

AN INQUIRY ABOUT JINN IN ISLAMIC TEXTS

In the name of Allah

Abstract:

Jinn is among God's creatures which is created from fire unlike man. Breathing God's spirit to mud that resulted man creation, made such greatness which naturally and developmentally has superiority on jinn. Jinn, like man has responsibility, punishment, resurrection. Some of them are believers and some are unbelievers. They have the ability to do hard and extraordinary activities which man don't. They are visible to some mankind like prophets and were forced to do hard work by them. They are able to get several shapes. They are able to do magic, sorcery and create division among man but they cannot do anything without God's will. They have off springs and descendant but their gender and their reproduction and generation are not clear. In this article, it is tried to discuss its gender, creation and abilities with elaborating approach. Since jinn is not a topic which is discussable academically and logically, therefore the main topics of the article is based on Qur'an, accurate Hadith and vision of interpreters which are more complete.

Key words: Jinn, Islam, Qur'an, Satan, Iblis

Preface

Although man is familiar with words like Jinn, Satan and Iblis but doesn't have much knowledge about them. Since these creatures are not originated from earth materially, science cannot present a clear evidence on existence and non-existence of such creatures with all its progress in current time. Man's knowledge about these creatures are limited to the afflatuses of the prophets and their successors or are untrusted superstition which came from priests, magicians and exorcists claiming they are in contact with Jinn.

The position of Jinn and Satan in holly religions and some not holly ones is clear and decisive and believers to these religions have no doubt on their existence and believing to Satan is like and along with believing to God and angles and the invisible universe are always part of their religious beliefs.

On the other hand, because of Jinn's special nature, there are strange and sometimes superstitious beliefs regarding these creatures and their abilities among religious people including Muslims. Contacting with Jinn and getting information from them is existed even in non-monotheism religions and those who don't believe in God from long ago, among sorceries, priests and exorcists to the current time even in civilized man.

It can be said that as much as accurate information is limited, wrong beliefs and thoughts about these mysterious creatures are abundant and pervasive. Hence, discussing Jinn's existence and its nature and removing the dust of ignorance and superstitions from the beliefs and realities regarding these creatures is essential.

Semantics

Meaning of Jinn

Lexical meaning: The word jinn is derived from the word "jan-na" that means camouflage and hiding (Tabatabaei, 1374:429/7).

Idiomatic meaning: Jinn in Qur'an means as creatures different from man and angles who have wisdom and determination but are invisible from our senses (Tabatabaei, the same place), and God has identified Iblis from type of Jinn (Qur'an: 18/50). The plural form of "Jinn" is "Jinnah". The infant in their mothers' uterus is

called "Janin" owing to their invisibility, whose plural form is "ajinnah". A garden full of trees – being covered – is called "jannat" (Toraihi, 1375: 6/226).

Because in the discussion of Jinn we have to recognize the concepts of Satan and Iblis, we only need to know the Idiomatic meanings of two words.

Idiomatic meaning of Satan: In religious text, Satan is usually said to every wicked, mischievous, rebellious and unruly creature whether from human or non-human. (Qur'an:6/6)

It was named Iblis because this word shows it's enmity, hatred, wickedness, or avoidance and deviation from the right and defiance and rebellion against the divine command, or the destruction and the intensity of his anger (Mostafavi, 1374: 6/65; Ebne manzor 1408q: 7/121; Raagheb, 1412q: 454 "sha-ta-na").

However, it is used in the meaning of microbe and small harmful creatures and sometimes as the factor of harm. (Makarem Shirazi, 1374: 1/128)

Idiomatic meaning of Iblis: In Islamic text, Iblis is regarded as the creature who refused to bow to man and was cursed by God. "Iblis" is the father of Jinn as Adam is the father of man. (Toraihi, ibid)

The relation between Satan, Iblis and Jinn

The comparison between the two words, Iblis and Satan, reveals that Iblis is a proper name for a creature who refused to bow to man, but Stan is a general name for all seductive creatures. Based on this Iblis is Satan but every Satan is not Iblis (Tabatabaei, 8/59). However, it should be mentioned that in some Hadiths the word Iblis is used for other Satans which is made plural as "abalesa" (ibid), and according to Qur'an, God has identified Iblis from type of Jinn (Qur'an: 18/50).

What is Jinn?

Creation of Jinn

There is no logical reason presented by science regarding the existence of Jinn. This is how in monotheism texts not only existence of such creatures is obvious but there are issues on the creation and connection between Jinn and man which remove any doubt on its existence.

