

Responsible Dominion and Knowledge for man: Re-reading the Account of
Adam's Creation in the Qur'an and the Bible

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Received: 2022/04/25 Accepted: 2022/06/06

سلطه مسئولانه و دانش مسئولانه برای انسان: خواندن گزارش خلقت آدم در کتاب مقدس و قرآن

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دریافت: ۱۴۰۱/۰۲/۰۵؛ پذیرش: ۱۴۰۱/۰۳/۱۶

Abstract

There are several mentions of man gifted dominion and knowledge by God, both in the Qur'an and the Bible, but it is important to notice that this advantages for man are not absolute and are bringing responsibility. The main question of this research is inquiring those conditions and responsibilities through re-reading the relevant verses of the Qur'an and the Bible. The approach of this article is comparative theology of Abrahamic sacred books and the methods used are those common in lexical etymology. The core sentence of the article is the fact that both in the Qur'an and the Bible, the power and dominion of man, as well as knowledge gifted is conditioned to be used in just and responsible way. Then the man has to response to God regarding all the privileges given to him/her and only in this way, one can perform his/her role as caliph of God according to the Qur'an or image of God according to the Bible.

Keywords: Quranic Anthropology, Biblical Anthropology, comparative theology, caliph of God, image of God, man's responsibility.

چکیده

هم در انجیل و هم در قرآن، چندین مورد از سلطه و علم خداوند به انسان ذکر شده است، اما توجه به این نکته حائز اهمیت است که این امتیاز برای انسان مطلق نیست. سؤال مورد این تحقیق، خواندن آیات مربوطه از انجیل و قرآن برای بررسی آن شرایط است. رویکرد این مقاله، الهیات تطبیقی کتب مقدس ابراهیمی و روش‌های مورد استفاده در ریشه‌شناسی لغوی رایج است. جمله اصلی مقاله این است که هم در انجیل و هم در قرآن، قدرت و فرمانروایی انسان و همچنین علم موهبت مشروط به عادل و مسئولیت‌پذیری است. آنگاه انسان باید نسبت به همه امتیازاتی که به او داده شده پاسخ‌گویی خداوند باشد و تنها از این طریق می‌توان نقش خود را به عنوان تصویر خدا ایفا کرد.

کلمات کلیدی: انسان‌شناسی کتاب مقدس، انسان‌شناسی قرآنی، تصویر خداوند، مسئولیت انسان.

Introduction

The story of Adam is a common teaching among Abrahamic religions reflected in parts of Torah and the Qur'an; a story which had a profound influence on anthropology of those religions. Although there are differences between Pentateuchal and Quranic accounts in details, but a common theme is two sacred books is speaking of divine attributes of dominion and knowledge given to Adam as the chosen creature. The main question in this essay is the relationship between attributed of God and man in these accounts and the critical nature of these attributes belonging to man.

As for methodology, the nature of this essay is comparative study of sacred books using the methods of semantics. Namely the semantic study done here is based on both componential analysis and context analysis.

This essay tries to find out the similarities between Divine and human attributes of dominion and knowledge, as well as distinctions. The most important distinction here, maybe the fact that those attributes when given to man are accompanied with a duty of protection. It means that human gains not absolute, but responsible dominion and knowledge.

The Attribute of Power and Dominion

One of the most common attributes of God in major theological systems is being omnipotent. God having power and dominion over all the existence is reflected in some expressions in the Abrahamic sacred books, including:

Indeed, before the day was I am He; and there is none who can deliver out of My hand; I work and who will reverse it? (Isaiah, 43:13)

Then Job answered the Lord and said, "I know that You can do everything, and that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from you (Job, 42:1-2).

Who established the mountains by his strength being clothed with power (Psalms, 65:6)

But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." (Matthew, 19:26)

For nothing will be impossible with God (Luke, 1:37).

And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thundering, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God, Omnipotent reigns (Revelation, 19:6).

In the Qur'an, apart from numerous usages of the attributes 'qādir' and 'qadīr,' meaning 'powerful' for God, we come across with a repeated expression speaking of God's omnipotence as follows:

"... Allah hath power over all things" (2: 20). This expression is repeated in the Qur'an 36 times.

