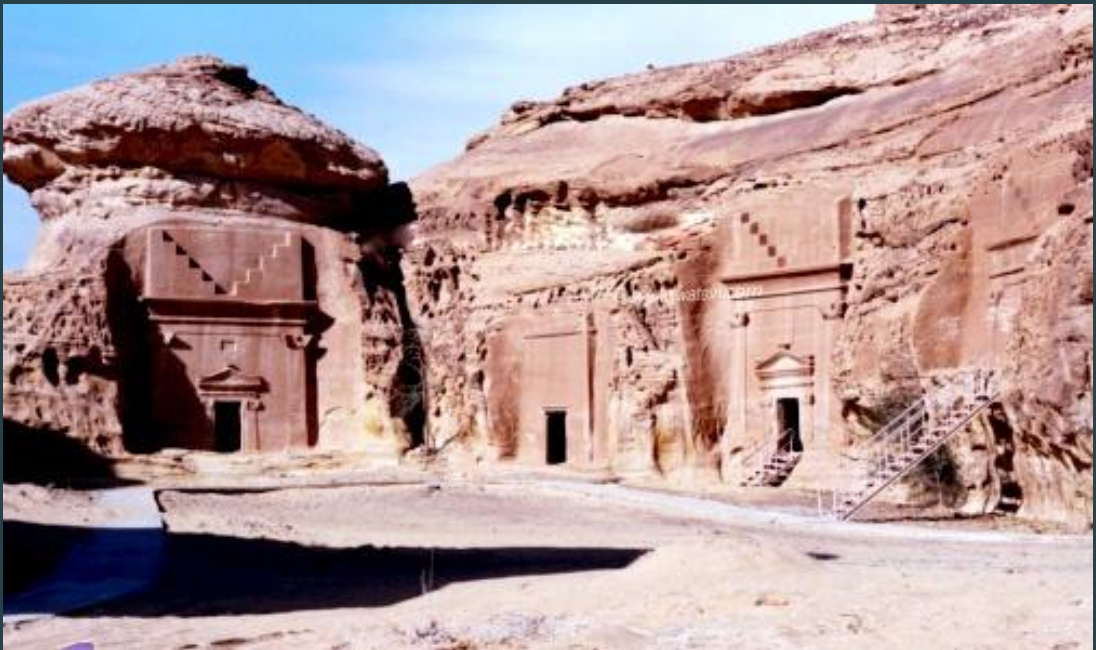


*Stories
of
The Holy Prophets*



NOURESHAM BOOK CENTER AL-FATIH ISLAMIC INSTITUTE

*Stories
of
The Holy Prophets*

TEXTS BY

Bashar Bakkour

Mansi Omar Omar

Sa'ad Eddin Omar

Kachkar Safi

Shehada

EDITED BY *M.W. Al-Jallad*

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NOURESHAM BOOK CENTER

Bldg 2, Omar Al-Mukhtar Avenue No.6, Al-Mazraa, .

Tel: 00 963 11 4457458, Fax: 00 963 11 3324913

PO Box: 249. Damascus-Syria

E-mail: nouresham@gmail.sy

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1-THE HOLY PROPHET ADAM

Bashar Bakkour

The holy Prophet Adam, peace be upon him (pbuh), is the Mankind's father and the first human being to set foot on the earth. He is mentioned in six long Quranic chapters telling the story of his creation and other related events, most remarkable of which is Iblîs' (*Satan's*) rejection of Allah's Divine Order to prostrate himself to Adam. The first Quranic text is:

[And (remember) when your Lord said to the angels: "I will make a viceroy on the earth." They said: "Will you place in it those who will make mischief in it and shed blood, while we do celebrate Your Praise and Glory?" He (Allah) said: "I know what you do not know." [30] And He (Allah) taught Adam the names of all things, and then He offered them to the angels and said: "Tell me the names of these if you are truthful." [31] They replied: "Glory to You! We have no knowledge except that which You have taught us. Verily, You are All-Knowing and All-Wise. [32] He (Allah) said to Adam: "Tell them their names." When he (Adam) told them their names, He (Allah) said: "Did I not tell you that I know what is unseen in the heavens and the earth and that I know what you reveal and what you conceal?" [33] And (remember) when We said to the angels: "Prostrate yourselves to Adam." They all fell down prostrate, except Iblîs (Satan), who refused and was arrogant, and was one of the disbelievers. [34] And We said to Adam: "Dwell, you and your wife, in Paradise. And eat, both of you, easefully where you desire, but do not go near this tree, otherwise you will be one of the wrongdoers." [35] However, Satan caused them to slip from it (Paradise), and removed them from the state they were in. And We

