

*Qhutbah, Insha Allah, Friday, June 9, 2006*

*Alhamdu lillah, wa ash hadu ala ila ha ill lallah*

*Bismillah hir Rahman nir Rahim*

On July 5, 1996, there was a headline-grabbing announcement of an asexual birth of a sheep called Dolly through a complex biological process known as “cloning” at the Roslin Institute in Scotland. The genetic technique that was made famous by her birth is *somatic cell nuclear transfer*, in which a cell from the mammary gland of a six-year-old ewe was placed in a de-nucleated ovum, the two cells fused and then developed into an embryo. Agnostics hailed it as a challenge to the Supreme Creator. Some pathetic souls became nearer to the end of their faith in God, the Initiator.

On February 14, 2003 a decision was taken to euthanise Dolly after a veterinary examination showed that she was suffering from a progressive lung disease. An autopsy confirmed she had *Ovine Pulmonary Adenocarcinoma*. She had also developed a potentially debilitating form of arthritis at an unusually early age. Human cloning expert Dr. Patrick Dixon told the UK Press Association – “The real issue is what Dolly died from, and whether it was linked to premature ageing. She was not old by sheep standards to have been put down,” & “The greatest worry many scientists have is that human clones - even if they don't have monstrous abnormalities in the womb - will need hip replacements in their teenage years and perhaps develop senile dementia by their 20th birthday”.

They forget that no matter how mind boggling the technique might be, it has not produced a living cell from nothing – the way our Awesome God does through nature – so incessantly and effortlessly. The DNA was found in and derived from a mature adult cell made by that very God, and now people have the audacity to debate the Designer's existence and Creative Power. They do not try to understand the difference between the making of a living cell and attempting to interpret and handle an already present living cell. [23:14] Then we developed the drop into a hanging (embryo), then developed the hanging (embryo) into a bite-size (fetus), then created the bite-size (fetus) into bones, then covered the bones with flesh. We thus produce a new creature. Most blessed is GOD, the best Creator.

On July 20, 1969 astronaut Neil Armstrong became the first man to land on the moon and there was a similar euphoria in the atheistic circle all over the world. [55:33] O you jinns and humans, if you can penetrate the outer limits of the heavens and the earth, go ahead and penetrate. You cannot penetrate without authorization. This was propounded when NASA announced its controversial verdict about the debatable existence of primitive extra-terrestrial living organisms, which may have become extinct now, on planet Mars. What transpired was a small rock called ALH 84001 discovered in the Antarctica. In 1994, it was determined that the rock was about 4.5 billion years old and left Mars 16 million years ago after being blasted off by a meteor impact (this was determined through examination of its

chemical composition and by carbon dating). After studying it for around a year, scientists from NASA realised that they had discovered evidence suggesting there was “*life on Mars*”. They then spent a further year checking and analysing their results, and on August 7th 1996, they announced to the world their findings. Immediately, every newspaper, TV and radio station news programme began to broadcast the news that “*life on Mars*” had been discovered.

Such scientific discoveries may be astounding and epoch making but they cannot, thank God, have the slightest possibility to banish humankind’s deep-seated belief of an Omnipotent Creator who brought into being our seven immeasurable universes with all its countless animate and inanimate objects out of nothing. *We Are Born With Instinctive Knowledge About God* [7:172] Recall that your Lord summoned all the descendants of Adam, and had them bear witness for themselves: "Am I not your Lord?" They all said, "Yes. We bear witness." Thus, you cannot say on the Day of Resurrection, "We were not aware of this." [36:82] All He needs to do to carry out any command is to say to it, "Be," and it is.

In the Quran too there are several examples of asexual birth i.e. not necessarily involving sexual activity. The birth of the first human on earth was of Adam. *The Origin of Man* [32:7] He is the One who perfected everything He created, and started the creation of the human from clay. [32:8] Then He continued his reproduction through a certain lowly liquid. [32:9] He shaped him and blew into him from His spirit. And He gave you the hearing, the eyesight, and the brains; rarely are you thankful. We then have the creation of Adam’s spouse Eve - [4:1] O people, observe your Lord; the One who created you from one being, and created *from it* its mate, then spread from the two many men and women. You shall regard GOD, by whom you swear, and regard the parents. GOD is watching over you. Thus Eve’s creation in contemporary scientific parlance was an asexual phenomenon like cloning.

Abraham - [11:71] His wife was standing, and she laughed when we gave her the good news about Isaac, and after Isaac, Jacob. [11:72] She said, "Woe to me, how could I bear a child at my age, and here is my husband, an old man? This is really strange!" [11:73] They said, "Do you find it strange for GOD? GOD has bestowed His mercy and blessings upon you, O inhabitants of the shrine. He is Praiseworthy, Glorious."

We understand from Genesis 21:5 that Abraham at that time was 100 years old and from Genesis 17:7 that Sarah was not far from that age.

