

The Qur'an and the Nature of Reality

Modern evolutionary theory, and in fact all atheistic ideologies take as their philosophical foundation the materialist world-view. By this they seek to deny Allah and any accountability to Allah. They have used this **belief/assumption** to make their **belief**¹ in evolution as applied to biology, psychology, the cosmos and society at large seem true to each other and to the impressionable masses, to justify their own distorted and hedonistic world view. Thereby ushering in an age of massive misguidance and moral and intellectual depravity².

This materialist world-view is a philosophy that is based upon the assumption that matter is all there is; it assumes that matter is self-sufficient. It, by the necessity of its central **assumption** therefore denies Allah, the soul and anything that contradicts it. It is as such the central belief of atheism, and incompatible with Muslim belief.

It is therefore of utmost importance that Muslims understand what the true nature of reality is from the very words of Allah, the Qur'an. In this sense they will be rightly guided in how they perceive the world around them, and they will avoid being deluded by the life of this world and see through the ideologically motivated interpretations of the materialist scientists. This is the first step.

I plan to briefly explain what the nature of reality is in the Qur'an.

The Qur'anic description of the nature of reality contains several factors: -

- 1) Reality is continually created.
 - a) This implies that our universe is not a closed, continuous and self-perpetuating material universe. This is the **intrinsic nature of reality**.
- 2) The nature of reality is that it proclaims its Creator, in that: -
 - a) Reality is the unfolding of Allah's Plan for creation. That is, in the same way as guidance through revelation actualises in the message that comes with the prophets of the past and is now with us in the form of the Qur'an, **reality is the physical revelation of Allah's plan/knowledge**.
 - b) The physical reality we experience will proclaim its Creator by its design, in a manner identifiable by mankind. That is, the Qur'an guides to scientific investigation and forecasts Allah's design as clearly observable. This is the **extrinsic nature of reality**.

Proof of 1 (a)

*“And Allah created you and whatever you do”
(The Qur’an, 37: 96)*

This verse clearly implies that everything we experience or think we do for ourselves at every point in time is in fact created for us. It reminds us that we have no power to bring anything into being or to create anything. Many other verses in the Qur’an harmonise perfectly with this understanding. For example: -

*“And who sends down rain from the sky in due measure;- and We raise to life with it a land that is dead; even so will you be raised;”
(The Qur’an, 43:11)*

Consider also (The Qur’an 56:57-74)

What did you think this and all the verses like it meant? Metaphorical? Exaggeration? No; Allah is telling us that He is actually bringing all these things into existence for us. Every part of every process is brought about by Allah, whether creation of rain, the development of seeds, rotation of planets etc...

*“Truly, all things have We created in proportion and measure.
And Our commandment is but one (commandment), as the twinkling of an eye.”
(The Qur’an, 54:49-50)*

*“Such is Allah, your Lord, the Creator of all things, there is no god but He: Then how are you deluded away from the Truth!”
(The Qur’an, 40:62)*

Created **ALL** things, that is everything at every moment in time, for as new things appear, they too are created by Allah at all times. So how can we be deluded in believing in a material self-maintaining universe?

*“Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High,
Who has created, and further, given order and proportion;
And Who makes according to a measure, then guides,”
(The Qur’an, 87:1-3)*

Allah creates all things in due measure and proportion and maintains and guides them. This is in the nature of Allah as Al Rabb (The Lord, maintainer, cherisher etc...), Allah continually sustains and maintains all things, and the means of this is Allah’s perpetual creation of all things.

In short, Islamically, material causality is refuted³. Constant divine creation is established.

Proof of 2 (a)

Reality is the unfolding of Allah's Plan for creation.

All that happens is already in Allah's knowledge, in fact, all that happens and will happen is already noted with Allah.

Reality is the unfolding of this knowledge.

*No misfortune can happen on earth or in your souls but it is in a Decree/Book/Record before We bring it into existence: That is truly easy for Allah: In order that you may not despair over matters that pass you by, nor exult over favours bestowed upon you. For Allah does not love any arrogant boaster,
(The Qur'an, 57: 22-23)*

Consider also (The Qur'an, 6:59, 10:61⁴)

That is, the nature of reality is that it is an actualisation/revelation of information that is with Allah before it is brought into existence. This is a natural consequence of the complete knowledge of Allah.

Proof of 2 (b)

The physical reality we experience, will proclaim its Creator by its design, in a manner identifiable by mankind.

For example: -

*Behold! in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day,- there are indeed Signs for those with understanding,- those who celebrate the praises of Allah, standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and contemplate the creation of the heavens and the earth, (With the thought): "Our Lord! not for nothing Have you created this! Glory to You! Give us salvation from the penalty of the Fire.
(The Qur'an, 3:190-191)*

Consider also (The Qur'an, 50: 6-10 and 41:53⁵)

There are many examples of similar verses in the Qur'an. We are as Muslims to *EXPECT* design and magnificence in the universe, and indeed there is.⁶ This in itself implies a non-materialistic approach to science, and hence a change in the philosophy of science.