said: "Get down (all of you), you will be each other's enemies. On earth will be the place for your dwelling and enjoyment for a time." [36] Then Adam received some words from his Lord, Who accepted his repentance. Verily, He is Ever the Acceptor of Repentance, the Most Merciful. [37] [2: 30-37. See also chapters, [7: 11-25], [15: 26-44], [17: 61-65], [20: 115-126], [38: 67-88].

The word "Adam" in Arabic is derived either from "Adim al-Ard", which means: "the surface of the earth" or from "Al-Udmah", which means "brownness".

Allah, Glory to Him, informed His angels that He would create a human being, whom He would call 'Adam', and of whose offspring would be generations succeeding one another. By way of enquiry not objection, the Angels asked: "Will you place in the earth those who will make mischief...?" In other words, they enquired whether the new creature would commit evil deeds or spread corruption on earth, while they glorified the Lord in absolute obedience and devotion. In fact, they desired to know the wisdom behind creating such a new human creature as Adam.

However, an imperative question may arise in this context: What made the angels think that the new human creature, and his offspring, would make such probable mischief on earth? In answer to this question, two suggestions have been put forward. The first suggestion was adopted by two eminent commentators of the Holy Quran, Abdullah Ibn Omar and Ibn 'Abbas, who mentioned that, before the creation of Adam (pbuh), Jinn had dwelled on earth. They had made a lot of mischief and committed heinous crimes and murders. Therefore,

Allah the Almighty sent hosts of angels who killed some of them and forced the others to have recourse to the seas and summits.¹

The second suggestion, adopted by some contemporary commentators, such as Sheikh ‘Abdurrahman Hābannakah, holds that the foregoing Quranic verses could be interpreted as follows: The angels asked Allah, the Almighty, to describe the qualities of the new human creature, Glory to Him, informed them that, among the human characteristics of Adam, there are a free will, whereby he makes his own choices, the ability to learn and acquire knowledge, lusty desires and caprices that he strives to satisfy even by committing sins and misdeeds. Such illaudable human traits are conducive to lots of mischief and bloodshed.²

The latter opinion is supported by At-Tābāri, a well-known Quranic commentator and historic, in his tradition that goes to the same effect, confirming vulnerability of Adam's offspring to such illaudable human traits as envy, corruption, murder, and bloodshed.³

However, Allah's answer to the angels' enquiry came: *"I know what you know not."* In other words, Allah, alone, knows the wisdom behind the creation of mankind.

Phases of Adam's creation:

It is common knowledge that Adam (pbuh) was created from clay, a mixture of water and dust. According to Muslim's traditions and the collections of Prophetic Hādith, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said:

¹ Fossil records revealed that there had been creatures and living things before human beings.

² Ma‘arij At-Tafakkur, ‘Abdurrahman Hābannakah. Vol. 3, p 674-675

³ Ibid.

exalted? ' [75] He (Iblîs) said, 'I am better than he is. You created me from fire, while You created him from clay.' [76] [38:75-76].

However, envy and arrogance stood behind Iblîs's rejection and disobedience. Due to his insolent arrogance, Iblîs was expelled from the heavenly world. Allah commanded him, saying: { 'Then get out from it (Paradise)! You are accursed; and the curse will be on you till the Day of Judgment.' } [15: 34- 35] Allah also addressed him: ['Get down from it. It is not for you to be proud here. Get out; you are one of the degraded'] [7: 13]

Admitting Allah's Divinity, Iblîs said: ['O my Lord, respite me till the day when they are raised up (i.e. as You issued this decree to dismiss me from Your Mercy, so keep me alive till the Day of Judgment).'] [15: 36] Allah answered Iblîs' request and promised to respite him to the Resurrection Day. To this effect, the verse goes: [He (Allah) said, 'You are among the ones that are given respite [37] till the day of the time appointed.' [38] [15: 37- 38] Having received the Divine Promise, Iblîs declared that he would make each and every endeavor to allure Adam's children away from the straight path. He said: { 'I swear by Your Glory, that I will seduce them all, [82] except Your Chosen Servants.' [83] [38: 82-83]. He added arrogantly: ['Do You see this (creature) whom You have honored above me? If You give me respite till the Day of Resurrection, I will surely lead astray his descendents, except a few of them.'] [17:62].

