



### **The Creation of Man in the Bible and the Holy Quran**

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## The Creation of Man in the Bible and the Holy Quran

### Abstract

Jewish, Christian, and Islamic scriptures, confirms Adam as the first man created by God in Heaven. His ingredients were clay and water. To lessen his loneliness Eve was created from the rib<sup>1</sup> of Adam. Adam and Eve were living in Paradise happily. The Satan became their enemy. He deceived them. They were sent to earth. All human races descended from them.<sup>2</sup> The article, "The creation of Man in the Bible and the Quran" focuses on the similarities and differences during the stage to stage developments of Man as described in the Bible and the *Qur'an*. It also explains at the end, the lessons derived from the story for the betterment of the society.

### Similarities & Differences

1. In both the Bible<sup>3</sup> and the *Qur'an*<sup>4</sup>, the universe was created in six days.
2. In the Bible Adam after creation was placed in the Garden of Eden (situated on earth)<sup>5</sup> while in the *Qur'an* he was placed in the paradise<sup>6</sup>.

### Introduction

#### Before Birth

Almighty God informed Angels of His intention to create humans from dust. They would be His vicegerent on earth.<sup>7</sup> Their one generation would succeed another.<sup>8</sup> Man would be given the power to decide and choose. The Angels were amazed when they heard it. They submitted before God in glory. They also enquired about the wisdom behind Man creation.<sup>9</sup>

expanded earthenware, God blew soul into the earthen body.<sup>13</sup> Resultantly, it turned to possess sense of intention, consciousness, intelligence and intuitive awareness. God gave Man preference over all other beings.<sup>14</sup>

### Similarities & Differences

1. The *Qur'an* explains, in the creation of Adam, when God said to the angels, "Verily I am going to place (mankind) generations after generation on earth".<sup>10</sup> This means Prophet Adam was made to be sent to earth not to live in heaven forever. While in the Bible Man was fallen on earth as a punishment after eating the forbidden fruit.<sup>11</sup>

### Similarities & Differences

1. In the *Qur'an* Adam was created by God out of dust. He then breathed in to him the Spirit<sup>15</sup>, specified for him.<sup>16</sup> In Hadith it is stated that Almighty God created Adam and then breathed the spirit into him,<sup>17</sup> In the Bible Adam was created by God in His own image<sup>18</sup> and He breathed into his nostrils "the breath of life".<sup>19</sup>

#### Angels Prostration

The vicegerency of God rests in the attribute of "knowledge".<sup>20</sup> He bestowed the gift to Adam<sup>21</sup> and taught him the names, properties and qualities of all the existents, animate or inanimate objects.<sup>22</sup> He brought Adam before the angels. God ordered Adam to tell Angels the names he learnt.<sup>23</sup> According to some commentators, these might not be the exact names he told, but he may differentiate one thing from the other, which meant to tell about man's nature that he can differentiate between good and bad.<sup>24</sup> The angels were then commanded to prostrate before Adam. They confirmed his superiority<sup>25</sup> and were quick to obey<sup>26</sup>.

#### Man's Matter

Almighty God created Man from dust. His mould was kneaded with the clay, adoptable to attain any shape. When the clay began to make a sound<sup>12</sup> like

**Similarities & Differences**

2. In the Bible<sup>27</sup>, God brought the birds and the beasts of the field to Adam to see what would he call them? while in the *Qur'an*<sup>28</sup> God taught Adam the names "of everything" and he repeated them<sup>29</sup>
3. In the *Qur'an* God commanded the Angels to prostrate before him<sup>30</sup> while Bible remained silent in this regard

