

Story of Creation (part 1 of 2)

Description: The first lesson explains the origins of creation from the perspective of Islamic cosmology, acknowledging that Allah is the sole Creator of everything. The lesson also talks about the description of the Magnificent Throne and the Footstool.

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Category: Lessons > [Islamic Beliefs](#) > [Oneness of God \(Tawheed\)](#)

Objectives

- To appreciate that Allah created everything.
- To learn about the description of the Throne.
- To learn about the description of the Footstool.

Arabic Terms

- *Arsh* - Throne.
- *Kursi* - Footstool.
- *As-sama ad-dunya* - The first heaven.
- *Firdaws* - the highest part of Paradise.
- *Surah* - chapter of the Quran.

Allah Created Everything

So how does it all start? Allah. Nothing else. The Prophet of Islam was asked, “O Messenger of Allah, where was our Lord before He created His creation?” He said: “Nothing existed but Him, with nothing beneath Him and nothing above Him.”[\[1\]](#)



Think about how amazing that is, basically it tells us that there is nothing but Allah that is truly worthy; creation needs Allah and nothing else because in the beginning there was Allah while there was nothing else.

Allah says in the Quran:

“Allah is the Creator of all things and He is the Guardian over all things.” (Quran 39:62)

So everything besides Allah was created by Him, is under His dominion and His disposal, and He brought it into existence.

Jubayr, a contemporary of Prophet Muhammad describes himself, saying, “I was one of the greatest enemies of the Prophet,” and he said, “I hated him more than any other human being on the face of this earth,” but then something strange happened. “One time I walked into the mosque and I heard the Prophet reciting verses from *Surah at-Toor* (Quran 52:35-36), ‘Were they created from absolutely nothing or are they themselves suggesting that they are the creators? Or did they create the heavens and the earth? Rather they have absolutely no idea, they are at confusion!’”

Jubayr says that at that moment when the Prophet said that, even though he wouldn't officially accept Islam until later on in his life, “faith entered my heart. I knew at that point that there is absolutely no way that there is no God!”

If you just sit with yourself and you go through the process of elimination of the possibilities of how we and everything else around us is here, you will find that there is no other way to explain it except by Allah.

Creation of Water and the Throne (*Arsh*)

Prophet Muhammad said: “Nothing existed but Him, with nothing beneath Him and nothing above

Him. Then He created His Throne above the water.”[2]

The Prophet tells us that there was Allah first and nothing else. Then, He created the water and the Throne (*Arsh*). They were created independent of any angels and were created before the creation of the heavens and the earth. Prophet Muhammad said, “There was Allah, and there was nothing else besides Him, and His Throne was over the water. He wrote all things in the Book (in heaven) and He created the heavens and the earth.”[3] All stars, planets, galaxies comes under the “first heaven” (*As-sama ad-dunya*).

God mentions many times in the Quran that He is the Lord of the Glorious Throne, because it is one of the foremost and most magnificent of his creations.

Description of the Throne

1. Allah Created His Throne Above Water

Allah said, “And He it is Who has created the heavens and the earth in six Days and His Throne was on the water.” (Quran 11:7)

2. Throne is the Roof of Paradise

The Prophet said: “If you ask Allah, then ask him the (Paradise of) *Firdaws*, for it is in the highest point of Paradise, and above it is the Throne of the Most Merciful, and from it burst the rivers of Paradise.”[4]

3. Throne is Above the Heavens & Above All Creation

Abdullah Ibn Masud, a Companion of the Prophet, said, “Between the lowest heaven and the one after it is the distance of five hundred years, and between every two heavens is the distance of five hundred years, and between the seventh heaven and the *Kursi* is the distance of five hundred years, and between the *Kursi* and the water is the distance of five hundred years, and the Throne (*Arsh*) is above the water. Allah the Almighty is above the Throne. And nothing is hidden from Allah of your deeds.”[5]

4. Throne has Pillars

The Prophet said: “The people will become unconscious on the Day of Resurrection and I will be the first to gain consciousness, and behold, I will find Musa clinging to one of the pillars of the Throne. Then I will not know whether he regained consciousness before me or he has been exempted because of his unconsciousness at the mountain of Toor (at Sinai).”[6]

5. Angels Who Carry It

Allah said: “Those (angels) who bear the Throne and those around it glorify the praises of their Lord.” (Quran 40:7)

He also said: “And the angels will be on its sides, and eight angels

will, that Day, bear the Throne of your Lord above them.” (Quran 69:17)

Moreover, Allah talks about the great angels that carry the Throne. They are huge magnificent creatures from the best of Allah’s angels. On the Day of Judgement, Allah tells us there will be eight angels that will bear His Throne (Quran 69:17). The Prophet said, “I was permitted to speak about one of the angels of Allah, the Almighty, the All-Powerful, who is one of the bearers of the Throne and (to tell you) that the distance between his earlobe and his shoulder is a journey of seven hundred years.” (Abu Dawud) It was also narrated with this wording, “The distance is (like) that of a bird flying for seven hundred years.”^[7]

God tells us that those angels who bear His Throne and those around it glorify His praises, believe in Him and ask for forgiveness for those who believe. They pray for them saying “Our Lord, You have encompassed all things in mercy and knowledge, so forgive those who have repented and followed Your way and protect them from the punishment of Hellfire.” (Quran 40:7)

They are glorifying Allah and declaring His perfection to show that He is independent of the Throne and is independent of those who bear the Throne. Allah does not need the Throne nor does not need those who bear the Throne.

The Footstool (*Kursi*)

The *Kursi* is a footstool that is like a stair to the Throne and Allah is above the Throne, yet nothing is hidden from Him.

The *Kursi*, the Footstool, alone has all of the heavens and the earth under it (Quran 2:255). The Prophet Muhammad said, “The Footstool in relation to the Throne is no more than a ring of iron thrown into an open desert on earth.” (Tafsir Tabari) We have no indication of how great the Throne is in size and obviously we cannot estimate the greatness of Allah Himself.

Allah is not distant; He stresses throughout the Quran that He is with us wherever we may be. In *Surah* al-Hadid (Chapter 57), immediately after Allah tells us that He rose above His Throne, He tells us that He knows everything that goes in and out of the earth, everything that descends from the heaven and what ascends therein, in short, He knows the minutest details of everything (Quran 57:4). We know Allah is above His Throne, but He is Omnipotent and His knowledge encompasses everything.

Endnotes:

^[1] Classed as *sahih* by Tabari and *hasan* by Tirmidhi, Dhahabi and Ibn Taimiyya, *Tirmidhi*, *Abu Daud*

[2] *Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah*

[3] *Saheeh Al-Bukhari*

[4] *Al-Bukhari, Musnad*

[5] *“al-`Adhamah”* by Abu Ash-Shaykh al-Asbahani, *“Al-Mujalasaah wa Jawahir Al-`Ilm”* by Ahmad ad-Daynuri, *“An-Naqd”* by Ad-Darimi, *“Sharh I`tiqad Ahl AsSunnah wal Jama`ah”* by Al-Lalikai, *“Ithbat Sifat Al-Ulu”* by Ibn Qudama.

[6] *Saheeh Al- Bukhari*

[7] *Ibn Abi 'Asim*

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