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Eve (Ḥawwāʾ) and the Expulsion (Ikhrāj) from Paradise in the Brill Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān (Letter E): Human Origin and Moral Transition in Qurʾānic Thought

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ABSTRACT

The Qurʾānic narratives concerning Eve (Ḥawwāʾ) and the Expulsion (Ikhrāj) from Paradise constitute a foundational discourse in Islamic anthropology, ethics, and theology. This study examines these narratives within a unified conceptual framework inspired by thematic entries of Brill Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān (Letter E section), emphasizing their role in constructing a theory of human origin as moral transition rather than metaphysical fall. The Qurʾān presents the primordial human condition as grounded in a single soul (nafs wāḥidah), from which a paired human existence emerges. Within this framework, Eve (Ḥawwāʾ) is understood as a co-constitutive agent of human origin, while the Expulsion (Ikhrāj) represents a structured movement from pre-moral existence to ethical responsibility in temporal life. The study argues that Qurʾānic anthropology rejects inherited guilt and instead establishes a model of shared moral agency, immediate repentance, and continuous divine mercy. The narrative thus functions not as a story of loss, but as an epistemic and ethical transition into human moral history.

KEYWORDS: Eve (Ḥawwāʾ), Expulsion (Ikhrāj), Qurʾānic Anthropology, Moral Agency,Human Origin,Ethical Transition and Brill Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān.

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EVE (HAWWA') AND THE EXPULSION (IKHRĀJ) FROM PARADISE

Human Origin and Moral Transition in Qur'anic Thought

"Then Satan made them slip out of it and removed them from the state in which they had been."
(Qur'an 2:36)

MAIN THEME

The Qur'anic narrative of Adam and Hawwa' is not a story of blame, but a divine lesson on human becoming. It explains how humanity enters moral existence through freedom, experiences error, is guided back through repentance, and divine mercy.

KEY QUR'ANIC VERSES

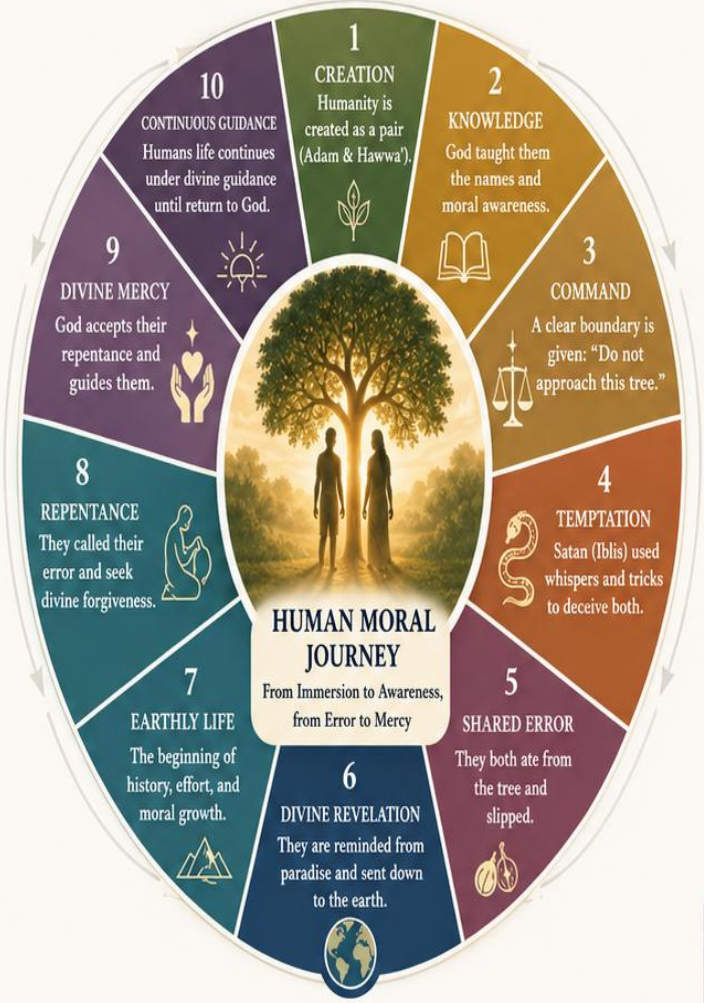
- 2:30–34 Creation, sacred trust, dignity, expulsion, and repentance.
- 2:35–36 Satan's whispers, eating from the tree, slip, descent to earth.
- 20:115–123 Admission of error and divine forgiveness.
- 7:19–20 The human soul and the inspiration of good and evil.

CENTRAL MESSAGE

The Qur'an does not blame Eve (Hawwa') alone. Satan deceived both Adam and Hawwa'; both slipped, both repented, and divine mercy remained open.

CORE CONCEPTS

- *Ikhtiyār* (Free Will) – The capacity to choose.
- *Waswasa* (Temptation) – External suggestion, not internal evil.
- *Zalla* (Slip/Error) – A human lapse, not a moral corruption.
- *Ikhraj* (Expulsion) – Transition from paradise to earthly life.
- *Tawba* (Repentance) – Return to God.
- *Rahma* (Mercy) – Divine acceptance and guidance.



CONCEPTUAL THEME

The story of Adam and Hawwa' expresses the Qur'anic view of human existence:

- Humans are created noble and free.
- Temptation is allowed, but not commanded.
- Error is human, but not final.
- Repentance is possible and divinely enabled.
- Mercy is constant and universal.

KEY INSIGHTS

- The Qur'an does not blame Eve (Hawwa') alone.
- Satan deceived both Adam and Hawwa'.
- Both slipped, both repented, and both were forgiven.
- Repentance is immediately opened by God.
- Humanity's story begins with mercy, not tragedy.

