

Prophet Adam (as)

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Adam is the first human being on Earth and the first prophet of Islam. Adam's role as the father of the human race is looked upon with reverence. Muslims also refer to his wife, Hawa (Eve), as the mother of mankind.

An overview of Creation

According to the Qur'an, when God informed the angels that He was going to put a successor on Earth, they questioned whether the human would cause bloodshed and damage, but He told them that He knew what they did not know. He created Adam from mud or clay and breathed life into him. Hadith adds that he was named Adam after the clay he was made out of, or the skin (adim) of the earth.

According to the Qur'an, God commands the angels to prostrate before Adam wherein all obeyed except for Iblis, who claimed, "I am better than him. You created me of fire and him from mud."

Traditionally, Sunni scholars say that while Adam was sleeping, God took a rib from him and from it He created Eve. However, this is also considered "of the Israelites." While the creation of Adam and Eve is referred to in the Qur'an, the exact method of creation is not specified. The Qur'an then says that God commanded Adam and Eve not to eat from one tree in the garden, but Satan was able to convince them to taste it. They then began to cover themselves because they now knew that they were naked. For this, God banished Adam and Eve unto earth. Hadith states that Adam and Eve were cast down far apart, so that they had to search for each other and eventually met each other at Mount Arafat.

God taught Adam how to plant seeds and bake bread. This was to become the way of all of Adam's children. Adam lived for about 1000 years.

Islamic scholar Sayyid Mumtaz Ali, while commenting on whether Adam was first or Eve, says that "the fact that Adam was created first is nothing but childish. To begin with, we are tempted to assert that this is so because it was Adam was created first and then came Eve is part of the Christian and Jewish faith as well.

Significance of Adam

Adam was the first to learn to plant, harvest, and bake as well as the first to be told how to repent and how to properly bury someone. It is also said that God also revealed the various food restrictions and the alphabet to Adam. He was made the first prophet and it is said that he was taught 21 scrolls and was able to write them.

Adam was created from earth. It is well known that earth produces crops, supports animals, and provides shelter, among many other things. Earth is very important to humankind, so being created from it makes them very distinct. According to some Ahadiths, the various races of people are due to the different colours of soil used in creating Adam. The soil also contributed to the idea that there are good people and bad people and everything in between in the world. Adam is an important figure in many other religions besides Islam, particularly in the Abrahamic Religions. The story of Adam varies slightly across religions, but manages to maintain a general theme and structure.

The story of angels prostrating before Adam gave rise to various debates about whether humans or angels rank higher. Angels bowing before Adam is evidence that humans are superior than angels. In the Quranic version of Adam's fall, Satan tempted them with a promise to become immortals.

Descendance of Adam

Though it is up for debate, it has been said that Eve went through 120 pregnancies with Adam and each of these consisted of a set of twins: a boy and a girl. According to sources, God took all of Adam's progeny from his back while they were still in heaven. He asked each of them "am I not your lord?" as read in verse 7:172 of the Qur'an, and they all replied yes. For this reason, it is believed that all humans are born with an innate (*fitra*) knowledge of God. The most famous of Adam's children are Cain and Abel. Both brothers were asked to offer individual sacrifices to God. God accepted Abel's sacrifice because of Abel's righteousness and Cain, out of jealousy, threw a rock at Abel, leading to the first murder in human history: the murder of Abel by Cain. As Adam grieved his son, he would preach to his other children about God and faith in Him. When Adam's death drew near, he appointed his son Seth as his successor.

Adam in the Qur'an

The story of Adam and creation is pieced throughout the Qur'an. There are references in chapters: 2, 4, 5, 20, 21, 38 and others. In the Qur'an narrative, God created humankind out of clay (*Qur'an 3:59*), shaped it to a form, and then commanded the angels to bow before Adam. Iblis refused out of pride (*Qur'an 15: 26-32*).

According to the Qur'an, God had already decided before the creation of Adam that mankind (*Adam and his progeny*) would be placed on earth. Islam does not ascribe mankind's life on earth as a punishment, rather as part of God's plan.

"Verily, I am going to place mankind, generations after generations upon the earth.' The angels said: 'Will You place therein those who will cause mischief therein and shed blood, while we glorify You with praises and thanks, and sanctify You?' God said: 'I know that which you do not know.'"

