

Story 1514 (1981 Tape 8)

Narrator: Ali Çiftçi, in mid-60s by the time he told this mythical tale

Location: Çıkırıkçı village, Sarıkaya kaza, Yozgat Province

Date: 1981

The Creation of Adam and Eve¹

Allah ordered Gabriel to bring a handful of soil from the place where Beytullah² is now located. Gabriel went to that location and was about to grab a handful of soil when the ground spoke and said, "If you love Allah, do not take any of my soil away." Because the ground had spoken to him in that way, Gabriel was unable to take any soil. Michael and Israfil in turn also tried to snatch away some soil, but each was prevented from doing so by the same statement of the ground.

After the first three angels had failed to bring back a handful of soil, Allah sent Azrail³ to accomplish that task. Azrail heard the ground's statement based on the love for Allah, but he ignored this religious appeal and grabbed a handful of soil. Having done so, however, he became so ashamed of

¹This is a retelling five years later of "The Creation of Adam and Eve" narrated in 1976 for ATON tale 1512. A comparison will reveal some deviations, but, more important, Ali Çiftçi here follows this tale with others about the first generations of Adam's descendants.

²Term sometimes used for the Kaaba, the small, square building housing the sacred Black Stone, within the walls of the Great Mosque at Mecca.

³Always pictured as an enormous figure with rank after rank of wings.

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his act that he stood there motionless, with the soil in his hand, for forty years. Finally Allah spoke to him, saying, "You have already taken the soil. Now bring it here.

After Azrail had done this, Allah mixed the soil with some water from the Selsebil River, which flows through heaven. With His own capable hands Allah kneaded the mud which was the material from which He would make Adam. After He had mixed it thoroughly, Allah molded the shape of Adam, a form that stretched out sixty or seventy meters across the floor of heaven.

But the angels⁴ had been in existence for some time before the creation of Adam. Satan, one of those angels, had up to that time obeyed the will of Allah, but this now changed. As he was wandering about in heaven, Satan came upon the form of Adam. When he tapped the form, it made a clanging noise. "This is empty," he said. "I am not in any way intimidated by it." He then made a hole in Adam's stomach and entered the form through that hole. As he looked around inside, he felt as if he were in a city where there were all the sorts of things that anyone might want. When he came upon a large drawer, he began to pull it open, but he was prevented from doing so by a very hard slap in the face. That drawer contained Adam's heart which was protected in this way. When Satan left the form of

⁴The narrator refers to heavenly beings as "cangavmi." Whatever the literal meaning of that term may be, its context suggests angels.

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Adam, he asked the other angels, "Will you show respect to this creature if Allah orders you to do so?"

"Yes, we shall respect it if Allah commands us to do so," they responded.

"I shall not do so," Satan said. "This man was created from mud, but I was created from fire." Satan's father's name was İblis, according to the Lion chapter⁵ of the Koran, and his mother's name was Tebrîş, according to the Monster chapter.⁶ I mention them because it is written that Satan also rebelled against his father and his mother. Satan's first name was Ezacı. ⁷ When he refused to show respect for Adam, Allah threw him out of heaven.

After Allah had raised Adam from the floor of heaven, Adam wandered around for a while and then fell asleep. As soon as Adam was sleeping soundly, Allah created Eve from a bone taken from Adam's left foot. Allah explained this, saying, "I did

while Adam slept, for if he had felt great pain during the creation of Eve, he would never have loved the woman. As it was, he did not feel a thing."

⁵There is no such chapter (sure) title in the Koran. This may be a local nickname for a chapter.

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⁷We have not located any other reference to this name except by the same narrator in Story 1512, told five years earlier.

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When Adam awakened again, he saw a creature sitting beside him. The angels asked Adam, "Who ~~is~~ that creature beside you?"

He answered, "It is Havva /the Turkish word for Eve/.