Returning to man, we come across with a position of having power and dominion over other creatures and ruling it in the Old Testament, as we read concerning Adam:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים וַעֲשֵׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדְמוּתֵנוּ
וַיְרַדּוּ בְדִגְתַּת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל־
הָאָרֶץ וּבְכָל־הַרְמֵשׁ הָרֹמֵשׂ עַל־הָאָרֶץ:

Then God said: Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth (Genesis, 1: 26).

As well, we read in a passage speaking of human being in general, as follows:

וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים וַיֵּאמֶר לָהֶם אֱלֹהִים פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמְלאוּ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ וּכְבֹּשׁוּהָ וּרְדוּ בָדָגַת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבְכֹל-חַי הָאָרֶץ עַל-הָאָרֶץ:

Then God blessed them, and God said to them: be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the seam over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth (Genesis, 1: 28).

Of course, this dominion over the creatures is not an absolute advantage, but a gift accompanied with responsibility. In this regard, we find out in Torah man's power over all things besides his duty for protecting them. Either speaking of Adam's presence in Garden of Eden or after his descent on the earth, the issue of protection is considered. We read in Torah:

וַיִּקַּח יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאָדָם וַיִּנְחֵהוּ בְּגוֹ-עֵדֶן לְעִבְדָהּ וּלְשִׁמְרָהּ:

"Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it" (Genesis, 2: 15)

וַיִּשְׁלַחְהוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מַגֹּ-עֵדֶן לְעַבְדֵי אֶת-הָאָדָמָה אֲשֶׁר לְקַח מִשָּׁם: וַיִּגְרֶשׁ אֶת-הָאָדָם וַיִּשְׁכַּן מִקֶּדֶם לְגוֹ-עֵדֶן אֶת-הַכְּרִבִּים וְאֵת לֶהֱט הַחֶרֶב הַמְתִּיקָתָהּ לְשִׁמֹּר אֶת-דֶּרֶךְ יְעֵץ הַחַיִּים:

Therefore, the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. So, he drove out the man; and he placed cherubim at the east of the garden on Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life (Genesis, 3: 23-24).

What can explicitly show this responsibility for given dominion to man, is reflected in the following verse of the Old Testament:

'... He who rules over men, must be just, ruling in the fear of God' (2 Samuel, 23: 3).

Regarding the Qur'anic teaching in this concern, the first point is the fact that Adam has been assigned as God's caliph on the earth, where we read:

وَ إِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَ نَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَ نُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ (٣٠) وَ عَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (بقره/٣١).

Behold thy Lord said to the angels: "I will create a vicegerent on earth." They said "Wilt thou place therein one who will make mischief therein and shed blood? Whilst we do celebrate Thy praises and glorify Thy holy (name)?" He said: "I know what ye know not." (30) And He taught Adam the nature of all things; then He placed them before the angels and said: "Tell Me the nature of these if ye are right." (2: 31)

We know that for the word *ḥalīfa* (caliph), the core component of its semantic content in governing and having dominion; that is why after the prophet Muhammad, for long centuries the highest rulers of the Muslim society had be known as *ḥalīfa* (Pakatchi, 2016: 469).

Also, it should be considered that according to this Qur'anic account, immediately after God's announcement to angels about His decision to assign a caliph on the earth, they announced their worries about this caliph to make corruption and shed blood on the earth. Dropping out the negative estimation of the angels, this response clarifies that the human being has enough power to do such deeds.

Further, parallel to Genesis (1:28), there is several passages in the Qur'an speaking of human being in general to have dominion over all creatures on the earth as we can read in the following verse:

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مَّا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ
جَمِيعًا مِنْهُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ
يَتَفَكَّرُونَ
(جاثية/١٣)

And hath made of service unto you whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth; it is all from Him. Lo! herein verily are portents for a people who reflect.

As it is visible in both Biblical and Quranic accounts, the dominion and prominent position given to man is accompanied with a huge duty; to protect the earth and all the creatures living there. Then, one can conclude that the Abrahamic religions, insist on the fact that man's sovereignty on the earth is conditional, and man is responsible in this position.

The Attribute of Knowledge

As mentioned about the dominion, a parallel attribute of God is omniscience; God having knowledge over all the existence is reflected too in numerous passages of Abrahamic Sacred books, such as:

Then hear in heaven your dwelling place, and forgive, and act, and give to everyone according to all his ways whose heart you know (1 Kings, 8: 39).

