

# he Infallibility of Prophets

LESSON 3: THE CASE OF PROPHET ADAM



# AVicegerent on Earth

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَ<sup>ٓ</sup> بِكَةِ إِنِّى جَاعِلٌ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوٓاْ أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ ٱلدِّمَآءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

"And when your Lord said to the angels, 'I shall instate a vicegerent on earth'. They said, 'Will you instate therein one who will cause corruption therein and shed blood while we exalt you by praising you and proclaim your sanctity?"

Quran 2:30

# Into the Garden وَقُلْنَا يَــَّ ادَمُ ٱسْكُنْ أَنتَ وَزَوْجُكَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَـذِهِ ٱلشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ ٱلظَّـلِمِينَ

#### AND WE SAID TO ADAM, 'DWELL WITH YOUR WIFE IN THE **GARDEN AND EAT FROM IT FREELY WHEREVER YOU** DESIRE BUT DO NOT APPROACH THIS TREE, LEST YOU BE **AMONG THE WRONGDOERS.**

**OURAN 2:35** 

# **Into the Garden** فَقُلْنَا يَـٰٓ ادَمُ إِنَّ هَـٰذَا عَدُوٌّ لَّكَ وَلِزَوْجِكَ فَلَا يُخْرِجَنَّكُمَا مِنَ ٱلْجَنَّةِ

#### "SO WE SAID, "O ADAM, INDEED THIS IS AN ENEMY TO YOU AND TO YOUR WIFE. THEN LET HIM NOT REMOVE YOU FROM PARADISE SO YOU WOULD SUFFER."

**QURAN 20:117** 

# Into the Garden إِنَّ لَكَ أَلَّا تَجُوعَ فِيهَا وَلَا تَعْرَىٰ وَأَنَّكَ لَا تَظْمَؤُاْ فِيهَا وَلَا تَضْحَىٰ

#### "IN IT YOU WILL EXPERIENCE NO HUNGER OR NAKEDNESS, AND YOU SHALL NOT BE THIRSTY THEREIN NOR SHALL YOU FEEL THE HEAT OF THE SUN."

**OURAN 20:118-119** 

#### WHY WAS ADAM PLACED IN THIS GARDEN?

- God accomplished two very important purposes: • 1. He set up a perfect training ground for Adam and Eve. They needed to learn that there are consequences for acting against God's instructions. They also had to learn the true nature of their archenemy Satan
  - 2. He gave them a taste of what they could hope for in paradise.

# فَوَسْوَسَ إِلَيْهِ ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنُ قَالَ يَـۖ ادَمُ هَلْ أَدُلُّكَ عَلَىٰ شَجَرَةِ ٱلْخُلْدِ وَمُلْكٍ لَّا يَبْلَىٰ

Then Satan whispered to Adam: Shall I lead you to a tree that will give you immortality and a dominion that shall never perish?"

Quran 20:120



فَوَسْوَسَ لَهُمَا ٱلشَّيْطَـٰنُ لِيُبْدِىَ لَهُمَا مَا وُۥرِىَ عَنْهُمَا مِن سَوْءَٰتِهِمَا وَقَالَ مَا نَهَىٰكُمَا رَبُّكُمَا عَنْ هَـٰذِهِ ٱلشَّجَرَةِ إِلَّا أَن تَكُونَا مَلَكَيْنِ أَوْ تَكُونَا مِنَ ٱلْخَـٰلِدِينَ وَقَاسَمَهُمَآ إِنِّي لَكُمَا لَمِنَ

But Satan whispered to them to make apparent to them that which was concealed from them of their private parts. He said, "Your Lord did not forbid you this tree except that you become angels or become of the immortal. And he swore to them, "Indeed, I am to you from among the sincere advisors."

