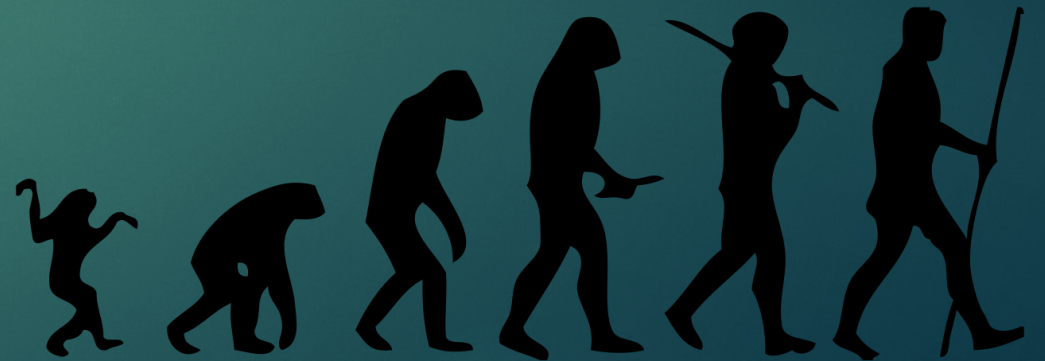# Evolution and Islam

A Ghazalian Perspective

DR. SHOAIB AHMED MALIK

Overview

- What this talk *isn't* about
- What this is talk *is* about
- Principles of Evolution
- The Ash'arite School
- The Issues with Evolution
  1. The Problem of Evil
  2. The Problem of Inefficiency
  3. The Problem of Chance

What this talk isn't about

Science

Hermeneutics

Metaphysics

What this talk is about

Orthodoxy

Ash'arite

Maturidi

Athari

Representatives

Imam Juwayni

Imam Ghazali

Imam Baqillani

Imam Razi

Interpretations

Ash'arite

Neoplatonism

Principles of Evolution

▶ General lines of evidence:

1. Fossil record
2. Molecular clocks
3. Anatomical comparisons
4. Genetics

▶ General principles:

1. Variation
2. Heritability
3. Competitive survival
4. Natural selection

The Ash'arite School

- Occasionalism
  1. Physical causality is contingent
  2. Creation has no autonomy
  3. God has total knowledge of everything
- Theological Voluntarism / Divine Command Theory
  1. Good and bad are divinely decreed
  2. God abides by no moral law

1. The Problem of Evil

- God is creator of everything
- Good and evil are from God
- Morality is contingent
- God could have created a different moral order
  - Programmer analogy

2. The Problem of Inefficiency

▶ Inefficiency implies deficiency:

1. Space
2. Time
3. Material

▶ God doesn't have a limit
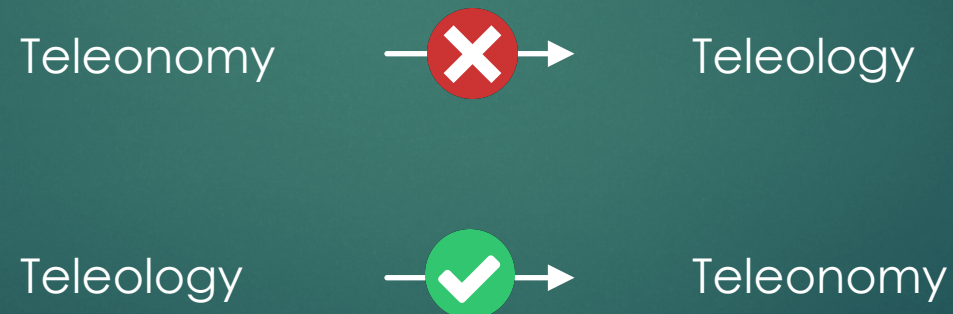
3. The Problem of Chance

- Predictability - there are four kinds of chance:
  1. Unknown cause
  2. Unknowable cause
  3. No physical cause
  4. God-doesn't-know cause

3. The Problem of Chance

- Purpose – two kinds of purposes in nature:
  1. Teleonomy (proximate)
  2. Teleology (ultimate)

Teleonomy   ❌→   Teleology

Teleology   ✅→   Teleonomy

Conclusion

- Compatibility is possible
- Provided it is maintained:
  1. No autonomy exists out of God's power/control
  2. God knows everything
  3. God doesn't play dice