As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for the Lord searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts ... (1 Chronicles, 28:9).

Would not God search this out? For he knows the secrets of the heart (Psalms, 44:21).

O Lord! You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; you understand my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, o Lord, you know it altogether (Psalms, 139: 1-4).

Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite (Psalms, 147:5).

But the very hairs of your head are all numbered (Matthew, 10:30).

And they prayed and said: You, o Lord who know the hearts of all, show which of these two you have chosen (Acts, 1:24).

And there is no creature hidden from his sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of him to whom we must give account (Hebrews, 4:13).

For in our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things (1 John, 3:20).

In the Qur'an, besides a wide range usages of the attributes 'alim,' meaning 'powerful', 'habir', meaning 'aware' and 'basir', meaning 'seeing' for God, we find out a repeated formula speaking of God's omniscience in this expression: "He is who knows everything" (2: 29, and 25 other verses). Also, we read in a passage:

"Say, (O Muhammad): Whether ye hide that which is in your breasts or reveal it, Allah knoweth it. He knoweth that which is in the heavens and that which is in the earth, and Allah is Able to do all things" (3:29).

Further we should point of to the verses speaking of God as 'witness of all things' (2:29, 22:17, 33:55, 41:53, 58:5, 85:9).

Coming back to man, we issue of special knowledge have a special place in the accounts of Adam's creation. Meanwhile, the reflex of this

knowledge granted to man by God is different.

The Bible projects the course of receiving knowledge by man, to the prohibited tree of Eden. In the text of Genesis, the fact that the prohibited tree was tree of knowledge is repeated three times in these verses:

וּמֵעַץ הַדְּעִת טוֹב וְרָע לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ כִּי בְיוֹם
אֲכָלְתָּ מִמֶּנּוּ מוֹת תָּמוּת:¹

But from the tree of knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat the fruit of it you shall surely die (Genesis, 2:17).

וַיֹּאמֶר הַנָּחַשׁ אֶל-הָאִשָּׁה לֹא-מוֹת תָּמוּתוּן: כִּי
יָדַע אֱלֹהִים כִּי בְיוֹם אֲכָלְתֶּם מִמֶּנּוּ וְנִפְקַחוּ עֵינֵיכֶם
וְהָיִיתֶם כְּאֱלֹהִים יֹדְעֵי טוֹב וָרָע:

And the serpent said to the woman: You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil' (Genesis, 3: 4-5):

וַיִּשְׁלַחְהוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מַגּוּר־עֵדוֹן לְעַבְדֵי אֶת-
הַחַדְמָה אֲשֶׁר לָקַח מִשָּׁם:

Then the Lord God said: Behold, the man has become like one of us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also from tree of life and eat, and live for ever (Genesis, 3:23).

The issue of God knowing good, and evil is pointed out in Qur'an too, where saying:

...عَسَىٰ أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ
تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ
(البقرة/٢١٦).

... It may happen that ye hate a thing which is good for you, and it may happen that ye love a thing which is bad for you. Allah knoweth, ye know not (2:216).

But concerning the Qur'an, it is considerable that it did not expand about the nature of forbidden tree and kept it in ambiguity. From other side,

the Qur'an paid special attention to the place of granted knowledge in the course of Adam's creation story. Not like the Bible, for the Qur'an the issue of granted knowledge is projected on the 'teaching of name' (*asmā'*), where saying:

وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ
فَقَالَ أُنَبِّئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ
(البقرة/٣١).

And He taught Adam all the names (*asmā'*), then he showed them to the angels, saying: Inform me of the names of these, if ye are truthful (2:31).

As a common point, one can realize that both the Bible and the Qur'an speak of a special knowledge granted to Adam immediately after his creation. While the Bible precisely speaks of man being like God, in knowing good and evil after eating of the prohibited, the Qur'an speaks of the fact that because of learning the names (*asmā'*), Adam became a subject worthy to obeisance. Although the Qur'an does not use a precise expression of 'similarity,' but this likeness of man to God is present in context, because this obeisance always supposed to be specific for God; especially taking in consideration that the Qur'an used in this account the verbal root $\sqrt{\text{sgd}}$ which is used to be applied just for God.

