72470 - Was There Life before Adam?

the question

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

Summary of answer

There is nothing in the Quran or Sunnah to indicate that there were any people living on Earth before prophet Adam. Rather the reports that speak of this are the opinions of Quran commentators among the companions and successors.
With regard to what some commentators and historians say about a race called Hinn inhabiting the earth, and that the jinn came and killed them and took their place, it seems that this is a story that cannot be attributed to any sound chain of narrators.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

There is nothing in the Quran 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 Quran commentators among the companions and successors. For example:

1. 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 commentators of the Quran.

At-Tabari (may Allah have mercy on him) narrated in his Tafsir 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-Rabi` ibn Anas (may Allah have mercy on him) 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.”

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

At-Tabari (may Allah have mercy on him) narrated this view in his Tafsir from `Abd Ar-Rahman ibn Zayd (may Allah have mercy on him), who said:

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

Al-`Allamah At-Tahir ibn `Ashur (may Allah have mercy on him) said in At-Tahrir wat-Tanwir:

“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.”

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

Ibn Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him) said in Al-Bidayah wan-Nihayah:

“Many scholars of Tafsir 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."

Al-`Allamah At-Tahir ibn `Ashur (may Allah have mercy on him) said in At-Tahrir wat-Tanwir:

"If it is true that the earth was inhabited before by a race of creatures called Al-Hinn wal-Binn or, it was said, they were called At-Tamm war-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 war-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."

For more details, please refer to the following answers: 141280 , 145806 , 10551 , 145856 , and 13286 .

And Allah knows best.