**Satan Denial**

Satan was commanded along with the angels to prostrate before Prophet Adam,<sup>31</sup> but he refused to bow down due to arrogance, rebellion, and jealousy.<sup>32</sup> When he was asked about the reason of his refusal, he explained his matter as fire and Adam's matter as earth thus he thought himself better than Adam.<sup>33</sup> Satan forgot that the rank of any creation does not depend on the material with which it was cast but it depends on the qualities the Creator trusts with. God deprived him for ever, of His Mercy. The Satan instead of repenting asked God to prolong his life time till the Day of Resurrection. His desire was granted by God. He was driven out of paradise.<sup>34</sup> The devil again displayed his devilish character. He announced to misguide Adam and his progeny, as they were responsible for his fall, that is why, God warned Prophet Adam against Satan.<sup>35</sup>

**Similarities & Differences**

1. In the *Qur'an*, God ordered the angels to prostrate before Prophet Adam (as a sign of respect), but Satan refused,<sup>36</sup> while in the Bible it is not mentioned.
2. In the *Qur'an*<sup>37</sup> Satan was among the Jinn while in the Bible it is not mentioned.

**Creation of Eve**

Eve (*Hawāa*) is derived from the Hebrew word, meaning "life". It is the name of Prophet Adam's wife. She had been created from Adam<sup>38</sup> in order to remove his lonesomeness. Prophet Adam was commanded to dwell in the paradise with his wife and enjoy everything in it.<sup>39</sup>

**Similarities & Differences**

1. In the Bible, Eve<sup>40</sup> is mentioned by name while in the *Qur'an*; Eve is not mentioned by name, rather with the name of her husband<sup>41</sup>, although Islamic tradition gives her the name, "*Hawāa*"<sup>42</sup>.
2. In the Bible, Eve was called "Woman", because she was taken out of Man<sup>43</sup>. In another verse God calls her "Eve" because she is the mother of all human being.<sup>44</sup> Islamic and Hebrew,

"*Hawāa*" also means, "Mother of all living".

3. In the Bible Eve was created from the rib of Adam while he was sleeping<sup>45</sup>, is same with the *Qur'an* that women is created from man.<sup>46</sup>

**The Tree**

While in the Paradise, God had pointed one tree as forbidden to Adam. He warned them not to eat or even approach it.<sup>47</sup> The banned tree has not been specified by name either in the *Qur'an* or in the *Hadith*. Some exegeses say that it was wheat,<sup>48</sup> other term it as a fig or a grape- vine tree<sup>49</sup>. In the Bible God subdued the earth and everything in it to Adam and Eve<sup>50</sup> beside the tree of knowledge of good and bad.<sup>51</sup>

**Similarities & Differences**

1. In the Bible God warned Adam and Eve from a tree lest they will die<sup>52</sup> but in another verse the Bible says, that they transgressed by committing the sin.<sup>53</sup> In the *Qur'an* God warned Prophet Adam and Eve from the tree lest they should become transgressors.<sup>54</sup>
2. In the Bible the forbidden tree is the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and the fruit is more likely to be an apple.<sup>55</sup> While in the *Qur'an* Satan told Prophet Adam that he will lead him to the tree of eternity and to a kingdom that will never waste away.<sup>56</sup>
3. In the Bible God banned a tree of life as well as the tree of knowledge of good and Bad<sup>57</sup>, while the *Qur'an* does not mention the second tree.

**Delusion**

Satan prompted Adam and Eve with evil whisperings, which signified that the "banned tree" was actually a "tree of eternity".<sup>58</sup> Its fruit would ensure permanent rest and peace in paradise and nearness to God. He swore to them that he was their well-wisher and not an enemy.<sup>59</sup> The first thing of human qualities that manifested itself in Adam was forgetfulness. He forgot<sup>60</sup> God's Command and there arose a slip in his determination, after which he ate the fruit of that tree. As they ate it, human aspiration arose in them.<sup>61</sup> They realized that they had no clothing on them. Quickly they both began to cover themselves with leaves.<sup>62</sup> This was the advent of human civilization. It is only through the progeny of Prophet Adam, the union of sexes, that the race of mankind attains a perpetual existence.<sup>63</sup>