"How do you know it is Havva?" they asked

"It must have been created from nothing," answered Adam
"It was not there when I fell asleep, but it was there when I woke up. It must have been created out of air /for which the Turkish word is hava/ . That is why I call it Hav(v)a." ⁸

Adam felt like touching Eve, like placing his hand on her shoulder. As he started to do so, however, the angels said, "No, no! Do not touch her until you have repeated a certain prayer 1,000 times in a single breath." Adam said the prayer 1,000 times, but he had to take two breaths in order to do so. It is said that that was the source of having the bride-price paid in two parts--half before the marriage and half after marriage.

While Adam and Eve wandered around heaven together, they were observed at a distance by Satan, who had been cast out of heaven. He was very jealous of their happiness. He went

⁸Although the narrator had a fine sense of humor, he has not elsewhere joked about any religious matter. It is unlikely, therefore, that this is a bit of bilingual word play. It is more likely to be a naive piece of folk etymology.

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to the peacock, which sat at the top of the world and served as the gatekeeper of heaven, and spoke to him. He said, "Let me enter heaven very briefly so that I can get some fruit which when eaten will prevent you and me from ever growing and becoming ugly."

"No, I shall not do that, for Allah still rules heaven."

"He will not see me walk through the gate if I enter your mouth as a snake and come out through your hind end, which is inside the gate. Allah will not see that." Speaking in this Satan tricked his way into heaven.

Satan went toward Adam and Eve crying loudly. (He had formerly been the treasurer of heaven⁹ for 1,000 years before he had gotten thrown out. He had been cast out for not respecting Adam as the other angels had, and as a result of this he was now angry at Adam. When Eve heard him crying, she asked, "Why are you crying?"

"How can I do otherwise?" Satan asked. "You will grow and ugly, and later you will die. Then you will rot and become soil. When I think of that, I cannot help crying."

"Well, is there any way to prevent that from happening to

⁹It may seem incongruous to have a treasurer of heaven. The folk imagination works via analogy, logical or illogical. Sultans' treasurers are, in folktales, often men of considerable status. The narrator here gives Satan status in heaven by naming him treasurer!

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me?" asked Eve.

"Yes, there is," said Satan. "If you eat what grows on this tree, you will be eternally young."

Earlier than this, Allah had given Adam an order about that tree. He had said, "You may eat the fruit of any tree in heaven except this one tree." But Eve knew nothing about that order, for neither Allah nor Adam had spoken to her about it.

Ahmet Uysal: "What kind of a tree was it?"

Narrator: "It was a wheat tree."¹⁰₇

Eve said, "Adam, listen to what this snake says! Come and eat some of the fruit of this tree!"

"Don't do that, Eve! Allah forbade me to eat of the fruit of that tree." But Eve ate a grain of wheat, and nothing happened, for Allah had never forbidden her to do so. She finally persuaded Adam to eat some too. But just as soon as Adam bit a kernel of wheat, he was condemned. At that very moment Gabriel appeared and removed the crown from Adam's head, and Michael arrived to strip the clothes off Adam and Eve. Left totally naked, they fled with their left hands over their crotches and their right hands over their heads. They ran and

¹⁰Is the narrator here really referring to a wheat plant? Does the Biblical reference to a fruit tree influence him to make the bearer of forbidden food a tree regardless of what kind of food is involved?

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hid behind some trees.

Allah then spoke, asking, "Oh, Adam, where have you run? I can see you wherever you go."

Only the fig tree was willing to give Adam and Eve any leaves with which they could cover themselves. When Allah observed this, he said to the fig tree, "From now on I shall no longer permit you to flower in the way you have until The fig flowers are now very tiny, just barely visible among the branches."¹¹

At that moment Adam felt the urge to defecate. "What tree root in heaven do you intend to pollute?" asked Gabriel. out of here!"

They threw Adam out of the Gate of Repentance, causing him to land in Serendip.¹² They threw Eve out of the Gate of Compassion, causing her to land in Cidde.¹³ They threw the snake out of the Gate of Manners, and as they did so, Allah said to it, "May your four legs disappear, and may you live in misery until Doomsday." They threw Satan out of the Gate of

¹¹The female fig tree has hundreds of tiny flowers contained in an open-ended pod and for that reason less readily visible than some other flowers.

¹²Presently Sri Lanka, but known as Ceylon for a considerable time before the late twentieth century.