The object introduced for this knowledge, distinction between good and evil is particularly key component of Biblical image of human being. This teaching emphasized on the fact that this granted knowledge is not an absolute advantage, but rather a responsibility. Regarding the Qur'an, while the issue of teaching the names (*asmā'*) to Adam is God's answer to angels' critical question, it also emphasized on man's responsibility. That is because the angels had

manifested their worries about this new creature to commit crimes on the earth and shed blood; then the names (*asmā'*) learnt by Adam should be a kind of knowledge relevant to those worries and can hinder man of doing evil.

Human likeness to God in naming things

Naming things and give them names is a deed attributed to God several times in the Bible, while in the Qur'an too there is an account of God teaching Adam the names (*asmā'*). In both Biblical and Quranic verses, the concept of 'name' should be an important truth beyond what we understand of name and naming in usual applications. No doubt that reaching the deep meaning of 'names' in the connection between God, man and creatures needs to be investigated, but how much it concerns this essay, it is a case of man's likeness to God. Although God is an appellator by self and man is an appellatory on behalf of God; that is why, it can be important as a case of man's succession to God too.

Naming things by God is mentioned several times in the account of early pre-human creation in Genesis, as follows:

וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים | לְאוֹר יוֹם וְלַחֹשֶׁךְ קָרָא לַיְלָה
וַיְהִי-עֶרֶב וַיְהִי-בֹקֶר יוֹם אֶחָד:

God called the light Day, and the darkness he calls Night. So, the evening and the morning were the first day (Genesis, 1: 5).

וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים לְרָקִיעַ שָׁמַיִם וַיְהִי-עֶרֶב וַיְהִי-בֹקֶר יוֹם שֵׁנִי:

And God called the firmament Heaven. So, the evening and the morning were the second day (Genesis, 1:8).

וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים | לַיַבֶּשֶׁת אֶרֶץ וְלַמְקוּוֹה הַמַּיִם
קָרָא יַמִּים וַיִּרְא אֱלֹהִים כִּי-טוֹב:

And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering the waters he called Seas. And God saw that it was good (Genesis, 1:10).

Naming things by God is mentioned in other parts of the Bible too, such as:

מוֹנֵה מִסְפָּר לְכּוֹכְבֵי שָׁמַיִם יִקְרָא:

He counts the number of the stars; He calls them all by name (Psalms, 147:4).

Returning to Genesis, it speaks of four riverheads in the Garden of Eden which has names as Pishon, Gihon, Hiddekel and Euphrates (2:11-14), without preciously referring to who gave them these names.

In the Biblical account of creation after the appearance of man on the earth, naming of the things had been assigned and entrusted to man. Afterwards, this is Adam who was responsible with naming things on the earth on behalf of God, as explained in these verses of Genesis:

וַיִּצְרֶה יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִן-הָאֲדָמָה כָּל-חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה
וְאֵת כָּל-עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיִּבְאֵהוּ אֵל-הָאָדָם לְרְאוֹת מַה-
יִקְרָא-לוֹ וְכָל-אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָא-לוֹ הָאָדָם גִּפְשׁ חַיָּה הוּא
שְׁמוֹ: וַיִּקְרָא הָאָדָם שְׁמוֹת לְכָל-חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה וְלְעוֹף
הַשָּׁמַיִם וְלִכְל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה וְלָאָדָם לֹא-מֹצֵא עֹזֵר
בְּגִידוֹ:

Out of the Ground of the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. So, Adam gave names to call cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him (Genesis, 2:19-20).

וַיֹּאמֶר הָאָדָם זֹאת הִפְעַם עָצָם מֵעַצְמִי וּבָשָׂר
מִבְּשָׂרִי לְזֹאת יִקְרָא אִשָּׁה כִּי מֵאִישׁ לָקַחְתָּהּ זֹאת:

And Adam said: This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh. She

shall be called 'woman' (iššāh) because she was taken out of man (Genesis: 2:23).

וַיִּקְרָא הָאָדָם שֵׁם אִשְׁתּוֹ תַּוּבָהּ כִּי הוּא הֵיטָהּ אִם
כָּל־חַיִּים:

And Adam called his wife's name Eve (ḥawwāh), because she was the mother of all living (Genesis, 3:20).