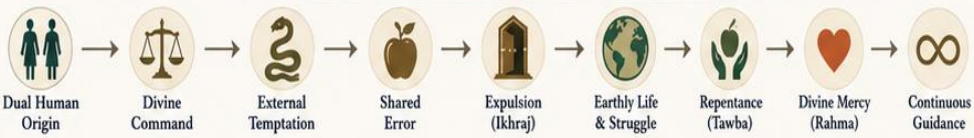
THEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Affirms human dignity and equality.
- Establishes moral responsibility.
- Rejects determinism and fatalism.
- Builds a theology of hope and return.
- Forms the foundation of Qur'anic ethics.

OVERARCHING MESSAGE

"The Qur'an does not blame Eve (Hawwa') alone for sin or expulsion from Paradise. Satan deceived both Adam and Hawwa'; both slipped, both repented, and divine mercy remained open."

CONCEPTUAL FLOW: THE QUR'ANIC ANTHROPOLOGICAL MODEL



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Volume No: 03 Issue No: 01 (2026)

INTRODUCTION:

The Qurʾānic account of human origin is structured around two interconnected narrative axes: the creation of the primordial human pair and the subsequent Expulsion (Ikhrāj) from Paradise. These narratives occupy a central position in Qurʾānic cosmology and moral anthropology, shaping the foundational understanding of human purpose, ethical responsibility, and divine guidance.

Unlike later doctrinal systems that emphasize inherited sin or irreversible fall, the Qurʾān constructs human existence as a dynamic moral process characterized by guidance, lapse, recognition, and restoration. The immediacy of repentance following moral deviation indicates that error is not final but integrated into divine pedagogy. Within the interpretive tradition of the Brill Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān, particularly under Letter E entries such as "Eve" and "Expulsion,"3 these narratives are treated as interconnected semantic structures rather than isolated historical accounts. The interpretive approach of this study is therefore thematic and encyclopaedic, focusing on conceptual relationships rather than chronological storytelling.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

This study is guided by the following research questions:

How does the Qurʾān construct Eve (Ḥawwāʾ) within the framework of human origin?

Does the Expulsion (Ikhrāj) represent punishment or moral transition?

How is moral responsibility distributed within the primordial human pair?

What role does repentance (tawbah) play in the structure of expulsion?

How does the combined reading reshape Qurʾānic anthropology?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

To analyze Eve (Ḥawwāʾ) as a foundational anthropological figure in the Qurʾān

To reinterpret the Expulsion (Ikhrāj) as ethical transition rather than punitive fall

To examine shared moral responsibility within the primordial pair

To explore repentance as a structural component of human moral existence

To construct an integrated Qurʾānic model of human origin

METHODOLOGY:

This study adopts a thematic-encyclopaedic methodology, consistent with the interpretive style of Brill's Qurʾānic scholarship. Instead of linear narrative reconstruction, it employs conceptual mapping across Qurʾānic passages.

The methodological framework includes:

Qurʾānic textual analysis

Semantic-linguistic examination of key Arabic terms

Classical tafsīr comparison

Thematic synthesis of anthropological concepts

Encyclopaedic cross-referencing of related entries, is used here as a conceptual marker of epistemic misrecognition, illustrating how perception may distort moral reality before correction through divine guidance.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES
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Volume No: 03 Issue No: 01 (2026)

Qurʾānic Anthropology of Human Origin and the Paradigmatic Structure of Creation:

The Qurʾānic narrative of human origin does not function as mythological storytelling in a conventional sense, nor as purely historical reconstruction. Instead, it operates as a theological anthropology, where the creation of Adam and his spouse (Ḥawwāʾ/Eve) is presented as a moral architecture through which human existence is defined. "The Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān (Brill) situates this narrative within a broader conceptual framework in which human beings are not simply created but ethically initiated"4 . The Qurʾān repeatedly emphasizes not only the act of creation but also the purpose of creation: moral accountability (taklīf), vicegerency (khilāfa), and experiential knowledge of obedience and disobedience. Key Qurʾānic references shaping this anthropology include: "innī jāʿilun fī al-arḍ khalīfa"5, "wa ʿallama Ādama al-asmāʾa kullahā"6, "thumma qulna lil-malāʾikati usjudū li Ādam"7, "wa qulna yā Ādam uskun anta wa zawjuka al-janna", "fa-azallahumā al-shayṭān"8. These textual units construct a layered anthropology in which:

Creation is intentional, not accidental
Knowledge precedes moral responsibility
Obedience is tested through prohibition
Humanity is dual from origin (Adam + spouse)
Moral agency is shared and relational

A critical insight emphasized in modern Qurʾānic encyclopaedic analysis is that the Qurʾān does not present Adam as a solitary prototype of humanity. Instead, humanity emerges as a paired ontological structure.The repeated address:

"yā Ādam uskun anta wa zawjuka al-janna"
("O Adam, dwell you and your spouse in Paradise"9)

establishes a grammatical and theological duality. The presence of "anta wa zawjuka" ("you and your spouse"10) indicates that the human moral condition is inherently relational. Ḥawwāʾ is not a secondary figure added after Adam's creation in ethical significance; rather, she is embedded within the same divine address, indicating:

shared command
shared prohibition
shared environment
shared consequence

The Brill Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān highlights that this structure resists any hierarchical moral assignment. Instead, it constructs a symmetrical anthropology, where both male and female participate equally in the initiation of moral history.

The Qurʾānic narrative begins not with sin, but with knowledge:

"wa ʿallama Ādama al-asmāʾa kullahā"
("And He taught Adam all the names"11)

This epistemic moment is crucial in Qurʾānic anthropology. Knowledge precedes temptation, and awareness precedes moral failure. Thus, human error is not rooted in ignorance alone but

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in the complexity of choice. Within this framework, Ḥawwāʾ participates in the same epistemic environment as Adam. Although not explicitly mentioned in the teaching of names, she is included in the moral sphere where knowledge and prohibition coexist. The encyclopaedic interpretation stresses that:
knowledge is divine gift,
moral testing is structural, not accidental,
awareness creates possibility of disobedience,
responsibility emerges with cognition,
Thus, the origin narrative is not about innocence lost in ignorance, but about responsibility activated through knowledge. A major interpretive dimension emphasized in Brill-based scholarship is the redefinition of Paradise (al-janna) in the Adam narrative. It is not the final eschatological Paradise, but a pre-moral testing environment.The command structure:
"kulā min haythu shiʾtumā wa lā taqrabā hādhihi al-shajarah"12
establishes:
unrestricted permission
A single prohibition,
Conditional moral boundary,
Paradise here functions as:
A controlled environment of obedience,
A symbolic space of divine nearness,
A transitional stage before earthly existence,
Ḥawwāʾ's presence in this space is therefore not decorative but essential: she is part of the first moral experiment of humanity.