Quran 7:20-21

#### فَأَكَلَا مِنْهَا فَبَدَتْ لَهُمَا سَوْءَٰتُهُمَا وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفَانِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِن وَرَقِ ٱلْجَنَّةِ وَعَصَىٰٓ ءَادَمُ رَبَّهُۥ فغوئ

"And Adam and his wife ate of it, and their private parts became apparent to them, and they began to fasten over themselves from the leaves of Paradise. And Adam disobeyed his Lord and erred."

Quran 20:121



### و ۖلَقَدْ عَهِدْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ ءَادَمَ مِن قَبْلُ فَنَسِيَ وَلَمْ نَجِدْ لَهُۥ عَزْمًا

"And certainly We gave a commandment to Adam before, but he forgot; and We did not find in him any determination."

Quran 20:115



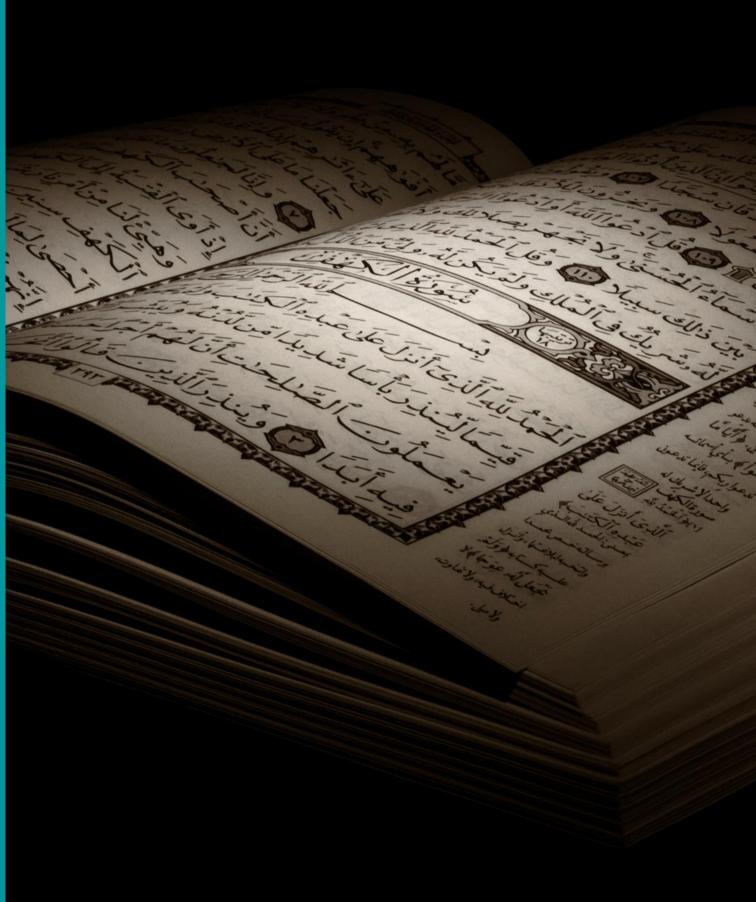
وفي الكافي عن الباقر عليه السلام في هذه الآية قال انّ الله قال لآدم وزوجته لا تقرباها يعني لا تأكلا منها فقال لا نعم يا ربّنا لا نقربها ولا نأكل منها ولم يستثنيا في قولهما نعم فوكلهما الله في ذلك الى انفسهما والى ذكرهما.

God said to Adam and his wife: Do not approach it (the tree) (meaning do not eat from it). They replied: Yes Lord! We will not approach or eat from it. And they did not make any exception in their statement (they did not say 'God willing). So God left them to themselves and their memories..."- Imam Al-Bagir

### **Two Types of Divine Commands**

#### أمر مولوي Legislative Command أ

Such orders must be implemented; and, if someone disobeys such a command, then he is committing a sin and is liable to be punished. For example, the command to "say the daily prayers" or "do not eat the pork" is of such nature. Neglecting the daily prayers or eating of the pork is a sin and Allah can rightly punish the sinner.



### **Two Types of Divine Commands**

أمر إرشادي Advisory Command أمر إرشادي

Such orders are of advisory nature; their purpose is to inform the people about its consequences. However, if someone disobeys such an order, then he is not committing a sin; of course, he will have to face the consequences of not following the advice.

