



nd when thy Lord said to the angels: ‘I am setting in the earth a viceroy.’

“And the angels answered: ‘O Lord, will You then create a being to be Your deputy on earth who will shed blood and vomit evil on the face of the earth? We are incessantly engaged in Your praises and we never disobey.’ And the Lord said: ‘Assuredly I know that you know not.’” [The Cow, 2:30]

When the Lord spoke these words, the angels all grew afraid and they were stricken with awe by the power of these words. They began to circumambulate the Ka’ba seven times on that day, and that is the origin of the rite we perform to this very day.

The Lord intended to create Ādam ﷺ and He revealed to the earth: “O Earth, I wish to create the Children of Ādam from your clay, and they should live upon you and worship Me, and I shall grant them paradise as their final station, and if they disobey Me, I shall place them in Hell.” Then He sent the angel Jibrā’īl ﷺ to fetch some clay so that He could begin the work of Creation. When Jibrā’īl ﷺ stretched out his hand to pick up some clay, the earth resisted, invoking the Divine Name: “By the Might and the Glory of my Lord, do not touch me, do not stretch out your hand for me to take any part of my clay!”

Before Jibrā’īl ﷺ set out to perform this task as he had been ordered by the Lord, Iblīs had gone and warned the earth not to give him any of her earth. Iblīs had long believed that the Lord would make him His deputy on earth, and when he heard that He was planning to call into being a wholly new creature, he was eaten by envy and jealousy. So he tried to subvert the plans of the Lord, advising the earth that what the Lord planned to create from its clay would be no good for it. When the earth refused to yield up any of her clay to him, Jibrā’īl ﷺ returned to his station and was silent. The Lord addressed him and said:

“O Jibrā’īl, have you brought the clay?” Jibrā’īl عليه السلام answered “O Lord, I went and did as Thou bade me do, but the Earth besought me and invoked Thy Holy Name not to take anything from her, and I could not do it by force.”

The Lord then sent the Angel Mikā’īl عليه السلام to procure the clay, but the same happened also to him and he did not succeed. Likewise it was with Isrāfil عليه السلام, he too returned without success. Finally the turn came to ‘Azrā’īl عليه السلام who went to the earth and asked her for the clay, upon the Command of the Almighty. The earth implored him also and besought him with all her might and persuasion, but ‘Azrā’īl عليه السلام was not moved, and said: “It is the Command of the Almighty, so be quiet!” And in spite of her protests he gathered some earth for this creature to be formed, and the earth screamed all the while the angel took the earth from her. He collected clay from every land, from every continent, from all the four corners of the earth. For this reason, mankind is so varied, and there are so many different races and hues.

Then ‘Azrā’īl عليه السلام brought the clay before the Lord and the Lord asked, “What did she say when you took the clay from her?” ‘Azrā’īl عليه السلام replied: “O Lord, she screamed all the while and implored me by Thy Holy Name not to take any of it, but I carried out Thy Command and I listened not to her protests.” Then the Lord spoke and said, “O ‘Azrā’īl, for this that you have listened single-mindedly to My Command, and never were in doubt as to what was demanded of you, I will charge you with the task of taking their souls when they are to die. At that time they will certainly cry and scream and entreat you to leave them, but you among all the angels will pay no attention to their clamour and heed My Command alone.” From that time on, ‘Azrā’īl عليه السلام has not smiled even once.

Allah Almighty took the lump of clay, and in forty days He made it into a dough-like mass. Then He took from it a piece and mixed it with a part of Hell, and He took another piece and mixed it with Paradise. Then He spoke: “I am Allah, and to Me belongs all judgment, and none judges Me.”

He sent Jibrā’īl عليه السلام to fetch a bit of earth from the very core of the earth, and he mixed it into the dough. But this piece was

like musk or amber, a very wonderful substance, such as was not found in all the *janna* and its gardens of delights, and nothing like this was ever created. And He placed this within Ādam ﷺ, and all the angels knew that this was the clay that Muḥammad ﷺ was going to be made of.

It is written: "... *and of water fashioned every living thing ...*" [The Prophets, 21:30]. All of creation is essentially made of water, even the clay of the earth and its firmness, and all its creatures. Water is the original substance.

Then Allah Almighty created the *nafs* (the lower, appetitive, commanding soul of man; his ego). When the *nafs* is told, "Go!" it says, "No, I don't want to," and when it is told "Come!" it says, "no, I don't want to." It was asked: "Who are you?" It answered: "Who am I? I am I, and you are you." Then the order was passed for the *nafs* to be punished with the heaviest afflictions for 1,000 years. It was brought back and asked again, "Who are you?" "Who am I?" it said, "I am I, and you are you." And they took it away and made it suffer more and more punishment, for another 1,000 years. They led it back before the Lord who asked it again: "Who are you?" It answered: "Well, who am I?" And He asked it: "And who am I?" The *nafs* said: "Who are you?" And its pride had only increased. So the Lord ordered it to be placed in the Valley of Hunger, and it was tormented by hunger for a thousand years. Then it was brought back before the Lord who asked it: "Who am I, O *nafs*?" Then the *nafs* answered: "You are He beside whom there is no other god." It was chastened by hunger alone, and for this reason the Lord has enjoined on us a whole month of fasting so that our *nafs* might be disciplined through hunger.