Statical Table of Qurʾānic Anthropological Structure:

Element	Qurʾānic Term	Function	Moral Significance
Creation	khalq	Ontological origin	Divine intentionality
Knowledge	ʿilm al-asmāʾ	Epistemic foundation	Capacity for moral choice
Paradise	Al-janna	Testing environment	Conditiona obedience
Command	amr / nahy	Moral boundary	Freedom within limits
Error	zalla / khataʾ	Human lapse	Non-essential sin
Expulsion	ikhrāj / hubūṭ	Transition	Ethical historicity
Repentance	tawba	Restoration	Divine mercy

Within this anthropological system, Ḥawwāʾ is not a symbolic afterthought but an integral component of human moral formation. Her presence indicates that:
humanity is relational from origin
moral testing is shared, not individualized
ethical failure is collective experience

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES
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Volume No: 03 Issue No: 01 (2026)

redemption applies equally

The Encyclopaedia emphasizes that Qurʾānic narrative avoids the later theological tendency to isolate female agency as the source of moral collapse. Instead, responsibility is distributed across the human pair and redirected toward the external force of temptation (Shayṭān).

Eve (Ḥawwāʾ), Temptation, and the Ethics of Shared Moral Responsibility:

The Qurʾān frames the moment of transgression not as an isolated act of female deception, but as a systemic moral event involving three actors:

Divine command

Human pair (Adam + Ḥawwāʾ)

External deceiver (Shayṭān)

The critical verse:"fa-waswasa lahumā al-shayṭān"13

"fa-azallahumā al-shayṭān"14

establishes that the source of deviation is externalized. The verb "azalla" (caused to slip) indicates induced error, not inherent corruption. One of the most significant theological insights in the Brill Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān is the absence of gendered culpability. The Qurʾān consistently uses dual grammatical forms:

"Akhrajahumā" (he expelled them both)15

"Azallahumā" (he caused both to slip)16

"Akālā min-hā" (they both ate from it)17

This linguistic structure eliminates the possibility of:

Eve as sole temptress, female origin of sin, inherited female guilt,Instead, it constructs a model of symmetrical moral agency.

Static Table of Agency Distribution in the Fall Narrative:

Actor	Role	Action	Responsibility Type
Adam	Human partner	Ate from tree	Shared responsibility
Ḥawwāʾ	Human partner	Ate from tree	Shared responsibility
Shayṭān	External deceiver	Whispered temptation	Primary instigator
Divine command	Moral structure	Prohibition	Ethical framework

The Qurʾānic term "zalla" 18 (slip) is crucial. It indicates:

Accidental deviation, momentary lapse, reversible mistake, not ontological sinfulness. Thus, the human condition is defined not by corruption but by fallibility within moral awareness. Ḥawwāʾ, in this structure, represents the human capacity to act under temptation not the origin of evil itself. The narrative moves rapidly from error to restoration: "fatalaqqā Ādamu min rabbihi kalimātin fatāba ʿalayh"19

This immediacy is theologically significant. It indicates:no inherited sin,no prolonged punishment structure,direct accessibility of divine mercy. Ḥawwāʾ is implicitly included in this restorative movement, as Qurʾānic grammar consistently maintains duality. The expulsion

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES
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Volume No: 03 Issue No: 01 (2026)

(ikhrāj) is not merely spatial displacement but ethical transformation. Humanity transitions from:
passive obedience → active moral choice
protected environment → tested environment
immediate divine proximity → mediated divine guidance
Ḥawwāʾ becomes part of this transformation, symbolizing:
Emergence of moral subjectivity
Beginning of historical human existence
Activation of ethical consciousness.

The Concept of Ikhrāj (Expulsion) as Ontological and Ethical Transition in Qurʾānic Thought:

The Qurʾānic notion of ikhrāj (expulsion) from Paradise is one of the most conceptually dense elements in the narrative of Adam and Ḥawwāʾ (Eve). While earlier exegetical traditions often interpreted this event as a punishment for disobedience, modern Qurʾānic scholarship particularly reflected in encyclopaedic analyses such as the Brill Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān reframes it as a transformative ontological shift rather than a purely punitive act. The Qurʾān employs multiple expressions to describe this transition:
"ihbiṭū"20 (descend)
"akhrajahumā"21 (He expelled them both)
"qāla ihbiṭū minhā jamīʿan"22
These expressions do not merely indicate spatial relocation; they encode a cosmic reconfiguration of human existence. The expulsion from Paradise marks a shift in the ontological condition of humanity. Before expulsion, Adam and Ḥawwāʾ exist in a state characterized by:
direct divine provision
absence of moral burden
limited prohibition structure
non-historical existence
After expulsion, the structure changes fundamentally:
moral accountability becomes permanent
knowledge is tested in real-world conditions
time and history begin
struggle (jihād al-nafs) becomes existential
Thus, ikhrāj is not destruction but reconstruction of human mode of being.