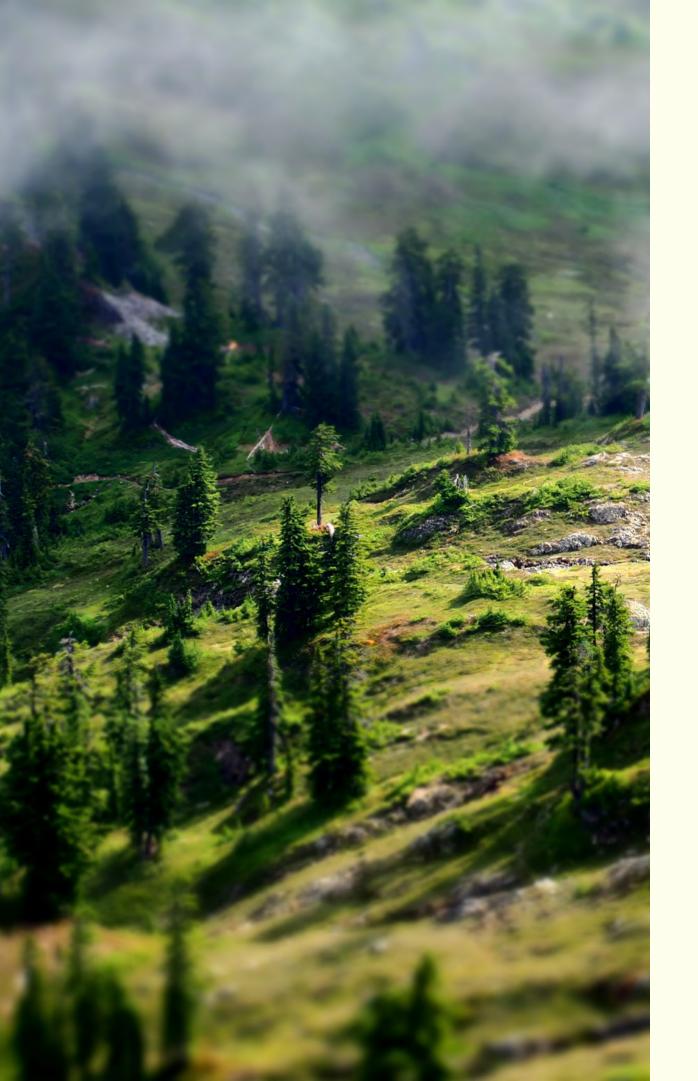


In case of Adam and his wife, the consequence they faced was cancellation of their tenure as guests of God in the Garden and its comforts. Remember that they were not supposed to stay in the Garden forever; they were created for the earth, and their stay in the Garden was meant to be temporary.