In Qur'an, the creation of Jinn is discussed with human creation (Qur'an: 15/26 & 27). Although in God's

words regarding the human elementary matter there are various words like soil(Qur'an:22/5), mud(Qur'an:6/2), spoiled mud (Qur'an:55/14&15,37/11)and dried mud (Qur'an:22/5)which are used but it is perceived that the first human had been created from soil.

What is derived from the 27 verse of Hejr chapter, is that Jinn is created from poisonous fire (Tabatabaei, 1374:1/191)or burning fire (Makarem Shirazi,1374: 11/68)and was living on earth before man creation (Tabatabaei,ibid).

In Al-rahman chapter the origin of Jinn's creation is "marejen men naar"¹(Qur'an:55/15)which is not contradicting the "naar e samoom"²in the Hejr chapter, because "marejen men naar" is the pure and non-smoked flame of the fire and as it is said it is a flame with darkness, thus these two verses altogether introduces the origin of Jinn's creation from a poisoned wind which has got fired and became as a "marej"(a flame) of fire. From this interpretation "marejen men naar" are mobile flames of fire. From Makarem point of view "marej" means interaction and combination and it is narrated from some that meaning of mobility is also included in that word (Tabatabaei, 1374:12/225 & Makarem, 1374:23/120). Makarem acknowledges that he does not understand the creation of Jinn from colorful fires and adds that the origin of man's creation were water and soil however Jinn creation is wind and fire, and this double origins of creation has caused many differences between them (Makarem,ibid).

Jinn are creatures that are invisible from our senses and like us have wisdom, determination and life, death and resurrection and Iblis is from jinn (Qur'an: 18/50),and John is a kind of Jinn or one of its type.

In Makarem Shirazi's opinion John and Jinn are the same, that's why in Qur'an in front of the word "Ensan"sometimes Jinn is used and sometimes John (Makarem Shirazi, 1374: 11/80). And whether John's next generations are created from poisoned or hot fire, unlike man whose first man was created from "salsal"-dried mud- and the next generations came from reproduction and whether it is the same for Jinn as well, According to Allama Tabatabaei, it is not clear from Qur'an. Because Qur'an is silent on this issue (Tabatabaei, 1374: 12/225). But it is clear that Satan belongs to these creatures has children (Qur'an: 18/50) and vulnerable to death (Qur'an: 46/46).

Does Jinn have duty?

About whether Jinn have a duty as human and a prophet and the book and the resurrection, and reward and punishment, there are no other information than the Qur'an and hadiths. What can be used in this field is that, Jinn are the kind of creatures that have intelligence and talent and have the duty. And like human they are two groups: The righteous believers, and disobedient unbelievers. (Makarem Shirazi, 1374:13/472)

The purpose of the creation of Jinn, like mankind, is worship. (Qur'an:51/56). And it is necessary that there should faith and Islam and worship to the jinn, and if the deviation is seen in the two species is according to their nature and is the sign of rebellion and outburst against the Lord of the universe. Some of Jinn believe in Qur'an, and seek tyrant against impiety (Qur'an: 72/1&2) and admit that among them there are righteous people and non-righteous. And they have different and variant groups. (Qur'an: 72/11) faithful Jinn with this verse clarify that the principle of choice and freewill also governs them. Therefore, there is groundwork of guidance in them and not all of them cause evil, corruption, deviation. (Makarem Shirazi, 1374:25/115). For him Jinn has Intelligence and understanding obligations and responsibilities, can read and recognize miraculous word also consider themselves to bind to advertise the righteous and the audience of the sermons of Qur'an. (Makarem Shirazi,1374:25/102)

Jinn insist that, after hearing the guidance they believed it and believe that whoever believes in his Lord will not fear, and that they have two parties, some Moslems and some deviant and whoever surrenders to God, has taken way ahead of growth, however, the deviants will be Firewood for Hell (Qur'an: 72/13-15). Just like the deviants of the humankind they have resurrection (Qur'an: 2/24).They also believe in the guiding Qur'an to the right and straight path and are familiar with Torah and Excellency Muses, and evoke their tribes to accept the invitation of Qur'an (Qur'an: 46/31).

In Ehtajaj it is narrated from Ali(as) that in a Hadith said: When Jinn encountered the messenger of Allah that he was in Batnonakhl Where they apologized that we, like pagans thought that God doesn't enliven one after death. And at the time there were 71000 of the Jinns. They pledged allegiance on this treaty that do the Prayer, Fasting, Zakat, Hajj and Jihad and be well-wisher to the Moslems. Jinns accepted that and apologized for the already far-right rhetoric against God had said (Tatabaei, 1373:74/20 according to Ehtajaj, 222/1). Allama then continues Jinns allegiance to the Prophet (PBUH) that prayer, fasting and other acts to take place is something that Almighty God has confirmed it. Since the beginning of this Sura (Jen) He has narrated speech that said: «فَأَمَّا» «وَأَنَا لَمَّا سَمِعْنَا الْهُدَىٰ آمَنَّا بِهِ» (Qur'an: 72/13);But how the jinn worship and specially their Zakat and Jihad, is unknown for us and their first apology is not so clear for us (Tabatabaei, ibid).