Static Table of Ontological Comparison Before and After Ikhrāj:

Dimension	Paradise State	Earthly State
Moral responsibility	Minimal	Full accountability
Knowledge	Given directly	Applied experience
Temptation	External and isolated	Continuous and systemic

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES
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Volume No: 03 Issue No: 01 (2026)

Divine proximity	Immediate	Mediated	Human condition
Stable obedience	Dynamic struggle	Non-linear/	Historical existence
	Time	ahistorical	

The Qurʾānic term hubūṭ (descent) does not imply humiliation alone. Classical and modern linguistic analysis shows it carries three semantic layers:
Spatial descent (movement from higher to lower realm)
Existential descent (entry into material temporality)
Ethical descent (entry into realm of moral testing)
In this framework, Ḥawwāʾ participates equally in this descent. The Qurʾān does not isolate Adam or Eve; instead, it repeatedly uses plural imperatives:
"ihbiṭū baʿḍukum li-baʿḍin ʿaduww"23
This establishes a new reality:
human social existence begins after expulsion
relational tension becomes part of history
moral opposition becomes structurally embedded
Ḥawwāʾ's role in ikhrāj is not symbolic blame but symbolic participation in human historicity. The Qurʾān constructs her as part of a dual entry into:
ethical awareness
social complexity
temporal life
Thus, she is not the "cause"24 of expulsion but a co-transitionary agent in the emergence of humanity as a historical moral species. Contrary to interpretations that frame expulsion purely as loss, the Qurʾānic narrative especially in modern academic readings reveals a dual valence:
Loss: separation from paradisiacal immediacy
Gain: entry into moral agency and knowledge through experience
This duality is crucial. Without expulsion, there is:
no moral growth
no ethical choice
no history of revelation
no concept of repentance
Thus, ikhrāj becomes a necessary precondition for human spiritual development.
One of the most significant implications of ikhrāj is the beginning of ethical history. Before expulsion, there is no moral narrative in time. After expulsion:
prophets are sent
revelation begins
law becomes necessary
human societies form

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES
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Volume No: 03 Issue No: 01 (2026)

Ḥawwāʾ's participation signifies that ethical history is not male-originated but human-originated as a pair. The Encyclopaedia-based interpretation synthesizes ikhrāj into three integrated dimensions:
Ontological: change in human being
Ethical: activation of moral responsibility
Historical: initiation of time-bound existence

Eve (Ḥawwāʾ) in Classical Exegesis and Modern Qurʾānic Scholarship:

The figure of Eve (Ḥawwāʾ) occupies a dynamic interpretive space in Islamic intellectual history. While the Qurʾān itself refers to her indirectly as Adam's spouse (zawj), later exegetical traditions developed more elaborate narratives about her role, identity, and moral responsibility. The Brill Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān highlights that interpretations of Ḥawwāʾ evolve across three major stages:
Early classical tafsīr
Medieval theological synthesis
Modern critical scholarship
Each stage reflects changing theological concerns about gender, morality, and human origin. Early exegetes such as al-Ṭabarī, al-Qurṭubī, and others expand the Qurʾānic silence on Eve's name into detailed narratives. Some traditions, influenced by Isra'iliyyāt material, introduce additional storytelling elements, including: "Eve's creation from Adam's rib (parallel traditions), her alleged role in encouraging consumption from the tree, moral asymmetry between Adam and Eve in early narration."25 However, even within classical tafsīr, there is no unanimous agreement on gendered culpability. Many scholars maintain that:
both Adam and Ḥawwāʾ share responsibility
Shayṭān is the primary deceiver
repentance is equally available to both

Static Table of Classical vs Qurʾānic Narrative Emphasis:

Theme	Qurʾānic Text	Classical Expansion
Modern Academic Reading	Responsibility	Shared
Sometimes asymmetrical	Fully symmetrical	Eve's role
Spouse, partner	Expanded narrative role	Archetypal human agent
Temptation	Shayṭān	Shayṭān + narrative additions
External moral force	Sin	Slippage
Moral lapse	Non-original, non-inherited	Outcome
Repentance	Repentance	Ethical transition

In medieval Islamic theology, discussions of Ḥawwāʾ become increasingly philosophical. Scholars explore questions such as:
"nature of free will, relationship between divine decree and human action,
moral responsibility of the first human pair"26.
Despite variations, the dominant theological position remains:

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES
ISSN Online: 3006-4686, ISSN Print: 3006-4678
Volume No: 03 Issue No: 01 (2026)

no doctrine of inherited sin
no eternal blame on Eve
emphasis on divine mercy
This distinguishes Islamic anthropology from some parallel doctrinal systems in other Abrahamic traditions. Modern Qurʾānic scholarship, particularly in encyclopaedic works such as the Brill Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān, reframes Ḥawwāʾ within:
literary analysis
linguistic structure
anthropological theory
comparative religious studies. **Linguistic Neutrality**:" The Qurʾān's avoidance of naming Eve suggests intentional neutrality rather than omission"27. **Ethical Symmetry**:" Dual grammatical structures emphasize shared agency"28. **Narrative Deconstruction**: " The fall narrative is not linear causation but relational interaction."29 Modern interpretation increasingly views Ḥawwāʾ as an archetype rather than a historical figure alone. She represents: "human susceptibility to temptation, capacity for error without corruption, immediate potential for repentance, participation in moral evolution."30 Thus, she symbolizes humanity itself in its earliest ethical formation. A key conclusion in Brill-based scholarship is that the Qurʾān does not construct a gendered moral ontology. Instead:
moral responsibility is universal
temptation affects all humans equally
redemption is equally accessible
Ḥawwāʾ's narrative function therefore resists patriarchal reduction and instead affirms shared human moral identity. Ḥawwāʾ is fully integrated into Qurʾānic ethics through three principles:"Shared creation (nafs wāḥida concept), Shared responsibility (dual verbs), Shared redemption (tawba acceptance)."31 This triadic structure defines Qurʾānic moral anthropology.