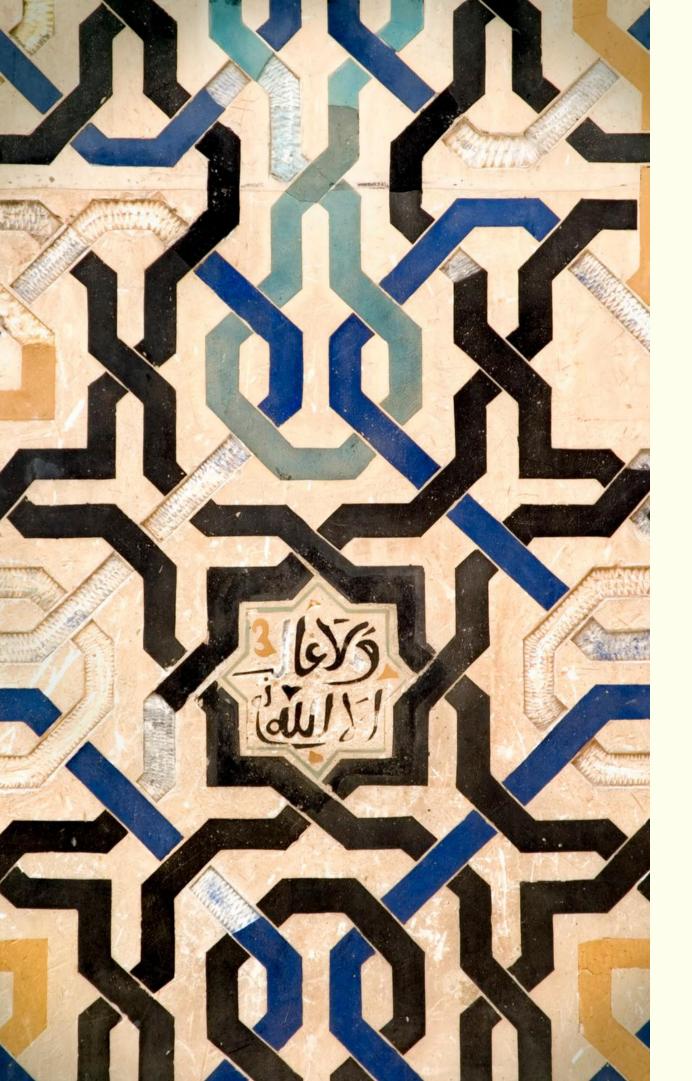
The Garden is not the place for test and trial. It is this earth on which human beings have been destined to go through test and trial by obeying the commands of God. The concept of sinning in case of human beings is connected to the worldly life.



"We said, "Go down from it, all of you. And when guidance comes to you from Me, whoever follows My guidance - there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve."

َقُلْنَا ٱهْبِطُواْ مِنْهَا جَمِيعًا فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُم مِّنِّى هُدًى فَمَن تَبِعَ هُدَاىَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

Quran 2:38

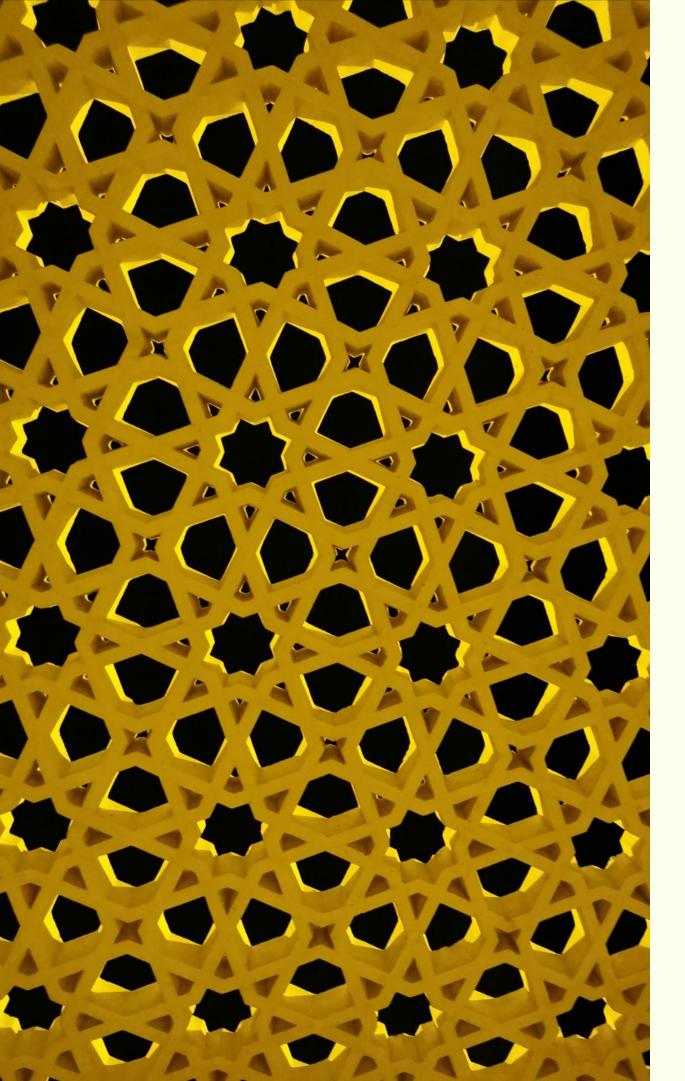


reasons:

## Did Adam Commit a Sin?

 Those who believe that Adam committed a sin, describe the eating of the forbidden fruit as the "sin" and Adam's expulsion from the heaven as the "punishment". However, this relationship between the sin and its punishment is not valid because of two

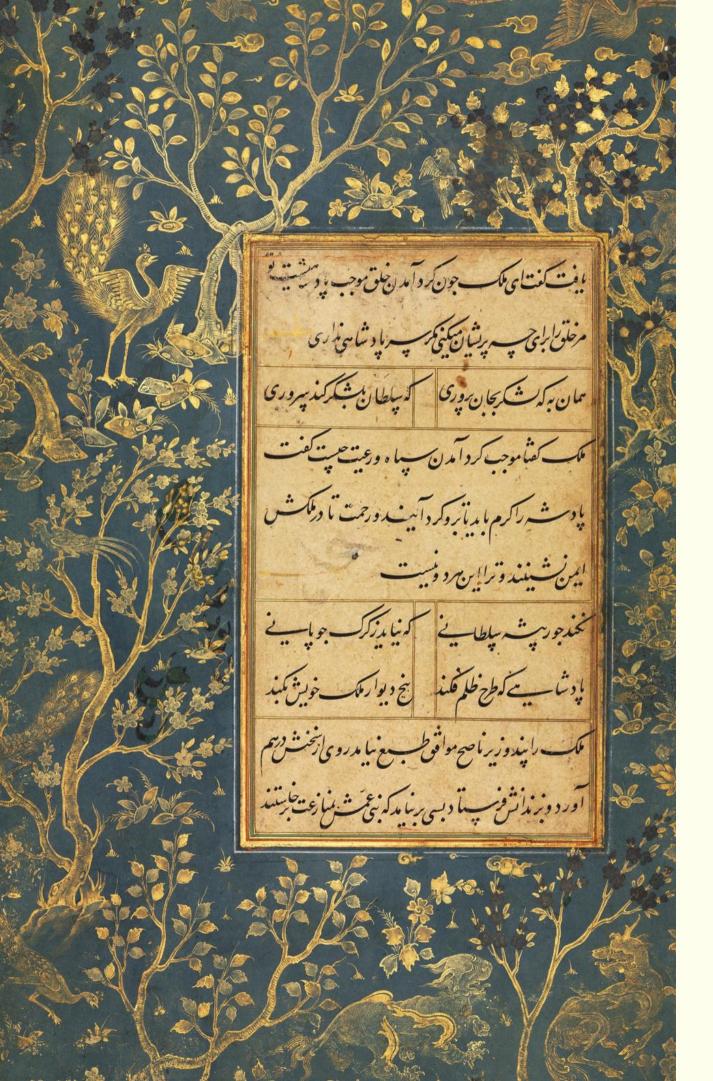
• Firstly, Adam was destined to come to the earth anyway. God had declared even before creating Adam that "I want to place a vicegerent on the earth." So coming of Adam to the earth is not a punishment; whether or not he ate the forbidden fruit. Adam would have come to the earth anyway. So that was not a punishment.



was not a "sin".

## Did Adam Commit a Sin?

• Secondly, if coming of Adam to the earth was a "punishment" of eating the forbidden fruit, then he should have been returned to the paradise after God "forgave" him. Forgiveness means "canceling the punishment"—Adam should have been taken back to the Garden. This did not happen, which proves that Adam's coming to the earth was not a "punishment"; and eating



- that imply that he committed sin?
- have occurred in the story of Adam.