Expanding upon 1 (a)

The Qur'anic position on the nature of reality is clear, it is continually created. But can we approach this from another direction? I will do so briefly below insha'allah.

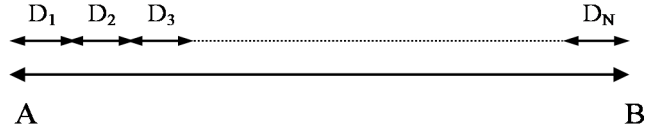


Figure 1: The basis

$$|A - B| = \sum_{X=1}^N D_X = D \times N$$

$$\therefore \lim_{N \rightarrow \infty} D = \varepsilon, \varepsilon > 0$$

A can be: -

- The application of force that 'causes' or is followed by some motion **B**. For example: -
 - **A** = you kick a ball; **B** = the ball moves and hits the ground.
- The energy in a filament that 'causes' or is followed by the **B** of light and heat.
- Some point in space and time that is seen to precede another 'later' point in space and time. For example: -
 - **A** = the ball at your foot at 6:15:00 pm; **B** = the ball 10 meters away at 6:15:02 pm.
- Etc...

It can be any action or state **A** which is seen to be followed by or appear to 'cause' some effect or state **B**.

From Figure 1, we see that as **D** becomes smaller, **N** becomes larger. In order to go from **A** to **B**, **D** cannot be equal to 0 and **N** cannot be 'equal to ∞ '.⁷ This is because, when **D** = 0, there is no number **N** that is ever going to be large enough such that **N** × **D** will take you from **A** to **B**.

This means fundamentally that **D** can never be equal to 0 and **N** will never be an infinite number, that is, both **D** and **N** must be finite

This logic can now be applied to: -

- Time
 - A time interval from **A** to **B**.
- Distance
 - A space interval from **A** to **B**.
- Energy
 - An energy change from **A** to **B**.

What we learn from all this is that at some fundamental limit, the (matter/energy/time) universe we inhabit proceeds in finite, discrete and unchanging steps.

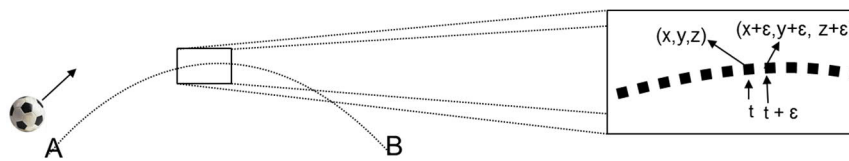


Figure 2: The flip book universe

Why unchanging? This is due to the fact that there exists a finite number of states available between any two states (from Figure 1: N is finite and the beginning and end states are **A** and **B**, from Figure 2: The ball can only ever be in one state at a time), you will have only a finite number of such states with which to represent the change (From **A** to **B**). Given this, it is obvious that at maximum resolution, that is, at some limit, the states have to be unchanging, like a slide in a cartoon illustration.

This can sometimes be unclear, so another way to think of this is as follows:

- Change in space, time or energy implies going from one state to another.
 - You cannot be in two places simultaneously.
 - You cannot be at two times simultaneously.
 - You cannot be at two energy levels simultaneously.
- Imagine we have reached ϵ in terms of space, time or energy resolution. We have hit the limit of granularity.
 - There is no smaller distance, time or energy unit.
- This means that at the maximum resolution (the ϵ state), you have **a static state**. There is no motion, no change of any kind as you can no longer subdivide any change.
 - This is analogous to the frames of a drawn cartoon, the static subcomponents of what finally appears like a fluid cartoon.
- So, from Figure 2: if you could slow down the motion of the ball (or particle or whatever) enough, you would be able to observe the ball in state 1 at position (x, y, z) at time t and then you would observe the ball in state 2 at position $(x + \epsilon, y + \epsilon, z + \epsilon)$ at time $t + \epsilon$.
 - There would be **no state between these two states**, we have a dimensionless discontinuity here. **This is a fundamental point**.
 - This actually means that when going from state 1 to state 2, the ball ceases to exist as state 1, after state 1, and begins existing in state 2.
 - The gaps between the dots in Figure 2 are aids in visualising this.
 - We have a discrete change in states from state 1 (S_1) to state 2 (S_2).

Now given what we know so far, we have one more thing to consider...

Given that the universe and everything in it must proceed in finite, discrete and unchanging steps, we must ask, how can an unchanging state in matter/energy/time

actually 'cause' the next unchanging state, when it ceases to exist before the next state begins to exist?

This is very much like asking how the content seen in one frame of a cartoon can 'cause' the content in the next frame. Consider:

- If a state is unchanging, how can it 'do' anything to bring about the next state?
- There are no intermediate states or connections by which one state can transmit or affect the next.
 - 'Causal' continuity is broken.
- How can a state that is unchanging and has no connection to a following state, bring about a change and transmit it to the next state?

And the answer is that it doesn't, simply because it can't. That is, an action does not cause a reaction, the succession of happenings which conform to this pattern are merely the expression of Allah's design and plan for his creation. Matter, in fact the universe, has no power to sustain itself and maintain itself.