Tawba (Repentance), Divine Mercy, and the Ethical Restoration of Humanity after Ikhrāj:

Within Qurʾānic anthropology, the narrative of Adam and Ḥawwāʾ does not culminate in expulsion but in restoration through divine mercy. The act of tawba (repentance) is not a marginal addition to the story; it is its theological climax.
The Brill Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān emphasizes that the expulsion (ikhrāj) cannot be interpreted independently from repentance, because the Qurʾānic structure of the narrative is inherently cyclical rather than linear:
Creation → Instruction → Test → Error → Expulsion → Repentance → Mercy → Continuation of life
Thus, the moral universe of the Qurʾān is not defined by fall, but by return (rujūʿ).
The key verses shaping this theological framework include:
"fa-talaqqā Ādamu min rabbihi kalimātin fa-tāba ʿalayh"32
"thumma ijtabāhu rabbuhu fa-tāba ʿalayhi wa hadā"33

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES
ISSN Online: 3006-4686, ISSN Print: 3006-4678
Volume No: 03 Issue No: 01 (2026)

"innahu huwa al-tawwābu al-raḥīm"34 These verses establish repentance as a divinely initiated process rather than a purely human act. In Qurʾānic semantics, tawba does not merely mean "feeling regret.35 " It signifies:

turning back, reversal of direction, moral reorientation and divine acceptance of return. Importantly, the Qurʾān often attributes tawba first to God before attributing it to humans. This dual structure appears in: "thumma tāba ʿalayhim li-yatūbū"36 (God turns toward them so that they may turn back)

This establishes a critical theological principle:

Human repentance is preceded by divine attraction toward forgiveness.

Thus, mercy is not reactive it is ontologically prior.

Static Table Structure of Tawba in Qurʾānic Theology:

Stage	Actor	Action	Theological Meaning
1	Human (Adam + Ḥawwāʾ)	Error (zalla)	Moral vulnerability
2	Divine command	Reminder	Ethical awareness
3	Human response	Recognition	Conscious guilt
4	Divine initiation	"kalimāt" given	Mercy begins
5	Human response	Tawba	Return
6	Divine acceptance	"fa-tāba ʿalayh"	Restoration

The Qurʾān does not separate Eve from Adam in the repentance process. Although her name is not explicitly mentioned, the grammatical structure of the narrative remains dual throughout:

"fa-azallahumā"37 (he caused them both to slip)

"qāla ihbiṭū" 38(descend, plural)

"fatāba ʿalayh" 39(He turned toward him/they collectively understood as humanity)

The Encyclopaedia emphasizes that this grammatical duality ensures that:

repentance is shared

guilt is not individualized

mercy is collectively accessible

Ḥawwāʾ therefore remains fully included in divine restoration. A major theological shift occurs when the Qurʾān states: "fatalaqqā Ādamu min rabbihi kalimātin"40

Adam does not initiate repentance independently; rather, he receives words from God. This indicates: divine guidance precedes repentance, moral awareness is externally supported, forgiveness is structurally embedded in creation. Thus, the Qurʾānic worldview differs from strict moral autonomy systems; it presents a relational moral ontology, where God actively facilitates return. When read in isolation, ikhrāj appears as punishment. However, when read in onjunction with tawba, it becomes part of a mercy-driven sequence. This produces a theological paradox: Expulsion is hardship, But hardship becomes the condition for moral growth, Moral growth leads back to divine mercy. The Qurʾānic narrative constructs what can be called: "Mercy-through-transition theology"41

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES
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Volume No: 03 Issue No: 01 (2026)

Ḥawwāʾ, as part of the expelled pair, becomes a participant in this transformation rather than a passive recipient of punishment. The transition from Paradise to Earth produces a fundamental shift in human ethics:

Before Tawba:	**After Tawba:**
awareness of good and evil	innocence without awareness
capacity for repentance	obedience without moral struggle
ethical struggle as permanent condition	absence of ethical tension

This shift is crucial: humanity becomes morally self-aware only after error and repentance. Thats why , Ḥawwāʾ is embedded in the Qurʾānic logic that:

moral consciousness is born through experience of limitation and forgiveness

Static Table of Moral Transformation Cycle:

Phase	Condition	Moral Status
Role of Eve (Ḥawwāʾ)	Paradise	Innocence
Pre-moral	Shared existence	Temptation
Test	Emerging agency	Shared exposure
Error	Slip	Moral lapse
Shared action	Expulsion	Transition
Historical entry	Shared descent	Repentance
Awareness	Ethical awakening	Shared return
Earthly life	Responsibility	Full agency
		Shared moral existence

One of the most significant theological implications emphasized in Brill-style scholarship is that tawba is not limited to Adam and Ḥawwāʾ. Instead, it becomes a universal human paradigm. The Qurʾān repeatedly affirms:

“inn Allāha yuḥibbu al-tawwābīn”42 “wa man yaʿmal sūʾan aw yaẓlim nafsahu thumma yastaghfir Allāh.”43 This establishes: repentance as ongoing human necessity, divine mercy as constantly accessible, moral failure as correctable condition. Ḥawwāʾ thus becomes the archetypal figure of restored humanity, not fallen femininity. The final synthesis of tawba in Qurʾānic anthropology reveals three interlocking principles:

Ontological Mercy: Mercy is built into creation itself. **Ethical Mercy:** Human error is anticipated, not condemned eternally. **Historical Mercy:** Human history is a continuous process of return. In this structure, Eve (Ḥawwāʾ) is not marginal but foundational she participates in the first enactment of human return to divine acceptance.

Comparative Scriptural Anthropology Qurʾān, Biblical Tradition, and Second Temple Interpretations of Eve:

The Qurʾānic narrative of Adam and Ḥawwāʾ cannot be fully understood in isolation. The Brill Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān emphasizes that the Qurʾān emerges in a Late Antique environment where Biblical, para-Biblical, and interpretive traditions about Adam, Eve, and

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES
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Volume No: 03 Issue No: 01 (2026)

the "fall" were already well established. Thus, comparative analysis is not external to Qurʾānic interpretation it is part of its intellectual horizon. The key comparative traditions include:
Genesis (Hebrew Bible)
Rabbinic Midrash
Syriac Christian interpretations
Early Islamic tafsīr traditions

Genesis Narrative: Gendered Responsibility and Theological Divergence

In the Book of Genesis (chapters 2–3), the narrative introduces:
"Eve created from Adam's rib, serpent as deceiver, Eve as first to eat fruit, Adam following her action"44. This structure produces a sequence of moral causation:
Eve → Adam → Fall → Curse
In many later theological readings, this led to:
gendered moral asymmetry
inherited sin doctrines
association of female agency with temptation

Qurʾānic Reconfiguration of the Narrative

The Qurʾān fundamentally restructures this sequence:
Shayṭān → Adam + Ḥawwāʾ → shared slip → shared expulsion → shared repentance
Key differences:" no serpent narrative, no female origin of sin, no inherited curse
no exclusive blame on Eve"45. The Qurʾān replaces causal hierarchy with ethical symmetry.