While the Bible mentions naming things by God and afterward this position given to man to name the things on the earth, the Qur'an speaks of the names (asmā') taught by God to Adam. In both resources, these accounts refer to a kind of likeness and succession by man for God.

Likeness to God in knowing of good and bad

The twin concepts of good and evil have prime place in ethical values and the core of discussions on ethical philosophy. Indeed, for a wide range of religions too, the twin concepts are very central in their teaching. As reflected in Abrahamic sacred books, God always care about human being to act according to good values and to evite the evil deeds. For example, we read in the Old Testament:

The boastful shall not stand in your sight; you hate all workers of iniquity (evildoers) (Psalms, 5: 5).

Hate evil! Love good! Establish justice in the gate ... (Amos, 5: 15).

Also, we find some relevant teaching in passages of the New Testaments such as:

For everyone practising evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed (John, 3:20).

Put the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil (Ephesians, 6: 11).

Finally, in the Qur'an we find out passages in this concern, like:

And when he turneth away (from thee) his effort in the land is to make mischief therein and to destroy the crops and the cattle; and Allah loveth not mischief (2: 205).

And when they do some lewdness, they say: We found our fathers doing it and Allah hath enjoined it on us. Say: Allah, verily, enjoineth not lewdness. Tell ye concerning Allah that which ye know not? (7: 28).

In the story of genesis, regarding every day of creation, we find a repeatable evaluation of the results; God evaluated them as good. The passages including such an expression are as following in order:

First day: And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together the waters he called Seas. And God saw that it was good (Genesis, 1:10).

Second day: And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good (Genesis, 1: 12).

Third day: And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good (Genesis, 1: 18).

Fourth day: So, God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good (Genesis, 1: 21).

Fifth day: And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its

kind. And God saw that it was good (Genesis, 1:25).

Sixth day: Then God saw everything that he had made, and indeed it was very good. So, the evening and the morning were the sixth day (Genesis, 1: 31).

In continuation of Genesis' account, after man's creation as image of God, man also engaged in evaluation of things as good and evil. Speaking of Adam's Garden, we read:

And out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis, 2: 9).

Again, regarding this tree and man's connection with that, we read:

But from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat the fruit of it you shall surely die (Genesis, 2: 17).

And finally, we read that man had reached this knowledge, where says:

Then the Lord God said: Behold the man has become like one of us, to know good and evil ... (Genesis, 3: 22).

It is worthy to emphasize that in all these passages, the Hebrew word used for the concept is טוב (tōv), meaning 'good, pleasing, fine, fair' (Gesenius, 1939: 373).

We realize that after several introductory paces, the fate of man was to reach such a knowledge and distinction between good and evil like God, and the latter verse of Genesis emphasized clearly on this characteristic as a main feature of likeness of man to God.

Likeness of Man to God in Life

The idols in Abrahamic sacred texts are described as dead things without

breathing as we read in the Old Testament in this regard as follows:

Everyone is dull-hearted, without knowledge; every metalsmith is put to shame by the graven image; for his moulded image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them (Jeremiah, 10:14).

As well in the Qur'an we read:

وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ لَا يَخْلُقُونَ شَيْئًا وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ (٢٠) أَمْوَاتٌ غَيْرُ أَحْيَاءٍ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبْعَثُونَ (النحل/٢١).

Those unto whom they cry beside Allah created naught but are themselves created. (They are) dead, not living. And they know not when they will be raised (16:20-21).

In this orientation, there are numerous verses speaking of God as living existence, as these passage in the Old and New Testaments:

Incline your ear, O Lord, and hear; open your eyes, O Lord and see; and hear the words of Sennachrib, which he has sent to reproach the living God (2 Kings, 19:16).

My soul thirsts for God, for the living God (Psalms, 42:2).

And saying: Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you and preach to you that you should turn from these vain things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them (Acts, 14:15; for more explanations, see: Henry 1997, 16-31).

As well we have some verses in the Qur'an speaking of God as living, such as:

Allah! There is no God save Him, the Alive, the Eternal (3:2; also: 2:255).

And trust thou in the Living One Who dieth not and hymn His praise. He sufficeth as the Knower of His bondmen's sins (25:58).

He is the Living (One): There is no god but He: Call upon Him, giving Him sincere devotion. Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds! (40:65).

