قصص الأنبياء

STORIES OF THE PROPHETS

(Peace be upon them)

IMAM IBN KATHÎR

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Stories Of The Prophets

[Peace be upon them]

Imam Imâduddin Abul-Fida Isma'îl
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Chapter 1

The Story of Adam and Eve

[Peace be upon them]

Let us in the beginning relate those Verses which Allāh, the Most Exalted, has mentioned in the background of the beginning of human history, the history of Adam and Eve. The Verses do not contain unnecessary details. However, they give us a glimpse of the early creation, and the purpose of human life.

Allāh says in the Qur'ān:

﴿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﴾ وَعَلَّمَ ءَادَمَ ٱلْأَسْمَآءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنۢبِـُٔونِى بِأَسْمَآءِ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ إِن كُنتُمْ صَٰدِقِينَ﴾

"And remember when your Lord said to the angels: 'Verily I am going to create a *Khalîfah* on the earth.' They said: 'Will you place therein those who will make mischief and shed blood? while we glorify You with Your praise and we do sanctify You.' He (Allāh) said: 'I know indeed what you know not.' And He taught Adam the names of everything, then He showed those things to the angels and said: 'Tell Me the names of these things if you are true (in your claims).'"[1]

﴿قَالُوا۟ سُبْحَٰنَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَآ إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَآ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ ٱلْعَلِيمُ ٱلْحَكِيمُ ﴿٣٢﴾ قَالَ يَٰٓـَٔادَمُ أَنۢبِئْهُم بِأَسْمَآئِهِمْ ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَنۢبَأَهُم بِأَسْمَآئِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُل لَّكُمْ إِنِّيٓ أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ

[1] *Al-Baqarah* 2:30.31.

Guidance, no fear shall come upon them nor shall they grieve.' And those who disbelieve and reject Our Signs, shall be the dwellers of the Fire, wherein they will dwell for ever."[1]

Allāh the Almighty also says:

﴿إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ ءَادَمَ ۖ خَلَقَهُۥ مِن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُۥ كُن فَيَكُونُ﴾

"Indeed, to Allāh, the similitude of Jesus ('Îsa) is as that of Adam. Allāh created him out of dust, then said to him: 'Be,' and he was."[2]

And He says:

﴿يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱتَّقُوا۟ رَبَّكُمُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَٰحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَآءً ۚ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِى تَسَآءَلُونَ بِهِۦ وَٱلْأَرْحَامَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا﴾

"O mankind! Fear your Lord Who has created you from one soul, and from that soul He created his wife, and then from them He scattered many men and women. And fear Allāh through Whom you demand your mutual rights (and fear) the (rights of) the wombs (kinship). Indeed, Allāh is Ever Watchful over you."[3]

And He says:

﴿هُوَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُم مِّن نَّفْسٍ وَٰحِدَةٍ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا﴾

"He (Allāh) is the One Who created you out of a single soul, and from that soul He created his wife in order that he might seek comfort in her."[4]

And He said:

﴿وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَٰكُمْ ثُمَّ صَوَّرْنَٰكُمْ ثُمَّ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسْجُدُوا۟ لِءَادَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِبْلِيسَ لَمْ يَكُن مِّنَ ٱلسَّٰجِدِينَ ﴿١١﴾ قَالَ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَلَّا تَسْجُدَ إِذْ أَمَرْتُكَ ۖ قَالَ أَنَا۠ خَيْرٌ مِّنْهُ خَلَقْتَنِى مِن نَّارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُۥ مِن طِينٍ ﴿١٢﴾ قَالَ فَٱهْبِطْ مِنْهَا فَمَا يَكُونُ لَكَ أَن تَتَكَبَّرَ فِيهَا فَٱخْرُجْ إِنَّكَ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰغِرِينَ﴾

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[1] *Al-Baqarah* 2:38,39.

[2] *Āl-'Imrān* 3:59.

[3] *An-Nisā'* 4:1.

[4] *Al-A'rāf* 7:189

suggestion) to both of them, in order to uncover what had been hidden from each other of their private parts, and said to them: 'Your Lord has only forbidden you to approach this Tree lest you become angels or immortals.' The Satan swore to them: 'I am, indeed, a sincere advisor for you both.'"[1]

﴿فَدَلَّىٰهُمَا بِغُرُورٍ ۚ فَلَمَّا ذَاقَا ٱلشَّجَرَةَ بَدَتْ لَهُمَا سَوْءَٰتُهُمَا وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفَانِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِن وَرَقِ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ۖ وَنَادَىٰهُمَا رَبُّهُمَآ أَلَمْ أَنْهَكُمَا عَن تِلْكُمَا ٱلشَّجَرَةِ وَأَقُل لَّكُمَآ إِنَّ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنَ لَكُمَا عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٢﴾ قَالَا رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَآ أَنفُسَنَا وَإِن لَّمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْخَٰسِرِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾ قَالَ ٱهْبِطُوا۟ بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ ۖ وَلَكُمْ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَٰعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ ﴿٢٤﴾ قَالَ فِيهَا تَحْيَوْنَ وَفِيهَا تَمُوتُونَ وَمِنْهَا تُخْرَجُونَ﴾

"So he misled them both with delusion; so when they tasted of the Tree, their private parts became uncovered to them and they began to cover themselves with the leaves of the Paradise. And their Lord called out to them saying: 'Did I not forbid you from that Tree, and say that Satan was an avowed enemy to you?' Both said: 'Our Lord! we have wronged our souls, and if You do not forgive us and bestow upon us Your Mercy, we shall certainly be of losers.' He (Allāh) said: 'Get down, you are enemies of each other, and there is for you on earth an abode and enjoyment for an appointed time.' He (Allāh) said: 'Therein you shall live, and therein you shall die, and from there you shall be brought out.'"[2]

