

# A Quranic Study of Hadhrat Adam

According to the Holy Quran Allah created the heavens and the earth in six periods

*'He it is who created the heavens and the earth in six periods'<sup>1</sup> Ch.11:8*

This means that Allah created the earth not in six days but over six periods which could have been up to even six million years.<sup>2</sup> We do not believe that Allah created day, night, skies, land, sea, vegetation, the solar system, living creatures of the seas and the sky all in 5 days, stopping at the end of each day to have a break. We also do not believe that, then, on the sixth day Allah completed his creation by creating the animals to fill the earth and then created man and woman (Adam and Eve) in his own image. And we certainly do not believe that on the seventh day Allah had finished his work of creation and so he rested on the seventh day, blessing it and making it holy. Allah does not need to rest as we know from the Holy Quran;

*Allah — there is no God but He, the Living, the Self-Subsisting and All-Sustaining. Slumber seizes Him not, nor sleep. Ch.2:25*

Allah created the earth and the whole universe in perfect harmony and there are no flaws in it.<sup>3</sup> He created the planets, suns, and moons and created day and night. He created the skies, the land, the mountains and the oceans and He caused life to grow on earth.

*'He it is Who made the sun radiate a brilliant light and the moon reflect a lustre, and ordained for it stages, that you might know the number of years and the reckoning of time. Allah has not created this but in truth. He details the Signs for a people who have knowledge.' Ch.10:6*

*'And He it is Who spread out the earth and made therein mountains and rivers. And fruits of every kind He made therein in two sexes. He causes the night to cover the day. Therein, verily, are Signs for a people who reflect.' Ch.13:4*

*'And in the earth are diverse tracts, adjoining one another, and gardens of vines, and corn-fields, and date palms, growing together from one root and others not so growing; they are watered with the same water, yet We make some of them excel others in fruit. Therein are Signs for a people who understand.' Ch.13:5*

Allah also created many kinds of beings. One of Allah's creations are spiritual beings called angels, who are Allah's message-bearer or agents. The belief in angels is one of the articles of faith in Islam. Angels are not how you may have heard about in fairy tales, having wings like birds or fairies, flapping them about as they fly from place to place. According to the Holy Quran the word 'Wing' literally means attributes and powers which are given to the angels by Allah.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sura Al Hud Ch.11:8 English Translation by Maulvi Sher Ali<sup>ra</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Sura Al Yunas Ch.10:4 – Five volume commentary in English – Note no.1279

<sup>3</sup> Sura Al Mulk Ch.67:4 – Five volume commentary in English – Note no.4290

<sup>4</sup> Sura Al Fatir Ch.35:2 – Five volume commentary notes in English – Note no. 3177

After creating the universe and the planets, Allah created the right atmosphere on planet earth where things could grow and live. Then Allah created human beings, as we are told in the holy Quran:

*'And, surely, We created man from dry ringing clay, from black mud wrought into shape.'*  
Ch.15:27

This verse does not mean that Allah suddenly made a clay<sup>5</sup> model of a human and then breathed life into it; according to the holy Quran this verse only speaks of the first stage of man's creation. Human beings were created gradually over a long time and in different stages.<sup>6</sup>

Other stages of human creation have been mentioned in other verses of the Quran:

*'And one of His Signs is this that He created you from dust; then, behold, you are men who move about on the face of the earth.'* Ch.30:21

*'We have indeed created you from dust, then from a spermdrop, then from clotted blood, then from a lump of flesh, partly formed and partly unformed, in order that We may make Our power manifest to you. And We cause what We will to remain in the wombs for an appointed term; then We bring you forth as babes; then We rear you that you may attain to your age of full strength.'* Ch.22:6

This verse explains that creation is a process of evolution, a gradual unfolding, a development from one stage to another. The creation of man is a long and detailed subject to understand, the holy Quran mentions several references e.g. 30:21, 35:12, 40:68, 22:6 and 23:15. These should be read to understand the different stages of development and evolution of man.

