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Original Research

The Logic of Understanding Ayatollah Javadi Amoli In the Scene of Prostration to Adam

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Introduction

One of the events in the story of Adam's caliphate in the Quran is the prostration of the angels to Adam. This event has significant implications for humanity's perspective on existence and has elicited various interpretations from Quranic scholars throughout history. The diversity of interpretations underscores the importance of this topic. Among these interpretations, the perspective of Ayatollah Javadi Amoli is particularly noteworthy. His comprehensive approach integrates cosmology, anthropology, and epistemology, forming what this study refers to as the "logic of understanding." This triad plays a fundamental role in shaping one's interpretation of events.

According to Ayatollah Javadi Amoli's logic of understanding, the story of Adam in the Quran is depicted in three distinct scenes:

1. The announcement of divine caliphate
2. The prostration to Adam
3. The scene of Adam's paradise

In the scene of the divine announcement, themes such as the appointment of a caliph on Earth, the dialogue between the angels and God, the creation of Adam, the teaching of names to Adam, and the angels' acknowledgment of his knowledge are discussed (for more details, see Alidad Abhari & Fakhari, 2024, *The Logic of Understanding Ayatollah Javadi Amoli in the Announcement Scene of Divine Caliphate*, pp. 103-137).

The scene of prostration marks the first appearance of Iblis (Satan) and his actions, with details mentioned in seven Surahs (Al-Baqarah, Al-A'raf, Al-Hijr, Al-Isra, Al-Kahf, Taha, and Sad). Among these, only Surah Al-Baqarah is Medinan, serving as an explanation of the Meccan Surahs (Javadi Amoli, Vol. 28, p. 166; Vol. 55, p. 408). The Quran's emphasis on introducing Satan in these Surahs is rooted in the centrality of monotheism in Islam, as the polytheists of Hijaz worshipped Satan in belief, attributes, and actions during the time of revelation (Javadi Amoli, Vol. 52, pp. 83, 88, 94).

The interpreter views the repetition of this scene as a reflection of its ongoing relevance, as arrogance and desire—the traits that led to Satan's expulsion—remain humanity's greatest challenges, requiring constant self-vigilance (Javadi Amoli, Vol. 69, pp. 152, 168-169).

Research background

While many commentators have addressed this story, some notable studies include:

- A content-based study titled "An Interpretive Analysis of the Verses on the Prostration of Angels to Adam" by Seyed Ali Akbar Rabiee Nataj and Mohsen Jahandideh, published in 2013 in the Journal of Interpretive Studies, which examines various commentators' views on the prostration and its implications.
- A structural study titled "The Logic of Understanding Ayatollah Javadi Amoli in the Scene of the Announcement of Divine Caliphate" by Mahsa Alidad Abhari and Alireza Fakhari, published in 2024 in the Quranic Studies Research Journal, focusing on the first scene of the story. Additionally, this structure was elaborated on in ۱۴۰۲(۲۰۲۳) in the article "Examining Contradictions in the Foundations and Interpretive Views of Ayatollah Javadi Amoli: A Case Study of Verses on Women" by the same authors, published in the Quarterly Journal of Quranic and Islamic Culture Studies.

This research synthesizes and categorizes the views of the commentator of Tafsir Tasnim on the prostration and its aspects, analyzing the intellectual and doctrinal framework that led to his unique interpretations compared to other commentators.

Research method

The methodology employed in this study is based on a two-part structure that begins with the interpreter and culminates in their interpretive written work. In essence, the examination of the process of interpretation formation is rooted in everything that unfolds within the interpreter's thoughts and inner world, which is then revealed to us. Accordingly, in analyzing Ayatollah Javadi Amoli's interpretive views on the story of Adam, the paradigms governing his thought and mental frameworks can be distinguished and examined at three levels: cosmology, anthropology, and epistemology. In this text, this triad is referred to as the "logic of understanding." The logic of understanding is a structured and comprehensive system rooted in our overall cognitive apparatus, which, by defining principles and objectives, determines orientations and approaches. This system may emerge based on misunderstandings and, as previously mentioned, possesses a rigid order grounded in an individual's beliefs in cosmology, anthropology, and epistemology.

Result

In the scene of prostration, the foundation of Ayatollah Javadi Amoli's interpretive approach is rooted in the triad of the logic of understanding. The commentator emphasizes God's focus on introducing Satan to humanity, highlighting the importance of understanding Satan's nature. The cosmological dimension of this event is based on Mulla Sadra's philosophy of the descending arc of the world of imagination, which bridges the abstract and material realms. A key principle in resolving the complexities of the story is understanding events within the framework of their respective realms. Thus, the prostration is seen as a symbolic truth, separate from creation and legislation, aimed at highlighting humanity's legal status (the rank of humanity), recognizing guides and allies (angels), and warning against enemies (Satan).

In his anthropological perspective, Ayatollah Javadi Amoli, adhering to the theory of Jismaniyat al-huduth wa ruhaniyat al-baqa (bodily origination and spiritual permanence), views the soul's attachment to the body as occurring after its perfection. He prioritizes the soul over the body, considering the divine bestowal of the soul—the reason for the angels' prostration—as unique to humans, distinguishing them from other creatures. From an epistemological standpoint, his approach emphasizes the foundational role of Quranic mysticism in resolving interpretive disputes, the Quran's authority in reconciling conflicting narrations, and the interpretation of narrations based on his logic of understanding.

Keywords

Prostration, Javadi Amoli, Logic of Understanding, Tafsir Tasnim, Methodology, Story of Adam.