Static Table of Comparative Scriptural Structure:

Element	Genesis	Qurʾān
Theological Outcome	First act of eating	Eve
Shared (Adam + Ḥawwāʾ)	No gender priority	Deceiver
Serpent	Shayṭān	External moral force
Responsibility	Asymmetrical	Symmetrical
Shared accountability	Punishment	Curse structure
Expulsion + mercy	No inherited sin	Restoration
Limited	Full tawba	Universal forgiveness

Rabbinic and Midrashic Expansions

Jewish Midrashic traditions often expand Eve's role in complex ways:
"Eve as intellectually curious, Eve as morally weak or strong depending on interpretation, debates over Adam's responsibility"46.However, these traditions remain diverse and non-systematic. The Qurʾān, in contrast, simplifies moral structure:"removes narrative complexity of blame, emphasizes unity of human agency, focuses on divine mercy rather than punishment."47 Scholars like those in the Brill Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān highlight that Qurʾānic anthropology emerges within a Late Antique context characterized by: "theological debates about sin, human freedom vs divine decree, origin of evil, role of women in moral history."48 The Qurʾān responds not by repeating these debates, but by restructuring their

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES
ISSN Online: 3006-4686, ISSN Print: 3006-4678
Volume No: 03 Issue No: 01 (2026)

moral logic. Ḥawwāʾ is therefore not a borrowed figure but a redefined theological agent. The most significant divergence lies in the rejection of inherited sin. Where some traditions develop:
original sin doctrine
inherited moral corruption
gendered guilt transmission
The Qurʾān constructs instead:
individual responsibility
immediate repentance
non-transmissible error
Thus, Ḥawwāʾ is never a carrier of collective guilt.
Comparative analysis reveals that the Qurʾānic narrative is not a derivative version of earlier traditions but a reformulation of moral anthropology. Eve (Ḥawwāʾ) is repositioned:
from cause of fall → to participant in moral emergence
from agent of sin → to co-agent of repentance
from symbol of blame → to symbol of shared humanity

Symbolic Anthropology of Eve (Ḥawwāʾ) Gender, Knowledge, and Moral Consciousness:

Ḥawwāʾ in Qurʾānic thought is not merely a historical figure but a symbolic anthropological construct. The Brill Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān interprets her as part of a broader symbolic system that encodes:" human vulnerability, moral cognition, relational existence, ethical responsibility."49 Thus, Eve becomes an archetype of human moral emergence. The Qurʾān does not associate knowledge with gender. Both Adam and Ḥawwāʾ: "receive divine instruction, experience temptation, commit error, undergo repentance"50. This establishes epistemic neutrality:" knowledge is human, error is human, responsibility is human, not gender-specific"51.

Static Table of Symbolic Functions of Ḥawwāʾ:

Symbolic Domain	Representation
Ontology	Human origin partner
Ethics	Shared responsibility
Psychology	Susceptibility to temptation
Epistemology	Moral awareness through experience
Theology	Inclusion in divine mercy
History	Beginning of human temporality

The moment of error followed by repentance produces:
awareness of limitation,
recognition of prohibition,
understanding of consequences.
Ḥawwāʾ thus represents the transition from:
unconscious obedience → conscious morality
This is central to Qurʾānic anthropology: morality requires experience.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES
ISSN Online: 3006-4686, ISSN Print: 3006-4678
Volume No: 03 Issue No: 01 (2026)

The Qurʾān avoids constructing:" female moral inferiority, male moral superiority, gendered sin inheritance."52 Instead, it constructs:"shared moral vulnerability, shared moral capacity, shared divine accountability."53 Ḥawwāʾ is fully integrated into this neutral moral ontology. Symbolically, Ḥawwāʾ functions as: The first human moral agent alongside Adam, A representation of relational ethics. A sign of universal human fallibility and redemption, She is not an "origin of sin" but an origin of moral consciousness.

Ontology of Moral Freedom Divine Will, Human Agency, and the Structure of Ethical Choice in the Narrative of Ḥawwāʾ (Eve) and Ikhrāj:

At the deepest philosophical level, the narrative of Adam and Ḥawwāʾ is not merely about origin, temptation, or expulsion. It is fundamentally about moral freedom (ikhtiyār) and its relationship to divine will (irāda ilāhiyya). The Brill Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān situates the Adamic narrative within a broader Qurʾānic anthropology in which human beings are neither fully determined nor fully autonomous. Instead, they exist in a relational ontology of responsibility, where freedom is real but always situated within divine sovereignty. Key Qurʾānic anchors for this structure include: "wa hadaynāhu al-najdayn"54 (We guided him to two paths). "innā hadaynāhu al-sabīl"55 (We guided him to the path). "fa-man shāʾa falyuʾmin wa man shāʾa falyakfur"56 (Whoever wills, let him believe, and whoever wills, let him disbelieve)

Within this framework, Ḥawwāʾ's participation in the primordial event becomes a philosophical case study of human freedom under divine command. The command given to Adam and Ḥawwāʾ is extremely minimal: "Do not approach this tree"

This establishes what philosophers might call a bounded freedom model:

"unlimited permission, single prohibition, clear moral boundary, Thus, the first human moral situation is not confusion but clarity"57. The presence of Ḥawwāʾ in this structure indicates that: moral choice is inherently relational, temptation operates within shared environments, ethical responsibility is distributed, not isolated, Freedom here is not abstract; it is dialogical and shared. A central theological tension arises: If God knows the outcome, is human choice real?