The human race began to grow and spread, in the beginning prehistoric men hunted, gathered food, ate and slept. Gradually human beings began to learn about things. They learnt how to build themselves homes and lived in caves. The cavemen learnt to light fire, learnt to cook their food and learnt how to build tools and weapons to hunt and keep themselves safe. Communities and tribes began to develop.

Then Allah decided to let men know the real reason why he created them, so that they could worship him. He decided to send his first messenger to the Earth.

*'And when thy Lord said to the angels: 'I am about to place a vicegerent in the earth,' they said: 'Wilt Thou place therein such as will cause disorder in it, and shed blood? — and we glorify Thee with Thy praise and extol Thy holiness.'* He answered: 'I know what you know not.' Ch.2:31

This verse clarifies the fact, that Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> was not the first man on the earth but the first prophet, because he was to be a successor or leader which could only be possible if there were other people to follow him.

So we do not believe that Prophet Adam<sup>as</sup> was the first man in the world or that the entire human race came from him. Neither do we believe that God took one of Prophet Adam's<sup>as</sup> ribs, whilst he was in a deep sleep and created his wife Eve from it.

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<sup>5</sup> Ch 6:3, Ch.17:62, Ch.23:13, Ch32:8, Ch.37:12, Ch.38:72.

<sup>6</sup> Sura Al Hijr Ch.15:27 – Five volume commentary in English – Note no. 1733.

The people before Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> were without Law and lived almost like savages. Law was to be introduced through Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup>. The angels, with their limited knowledge and little insight in to the future, were naturally worried, but Allah knew what they knew not.<sup>7</sup>

*'And He taught Adam all the names, then He put the objects of these names before the angels and said: 'Tell Me the names of these, if you are right.' Ch.2:32*

*'He said: 'O Adam tell them their names;' and when he had told them their names, He said: 'Did I not say to you, I know the secrets of the heavens and of the earth, and I know what you reveal and what you conceal?' Ch.2:34*

When the angels couldn't name all of the attributes that Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> could, it showed the angels the capabilities of Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> and they realised, how Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> would be able to let men know about the glory and the greatness of Allah. <sup>8</sup> And then the Angels understood what Allah meant when he said, 'I know what you know not.'

When Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> became an image of the attributes of Allah, and gained the rank of a Prophet, Allah ordered the angels to serve him.

*'When we said to the angels: 'Submit to Adam' and they all submitted. But Iblis did not. He refused and was too proud; and he was of the disbelievers.' Ch.2:35*

The command to angels to submit to Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> was not a command to worship Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup>, but a command to obey him. In this way, the angels are ordered to serve all the Prophets of Allah, their chief duty being to help the cause of a Prophet and to draw the hearts of men towards him.<sup>9</sup>

*'And remember the time when We said to the angels, 'Submit to Adam' and they all submitted, except Iblis. He was one of the Jinn; and he disobeyed the command of his Lord.' Ch.18:51*

This verse shows that the command to the angels, to submit to Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> also applied to Iblis. Iblis refused to obey Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> because he looked upon Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> as of lower status to himself.<sup>10</sup> This verse also clarifies that Iblis was not an angel, so it is wrong to think he may have been a leader of the angels.

He was just another disobedient being, regarding which the holy Quran says;

*'Allah said, "What prevented thee from submitting when I commanded thee"? He said, "I am better than he. Thou hast created me of fire while him hast Thou Created of clay." Allah said, "Then go down hence, it is not for thee to be arrogant here. Get out; thou art certainly of those who are abased." He said, "Grant me respite till the day when they will be raised up." Allah said, "Thou shalt be of those who are given respite." He said "Now since Thou hast adjudged me as lost, I will assuredly lie in wait for them on Thy straight path. Then will I surely come upon them from before them and from behind them and from their right and from their left, and Thou wilt not find most of them to be grateful." Allah. said, "Get out hence, despised and banished. Whosoever of them shall follow thee, I will surely fill Hell with you all." ' Ch. 7: 13-19*

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<sup>7</sup> Sura Al Baqarah Ch.2:31 – Five volume commentary in English – Note no. 37.