Further, it should be considered some accounts speaking of the life granted by God to human being as we read in the New Testament:

ὡσπερ γὰρ ὁ πατήρ ἔχει ζωὴν ἐν ἑαυτῷ, οὕτως καὶ τῷ υἱῷ ἔδωκεν ζωὴν ἔχειν ἐν ἑαυτῷ:

For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself (John, 5:26).

And we read in the Qur'an:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَحْيَاكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَكَفُورٌ (حج/٦٦)

And He it is Who gave your life, then He will cause you to die, and then will give you life (again). Lo! man is verily an ingrate (22:66).

Now we return to the theme of man's likeness to God, this time based on attribute of life.

During Adam's story in Pentateuch, we read in a passage:

וַיִּצְרֶה יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאָדָם עֹפָר מִן-הָאֲדָמָה וַיִּפְחֶה בְּאַפָּיו נְשֵׁמַת חַיִּים וַיְהִי הָאָדָם לְבָשָׂר חַיָּה:

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

Further such a theme may be understood in parallelism between two trees found in the garden of Eden; tree of knowledge and tree of life. Concerning the latter, we read in Genesis:

וַיִּצְמַח יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִן-הָאֲדָמָה כָּל-עֵץ נֹחֵם לְמַרְאֵה וטוב לְאֲכָל וְעֵץ הַחַיַּים בְּתוֹךְ הָעֵץ וְעֵץ הַדַּעַת טוֹב גַּרְע:

And out of the ground, the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden,

and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis, 2: 9).

וַיֹּאמֶר | יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים הֵן הָאָדָם הִנְהוּ בְּאֶרֶץ מִמְּנוֹ לְדַעַת טוֹב גַּרְע וְעֵץ | פְּרִי-שֵׁלַח יָדוֹ וּלְקַח גַּם מֵעֵץ הַחַיַּים וְאָכַל וַחַי לְעֹלָם:

Then the Lord God said: Behold the man has become like one of us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live for ever (Genesis, 3: 22).

While this tree of life is existing in the Adam's account with negation and it seems that Adam has not eaten of that, but comparing it with previously quoted verses of the Old and New Testaments, what is negated is the eternity, but man has been granted by divinely life.

The divine life granted to man is imaged in the Qur'an clearly, where in two abridged versions of Adam's story, speaks of divine spirit breathed into Adam's body in such words:

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي خَالِقٌ بَشَرًا مِنْ صَلْصَالٍ مِنْ حَمَإٍ مَسْنُونٍ (٢٨) فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ (حجر/٢٩)

And (remember) when thy Lord said unto the angels: Lo! I am creating a mortal out of potter's clay of black mud altered; So, when I have made him and have breathed into him of My Spirit, do ye fall down, prostrating yourselves unto him (15:28-29).

إِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي خَالِقٌ بَشَرًا مِنْ طِينٍ (٧١) فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ (ص/٧٢)

When thy Lord said unto the angels: Lo! I am about to create a mortal out of mire; And when I have fashioned him and breathed into him of My Spirit, then fall down before him prostrate (38:71-72).

A common component between these accounts of the Bible and the Qur'an is a

life of Divine kind given to human being and namely its ancestor, Adam.

Conclusion

This essay comes to the result that analytically thinking, the accounts about the creation of man in the Bible and the Qur'an carry two major teachings: the one is the likeness of man to God in some attributes, such as dominion, knowledge, naming and life. The other is the nature of this attributes; while they are absolute and self-standing concerning God, they are conditional, granted, and responsible regarding the man. It is an important part of the studied passages; the man must govern the earth in a responsible way and protect all the earth and protect all the earth and the terrestrial creatures.

Also, the man should be responsible is his knowledge and must use the given faculty of cognition in an ethical manner, distinguishing between good and evil. If we are allowed to render the attribute of 'naming' to the faculty of categorization, definition, and specification of all the world around,

then the man is obliged by God to be responsible and not to be selfish in this regard too. The man must always remember that his life is breathed by God's spirit and must do ever as he/she stands in the position of God's successor on the earth.

Viewing the results in a synthetic manner, this maybe a proper understanding of what formulated in the Bible as 'image of God' and what formulated in the Qur'an as 'caliph of God,' man being a representative of God's attributes on the earth, in condition of being responsible.

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