The Qurʾānic narrative does not resolve this through philosophical abstraction but through narrative ethics.

The sequence is:

1:Command is given
2:Choice is made
3:Consequence unfolds
4: Mercy is offered

This structure preserves:

1: divine omniscience
2: human accountability
3: moral significance of action

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES
ISSN Online: 3006-4686, ISSN Print: 3006-4678
Volume No: 03 Issue No: 01 (2026)

Ḥawwāʾ's role confirms that the narrative is not about predetermined failure but meaningful moral testing.

Static Table of Dimensions of Moral Freedom in the Adamic Narrative:

Dimension	Divine Role
Human Role (Adam + Ḥawwāʾ)	Ethical Outcome
Knowledge	Instruction
Reception	Awareness
Command	Definition of boundary
Interpretation	Moral framing
Temptation	Allowed within test structure
Experience of pressure	Ethical tension
Choice	Permitted by divine will
Actual decision	Responsibility
Consequence	Enforcement of structure
Acceptance	Learning
Mercy	Initiation of tawba
Response	Restoration

Ḥawwāʾ is essential to this structure because she eliminates the possibility of:
"solitary moral psychology, individualistic interpretation of sin, gendered moral exceptionalism"58. Instead, she establishes that: freedom is inherently social from its first manifestation. The Qurʾān does not present a solitary individual being tested, but a human pair embedded in relational ethics. Thus, moral freedom is:
shared
relational
dialogical
non-hierarchical
The presence of Shayṭān introduces a third element in moral ontology:
Divine command (truth)
Human freedom (choice)
Satanic suggestion (distortion)
Importantly, temptation is not sin. It is a structural condition of freedom.
Without the possibility of deviation:
obedience has no meaning
morality has no weight
freedom collapses into necessity
"Ḥawwāʾ's encounter with temptation therefore represents not failure but activation of moral agency59. Before ikhrāj, Adam and Ḥawwāʾ exist in a non-historical state. After expulsion, they enter:
time

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES
ISSN Online: 3006-4686, ISSN Print: 3006-4678
Volume No: 03 Issue No: 01 (2026)

change
causality
consequence
This is crucial: moral freedom only becomes meaningful in time.
Thus: ikhrāj is not removal from paradise only; it is entry into history
Ḥawwāʾ becomes part of the first human transition into temporal ethical existence.
A central philosophical tension emerges: If humans are free, why does God intervene with mercy? The Qurʾānic answer is not contradiction but integration:
Freedom allows error
Error activates repentance
Repentance activates mercy
Thus, freedom is not opposed to divine mercy it is its precondition.
Ḥawwāʾ participates in this structure as:
moral agent
fallible being
recipient of mercy
Ethical Implication: Responsibility Without Determinism
The Qurʾānic model avoids two extremes:
Absolute determinism (no freedom)
Absolute autonomy (no divine structure)
Instead, it constructs a relational responsibility model:
humans choose
God enables
consequences educate
mercy restores
Ḥawwāʾ is central to this balance because she ensures that moral agency is not isolated in a single subject but distributed across humanity." In philosophical terms, Ḥawwāʾ (Eve) is not a peripheral figure in the Qurʾānic narrative"60. She is structurally essential to its deepest claim: Human beings are free, responsible, and redeemable within a divinely structured moral universe.
Through her participation in:
command
temptation
error
expulsion
repentance
Ḥawwāʾ becomes the archetype of human moral existence itself. The Qurʾānic narrative, as interpreted in encyclopaedic scholarship, therefore culminates not in fall, but in the establishment of a sustainable ontology of ethical freedom.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES
ISSN Online: 3006-4686, ISSN Print: 3006-4678
Volume No: 03 Issue No: 01 (2026)

Eve (Ḥawwāʾ), Ikhrāj, and the Qurʾānic Theory of Human Moral Existence:

The narrative of Ḥawwāʾ (Eve), Adam, temptation, expulsion (ikhrāj), and repentance (tawba) is not a fragmented mythic episode in Qurʾānic discourse. Rather, it forms a single integrated theory of human existence. The Brill Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān and contemporary Qurʾānic studies converge on one key insight: the Adamic narrative is a foundational anthropological model, not merely a story of origin. It explains:

how humans begin morally,
how freedom is structured,
how error functions,
how history begins,
how mercy governs existence, Ḥawwāʾ is structurally embedded in all these dimensions. When all Qurʾānic elements are synthesized, the narrative forms a coherent philosophical sequence:

1. Creation (khalq)
2. Knowledge (ʿilm)
3. Command (amr)
4. Freedom (ikhtiyār)
5. Temptation (waswasa)
6. Shared error (zalla)
7. Expulsion (ikhrāj / hubūṭ)
8. Historical existence (dunyā)
9. Repentance (tawba)
10. Divine mercy (raḥma)

This sequence defines what can be called: "Qurʾānic moral ontology of human becoming"61 Ḥawwāʾ is present in every stage as co-agent, not subordinate figure.

Static Master Table of Complete Qurʾānic Anthropological Model:

Stage	Event	Ontological Status	Role of Ḥawwāʾ	Ethical Meaning
1	Creation	Pre-human emergence	Co-origin partner	Dual human origin
2	Knowledge	Epistemic foundation	Shared moral capacity	Awareness begins
3	Command	Divine boundary	Equal recipient	Moral structure
4	Temptation	Ethical test	Shared exposure	Freedom activated
5	Error	Moral lapse	Shared participation	Fallibility revealed
6	Expulsion	Ontological shift	Shared descent	History begins
7	Earth life	Temporal existence	Shared responsibility	Ethics becomes real
8	Repentance	Moral recognition	Shared return	Consciousness awakens
9	Mercy	Divine acceptance	Shared inclusion	Restoration of dignity

This model is defined by three philosophical pillars:

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES
ISSN Online: 3006-4686, ISSN Print: 3006-4678
Volume No: 03 Issue No: 01 (2026)

1. Ontological Duality: Humanity begins as a pair not a solitary subject. Eve is structurally essential to this ontology.
2. Ethical Fallibility: Error is not corruption but part of moral learning.
3. Merciful Restoration: Divine mercy is not reactionary; it is foundational.