Another Quranic verse shows the outlines of Iblîs' seduction plans: [He said, 'because you caused me to go astray, I shall sit in ambush for them (Adam's children) and prevent them from following Your Straight Path. [16] Then I shall come upon them from before them, from behind them, from their right hands and from their left hands; and You will not find most of them thankful.' [17] [7:16-17]. However, Allah, the Most Merciful, said: [You will have no power over My faithful servants, except those who follow you of the wrongdoers.'] [15: 42].

Is Iblîs an angel?

The majority of Muslim religious scholars hold that Iblîs was not an angel. They cite the following evidences:

1. Iblîs was from the Jinn (Demons), as the verse clearly indicates: *[And remember when We said to the angels: 'Prostrate to Adam', they prostrated, except Iblîs, he was one of the Jinn. He transgressed the command of His Lord.] [18: 50]*

2. If Iblîs was an angle, he would not have defied Allah's Order, for angels are always obedient to the Lord. The Quran describes them, saying: *{ They (Angels) never disobey Allah's Commands, but they do what they are commanded.} [66: 6]*

3. Iblîs was created of fire, while angels were created of light. In the Holy Quran, Iblîs is quoted as saying: *[I am better than him (Adam). You created me from fire, and You created him from clay. '] [38: 76]* By the same token, the authentic Prophetic H̄adith says, "Angels were created from light, Jinn from smokeless fire, and Adam from what has been described to you."¹⁰

4. Angels are not to be described with either masculinity or femininity. Therefore, they are not subject to the laws of sexual reproduction, unlike Iblîs, who has progeny, as mentioned in the verse: *[Will you take him (Iblîs) and his offspring as friends instead of Me (Allah).] [18: 50]¹¹*

Creation of Eve (H̄awwa’):

After the creation of Adam, Allah made Eve from his body. In relation to that, the verse says: *[O mankind, fear your Lord who created you from*

¹⁰ S̄ahih Muslim. No 2996

¹¹ An-Nubuwwah wal-Anbiya', Assabouni. P161-162

a single (human) being (Adam), and from him He created his mate (Eve).] [4: 1]
According to an authentic Prophetic Hādīth, it is confirmed that
"woman was created from a rib of man."¹²

Further information is provided in the book of Genesis (Ch. 2: 21-23): *"And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept. And He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said: This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man."*

It is unknown whether Eve's creation took place before entrance into Paradise or after it. Eve is named Hāwwa' in Arabic, because she is the mother of every human being.

Adam & Eve in the Garden:

Upon the creation of Adam and Eve, they were both made to live in the 'Garden' (Eden). Regarding the location of that Garden, there are different opinions, but some scholars claim to be in the heaven

The majority of Islamic religious scholars believe that it is the Paradise promised to the believers on the Day of Judgment. Supporting their view, they cite two proofs:

1- The following verse: *[We said to Adam: 'Dwell, you and your wife in al-Jannah (Paradise)'] [2: 35]* The usage of the definite article 'al' (the) in *Al-Jannah* refers to a certain known Garden, namely that of Paradise.

¹² Saḥīh Muslim. No 1468

2- The genuine Prophetic Hādīth: *"On the Day of Judgment Allah gathers all mankind together. When Paradise is brought near to the believers, they go to Adam saying: 'O our father! Ask (the Lord) to open Paradise to us.' He replies: 'Did anything cause you to be driven out of Paradise except your father's sin?' "*

In contrast, the Mu'tazila (a philosophical Islamic school) view the Garden as different from that into which the believers will be admitted on the Day of Judgment, as mentioned above. This is because the Garden in which Adam and Eve were made to live, they were ordered not to come near or eat from a particular fruit tree, but under Satan's malicious insinuations, they disobeyed the Lord and ate from the tree. In the Paradise promised to the believers, however, such things as happened to Adam and Eve do not exist.¹³

The Mu'tazila and Maturide schools also differ as regards the location of the Garden, whether in the heaven or on the earth. According to a tradition of the Old Testament, it is in east of Eden (somewhere in the area of Al-Sham and Iraq). To this effect, we read: *"And the Lord planted a Garden eastward in Eden, and there He put Adam whom He had formed."* (The book of Genesis: Ch. 2: 8)

As for the descent of Adam and Eve from the Garden, various traditions are mentioned. In the words of Ibn 'Abbas: The place of Adam's descent was India, while Eve descended to Jeddah (a port city in Arabia). Later on, they met in a place called Al-Muzdalifah near Mount 'Arafat in the vicinity of Mecca.