¹³Jeddah, seaport in Hejaz, Saudi Arabia.

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Damnation.¹⁴ The peacock was also punished. It had formerly puffed out its feathers in great pride, but after that time it would glance at its ugly feet and be so humiliated that its mantle of feathers would collapse.

One day before Adam had been cast out, Adam saw five doors in heaven. He saw that the first had the Blessed Mohammed's name written upon it. The second had the Blessed Ali's¹⁵ name on it. The third bore the name of the Blessed Fatma.¹⁶ The fourth had Blessed Hasan's¹⁷ name on it, and the fifth had the name of the Blessed Hüseyin.¹⁸ Gabriel said to Adam, "Do you see those names?"

"Yes."

¹⁴Earlier in this tale Satan transformed himself into a snake, but here they seem to be two separate creatures.

¹⁵Fourth Caliph. The controversy over his having been fourth instead of the first Caliph (successor of Mohammed) triggered the great Islamic schism between Sunnites and Shi'ites.

¹⁶Daughter of Mohammed and wife of Ali.

¹⁷Ali's elder son, who tried to recapture the caliphate after it had been taken over by the dynasty that had killed Ali. Soon after withdrawing from the conflict with the Ummayyad Dynasty, Hasan died mysteriously, possibly poisoned. He thus became a Shi'ite martyr (as were his father and his brother).

¹⁸Younger son of Ali, he refused to accede to the Ummayyad takeover of the caliphate as his brother had acceded. He and his small band of devoted warriors were slaughtered by vastly superior Ummayyad forces. Because of his youth and valor, he is the religious martyr whose death some Moslems feel most poignantly.

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"Well, memorize them. There will come a time when you will need those names."

When Adam landed in Serendip, it was night, and darkness was everywhere. When dawn began to appear, Adam prayed and gave thanks for the coming of the sun. When Allah accepted that prayer, it became obligatory for all future Moslems to perform that early morning prayer service. That is one explanation of the custom, but there is also another explanation. It is said that when Allah created the spirit of Mohammed, it shed 124,000 drops of sweat. Five of those drops prostrated themselves in worship of Allah, and it was from those five drops of sweat that our five daily prayer services originated. From each one of those 124,000 drops of sweat Allah created a prophet.

Ahmet Uysal: "Then Mohammed was created in heaven?"

Narrator: "It was the spirit of Mohammed that was created there; everything else followed from that."

Ahmet Uysal: "Where did all of those drops of sweat come from?"

Narrator: "They came from the spirit of the Blessed Mohammed After they had fallen upon the floor of heaven, Allah created 124,000 prophets from them."⁷

After 300 years had passed, Allah called down to Adam and asked, "Have you forgotten the names written on the five doors in heaven?"

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"O my Allah, for the sake of those five names forgive my sin."

"Oh, Adam, if you had asked me to forgive the sins of the whole universe for the sake of those five names, I should have done so. They are that dear to me! But now I shall forgive only your sin."

After that, Gabriel brought Adam from heaven a pair of oxen and a plow. He also taught Adam how to use the plow, but he did not tell Adam how to treat the oxen. As a result, Adam never rested those poor animals. He kept them plowing all day long. When Eve would bring his lunch to the field, he would have her plow while he ate his lunch. It is said that the Adam plowed produced wheat, and the land that Eve plowed produced barley. Then Gabriel returned and said, "Adam, this is not the way to be a farmer. You must rest the oxen every once in a while and you must feed them."

/Ahmet Uysal: "Did Adam remain in Serendip?"

Narrator: "No, he was reunited with Eve at Arafat."¹⁹

Ahmet Uysal: "Did he farm at Arafat?"

Narrator: "No, Adam lived in India throughout his life, but he made three pilgrimages to Mecca."²⁰ It is said

¹⁹ Mount Arafat in the Mecca area is one of the stations of the pilgrimage in and around the holy city.

²⁰ Peasant narrators often disregard time in their storytelling. Millenia passed between the time of the Biblical Eden and the establishment of Mecca as the holy city of Islam, but here Adam is said to have made three pilgrimages to Mecca.

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that wherever he left his footsteps, a village or city
sprang up."7