To help imagine this a bit better, let's say that $\epsilon = 1$ cm (and we conveniently cannot see better than at a 1cm resolution). What follows applies equally no matter how small you make ϵ .

- Imagine I push a barrel that is 1 meter in diameter and it moves a distance of 10 meters.
- It moves fast and the movement appears to be smooth.
- Everyone is happy say that it has moved 10 meters thanks to the force I impart to it and the momentum built up in the barrel.
- Someone records the barrel with a high speed camera (with zoom!) that somehow does not obey the resolution limit of ϵ . He slows down the frames so that he could theoretically see 1mm of motion.
- He is shocked to see that the barrel does not smoothly roll; rather it jumps in steps of 1cm. He looks at the leading portion of barrel and sees that it ceases to exist at the 5 m point and begins existing at the 5.01 meter point.
- He rewinds and goes forward... There is nothing in between the two states!
 - **Consider this deeply.**
- He looks around and sees that beams of light appear like dotted lines! The barrel appears to be made up of 1cm^3 subsections! It is like zooming into a screen and seeing all the pixels... except this is 3 dimensional...
- Was it force and momentum that moved the barrel or does it merely appear like this?

Therefore between every state in matter/energy/time there is a dimensionless discontinuity which matter/energy/time cannot bridge. And this problem goes back to the very first point of creation (there was nothing, then there was something. Thereafter there is something, nothing, something, nothing etc.); it is why materialism as a philosophy is false.

The concept of causality is itself an important one to consider. Physics can mathematically model the observed relationships in the universe; however this description was never an explanation. That is, to describe the patterns in the universe accurately does not in any way demonstrate causality. To see why this is true,

consider a hologram. It can present any example in the universe and obey mathematical descriptions perfectly in theory. Now imagine a scientist can only observe a hologram and must deduce mathematical descriptions like gravity, force, action and reaction etc... His description is accurate but has absolutely no bearing on causation. Does a holographic ball falling at 9.8ms^{-2} demonstrate a causal relationship between gravity and mass? No, it merely describes a pattern, and nothing other than materialism ascribes causation to the pattern.

Materialistic causality being true would imply an unbroken continuity, where cause is linked directly with effect, where any preceding state is linked directly (without break) with its following state. **It implies an infinity bound by the finite.** It is impossible.

It is my understanding that this is an insurmountable problem for materialists and a critical understanding for Muslims.

In summary and conclusion...

The proofs of 1 (a) and 2 (a) along with the understanding derived from them above, make clear that the action of Allah in the universe is not interventionism into a causally closed material universe⁸. Allah creates as He wills and all that He creates is according to his knowledge and plan. Materialism is an impossible philosophy.

In short, Allah tells us in the Qur'an that the causally closed material universe our materialist opponents put their faith in, is nothing but an illusion they have bought in to: -

“O mankind! Surely the promise of Allah is true, therefore don't let the life of this world deceive you, and let not the deceiver deceive you concerning Allah.”
(Qur'an, 35:5)

Glorify Allah, the All Mighty Creator with the power and knowledge to create all that there is in this massive universe, and to know about every minuscule part of it.

The preceding conclusions have implications on traditional concepts of causality and time that are not dealt with here. The use of terms above that assume traditional meanings of causality and time is merely to aid understanding, not to show support for their current/traditional meanings.

¹ I mean this in the sense that they can be more passionate in their belief in evolution than many Muslims are in their belief in Allah.

² Evolution has acted as the justification for total hedonism in many lives... a natural consequence of the denial of Allah, which evolutionary theory almost always leads to for any thinking man or woman. Consider for example: - **The evolutionist philosopher Daniel Dennett says in his book “Finding Darwin's God”:** *“Evolutionists who see no conflict between evolution and their religious beliefs have been careful not to look as closely as we have been looking, or else hold a religious view that gives God what we might call a merely ceremonial role to play.”* (pg. 310)

³ That is, a universe which maintains itself and is itself the creator of every new material object that comes to being in it.

⁴ “And you are not (engaged) in any matter, nor do you recite any portion of the Qur'an, nor do you do any work but We are witnesses over you when you enter into it, and there does not lie concealed from

your Lord the weight of an atom in the earth or in the heaven, nor anything less than that nor greater, but it is in a clear book.” (Qur’an 10:61)

⁵ “We shall show them Our signs on the horizons and within themselves until it will be manifest unto them that it is the Truth. Does not your Lord suffice, since He is Witness over all things?”(Qur’an 41:53)

⁶ For example refer to www.evolutionnews.org and even pick up a good cell biology or biochemistry text book, ignoring the empty and occasional evolution worship. The wonders of organic and inorganic creation are everywhere to be seen.

⁷ In reality, it is a concept to describe something which is not finite, and not an actual number.

⁸ A view that many theists hold... “Interventionism in a causally closed universe” means that Allah would have to somehow ‘interfere’ in the orderly working of the universe which can normally maintain and sustain itself.