¹³ An-Nubuwwah wal-Anbiya'. P. 164.

In another tradition, it is stated that Adam was made to get down on the highest summit on earth. ¹⁴

Irrespective of its location, it should be stressed that the dwelling of Adam and his wife in the Garden meant to be a sort of trial for both.

The Holy Quran says that before their entering the Garden, Adam and his wife had been warned by the Lord of Satan's evil temptations. To this effect, the verses go: [*And remember when We (Allah) said to the angels: 'Prostrate to Adam' They all prostrated, except Iblīs (Satan); he refused. [116] Then We (Allah) said: 'O Adam, certainly this is an enemy to you and your wife. Therefore, do not enable him to drive you both out of the Garden and thence you (Adam) will be loaded with misery'[117] [20:116-117]*

In its broadest sense, the word *misery* in the above verse refers to all of the unpleasant and undesirable aspects of human life on earth (e.g. illness, agony, anxiety, suffering etc). Further, the clause [*thence you (Adam) will be loaded with misery*] in the above Quranic verse is addressed to Adam alone, which bears the implication that he is the one who has to assume more life responsibilities and hardships than Eve does.¹⁵

While dwelling in the Garden, Adam and his wife were permitted to eat freely from all trees except only one. With this respect, the Quranic verse goes: [*O Adam, dwell you and your wife in the Garden. Eat whatever you like, but do not approach this tree, lest you become wrongdoers.*][7: 19] Islamic traditions do not give any definite account of the tree, although the book of Genesis describes it as "*the tree of knowledge of good and evil*". (Ch.2: 9)

¹⁴ See Atlas Tarikh Al-Anbiya' wa-rrusul. Sami Al-Maghlouth. P 28-29.

¹⁵ Ma'arj At-Tafakkur. Vol. 3, p 709.

Iblîs's evil strategies:

In revenge for his expulsion from the Garden and Heaven, due to obstinacy and arrogance, as previously mentioned, Iblîs undertook solemnly to seduce Adam and his progeny.

The Holy Quran portrays Satan's methods of seduction: [*But Satan whispered to him (Adam), saying: 'O Adam, shall I lead you to the tree of immortality, and a kingdom which does not decay?'*] [20:120] The remarkable thing about this verse is that Iblîs from now on is given a new name, Satan, which implies his rebellious character and malicious plotting against Adam and his offspring. In order to tempt Adam, Satan, apparently out of feigned love and sincere advice, offered to show him what he claimed to be "the tree of immortality and the ever-lasting kingdom" as if such a tree had already been known among the inhabitants of the Heaven. Driven by curiosity, Adam wanted to see the immortal tree and eat from it. Upon seeing the tree, however, he realized, later on, that it was nothing but the forbidden one.

A dialogue must have taken place between Adam and Satan. Adam must have explained to Satan that the Lord had already forbidden him to approach or eat from that tree. Adam was definitely certain that if he disobeyed the order, he and his wife would be among the wrongdoers and, hence, would be expelled from the Garden.

Having failed to seduce Adam to eat from the forbidden tree, Satan maliciously tried to get Eve involved in the dialogue, in the hope of attaining his wicked intentions through her. In this context, the Quranic verse goes: [*But Satan whispered to them, in order to reveal to them that which was hidden from them of their shameful parts, saying: 'Your Lord has forbidden you to*

approach this tree only to prevent you from becoming angels or becoming immortal'[20]
Then he swore to them (saying):' I am a sincere adviser to you'[21] [7:20-21]

It is obvious that Adam had been afraid of falling sinful. Therefore, he requested an evidence of truthfulness from Satan, who immediately made a solemn oath marking the beginning of a new step of his spiteful allurements. To this purport, the verse reads": *[So he led them by delusion]* [7:22] He may have said to them: "You do not have to eat. Just taste!"

It is worth remarking that this devilish method of gradual seduction has always been adopted by Satan's hosts from among both Jinn (Demons) and humans.

Adam was simply overcome not only by his human weakness and overwhelming desire to become an angel or an immortal creature but also by Eve's temptation to eat from the forbidden tree, as well as Satan's solemn oath that eating from that tree would certainly help him achieve his desire. As a result, he forgot Allah's Divine Order and ate from the forbidden tree, along with his wife. Upon doing that, Adam and Eve both went naked.

The Quranic verse describes their situation as follows: *[When they ate of the tree, their shameful parts appeared to them, and they both started to cover themselves with the leaves of (the trees of) Paradise.]* [7:22] (See also 20:121).

It should be mentioned that Satan must have known already that eating from this forbidden tree would cause nakedness, as we learn from the Quranic verse: *[And Satan whispered to them in order to reveal to them that which was hidden from them of their shameful parts.]* [7:20]

Allah reproached Adam and his wife, saying: *['Did I not forbid you from approaching that tree, and warn you that Satan is your manifest enemy?']* [7:22]

Sorrowfully and regretfully, they replied: *{ Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If You do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we shall, certainly, be of the losers. }* [7:23]

Due to their grievous erroneous act, they were all commanded to descend to the earth: *[Get down (all of you) to the earth, some of you will be enemies of the others. The earth will be the place for your dwelling and enjoyment for a time.]* [2:36]

In distress, Adam supplicated His Lord, the Most Merciful, to forgive him. The Lord, in response, revealed to him certain words to incorporate in his supplication. To this effect, the verse goes: *[Then Adam received some words from his Lord, Who accepted his repentance. Verily, He is Ever the Acceptor of Repentance, the Most Merciful.]* [2:37], in another verse, we read: *[Then his Lord chose him, turned again unto him, and guided him.]* [20:122]

In this context, it should be mentioned that while eating from the tree, Adam was in a state of forgetfulness of the Divine Order. The Quranic verse says: *[And We have made a covenant with Adam aforetime, but he forgot (Allah's Command), and We did not find in him a firm resolve (to commit such a sinful deed)]* [20: 115]. In this respect, Al-Hāsan Al-Basrī comments on the above-verse: "By Allah! Adam disobeyed (His Lord) because of mere forgetfulness." ¹⁶

As for Allah's Words: *[And Adam disobeyed his Lord and (thus) went astray]* [20:121], however, the word "disobeyed" in this verse should be taken to mean that Adam did not do as Allah ordered him to do. In other words, Allah's Order to Adam and Eve not to eat from that tree was by

¹⁶ Al-Insan Musayar am Mukhayar. Muhammad Said Ramadan Al-Butrī. P 130-132

way of advice rather than obligation. Therefore, Adam's eating from the tree is by no means considered a kind of disobedience.¹⁷

Was Adam a Prophet and Messenger?

Consensus holds that Adam was the first Prophet, yet his being a Messenger has been a controversial issue. Undoubtedly, Adam was a Prophet in the sense that he communicated Allah's Divine Commands to his own family and children.

The Story of the two sons of Adam Qabil & Habil (Cain & Abel):

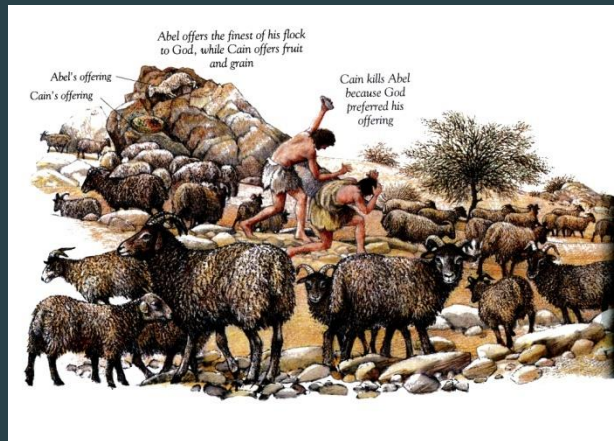
Regarding the story of Adam's two sons, the Quran says: *{ And recite to them the story of the two sons of Adam truthfully, when both of them offered a sacrifice. It was accepted of one of them, and not accepted of the other. 'I will surely slay you,' said one. 'Allah accepts only of the righteous,' said the other [27]. 'Yet if you stretch out your hand against me to slay me, I will not stretch out my hand against you to slay you. I fear Allah, the Lord of all being[28].'* [5:27-28]¹⁸ Commenting on these Qur'anic verses, exegetes, depending on the authority of the Old Testament, state that Eve gave birth to forty twins in twenty deliveries, a male and a female in every delivery. With Allah's Permission, Adam joined in wedlock between each son to his brother's twin sister. He did not intermarry a male to the female of the same delivery. However, one of Adam's sons, Abel, wanted to get married to the twin sister of his brother, Cain. But Cain wanted to keep his twin sister for himself because she was very beautiful. Adam ordered Cain to allow his twin sister to get married to Abel, but Cain refused. In order to solve this