**Similarities & Differences**

1. In the Qur'an, the tempter is 'Iblīs (Satan),<sup>64</sup> while in the Bible the tempter is a serpent<sup>65</sup> whom Christians identify as Satan.<sup>66</sup>
2. In the Bible<sup>67</sup> as soon as they ate the fruit of the forbidden tree their private parts became uncovered and they began to cover themselves with fig leaves, while in the *Qur'an* they covered themselves with the leaves of the garden of the Paradise.<sup>68</sup>
3. In the Bible Prophet Adam and Eve hid themselves, when they heard God walking in the garden. When God called out to them, "Where are you"? They said we are hidden, because we are naked. Then God knew that they had eaten the fruit<sup>69</sup> While in the *Qur'an* God knew exactly at the time, when they ate the fruit<sup>70</sup>
4. In the Bible it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner not the man.<sup>71</sup> While in the *Qur'an* both of them were deceived.<sup>72</sup>

**Repentance and Departure**

Prophet Adam was asked to explain why he disobeyed God. He did not argue like the devil. He was ashamed and repentant. He confessed his mistake. He learned some words of repentance from God. Almighty God accepted his apology and pardoned him. He sent him on the earth to take over his responsibilities for a fixed time. The Satan's enmity with Adam and Eve on the one hand and with their progeny on the other hand would continue on the earth till the day of resurrection.<sup>73</sup> God let Adam know that he will have to live between the angelic and the wicked forces.<sup>74</sup> If he and his generations would prove to be sincere servants, then their real destination would be paradise, otherwise the sinners would lead them to hell.<sup>75</sup> According to the Bible, God sent Adam and Eve to the ground because he knew that man had eaten a fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and if man stayed there longer he would also eat from the tree of life and would live forever.<sup>76</sup>

**Similarities & Differences**

1. In the Bible after eating from the tree of, "good and evil", man was driven out by God. God guarded the way to the tree of life by a flaming sword, so that man could not eat from the tree of life and live forever<sup>77</sup>. The *Qur'an* does not mention the second tree.
2. In the Bible when God asked Adam why he ate the fruit, he blamed Eve and she blamed the Serpent<sup>78</sup> while it was not so in the *Qur'an*.
3. In the Bible God cursed: Adam, Eve and the serpent due to the slip they made. The curse was that Men would have to work hard to eat, and have to die.<sup>79</sup> Women would give birth in pain<sup>80</sup>

and would be ruled by man. The serpent would walk on belly would eat dust and there would be enmity between the woman and the snake<sup>81</sup> While in the *Qur'an* Adam confessed his sin and asked for Mercy. Almighty God accepted his repentance.<sup>82</sup>

**Death**

Prophet Adam was buried in the mountain of Abu Qubais. Another tradition states that it is maintained that he was buried on mount Baudh, which is where he landed in the first place on earth. It is mentioned in some narratives that, after the flood, Prophet Noah had to bury him for a second time, and that he buried him in Jerusalem.<sup>83</sup>

**Similarities & Differences**

1. According to the Bible Adam lived at the age of 930 years<sup>84</sup>. However, the Bible does not tell us about Eve's age.

**Lessons**

The story of Prophet Adam teaches man:

1. To be aware of his enemy, "Satan". He can use many devices to deceive man. As in the story of Prophet Adam they were deceived by Satan.
2. To tell about human nature, which always make mistakes also He wanted mankind to have an experience about devil, to know his enemy.
3. The importance of knowledge as God kneaded knowledge in Man's matter and made the angels to prostrate before Prophet Adam due to his knowledge.
4. The unity of human origin thus breaking all false standards of caste and creed.
5. That forgetfulness is in human's nature. Man should seek repentance from God because repentance and remorse is the only way to be forgiven.
6. That lies and pride are two of the greatest sins. As "Iblis" was the peacock among the Angels but he was thrown to Hell due to his pride.
7. The advisability of mutual consultation. As God presented Prophet Adam to the assembly of Jinn and Angels.
8. That the Prophetic chain begins with Adam and that Muhammad (PBUH) was a true Messenger of God.

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