



Stories of the
PROPHETS

عليه السلام

A Rendering from
IBN KATHĪR

Translation
SHOAIB SHAH

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PROPHETS ﷺ

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SHOAIB SHAH



TURATH
PUBLISHING



وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ
رَسُولًا أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ

*We did raise a messenger among
every people with the message,
'Worship Allah and stay away
from the Rebel (Shayṭān)'*

(16:36)



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Bismi 'llāhi 'r-Raḥmāni 'r-Raḥīm

The Story of Ādam ﷺ

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

*Our Lord we have wronged ourselves. If You do not forgive us
and have mercy on us, we will be among the lost. (7:23)*

The story of Adam ﷺ begins when Allah ﷻ told the angels ﷺ, 'I am putting a deputy on the Earth,'¹ intending to make Ādam ﷺ and his offspring viceroys, following one after the other.² He ﷻ informed them, not asking their opinion on the matter, to exalt the creation of Ādam ﷺ and his offspring, like a king who presents his plans for a momentous decree before he delivers it. The angels, curious to know more, asked, 'Why put there one who will cause corruption and shed blood?'³ Their question was not an objection nor was it borne out of criticism of and hate for Ādam ﷺ and his offspring.

Why would the angels presume this about Ādam ﷺ and his offspring? Because they had already experienced something similar with a prior creation of Allah ﷻ. The Jinn,⁴ who were created before Ādam ﷺ, shed much blood, so Allah ﷻ sent an army of angels to drive them away to the seas and remote islands. The angels thought that if the purpose of creating this new creation was so that they worship Allah

1 2:30.

2 See 6:165 and 27:62.

3 2:30.

4 Ibn Kathīr also quotes an opinion that there was another race of creatures called the Binn, who also spread corruption and killed, but this cannot be verified through any reliable source.

ﷻ, then they, who constantly worshipped Allah ﷻ and never disobey Him, were more suited candidates. They said to Allah ﷻ, *'We glorify You with praise and proclaim Your purity.'*¹ Allah ﷻ responded, *'I know what you do not know'*,² regarding the true purpose of this creation. There will be Prophets, Messengers, truthful ones, martyrs and righteous people among them.'

When Allah ﷻ told the angels of his plan to create Ādam ﷺ, they said to themselves, 'Allah will not create a creation more knowledgeable than us,' so Allah ﷻ tested them. Allah ﷻ, demonstrating the new creations' excellence in knowledge, *taught Ādam all the names.*³ He ﷻ taught Ādam ﷺ the nouns which we use today; human, animal, ground, sea, mountain, camel, donkey and many other words for objects, their functions and descriptions.⁴ *Then He arrayed them before the angels and said, "Tell me their names if you are telling the truth."*⁵ *But no one can grasp any of His knowledge except what He wills,*⁶ so the angels responded, *'Glory be to You! We have no knowledge except what You have taught us. You are the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.'*⁷ Allah said, *'Ādam, tell them their names.'* *When he told them their names, Allah said, 'Did I not tell you I know the Unseen of the heavens and the earth, and I know what you reveal and what you conceal?'*⁸ Allah ﷻ told them that not only did He know of their open reservation: *'Why put there one who will cause corruption,* but He ﷻ also hinted that He is aware of the malice and arrogance Iblis was concealing when he saw Ādam ﷺ.⁹

1 2:30.

2 Ibid.

3 2:31.

4 To prove this point, Ibn Kathīr quotes a hadith about the Day of Rising, when people will implore prophets to ask Allah ﷻ to begin the judgement. In the hadith, the Prophet ﷺ mentions that when they come to Ādam ﷺ, one of the descriptions they will praise him with before making their request will be: 'Allah taught you the names of all things.' Bukhārī (4476). Some other opinions of what these names refer to are the names of the angels, and the names of his own offspring. And Allah ﷻ knows best.

5 2:31.

6 2:255.

7 2:32.

8 2:33.

9 'What you conceal' could also be a hint at the angels' prior comment: 'Allah will not

EXTRACTED from the celebrated Ibn Kathīr's *al-Bidāyah wa'n-Nihāyah, Qaṣaṣ al-Anbiyā'* is a detailed look at the rich, lesson-filled lives of the Prophets, upon them be eternal blessings and peace. This classic work seeks to reconnect Muslims to the stories of Qur'an and the excellent example of the Prophets.

In this book, Ibn Kathīr presents verses of the Qur'an, complimented by narrations from the final Prophet ﷺ. Sources from previous scriptures are also consulted but with critical analysis of their veracity. May Allah ﷻ instil in us the beautiful qualities of the best of humankind and may He unite us with them in Firdaws al-A'lā. *Āmīn*

The author is Abū 'l-Fidā' Imād ad-Dīn Ismā'īl ibn 'Umar ibn Kathīr ad-Dimashqī. Born in 700AH in Basra, he had the love of Islam and knowledge instilled in him from a very young age. He was reared and taught by some of the Ummah's leading personalities such as Ibn 'Asākir, Ibn Taymiyyah and Imam Dhahabī رحمه الله. He became a master in his own right and a leading figure in the fields of *Tafsīr*, *Hadith*, Arabic Language and History. Imam Suyūṭī's words suffice as rightful praise of this great scholar: 'He is the great Imam, the master of *Hadith* and possessor of many excellences.'



TURATH
PUBLISHING

ISBN 978-1-915265-28-9



9 781915 265289

This edition is published by 'ilmStore.in
in India and is authorised for sale only in India,
Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives.