

# Belief in Jinn



In the Name of Allāh, the Merciful, the Compassionate

Last time, we talked about the **unseen world of angels**, and mentioned that having the correct belief in the angels is a requirement of faith. This time, we are going to discuss another unseen world; that of **the jinn**. Some people are skeptical of the existence of the jinn, while others resort to far-fetched, distorted interpretations of these creatures in order to suit their whims and personal fancies, such as claiming that the **jinn** are **microbes**. In the USA, a certain heretical group teaches that the **white man** is the devil (**evil jinn**). This preposterous idea would imply either that the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) was black, or that he was a devil (Allāh forbid!). Both of these conclusions are **clear blasphemy**, for they contradict conclusive historical facts and common sense.

## WHAT ARE THE JINN?

The reality, which it is **obligatory to affirm**, is that the **jinn** are an established **world, unseen** to us. They eat, drink and procreate, and among them are both righteous and wicked individuals. The word **jinn** itself comes the Arabic root meaning "*something hidden which cannot be seen.*"

The existence of the jinn is firmly corroborated by the **Qur'ān**, authentic **sunnah** and consensus of scholars (**Ijma'**), and thus one **who denies** their existence is **outside the pale of Islam**. Suffice it to say that the word jinn and its derivatives occur at least **29 times** in the Qur'ān, and the word shayṭān and its plural **shayāṭīn** together occur more than **80 times**. In fact, there is an entire surah called **Suratu'l-Jinn** (72), which speaks in clear, explicit terms about the jinn.

## THEIR CREATION

Ibn 'Abbās (رضي الله عنه) said, "Two thousand years before [mankind] was created, there were jinn on [the earth], and they caused corruption on the earth and shed blood. Then, Allāh sent against them a troop of angels who beat them and then cast them away to the islands in the seas. So, when Allāh said,

**"I am placing a viceregent upon the earth,' they said, 'Will You place therein one who will cause corruption therein and shed blood,'" [2 (Al-Baqarah), 30] i.e. just as those jinn did? Then, Allāh said, "I know that which you do not know."** [Q 2 (Al-Baqarah: 30)] (Related by Imām ('Abdullāh) Al-Ḥākim in his *Mustadrak 'ala's-Ṣaḥiḥayn*)

Thus, jinn were created before mankind, as attested to clearly by the Qur'ān also. Their origin is from fire.

**"And verily, We created mankind . . . and the jinn We had created before from smokeless fire."** [Q15 (Al- Hijr): 26-27]

They are the **descendants of Iblīs**, who disobeyed Allāh's command to prostrate to Ādam, and became known as the Satan (Shayṭān).

We cannot ordinarily see them, unless they materialize. When they materialize, it is usually in an unpleasant or **ugly form**, such as a snake or a black dog, as opposed to angels (who materialize into pleasant and handsome forms). In the battle of Badr, **Iblīs** materialized into the **form of a man** named **Surāqah ibn Mālik**, and urged on the disbelievers, saying,

**"There is none who can overcome you today,"** [Q 8 (Al-Anfāl): 48]

Then, Allāh sent the angel Jibrīl (Gabriel) (عليه السلام) against him, and when Iblīs saw him he cried out to the disbelievers, *"I have nothing to do with you! I see that which you do not see! I fear Allah, and Allah is severe in retribution,"* and then he fled.

## THEIR LIFESTYLE

They are **accountable**, just as human beings are.

**"I created jinn and mankind only in order that they might worship Me."** [Q 51 (Adh-Dhāriyāt): 56]

There are **believers** amongst them, who will be rewarded, and **disbelievers**, who will be punished.

**"And indeed, there are amongst us Muslims and amongst us wrongdoers. As for those who accept Islām, they have sought out the right path. And, as for the wrongdoers, they will be firewood for Jahannam."** [Q 72 (Al-Jinn):14-15]

Whenever Allah sent a prophet to mankind, the jinn of that time could also receive his message. Thus, some of them received the message of Prophet Moses (عليه السلام).

Some **jinn** came to the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) one night, and he went with them, recited Qur'ān to them, and taught them about Islām. [Muslim]

They **eat and drink**, and have **fiqh regulations** similar to ours. Just as we eat meat of animals over whose slaughter the name of Allāh was recited, the jinn are allowed to eat bones of such animals, and therefore the Prophet (ﷺ) has instructed us **not use these for istinjā'**.

On the authority of 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar (رضي الله عنه): the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, **"When one of you eats, he should eat with his right hand, and when one of you drinks, he should drink with his right hand, for Satan eats with his left hand and drinks with his left hand."** [Muslim]

Satan also **partakes of our food** if we neglect to mention the name of Allāh before eating.

A verse of the Qur'ān indicates that they have **conjugal relations**.

**"Therein [in Heaven] are [women] of modest gaze, whom neither human being nor jinn have touched before."** [Q 55 (Al- Raḥmān): 56]

Another verse establishes that they **beget children**.

**"Will you then take [Iblīs] and his offspring as protectors in preference to Me, although they are an enemy to you?"** [Q18 (Al-Kahf): 50]

Although the jinn tend to have **longer lifespans** than ours, they also die and pass away, as evidenced by the Qur'an [7 (Al- A'rāf), 38] Iblīs, however, has been given respite upto the Day of Arising:

**"[Allāh] said, You are, then, among those given respite, upto the day of the time known [and appointed]"** [38 (Ṣād), 81-82]

## THE SHAYĀṬĪN (DEVILS)

The shayāṭīn (devils; the singular is shayṭān) are the **disbelieving jinn**, but the word shayṭān is also used for those disbelieving human beings who are active in corruption and fighting Islam.

**"Thus have We made, for every Prophet, an enemy, the shayāṭīn of mankind and jinn, inspiring one another with flowery discourses by way of deception."** [Q 6 (Al-An'aam): 112]

As for those jinn who are prominent in mischief-making, they are referred to as marīḍ (plural: maraḍah), meaning froward or rebellious.:

**"Among mankind is he who disputes about Allāh without knowledge, and follows every froward shayṭān."** [Q 22 (Al- Hajj): 3]

Iblīs has his **throne in the sea**, and he sends out his dispatchments who aggravate people. The greatest of them before him is the one who has caused the most **fitnah**. One of his workers comes and tells him, "I did not leave [my victim] until

I brought about separation between him and his wife." Iblis draws him near, and says to him, "Yes! You (are the best!)" [Muslim]

### EAVESDROPPING ON THE HEAVENS

The shayāṭīn go up into the heavens, trying to eavesdrop on the angels. 'Ā'ishah *radiallāhu 'anhā* said that she asked the Prophet (ﷺ) about how it is that the fortune-tellers sometimes foretell something which turns out true. He replied that that is the word of truth which the **jinn** manages to catch, and so he comes and whispers it in the ear of the fortune-teller, and to one truth he adds a hundred lies. [Bukhari and Muslim] Allāh sends meteorites against these eavesdropping shayāṭīn, but sometimes one of them might pass on what he has heard to another jinn.

### THEIR EFFECT ON HUMANS

Every human being is always accompanied by a jinn, who tries to incite him to evil, but the Prophet (ﷺ)'s jinn was unable to harm him. On the authority of Ibn Mas'ūd (رضي الله عنه): The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, **"there is not any one of you except that he has been assigned his companion from among the jinn and his companion from among the angels."** They said, **"Even you, O Messenger of Allah?"** He replied, **"Even me, except that Allāh has helped me against him, so that I am unharmed (or, so that he has accepted Islām), and so he orders me to do nothing but good."** [Muslim] Thus, terrible thoughts may sometimes occur to us, but we are not responsible for these promptings provided we neither allow them to take root within us, nor act upon them. The fact that we recognize them as evil is itself a sign of our faith.

Satan runs through the children of Adam with the running of blood. It is possible for jinn to enter human beings and **possess** them. **"Those who consume interest (ribā) do not arise except as he arises whom Satan has driven to madness by his touch."** [Q 2 (Al- Baqarah): 275]

### PROTECTION FROM THE SHAYĀṬĪN

In ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth related by Bukharī and Muslim, the Prophet (ﷺ) has instructed us to recite the following supplication (**du'ā'**) **before having intercourse** with our wives. "Bismillāh. Allāhumma jannibna'sh-Shayṭān, wa-jannibi'sh-Shayṭāna mā Razaqtanā." (In the name of Allāh. O Allāh! Spare us from Satan, and repel Satan from that wherewith You have provided us.) Then, if a child is conceived, Satan will never harm him.

The shayāṭīn like to frequent **filthy areas** such as restrooms. Thus, we should ensure that we recite the sunnah supplication [Bukharī and Muslim] before entering the restroom, **"Allāhumma innī a'ūdhu bika mina'l-Khubuthi wa'l-Khabā'ith."** (O Allāh! I seek refuge with You from male and female devils.)

Reciting **Ayata'l-Kursiyy** [Q 2 (Al-Baqarah): 255] at bedtime ensures that no devil will come close to you until the morning. [Bukhari]

Saying "**Lā ilāha illallāhu Waḥdahū lā sharīka lah, lahu'l-Mulku wa lahu'l-Ḥamdu wa-huwa 'alā kulli shay'in Qadīr**" (There is no god but Allāh, alone, without any partner, His is the kingdom, and His is praise, and He has power over all things) **100 times** in the morning provides protection from Satan till the evening. [Bukhari and Muslim]

In general, frequent remembrance of Allāh and obedience to Him provides immunity from the shayāṭīn.

**"Whoever withdraws himself from the remembrance of [Allāh] Most Gracious, We assign to him a shayṭān, to be his comrade."** [Q 43 (Az-Zukhruf): 36]

**"[Satan] has no authority over those who believe and place trust in their Lord."** [Q16 (An-Naḥl): 99].