Allah Almighty created the souls 40,000 years before He created the children of Ādam ﷺ. And He created our provisions 40,000 years before He even created the souls. As it is written the Holy Qur'ān, "*And in heaven is your provision, and that you are promised.*" [The Scatterers, 51:22].

The angels said: "You have created man and he will shed blood on the face of the earth." The angels were created for no other purpose than to glorify the Lord Almighty, but they

were not created to be Allah's deputy on earth. Because they never ceased praising the Glory of the Lord with all their many thousand faces and tongues, they thought they were better than the sons of Ādam ﷺ. But in ten points they were mistaken, concerning Ādam ﷺ:

They defamed and discredited Ādam ﷺ; they had certain assumptions about him before they had even seen or known Ādam ﷺ; they testified against him falsely before they had seen him; they attributed to him bad character, but Ādam ﷺ was a prophet and he was of the righteous; they passed judgment over one who was absent; they attributed to him nothing but lust and anger; they were envious of Ādam ﷺ; they maintained that Ādam ﷺ was covetous of being Allah's deputy on earth — but how could that be, since he was not yet created?; they were proud of themselves and vain, for their continuous worship and praising of the Lord; they opposed the Will of the Creator.

The Lord said to them: "Verily, I know that which ye do not know," and the angels were terrified. Out of their great fear and reverence for the Lord they began circling the Throne every day for three hours, and they wept and begged the Lord for forgiveness. The Lord pointed to a river which flowed beneath the Divine Throne and which is called the Water of Life. "Wash therein your faces, hands and feet three times each," commanded the Lord, "until you are forgiven." They washed, and the Lord forgave them all.

"He created man of a clay like the potter's, and He created the Jinn of a smokeless fire. Then which of your Lord's bounties will you deny?" [The Merciful, 55:14–16] When He had thus formed man from clay, He left him to stand in the sun, and the wind and the rain. *"Has there (not) been an endless span of time before man appeared, a time when he was not yet a thing to be thought of?"* [Man, 76:1]

During this period Iblis came down to look at what the Lord had created, and he struck him with his finger, and a sound like an echo came forth, as when you strike a clay pot. Iblis thought to himself, "This thing is empty, its insides are hollow!" And he opened its mouth and looked down into it and was confirmed in his view that it was completely empty. Now he was in the

grip of his envy, and he went to the angels and put the question to them: what would they do if the Lord brought this hollow thing He had created to life, and if He gave it a soul and all that was necessary to turn it into a living being — would they obey him, if they were ordered to? The angels answered, “Of course we would obey him, for it is the Will of our Lord.” Iblīs said, “No, I will not obey him, I would either destroy him, or I would have to disobey the Lord’s Command.” And to this he swore an oath by his right hand.

The Lord ordered the soul of man to enter his still lifeless body. He enlightened this soul with spiritual lights, then he ordered it to enter. The soul said. “How shall I enter him, it is a difficult matter!” The Lord said: “You shall enter by force, and you shall emerge by force.”

When the Lord had made the soul enter the body of man, all its parts, one by one came alive, his skin, and flesh and bones, everything came to life. The soul entered from the head, and first it reached the brain, and feeling came to the brain and spread from there into all the limbs. Then it reached the eyes.

All his body still resembled the clay he was fashioned of, little by little only was it turning into sentient flesh. When his soul reached his eyes, Ādam ﷺ opened them, and the Lord showed him the Divine Throne. He looked upon the Throne and below it he saw two lines of writing: the first line read: *lā ilāha illā llah, Muḥammadu r-rasūlullāh*. And the Lord taught Ādam to read before he could even speak, for the soul had not yet reached his tongue. The second line read: “The servant is sinful and the Lord is forgiving.”

“Recite: and thy Lord is the Most Generous, who taught by the Pen, taught man that he knew not.” [The Blood-Clot, 96:3–5]

The soul descended until it reached the nose. As it reached the nose, Ādam ﷺ sneezed. By that time the soul had reached the mouth and the tongue, and Ādam ﷺ said, “*Al-ḥamdu li-llāh*, praise be to Allah,” his first words. The Lord of the Worlds answered: “*Yarḥamuka rabbuka, yā Ādam*,” which means, Your Lord has mercy on you, O Ādam. This is the origin of the custom we keep. When somebody has sneezed, it is *sunna* for him

to say *al-ḥamdu li-llāh*. Whoever is with him and hears him say these words, it is *wājib* for him to answer *yarḥamuka llāh*. Then the first person, the sneezer, says *yahdinā wa yahdikumu llāh*, may Allah guide us and you. If a person neglects saying *al-ḥamdu li-llāh* after sneezing, it is not a great mistake, it is an omission of a *sunna* practice, but it is no sin. However, the person who neglects to give the appropriate answer commits a sin, as he is leaving out an action which is *wājib*, the same as in the case of giving *salāms* and returning them. He who does not answer the *salāms* given to him commits a reprehensible act.