<sup>8</sup> Sura Al Baqarah Ch.2:34 – Five volume commentary in English – Note no. 40.

<sup>9</sup> Sura Al Baqarah Ch.2:35 – Five volume commentary in English– Note no. 41.

<sup>10</sup> Sura Al Taha Ch.20:117 – Five volume commentary in English – Note no. 2325.

Iblis thought that most people would follow the wrong path but Allah knew that good men would follow the path that leads to Allah, so He accepted the challenge of Iblis. However, these verses make it clear that Iblis will not be allowed to mislead the chosen servants of Allah who would have attained to the exalted stage of spiritual rebirth. Iblis will also not be able to force men to disobey Allah, as the verse clearly points out: only those will come under his influence who themselves choose to 'follow' him.<sup>11</sup>

Allah told Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> and his wife Eve to live in a garden which was a place called Eden; it must be remembered that according to the holy Quran this has always been referred to as an earthly garden and not paradise.

Allah gave specific instructions to Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> and Eve;

*'And We said: 'O Adam, dwell thou and thy wife in the garden, and eat there from plentifully wherever you will, but approach not this tree, lest you be of the wrongdoers.' Ch.2:36*

The tree referred to in this verse was not an actual tree, but meant as a symbol of good and evil, or pure and impure things. Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> was forbidden to approach a certain 'tree' which was not a tree in its literal sense but a certain family or tribe, which he was warned about, because the members of that family were Hadhrat Adam's (as) enemies and they could cause him harm.

Satan who was another being, pretended to be Hadhrat Adam's<sup>as</sup> and Eve's friend<sup>12</sup> and whispered in their ears.

*'But Satan whispered evil suggestions to them so that he might make known to them what was hidden from them of their shame, and said, 'Your Lord has only forbidden you this tree, lest you should become angels or such beings as live forever.' Ch. 7:21*

We do not believe that Satan may have been a snake or serpent. In fact Satan is often referred to in the holy Quran as an evil being or in some cases an evil person. *Iblis* is often considered identical with Satan, but is in some cases different from him<sup>13</sup>, In the story of Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> it is important to remember that Iblis and Satan are two different beings, the being which the Quran has mentioned as having refused to submit to is called Iblis, while the person who tempted him is called Satan.)<sup>14</sup> Satan wanted to cause trouble in the peaceful community.

*'So he caused them to fall into disobedience by deceit. And when they tasted of the tree, their shame became manifest to them and they began to stick the leaves of the garden together over themselves. And their Lord called them, saying, 'Did I not forbid you that tree and tell you: verily, Satan is to you an open foe?' Ch. 7:23*

Satan misled Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> and Hadhrat Eve into believing that he was telling them the truth. In this way he tricked them into doing something which Allah had forbidden them. When this verse mentions 'they tasted of the tree', this does not mean that Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> and Eve tasted a real forbidden fruit, this is just a

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<sup>11</sup> Sura Al Araf Ch.7:19 – Five volume commentary in English – Note no. 922.

<sup>12</sup> Sura Al Araf Ch.7:21– Five volume commentary in English – Note no. 923.

<sup>13</sup> Sura Al Baqara Ch.2:35 – Five volume commentary in English – Note no. 41.

<sup>14</sup> Sura Al Araf Ch.7:23 – Five volume commentary in English – Note no. 924.

metaphorical explanation that Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> was tempted at disobeying Allah's command in such a way by Satan, that Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> and Eve did not even realise that they were disobeying Allah. In this way this Satan succeeded in deceiving Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup>.

It was when Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> was tempted and deceived by Satan that he became aware of his natural weaknesses. The Quran does not say that the weaknesses of Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> and his wife became known to other people, but that they became known to themselves. Some of Hadhrat Adam's<sup>as</sup> weaknesses were indeed hidden from him and he came to realize them when his enemy lured him away from his position of security.

