticket, or the other side of the "entry ticket" index card, or the online survey tool, have the students answer the following questions: (The concept of the exit ticket is to collect feedback on students' understanding at the end of class and provide the students with an opportunity to reflect on what they have learned. This can be helpful in prompting students to synthesize and integrate the information gained during the class period.)

Exit Ticket Questions: "Now, based on your recently acquired knowledge, what is your understanding of the origin of man and how does that understanding correlate with the concept of evolution?" and/or "What questions do you still have about the concept of evolution in regard to human beings?"

Slide 2.18: As Muslims, What do We Believe to be True Regarding Humans?



As Muslims, what do we believe to be true regarding humans?

Doctrinal Position
1. Humans are the most superior and honourable of all creation.
2. The human species is created from dust (*turāb*) and proliferated from the first human Adam (PBUH).
3. Prophet Adam (PBUH) is the father of all humankind
4. Prophet Adam (PBUH) was created by Allah in paradise not on earth.
5. There were other living beings before humans were created.
6. Humans are created from the outset in the complete physical form and fairest symmetrical form (*aḥsan al-taqwīm*). Humans did not evolve, over the course of time, from another species. Humans are a living being distinct in essence, not in terms of degree, from other living beings.
7. Man does not belong to the anthropological classification of Homo

Closing: Summarize the truth claims made in this lesson; state the doctrinal position in Islam in regard to humans and evolution. (This can be done by the teacher listing the following, or by having the students participate in developing these statements as the teacher writes them down for the class to see.)

2:1

1. Humans are the most superior and honorable of all creation.
2. The human species is created from dust (turāb) and proliferated from the first human Adam (pbuh).
3. Prophet Adam (pbuh) is the father of all humankind.
4. Prophet Adam (pbuh) was created by Allah in paradise not on earth. (Evolution takes place only on earth, not in the heavens.)
5. There were other living beings before humans were created.
6. Humans are created from the outset in the complete physical form and fairest symmetrical form (aḥsan al-taqwīm). Humans did not evolve over the course of time from another species. Humans are a living being distinct in essence, not in terms of degree, from other living beings.
7. Man does not belong to the anthropological classification of Homo.

Printable Entry /Exit Ticket

Name: _____
Date: _____

Entry Ticket

Based on your prior knowledge, what is your understanding of the origin of man and how does that understanding correlate with the concept of evolution?

Name: _____
Date: _____

Exit Ticket

Based on your recently acquired knowledge, what is your understanding of the origin of man and how does that understanding correlate with the concept of evolution?

OR

What questions arise or do you still have about the concept of evolution in regards to human beings?

Name: _____
Date: _____

Entry Ticket

Based on your prior knowledge, what is your understanding of the origin of man and how does that understanding correlate with the concept of evolution?

Name: _____
Date: _____

Exit Ticket

Based on your recently acquired knowledge, what is your understanding of the origin of man and how does that understanding correlate with the concept of evolution?

OR

What questions arise or do you still have about the concept of evolution in regards to human beings?