From this first *ḥamd* (praise) that Ādam ﷺ spoke after he sneezed, the Lord fashioned the Banner of Praise, *liwā'u l-ḥamd*, beneath which He will unite all the prophets and saints on the Day of Gathering, giving the standard into the hand of our noble Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ to lead us all.

Little by little the soul proceeded into the body until it had reached Ādam's heart. The heart began to beat in remembrance of its Lord. The beating of our heart is a constant repetition of the Divine Name, *Allah, Allah, Allah*, it is always making *dhikr*. Then the soul descended into the belly, and all the way down until it reached the feet. All creatures admired the beauty of Ādam, for no creature of such beauty had yet been created. The beauty of the angels is similar to the beauty of Ādam, but Ādam's beauty is of a special kind, and it increased with every day.

Allah Almighty sent the angel Jibrā'il ﷺ with three things: reason, modesty and faith. He said to the angel, "Let him choose one of these things." Given the choice, Ādam ﷺ chose reason, and told the other two gifts to go away. But modesty and faith said, "Wherever reason goes, we must go as well, we will not be separated." For whoever has modesty, is he not a believer? First there was reason. From reason comes faith and from faith springs modesty. Hence the Holy Prophet ﷺ has said: "Modesty is from Faith." Those who have no shame and no modesty also have no faith. Faith and modesty are always found together. And whoever has faith, he also has reason. So, Faith said, "The Lord has commanded me to stay wherever

reason stays,” and Modesty said, “I am to go wherever faith may go.” So the three refused to separate and remained with Ādam ﷺ for all time.

The Lord commanded the angels to bring Ādam’s clothing from paradise, and they brought him paradise wraps and clothed and adorned him, and stood in wonder gazing at his great beauty.

Whenever Ādam ﷺ opened his mouth to speak or to breathe, a light would shine from his mouth and nose, and this light shone as bright as the sunlight. He asked, “O Lord, what is this light!” He was told, “This is the light of Muḥammad ﷺ.” He asked the Lord to let him see this light plainly, and the Lord placed the light upon his brow, between his eyebrows. It shone upon Ādam’s forehead as brightly as the sun, or as the light of the moon at its fullest. All was lit by this light, in whatever direction he turned his face.

Then Allah Almighty ordered Ādam ﷺ to preach a sermon to the angels. Now how should he find anything to say to the angels who are engaged in perpetual worship of the Lord for uncounted aeons before Ādam ﷺ was even created? However, it was the Command of the Almighty, and He called all the angels to assemble and hear the sermon, the *khutba*, of Ādam ﷺ. All the angels came together, and there were 20,000 rows of angels, each row extending from the West to the East. Ādam ﷺ began his address in a most sweet and beautiful voice, and he ascended a *minbar*, a pulpit, which they had brought for him from the *janna*. This pulpit stood on seven pedestals and was covered in green silk, studded with precious jewels and diamonds. It spread a dazzling light from all these many faceted gems. Ādam ﷺ ascended the *minbar* wearing a four-cornered crown of gold upon his head. Each of these corners cast a different kind of light, and this light reached all the four corners of the earth. Then Ādam ﷺ began to speak.

“*And He taught Ādam the names, all of them,*” [The Cow, 2:31]. The Lord had taught Ādam ﷺ the names of everything in the world. He spoke to the angels, “O My angels, tell me their names,” and the angels answered, “*Glory be to Thee! We know not*

save what Thou hast taught us" [The Cow, 2:32]. Then the Lord ordered Ādam ﷺ, "Ādam, tell them the names," [The Cow, 2:33]. Ādam ﷺ then spoke and told them the names of all things in existence, as the Lord had taught him. Then he saluted the angels, saying, "As-salāmu 'alaykum, oh angels of the Lord," and they returned his salām full of respect and reverence. And Ādam ﷺ asked the Lord, "O Lord, have You created any creature more excellent than me?" And the Lord answered: "By My Majesty and Divine Power, I have created no creature more preferable and favoured than yourself, O Ādam."