Before this he did his work, aided and helped by divine grace which kept covered his failings and weaknesses; but when he allied himself with the family against which he had been warned, he was exposed and he realized, to his sorrow, how weak he was.

As Satan had succeeded in causing a split in the community and some of the weaker members had gone out of its fold, Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> gathered together the (leaves) of the garden i.e. the youth of the community and began to re-unite and re-organize his people with their help. Hadhrat Adam's<sup>as</sup> error lay in taking this man-devil for a well-wisher, although Allah had warned him against having anything to do with him. <sup>15</sup>

We do not believe that Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> and Eve became aware of their nakedness after eating a real forbidden fruit and started sticking leaves on their bodies and sewed fig leaves together making aprons to cover themselves. We also do not believe that Allah walked about in the Garden angrily looking for Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> and Eve, who were hiding behind trees from Allah out of fear. Allah did not curse the land and put sorrow in the earth forever as a punishment because of Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> and Eve's mistake (not sin).

Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> and Eve did not remain in error for long. They soon realized their mistake and hastened to turn to Allah in repentance. Allah knew that they had not meant to disobey Him, so He taught them how to pray for forgiveness, Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> and Eve prayed;

قَالَ رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنفُسَنَا وَإِن لَّمْ تَغْفِرْ  
لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾

*'They said, 'Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves; and if Thou forgive us not and have not mercy on us, we shall surely be of the lost.'* Ch.7:24

A very important point to remember here is that Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> and Eve did not commit a deliberate sin, they made a mistake and as soon as they realised, they asked for Allah's forgiveness, and Allah forgave them.

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<sup>15</sup> Sura Al Araf Ch.7:23 – Five volume commentary in English – Note no. 924

We do not believe that as a result of Prophet Adam<sup>as</sup> and Eve's mistake, sin entered the world through them and because of this, everyone is born sinful. We believe that every child is born sinless. (Babies and children remain innocent until they grow old enough to learn and understand about right and wrong things.)

Allah forgave Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup>, however the blissful place in which he used to live was now divided and some people turned against him. Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> could no longer live there.

*'He said, 'Go forth, some of you being enemies of others. And for you there is an abode on the earth and a provision for a time.' Ch. 7:25*

The verse shows that Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> was commanded by Allah, to emigrate from the land of his birth because enmity and hatred had sprung up between different members of his community. We believe that Allah told Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> and Eve to leave for their safety. We do not believe that Allah was angry and was punishing them, by telling them to leave the land forever.

This verse also gives more proof that the garden, which Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> was to leave was not the Heaven or Paradise of the Quran, because, as the Quran itself tells us, Paradise is not a place from which no one is ever turned out after entering (15: 49), nor can Satan deceive or even approach anyone there.

The emigration was perhaps a temporary one, and Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> may have returned to his native land not long after.<sup>16</sup>

*'He said, 'Therein shall you live, and therein shall you die, and there from shall you be brought forth.' Ch. 7:26*

Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> is warned in this verse to be careful in future; for it was in his native land that he was now to live until his death. Taken in the general sense, the verse also hints that no human being can ascend into the heavens with his physical body. Man must live and die on the earth.<sup>17</sup>

This is the account of the story of Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> according to the Holy Quran.

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<sup>16</sup> Sura Al Araf Ch.7:25 – Five volume commentary notes in English – Note no. 926.

<sup>17</sup> Sura Al Araf Ch.7:26 – Five volume commentary notes in English – Note no. 927.

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Now let's see what you have learned. Write a brief description about some of the points from this story;

1. The world was not created in six or seven days.
2. Why did God send Prophets to this world?
3. Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> was not the first man on earth but the first Prophet.
4. Eden was not paradise but an earthly garden.
5. What does the forbidden tree stand for?
6. How did Satan trick Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> and Eve into disobeying Him?
7. As soon as Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> and Eve realized their mistake, what did they do?
8. What does the story of Hadhrat Adam<sup>as</sup> teach us?