God then teaches Adam the names of all things and assembles the angels in front of Adam so as to show them that there is more to Adam than they know, particularly the high intellectual capacity of Adam:

"And He taught Adam the names of all things. Then He showed them to the angels and said, "Name these, if you are truthful." They said: "Glory to You, of knowledge We have none, except for what You taught us: In truth, it is You who are perfect in knowledge and wisdom." Allah said: "O Adam! Tell them their names." When he had told them, God said: "Did I not tell you that I know the secrets of heavens and the earth, and I know what you reveal and what you conceal?"

God commands the angels to bow before Adam, they all obeyed His command, except for Iblis, who felt that he being made from fire, should not be bowing to Adam who was made from earth. His disobedience of God's command followed by his pride caused him to fall out of God's favour.

God later places Adam and Eve in the garden and tells them that they are free to enjoy its fruits, but not to come near a certain tree: (Qur'an 2:35)

"Then Adam learnt from his Lord words of inspiration, and his Lord turned towards him. Verily He is Oft-Returning, Most Merciful." God then informs Adam that He will send guidance to Adam and his progeny: (Qur'an 2:38)

The Qur'an describes the two sons of Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel

Abel and Cain are the first sons of Adam and Hawa' (Eve) mentioned in the Qur'an. The events of the story in the Qur'an are virtually the same as that of the Hebrew Bible narrative: Both brothers were asked to offer sacrifices to God, but God accepted Abel's sacrifice and rejected Cain's; and out of jealousy, Cain killed Abel – the first ever case of murder committed upon the Earth. The Sunni view narrates that Allah commanded (or permitted) Adam to marry his pair of twin daughters with his twin sons,

Habil with the beautiful Iqlimiya, and Qabil with the 'less attractive' Layudha. When Adam was about to marry them, Qabil protested and disobeyed, claiming his wife was less attractive, while his brother's wife was beautiful. Based on the revelations from Allah, Adam ordered both his sons to sacrifice, whoever received the accepted sacrifice was entitled to marry Iqlimiya.

Of Adam's first children, Cain was the eldest son. Each of them presented a sacrifice to God, but God only accepted Abel's sacrifice because of his righteous attitude and his faith and firm belief in God. After the offering, Cain, the wicked sibling, taunted Abel out of envy and told him that he would kill him. Abel justly warned Cain that God only accepted the sacrifice of those who were righteous in conduct. Abel further said that if Cain did try to slay him, he would not retaliate, because the God-fearing would never murder for the sake of envy. Abel then told Cain that in murdering him, he would carry the weight not only of his sin, but also the sins of his victim. Abel preached powerfully and reminded Cain that the punishment for murder would be that he would spend the afterlife in the fire of Hell. The innocent pleading and preaching of Abel had no effect on Cain, he was full of arrogance, pride and jealousy. He subsequently killed Abel, and so, he ruined himself and became one of those who remained lost. In the future, many other evildoers would slay the wise and pious believers.

After the murder, Allah sent a crow searching in the ground to show Cain how to hide the disgrace of his brother. Cain, in his shame, began to curse himself, and became full of guilt. The thought of the crime at last came to the murderer, as he realized indeed how dreadful it was to slay anyone, the more so as the victim was an innocent and righteous man. Full of regrets, Cain was marked with deep sorrow. The Qur'an states, "And he became of the regretful." (Qur'an 5:31)

The Qur'an states that the story of Cain and Abel was a message for all humanity, as it had told them about the consequence of murder and that the killing of a soul would be as if he/she had killed the whole of mankind, but the Qur'an states that still people rejected the message of the story, and

continued to commit grave sins, such as slaying prophets and other righteous people. All the prophets who preached since the time of Adam were persecuted, insulted or reviled in one way or another. As for the slaying of the righteous, it says "As to those who deny the Signs of God and defy righteous conduct, and slay the prophets, and slay those who teach just dealing with mankind, announce to them a grievous punishment.

Adam in the Ahadith

Sahih al-Bukhari narrated by Abu Hurairah states that Adam was created 60 cubits tall (about 30 meters), and that people in Paradise will look like Adam. The height of humans has since decreased.

Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said, "Allah created Adam in his image, sixty cubits in height. When Allah created Adam, Allah said, "Go and greet that group of angels sitting there, and listen what they will say in reply to you, for that will be your greeting and the greeting of your offspring." Adam went and said, 'As-Salamu alaikum (Peace be upon you).' They replied, 'Assalaamu-'Alaika wa Rehmatullah (Peace and Allah's Mercy be on you) So they increased 'Wa Rehmatullah' Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) further added 'Whoever will enter Paradise, will be of the shape and picture of Adam.'