72470 - Life on Earth Before Adam

the question

Were there any people before Adam (peace be upon him) whose name was Jinn and others whose name was Hinn?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

There is nothing in the Qur’an or sunnah (prophetic teachings) to indicate that there were any people living on Earth before Adam (peace be upon him). Rather the reports that speak of this are the opinions of mufassireen (Quran commentators) among the sahabah (companions) and tabi‘een (successors). For example:

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The first opinion is that the earth was inhabited by the jinn, whom Allah, may He be exalted, created from fire. This opinion was narrated from most of the mufassireen.

At-Tabari narrated in his Tafseer from Ibn ‘Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said:

The first ones to dwell on earth were the jinn, and they caused mischief therein, shedding blood and killing one another.

It was narrated from ar-Rabee‘ ibn Anas that he said:

Allah created the angels on Wednesday, and He created the jinn on Thursday and He created Adam on Friday. Then some of the jinn disbelieved, and the angels used to come down to earth to fight them, and there was bloodshed and corruption on earth.

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The second opinion is that there was no one on earth, jinn or otherwise, before Adam (peace be upon him).

at-Tabari narrated this view in his Tafseer from ‘Abd ar-Rahman ibn Zayd, who said:

Allah, may He be exalted, said to the angels: I want to create a creature on earth and make him a vicegerent (khaleefah) therein. On that day Allah had no creation except the angels, and there were no creatures on earth.

Al-‘Allamah at-Tahir ibn ‘Ashoor said in at-Tahreer wa’t-Tanweer:

After mentioning the creation of the earth then the heavens, Allah referred to His will, that He would create a vicegerent. This indicates that creating the vicegerent was the first thing done on earth after it was created. The vicegerent here is the one who takes control of another’s property and manages it, and the original owner does not necessarily have to have been in that place beforehand. So the vicegerent was Adam (peace be upon him), and his role as vicegerent was to do what Allah, may He be exalted, wanted of developing the earth on the basis of inspiration and revelation, and to teach his offspring Allah’s plan concerning this earthy realm. End quote.

With regard to what some commentators and historians say about a race called Hinn inhabiting the earth, then the jinn came and killed them and took their place, it seems that this is a story that cannot be attributed to any sound isnad (chain of narrators).

Ibn Kathir said in al-Bidayah wa’n-Nihayah:

Many scholars of tafseer say that the jinn were created before Adam (peace be upon him), and before them on Earth there were the hinn and the binn, then Allah caused the jinn to prevail over them, so they killed them and expelled them from the earth and inhabited it after them. End quote.

Al-‘Allamah at-Tahir ibn ‘Ashoor said in at-Tahreer wa’t-Tanweer:

If it is true that the earth was inhabited before by a race of creatures called al-hinn wa’l-binn or, it

was said, they were called at-tamm wa’r-ramm, this is a reference to something that never existed and is unknown. Perhaps these are among the myths of the Persians and Greeks propagated by the storytellers, because the Persians say that before mankind existed on earth, there was a race called at-tamm wa’r-ramm, and the Greeks believed that the earth was populated by creatures called Titans, and Zeus, the leader of their gods according to their beliefs, drove them from the earth because of their evildoing. End quote.

And Allah knows best.