¹⁷ Ibid, 135-136.

¹⁸ Qissas Al-Anbiya', Ibn Kathir p 27-28.

problem, Adam bade them both to offer a sacrifice to the Lord. "The one whose sacrifice is accepted by the Lord will marry her," said Adam. Abel, who had goats, sacrificed one of his best and fattest ones. But Cain, who was a farmer, sacrificed a bundle of the worst plants he owned. A fire was sent down to devour Abel's accepted sacrifice. Thus, Cain got angry and threatened to kill his brother. Abel replied: "Allah accepts only from the righteous." In the end, Cain killed his brother and became loser and the first to innovate murder.

In a Prophetic Tradition, we read: *"Never is a person killed unjustly but a part of his blood is on the hands of the first son of Adam, because he was the first to innovate murder"*¹⁹



Adam's death:

According to different sources, Adam lived for about thousand years. As for his place of burial, it is said he had been buried in India, or in Mecca (in the Cave of Abu Qubays).

Adam in the Old-Testament:

¹⁹ Sahih Al-Bukhari. No: 3335.

1. In the book of Genesis (Ch. 1: 26), we read: "*And God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.'*" This shows that Adam, according to the Bible, resembles God's image.

2. No reference is made to the angels' prostration to Adam, nor to their statement as mentioned in the Holy Quran [2:30].

3. In the Old Testament there is no mention that Adam was a Prophet or a Messenger.²⁰

4. There is no mention of Adam's superiority over the angels, because of his ability to learn and acquire knowledge. On the other hand, the book of Genesis refers that Adam feared Allah when he discovered that they, he and his wife, were naked for they had eaten from the forbidden tree.

5. The Old Testament is silent as regards the story of Satan with Adam: Satan's arrogance and rejection of the Divine order, and his evil plans against Adam and Eve.

6. In the Old Testament, it is claimed that it was the serpent that tempted Eve to eat from the tree of knowledge, and that it was Eve that convinced Adam to eat from the tree. Thus, a Divine curse befell the serpent, Eve, Adam and even the earth.

Morals of Adam's story:

- Allah honored mankind by a number of things: He created their father with His own Divine Hand, He breathed His spirit into him, He ordered the angels to prostrate to him, He taught him the names of all things, and He made him His vicegerent on earth.
- A human being should always remember that he was created of dust, and to the earth his return will be. Accordingly, he must not claim superiority over other people. Laying stress on that, the Prophet, (pbuh), said: "*O people! Verily, your Lord is One, and your father (Adam) is one. No Arab is (to be considered as) superior*

²⁰ Allah wal-anbiyya' fi At-tawrah wal'ahd Al-Kadim, Muhammad Ali Al-Bar. P 51-53.

*to a non-Arab, a non-Arab to an Arab, a red one to a black one, nor a black one to a red one, except by being more pious and righteous."*²¹

- A human being should always be watchful of Satan's malicious seductions and whisperings; and he should take him for an enemy. It was Satan who caused Adam and Eve to leave Paradise.

- Since man is naturally a weak forgetful creature, he is highly susceptible to erring and going astray. This human weakness played a major role in making Adam eat from the tree and hence become among the wrongdoers.

- A sinful person should, by no means, lose hope of Allah's Mercy and Forgiveness. Allah, The Most Merciful, says: *[O my servants who transgressed against their souls! Do not despair of the Mercy of Allah, for Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, He is the Oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.]*[39:53]

²¹ Musnad Ahmad. No: 22391