# What about the words in the story Adam

• After studying the issue of **'ismah** from the

Quranic point of view, if we come across such

words we have to interpret them in a way that

they are in harmony with the other verses of the

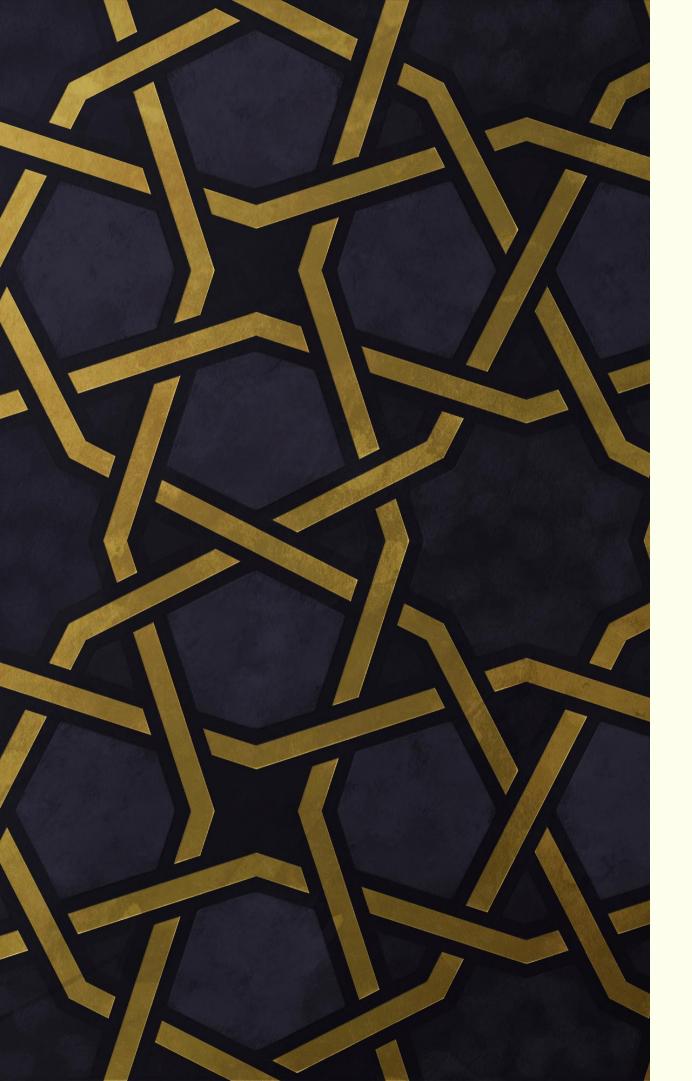
Qur'an. Now let us look at three such words that



- First: the word "الظالمين" is from " ظلم".
- This word has four meanings:

  - to oppress;
  - to make haste
  - to come to harm

• to put something in a wrong place;



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"And we said to Adam, 'Dwell with your wife in the garden and eat from it freely wherever you desire But do not approach this tree, lest you be among the wrongdoers. (meaning those who come to harm themselves or make haste)



Quran 2:35



does not necessarily imply sin because but not "sinned".

 Second: the word عَصَى means "disobeyed". This disobedience can be attributed to two types of commands: al- amr al-mawlawi (a legislative command) or al-amr al-irshadi (an advisory command). If a person goes against the advisory command, then he has "disobeyed"



# If Adam did not commit a sin, then why does God talk about repentance for Adam?

Firstly, When a prophet like Adam commits at-tarku 'lawla, it is quite appropriate for him to ask Allah for pardon—not necessarily for a sin but for an inappropriate behaviour. So "repenting" does not necessarily mean that Adam must have committed a sin; it is quite appropriate rather advisable even after committing at-tarku 'l-awla.



#### If Adam did not commit a sin, then why does God talk about repentance for Adam?

Secondly, the use of harsh words by God in describing the story of Adam is acceptable by keeping in mind the status of Adam. Although Adam did not commit a sin, it was improper for him to adopt an inappropriate behaviour. The people with high ranks are expected to live by the standard that is higher than that of the normal human beings.