Then we have the birth of John - [3:39] The angels called him when he was praying in the sanctuary: "GOD gives you good news of John; a believer in the word of GOD, honorable, moral, and a righteous prophet." [3:40] He said, "How can I have a boy, when I am so old, and my wife is sterile?" He said, "GOD does whatever He wills." We know from Luke 1:6-7, 57-80 in the Bible that the priest Zachariah and his wife Elizabeth were aged, devout and childless and Gabriel came to give Zachariah the news. Incidentally, John means *God is Gracious*.

Hearing this news, Mary went with haste to congratulate her cousin Elizabeth. [66:12] Also Mary, the Amramite. She maintained her chastity, then we blew into her from our spirit. She believed in the words of her Lord and His scriptures; she was obedient.

[3:45] The angels said, "O Mary, GOD gives you good news: a Word from Him whose name is "The Messiah, Jesus the son of Mary. He will be prominent in this life and in the Hereafter, and one of those closest to Me."

[3:47] She said, "My Lord, how can I have a son, when no man has touched me?" He said, "GOD thus creates whatever He wills. To have anything done, He simply says to it, 'Be,' and it is.

[3:59] The example of Jesus, as far as GOD is concerned, is the same as that of Adam; He created him from dust, then said to him, "Be," and he was.

We also know from the Old Testament – Book of Judges 13:2-25 the story of Manoah (Manoakh) and the miraculous birth of Samson whom God sent to fight the might of the Philistines armed with a jawbone of an ass. From I Samuel 2:1-10 we know the story of Elkanah and his wife Hannah. She prayed to God who granted her Samuel whom she had dedicated to God and to be a perpetual Nazarite (one separated unto God). Samuel was the one who anointed Saul and later David, son of Jesse to be King of Israel.

Cloning is thus, not as astonishing a concept as the common public perceives it. Though it is a remarkable human achievement, again only with God's permission – it should not surprise the priest in his pontifical chair or turn a believer into a skeptic.

Everything in the universe has been subdued for the use of humankind and this is frequently confirmed in the Quran. [45:13] He committed in your service everything in the heavens and the earth; all from Him. These are proofs for people who reflect. [45:12] GOD is the One who committed the sea in your service, so that the ships can roam it in accordance with His laws. You thus seek His provisions, that you may be appreciative.

God created us with His own hands. [38:75] He said, "O Satan, what prevented you from prostrating before what I created with My hands? Are you too arrogant? Have you rebelled?". The angels also serve us in accordance with God's commands. God created for us livestock with His own hands. [36:71] Have they not seen that we created for them, with our own hands, livestock that they own? Any advancement we make is because God has allowed us to do so. Thus the remarkable progress of humans in the realms of physical and now biological science was predestined and apart from God no one knows what advancement and improvement will be made and in what period of time. God has given us a capability to unravel the mysteries of nature and subdue the invisible forces and processes in the universe but God predetermines everything. [30:27] And He is the One who initiates the creation, then repeats it; this is even easier for Him. To Him belongs the most sublime similitude, in the heavens and the earth, and He is the Almighty, Most Wise.

The more a scientist knows about his own kind and about the universe, the more he should marvel at the mystifying and complex handiwork of his Maker. He should acknowledge with due humility, his complete inability to comprehend the Designer's inscrutable but absolutely perfect ways and laws. [55:13] (O humans and jinns,) which of your Lord's marvels can you deny? Can a biologist, even after the present breakthrough in gene's research state confidently that a person could be in a position to create a living cell that contains the whole gamut of a living being's genetic heritage and makeup. This question has yet not been answered. Biologists have discovered that human cells comprise no less than 80,000 genes. Fortified with this knowledge and being aware of their own limitations, the more knowledgeable among them would tend to admire the Creator rather than to brag and boast. It is only the uninitiated and those outside the core of the real scientific community who would think differently.

The answer is staring at them in their faces. [36:77] Does the human being not see that we created him from a tiny drop, then he turns into an ardent enemy? [36:78] He raises a question to us - while forgetting his initial creation - "Who can resurrect the bones after they had rotted?" [36:79] Say, "The One who initiated them in the first place will resurrect them. He is fully aware of every creation." [36:80] He is the One who creates for you, from the green trees, fuel which you burn for light. [36:81] Is not the One who created the heavens and the earth able to recreate the same? Yes indeed; He is the Creator, the Omniscient.

[10:61] You do not get into any situation, nor do you recite any Quran, nor do you do anything, without us being witnesses thereof as you do it. Not even an atom's weight is out of your Lord's control, be it in the heavens or the earth. Nor is there anything smaller than an atom, or larger, that is not recorded in a profound record.

Perhaps, it may be possible one day, in the wake of Dolly's cloning that Japanese biologists may succeed, to recreate the long extinct woolly mammoth from its fossilized remains that might still have been retaining some traces of their God – made DNA intact. [16:78] GOD brought you out of your mothers' bellies knowing nothing, and He gave you the hearing, the eyesight, and the brains, that you may be appreciative. [30:19] He produces the live from the dead, and produces the dead from the live, and He revives the land after it had died; you are similarly resurrected.

[6:102] Such is GOD your Lord, there is no god except He, the Creator of all things. You shall worship Him alone. He is in control of all things.