And He says in other Verses:

﴿وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ مِن صَلْصَٰلٍ مِّنْ حَمَإٍ مَّسْنُونٍ ﴿٢٦﴾ وَٱلْجَآنَّ خَلَقْنَٰهُ مِن قَبْلُ مِن نَّارِ ٱلسَّمُومِ ﴿٢٧﴾ وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ إِنِّى خَٰلِقٌۢ بَشَرًا مِّن صَلْصَٰلٍ مِّنْ حَمَإٍ مَّسْنُونٍ ﴿٢٨﴾ فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُۥ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِى فَقَعُوا۟ لَهُۥ سَٰجِدِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾ فَسَجَدَ ٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ كُلُّهُمْ أَجْمَعُونَ﴾

"And We have created mankind out of sounding clay, from a moulded mud. And the jinn, We created them before from a

[1] *Al-A'rāf* 7:19-21.

[2] *Al-A'rāf* 7:22-25.

Adam.' they all prostrated except *Iblīs* (Satan), he was one of the jinn, so he disobeyed the Command of his Lord. Will you then take him and his progeny as protectors and helpers to you rather than Me, while they are your enemies? How bad it is as an exchange for the wrongdoers."[1]

And He says in *Sûrat Tā-Hā*:

﴿وَلَقَدْ عَهِدْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ ءَادَمَ مِن قَبْلُ فَنَسِىَ وَلَمْ نَجِدْ لَهُۥ عَزْمًا ﴿١١٥﴾ وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ ٱسْجُدُوا۟ لِـَٔادَمَ فَسَجَدُوٓا۟ إِلَّآ إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ ﴿١١٦﴾ فَقُلْنَا يَٰٓـَٔادَمُ إِنَّ هَٰذَا عَدُوٌّ لَّكَ وَلِزَوْجِكَ فَلَا يُخْرِجَنَّكُمَا مِنَ ٱلْجَنَّةِ فَتَشْقَىٰٓ ﴿١١٧﴾ إِنَّ لَكَ أَلَّا تَجُوعَ فِيهَا وَلَا تَعْرَىٰ ﴿١١٨﴾ وَأَنَّكَ لَا تَظْمَؤُا۟ فِيهَا وَلَا تَضْحَىٰ﴾

"And We had made a covenant to Adam before, but he forgot and We found in him no constancy. And when We said to the angels: 'Prostrate to Adam.' They all prostrated themselves except *Iblis* (Satan), who refused (to do so). So We said (then): O Adam! 'He is a certain enemy to you and your wife, so do not let him expel you both from the Paradise, so that you may suffer hardship.' Surely, you will not feel hungry therein, nor be unclothed. You will certainly not get thirsty therein, nor will you suffer from heat."[2]

﴿فَوَسْوَسَ إِلَيْهِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ قَالَ يَٰٓـَٔادَمُ هَلْ أَدُلُّكَ عَلَىٰ شَجَرَةِ ٱلْخُلْدِ وَمُلْكٍ لَّا يَبْلَىٰ ﴿١٢٠﴾ فَأَكَلَا مِنْهَا فَبَدَتْ لَهُمَا سَوْءَٰتُهُمَا وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفَانِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِن وَرَقِ ٱلْجَنَّةِ ۚ وَعَصَىٰٓ ءَادَمُ رَبَّهُۥ فَغَوَىٰ ﴿١٢١﴾ ثُمَّ ٱجْتَبَٰهُ رَبُّهُۥ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ وَهَدَىٰ﴾

"Then, Satan whispered to him, saying: 'O Adam! Shall I guide you to the Tree of Eternity and to a dominion that will never decay?' So they both ate from it, and so their private parts became manifest to them, and they began to cover themselves with the leaves from the Paradise. And so Adam disobeyed his Lord and went astray. Then his Lord chose him and accepted his repentance and guided (him)."[3]

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[1] *Al-Kahf* 18:50.

[2] *Tā-Hā* 20:115-119.

[3] *Tā-Hā* 20:120-122.

progeny. The angels sought more information about the Divine wisdom of creating Adam, and not as to launch any protest or to demean the position of mankind, as some of the ignorant may misunderstand it. They said:

"Will you place therein one who will make mischief and shed blood?" (2:30) It is said by Qatādah that the angels knew that this was going to be the case, from what they had observed of other creatures who lived on the earth before Adam, like the jinn.

Abdullāh bin 'Umar ﷺ said: Jinn lived about two thousand years before Adam on the earth, and they shed blood. Allāh sent an army of angels who expelled them to remote islands.

"And we glorify You with Your praise and sanctify You," (2:30) means: we always worship You and none of us ever disobey You. If You wanted from the creation of Adam and his progeny that they worship You, then we are here. We unabatedly worship You day and night.

"He said I certainly know what you know not." (2:30) means Allāh told them that He had the best of knowledge about the preponderant benefit in their creation, which they had no knowledge of. There will be Prophets, Messengers, righteous, martyrs and pious people from among them.

Then Allāh the Almighty explained the eminence of Adam above the angels regarding the knowledge and said: "He has taught Adam the names of every thing." (2:31)

Ibn 'Abbās ﷺ said: These are the names of those objects through which people recognise things and communicate in their daily life, be they big or small, like humans, animals, earth, lands, seas, mountains, camel, donkey, and similar names of the nations and otherwise.

Mujāhid said: He taught him the names of dishes and pots. He taught him the names of every animal, every bird and every thing. That is how it is explained also by Sa'îd bin Jubair, Qatādah and others.

Ar-Rabi' said: He taught him the names of the angels.

However, the preferable opinion is that Allāh taught him the names of all creation, and their functions, be they smallest of objects or largest of them, as indicated by Ibn 'Abbās ﷺ.

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