Conceptual Model (Textual Diagram):

Divine Creation
↓
Adam + Ḥawwāʾ (Dual Human Origin)
↓
Knowledge + Command
↓
Freedom (Relational Choice)
↓
Temptation (Shayṭān)
↓
Shared Error (zalla)
↓
Ikhrāj (Ontological Transition)
↓
Earthly Moral History
↓
Tawba (Repentance)
↓
Divine Mercy (Raḥma)
↓
Continuous Human Moral Life

Findings:

1.The study finds that the Qurʾān consistently attributes moral responsibility to both Adam and Ḥawwāʾ, thereby rejecting the notion that Eve alone was responsible for humanity's expulsion from Paradise.
2. The Qurʾānic narrative does not support the concept of inherited or original sin. Human beings are born in a state of purity (fiṭrah) and are accountable only for their individual deeds.
3. The expulsion (ikhrāj) from Paradise is portrayed not merely as punishment but as an ontological transition from paradisiacal existence to earthly moral responsibility.
4.The study reveals that divine mercy (raḥma) and repentance (tawba) constitute the central themes of the Adamic narrative, overshadowing themes of punishment and condemnation.
5. The Qurʾān presents human freedom as operating within the framework of divine guidance, emphasizing accountability and ethical responsibility.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES
ISSN Online: 3006-4686, ISSN Print: 3006-4678
Volume No: 03 Issue No: 01 (2026)

6. The analysis demonstrates that the Qurʾān establishes the spiritual and moral equality of men and women by employing dual grammatical structures and shared accountability.
7. Ḥawwāʾ is depicted as a representative of humanity as a whole rather than merely a historical or gender-specific figure.
8. The interconnected themes of creation, temptation, expulsion, and repentance collectively form the basis of the Qurʾānic understanding of human nature and purpose.
9. Comparison with Biblical and post-Biblical traditions demonstrates the unique Qurʾānic approach, particularly in rejecting gendered blame and inherited guilt.
10. Modern scholarship, especially as reflected in the Brill Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān, offers a nuanced and text-centered understanding of Eve and the expulsion narrative.

Recommendations:

1.Classical interpretations that place exclusive blame on Ḥawwāʾ should be critically reassessed in light of the explicit Qurʾānic text.
2. Future studies should prioritize Qurʾānic language and context over extra-Qurʾānic narratives when examining the story of Adam and Eve.
3. Researchers should integrate theological, philosophical, anthropological, and gender studies approaches in future investigations of Qurʾānic anthropology.
4. Further comparative research involving the Qurʾān, the Hebrew Bible, Midrashic literature, and Christian traditions should be encouraged.
5. The Qurʾānic understanding of human dignity, responsibility, and mercy should be incorporated into contemporary ethical and philosophical discourse.
6. Academic institutions should encourage research that highlights the Qurʾānic principle of moral and spiritual equality between men and women.
7. Future scholars should further explore the role of repentance and divine mercy as foundational concepts in Qurʾānic theology.
8. Researchers should utilize semantic, philological, and discourse analyses to achieve a more accurate understanding of Qurʾānic narratives.
9. Enhance Public Awareness Regarding Qurʾānic Teachings on Women.
Educational and religious institutions should disseminate authentic Qurʾānic teachings concerning the status and role of women in Islam.
10. Explore the Methodological Contributions of Modern Encyclopaedic Scholarship. Future research should examine how contemporary reference works, particularly the Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān, contribute to renewed understandings of classical Qurʾānic narratives.

Conclusion:

The Qurʾānic narrative of Adam and Ḥawwāʾ (Eve), as examined through the analytical lens reflected in the Brill Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān, emerges as a foundational theological model of human existence rather than a simple story of disobedience. Across the interconnected themes of creation, moral testing, temptation, expulsion (ikhrāj), repentance (tawba), and divine mercy (raḥma), the Qurʾān constructs a comprehensive anthropology in which humanity

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES
ISSN Online: 3006-4686, ISSN Print: 3006-4678
Volume No: 03 Issue No: 01 (2026)

is defined by relational freedom, ethical responsibility, and continuous possibility of restoration.

Within this framework, Ḥawwāʾ is neither a secondary nor a culpable archetype. Instead, she functions as a co-equal participant in the formation of moral consciousness. The Qurʾān's consistent use of dual grammatical structures ("they both ate,"62 "they both slipped," 63"they both were addressed"64) eliminates any doctrinal basis for gendered moral hierarchy. Responsibility is shared, temptation is externalized, and redemption is equally accessible. The concept of ikhrāj (expulsion) is reinterpreted not as punishment alone but as an ontological transition from paradisiacal immediacy to historical moral existence. This transition marks the beginning of human ethical development, where knowledge becomes experiential, choice becomes meaningful, and accountability becomes central.

Repentance (tawba), in turn, is not merely reactive but structurally embedded within divine intention. The Qurʾānic narrative demonstrates that divine mercy precedes and enables human return, establishing a theological cycle in which error is neither final nor inherited. Instead, it becomes the condition for moral awareness and spiritual growth. Ultimately, the synthesis of these themes reveals a Qurʾānic vision in which human beings are neither fallen creatures nor morally predetermined beings, but agents of ethical becoming. Ḥawwāʾ, as part of this primordial pair, symbolizes the shared human journey from innocence to awareness, from error to repentance, and from distance to divine mercy. The narrative thus concludes not with exclusion, but with an open horizon of continual moral possibility.

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Volume No: 03 Issue No: 01 (2026)

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