Allah Almighty commanded the angels to place Ādam ﷺ on a throne of light and to show him all the heavens. They did so, and it took one thousand years. After 1000 years the Lord bade the angels make obeisance to Ādam, and they all fell down before him in prostration except for Iblīs, out of pride he refused to bow low. The first of the angels to fall down before Ādam ﷺ was Isrāfil ﷺ, for he could perceive the whole of the Qur'ān written upon the forehead of Ādam ﷺ. He is a very great and highly honoured angel, and he is one of the messengers among the angels. But Iblīs and some of those with him did not bow before Ādam ﷺ, and the Lord sent a fire to destroy them. After their destruction, Iblīs was rejected and cursed.

Allah sent to Ādam ﷺ his sustenance and the first food Ādam ate was a bunch of white grapes. When he had eaten, he pronounced the words, *Al-ḥamdu li-llāh*, praise be to Allah. Thence it has become the custom to give thanks to the Lord who has created us and provided for us after taking anything of food or drink, and to remember the Lord's favours on us.

"If you are thankful, surely I will increase you" [Ibrāhīm, 14:7].

The more thankful we are, the more the Lord will bestow upon us from His endless stores of bounty. This will be the *sunna* until the Day of Judgement.

After the creation of Ādam ﷺ the angels showed him their heavens and the regions around the Throne for one-hundred years; the Lord created for him a winged horse of musk, whose wings were made of coral and pearls. The angels mounted Ādam ﷺ upon the horse, Isrāfil ﷺ walking on his left, Mikā'il

on his right, and Jibrā'il leading his horse by the bridle. Thus they encircled all the heavens and the earth until a thousand years had passed. Then Ādam took up his dwelling in the *janna*, the paradise gardens.

After the creation of Ādam, some of his clay was left over, and from it the Lord formed the date-palm. For this reason the Holy Prophet said to his companions: "Give honour to your father's sister!" And they asked him: "Who is this aunt?" and he answered, "The date-palm."

Ādam lived in the *janna* for a long time, surrounded by all the delights of paradise, and yet he could not fully enjoy them, for he was alone. Even paradise without company fails to please. He was shown all that could be imagined of beautiful tastes and sights, and he was asked, "Ādam, are you content?" "No," he would say, "show me something else, it is not what I desire." At last, the Lord sent upon him a deep sleep. Now, up until that time, Ādam had never known sleep — and in his sleep, the Lord took from him a rib and from it created Ḥawwā'. But Ādam did not feel this. Because Ḥawwā' was created from a crooked rib, it is said that women must be treated gently and with consideration, yet with firmness. For if you allow their crooked nature to go on unchecked, it will become more and more crooked, and if you try to bend them straight, they will break.

Allah Almighty created Ḥawwā' and invested her with great beauty. She came into being as a young woman, dressed and adorned as a bride, with a crown upon her head. And they sat her beside Ādam's head.

When Ādam awoke, the angels wished to test him to see if he really knew the names of all things. For Ādam had been asleep during the creation of Ḥawwā', so how could he possess any knowledge of her? So they asked him, "Who is this?" Ādam answered, "Why, she is my wife, the Almighty Lord has created her for me." "What is her name?" "Her name is Ḥawwā'." The Lord had shown him all this in his dreams.

Ādam wanted to touch her and reached out for her, but a call sounded from on high, stopping him. "It is forbidden," he

was told, “first the marriage contract must be written. And then you must give her the bridal price, the dower.” “What sort of dower must I give her, see all these gardens of paradise, they all will belong to her!” “No, that will not do; you must salute the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ ten times in one breath! That will be her price!” Ādam ﷺ took a deep breath, and gave five *ṣalawāt* on one breath, then he had to draw another breath. And he completed the five remaining *ṣalawāt* with the second breath. The Lord accepted it, and from this is derived the custom of paying the dower for the daughters of Ḥawwā’ in two parts, one part before the marriage ceremony, and the other part at a later date. It is permissible.

“It is He who created you out of one living soul, and made of him his spouse that he might rest in her.” [The Battlements, 7:189]

3 — ĀDAM’S FALL FROM PARADISE

TOGETHER THEY LIVED in the *janna* and they were extremely happy and contented. The Lord said to them: “O Ādam and Ḥawwā’, eat and drink of whatever pleases you in this paradise home, but do not approach this one tree. My Peace and Mercy may be upon you.” And the Lord regarded His creation and He saw that it was good, that it was perfect, and He praised His own work and all the angels fell in with Him and sang His praises, so that the heavens resounded.

The Lord said to Ādam, “I have created you in the best of all possible forms, and I have made you to walk upright on two legs, I have blown upon you the Breath of Life. I have set you above the angels and made them bow down before you, and him who did not bow I have cursed for your sake. Then I have made for you your companion and mate, Ḥawwā’, and for you both I have prepared the *janna* 2000 years before you were created. Now I ask of you only that you do not go near that tree, which I have forbidden you. If you disobey and eat the fruit of that tree, I shall expel you from paradise and punish you with the fire.” Ādam said: “O Lord, I have heard and I will obey.”