Another subject that can be achieved from the verses about Jiin and Satan is that Jinn have a strong ground for rebellion and defiance. From rebellion of the Ibliss that he was the most competent person among them (Qur'an: 15/31) to the Jinn in excellencies Solomon's court and even the most powerful and the wisest of them "Efreet/عفريت" (Qur'an: 27/39), that if it were not for the violent power of God (Qur'an: 21/82) and the Solomon's Strength (Qur'an: 34/14), and the rebellions were not punished (Qur'an: 34/12) they were ready to start insurrection and rebellion at any moment.

¹ مارچ من نار -

² نار سموم -

C. The power and abilities of Jinn

According to the wrong belief of the people, it was believed that the jinn have more power than human beings. They have knowledge to the unseen and they are able to form different shapes.

What comes from Islamic texts about the power of Jinn is that they are in some ways more powerful than humans and have the ability to do things that are out of the power of the man. But it's not that they can do without permission and will of God. Some of the capabilities of the jinn, is mentioned in Saba Sura in the story of Sulaiman prophet.

C.1 -A number of jinns were under the Sulaiman's dominance and were conquered by him.

And his Excellency had put the hard works responsibilities that were out of the abilities of human despite being against their desire and of course this obedience from Solomon was under the violent power of God. Each of those who deviated from God's command, and obey not from Solomon, were doomed in Fire. (Qur'an: 34/12) The purpose was the chastisement of the fire in this world, and not the Hereafter, and of course some of them were subjected to Solomon not all (Tabatabaei, 1374: 16/548).

The Jinn could make whatever Solomon needed including temples, statues, bowls like pools, Large non-transferable pots(Qur'an: 34/13) objects that making them were difficult or impossible for humans. And other things including the masonry, diving in the ocean and bringing out pearls and jewels (Qur'an: 34/37) and other things (Qur'an: 21/82). What in this verse came as devils, is considered as Jinn in the verses of Saba Surah. And it is clear that the two are not contradict, because the devils are amongst the jinns (Makarem Shirazi, 13/472).

One of the stupendous and heavy tasks that Jinns of the Solomon's Court did was claim of bringing the throne of the Queen of Seba to King Solomon's court (Qur'an: 27/38-42).

The summary of the story is that after the decision made by the Queen of Saba to come to the court of Solomon(as), Solomon decided to while the queen and her companions are on the way, unveil his power and familiarize them more than ever to the reality of his miracle and make them accept his invitation. So asked his chiefs to bring her throne to court. First monster with the argument that is able and faithful claimed that will bring the throne before the session of Solomon ends and gets up. But a righteous man that had considerable knowledge of the "Book of God", brought the throne in the blink of an eye (Qur'an: 2/27). The man with the knowledge of the book was from among the humankind not from the jinn. And the narrations from the Ahlul Bait confirms this that this man was "Asif Ibn Barkhiya" Minister executer and nephew of Solomon (Makarem Shirazi,15/468, and Tabatabaei 15/517).

Certainly bringing the Queen of Saba's throne in a day or half a day, from a distance and with bare hands requires great power that apparently the Afreet of court of Solomon had it. However, in this story of human excel-

lence on the jinn and the extraordinary power of human beings is also on [display](#).

C.2- Another important and almost obscure issues about Jinn is that in some places of Qur'an is mentioned, is the issue of ascending to the heaven and eavesdropping and preventing them by meteorites. This subject in Suras of Safat, Hajar, Molk and Jinn has been proposed.

The appearance of the verses and the hadiths shows that jinns and demons, had the power and ability to ascend to the sky and there seems that could hear the information of earth that ran by the Angels and aware of the secrets of the people on earth and place the information in the hand of the priests. But after the mission of the prophet of Islam, they had been prevented from ascending to the sky made them amazed. In Surah Al-Safat in this area (We decorated the lower heaven with the stars, and guarded it from every evil devil) They cannot listen to the (speech of) angels of the heaven (if they wish so) will be target and shot from every side, they strongly driven back, and for them is a permanent torment. Except those who pass in a brief moment to listen to heaven that "shooting star" chases them (Qur'an: 37/6-10).A similar meaning is in other chapters of the Qur'an (15/17&18, 67/5, 72/8&9).

There have been various interpretations on how the Satans eavesdrop and banish by the shooting star. Some interpreters understands only the appearance of the verses and declare that they are unable to understand it; And some others, understand the meaning and grant these verses different interpretations and compares it with a logical issue with perceptible issue (Makarem Shirazi,19/20-22).Tabatabaei winds up about the verses of Surah Al-Jinn that: Simultaneous to the revelation of the Qur'an and mission of the prophet of Islam, Jinns were banned to eavesdrop to obtain information.(Tabatabaei, 20/66)

What that can be used from these verses is proving the ability of Jinn in rising in to the heavens and get Sky News. Even if this ability is just in a limited time verse or continues till now. Apart from in what manner is the manner of the ascension and what the meaning of the shooting star is.

C.3-A part of the abilities of the Satans can be understood from the Baqara Sura. In this Sura the Satans are regarded that they teach witchcraft to the people (Qur'an:2/102). With due attention that Satans are kinds of the Jinns, thus can be inferred that Jinns have this ability as well. Also according to the narrations from the interpretation of Ayyashi and Qomi this can be understood that Satans are able in doing things like writing scrolls and burying them or bringing them out of the soil. Then Allama in relation to this entry he adds: (If the state of the science of magic, and writing and reading the story attributed it to Satan, it has no contradiction with that in some other places, Jinn and humankind Satans are regarded to it, for all evils end to that and a curse will be published to their parents and supporters whether directly inspired them, or that they be penetrated by temptations (Tabatabaei, 1/356&357).

C.4-Another of the capabilities that is attributed to Jinn and generally to Satan is haunted or madness of human. That man may suffer insanity or epilepsy by contacting the Satan. In the Qur'an it is mentioned as a possibility, where the usurer is likened to haunted (2/275).

Tabatabaei also does not reject the possibility of suffering insanity influenced by Jinn and Satan, but does not accept attributing the madness of insane to the Satan, independence and without intermediaries and believes that if Satan makes someone mad, it is by natural cause. For example, he creates disorder in the nervous system or inserts a pest to brain (Tabatabaei, 2/634). Although he considers the impact of Jinn on human by natural factors; but the possession of the Jinn in the natural causes in turn, shows the power of Jinn in his view.

Makarem Shirazi by asking this question that "whether Satan is the source of insanity and epilepsy" referring to the belief of some that know the phrase "copper devil" among Arabs, of mental illness and insanity, doubts, it does not seem improbable some devilry and irregular works cause a devil insanity. It means after those actions devil do effects on person and disturb his or her psychological balance. In his belief, the basis of influence which is needed, and devil's effects is due to the human's actions. (Makarem Shirazi, 1374: 368/2).

Tabresi based upon historians' narrators of traditional, relates the bases of insanity to God, and according to them, He made it as authorized to carry on, the relation between jinn and insanity is simile, even though based upon others, relation between jinn and insanity is not opposite of mind and that is fair for affection and examination of thrall. (Tabresi: 668/2)

C.5-Physiologic and physically effects of sickness is something known to be related to jinn, for example Ayyub Prophet called the God that his torture is because of Satan (Qur'an:38/41). As it is understood from the Qur'an's signs and narrators, Ayyub Prophet was sick for a long time, this is not part of our discussion that what was the reason and how long or how did he get well, but there are many deferent ideas about the causes of it, if it was the devil or natural causes. Ayyub prophet in another verse of Qur'an without any direct mention to devil speaks about his disease (Qur'an, 21/83). In Allame Tabatabaei's mind both of these causes can be effective lengthy (Tabatabaei, 1374: 17/318). At least what can be understood about Devil's power to inflict disease on human is its possibility. He replied in this way that the possibility is not the cause of incidence and wrote: "nor there is not any refusal reason, this is the reason of incidence by the verse: 5/90 of Qur'an" (Tabatabaei, the same)

Zamakhshary denies the Satan's influence in prophets for the sake of innocence of the prophets and that if Satan were able to influence the prophet, primarily would have influenced the righteous people and this is in clear contrast with Qur'an's verses that considers the "sinceres" people out of the influence of Satan (Tabatabaei, 1374:319/17 a quote from Kashshaf interpretation). Allama in answering to this bug, just considers the prophets and saints out of the influence of Satan and not only does

not consider impossible his infiltration into human body but also citing to the 18th verse of Kahf Sura justifies it's happening (Tabatabaei, *ibid*).

Referring to the comments "of some great commentators" Makarem Shirazi considers improbable the infiltration of Satan in prophets, because this domination was firstly in Gods command, and secondly it is limited and temporary and thirdly for test of this great prophet and his evolution, considers the dominance of Satan in excellency Jacob and his property and children unobstructed (Makarem Shirazi, 1374:296/19).

C.6-Another ability of the Satan is his infiltration in man's soul. The infiltration which was called in different titles like inspiration, temptation, guile, misguidance, misleading, raising hope, oblivion, fear and etc.

Ayatollah Tabatabaei without reference to the documentations, points out some other abilities of Satan such as information about what is going on in human mind and at the same time the power to mislead all of them (Tabatabaei, 1374:42/8).

The disabilities of Jinns:

The interesting issue is that Jinns unlike our imaginations have limitations with all their power and abilities. Even in many cases especially in the matter of science and knowledge and faith, their abilities are less than human. The most basic and the key point about the power of jinns is that their will and authority is under the God's omnipotence and will and they can never overcome the providence of God and do something against the wishes and the will of God.

Jinn points out their limitations and their inability in Surah of Jinn. As guidance to their people they confess that we believed that none of us can hassle God on earth, or escape the earth so that God wouldn't be able to capture and punish us (Qur'an: 72/12).

In Allama tabatabaei's view point the Jinn by saying that, is this means that we cannot stop Gods will by immorality on earth and make him fail and do not let the system that is flowing goes on, and that if God wants to arrest us we cannot escape his grasp (Tabatabaei, 1374: 20/69).

Makarem Shirazi uses this of the Jinn to their people that they are unable to escape Gods power on earth, and absolute escape, including earth and sky. He also uses the probable from this verse that one cannot be prevailed upon God, and nor can escape justice grasp, thus when there is no way to overcome and nor is a way out, there is no choice but to command his righteousness (Makarem Shirazi, 1374: 25/116).

The story of Solomon and the manner of their death shows the limitation and disability of Jinn. He passed away while leaning on his stick and watching the jinns who were working. One year passed from Solomon's death and he was still leaning on his stick until the termites ate his stick and his Excellency fell to the ground. During all this time, the jinns, while suffering from hard labor and were unhappy, did not become aware of his death (Qur'an: 34/14).

D. Can Jinn be seen?

There are disagreements in relation to whether the known Satan, that is from the Jinn and enemy of the mankind can be seen or not. In Boroujerdi's point of view Satan and Jinn are invisible beings that exist in our world but cannot be seen in the original form. They are able to penetrate the material objects and at the same time are visible in various forms and shapes (Boroujerdi, 1366: 1/137).

Allameh Tabatabaei believes that Jinn normally cannot be seen, but there is possibility to see them. Adam and his wife could see Satan, also the prophets could see him, and when he wanted to bother them, they knew him. (Tabatabaei, 1374: 12/224 & 1374: 1/201).

Conclusions:

1-Existence of Jinn :Jinn is one of God's creatures that is normally hidden from the human eye. That is why he is called Jinn (hidden).So science and scientific instruments cannot appeal a reason in existence and non-existence of Jinn due to the nature of the creature. The only knowledge of us about the Jinn is from the religious texts and religious leader's guidelines.

2-Creature of Jinn: Unlike, humans that are created from soil, Jinn are created from fire. It has reproduction, but not as humans. Though the quality of this reproduction is not disclosed to us

3-Belief and disbelief of Jinn: Jinn have ability to faith and disbelief. Some of them are believers, others unbelievers. So they have resurrection, duties and punishment.

4-Abilities of Jinn: Their abilities in doing some hard labor is more than human but some human are better than Jinn for their faith and knowledge of the book and exactly for the same reason, the Jinn was commanded to bow down to the human in presence of God. But Jinn referring to the excellence of fire to the soil refused to do it and were driven away from God. This arrogance is the main reason of the enmity of Jinn to human. They have old enmity with human and always try to somehow divert people from right path.

5-Relationship of Jinn to unseen news: Jinn have access to some unseen news and are able to contact with some human and inform them of the sky news. Also they have ability to do magic and create division among man. But of course they are not able to go further than the dominance and power of God and cannot do anything except by the permission of God.

6-Jinn disabilities: The most basic point about Jinn's disability is that, because of the creature and the lack of inherent independence, their will and their authority under divine will and divine power and they can never overcome divine providence and do something contrary to the will of God

7-The Invisibility of the Jinn: Quran's opinion is that Jinn is not seen naturally but it is possible to see it. Adam and his wife saw Satan, the prophets saw him, and they knew him when he wanted to disturb them.

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