

## Transcript: Beliefs, Angels and Jinn

### Angels and Jinn

Angels are spirit beings ‘created of light’. They can take on different forms, appearing and disappearing. They do not eat, drink or reproduce [Q. **19:64, 35:1**].<sup>1</sup> They don’t have free will, which means that they are always completely *muslim*, and so this makes them ideally suited to carrying out the tasks set for them by God [Q. **66:6**].<sup>2</sup> One of their most important tasks is to act as messengers from God’s world to the created world. Because they do not have the capacity to disobey God, they are able to deliver God’s messages in a complete and unadulterated form.

We do not know how many angels there are in total, but there are Hadith that state that they are more than any other kind of creature. Some of them are identified in the Qur’an and Islamic tradition, e.g. Jibril, the carrier of messages; Mika’il, who guards places of worship; Israfil, who will sound the trumpet on the Day of Resurrection; Izra’il, the bringer of death; Ridzwan, the guardian of Heaven; Malik, the guardian of Hell; and Munkar and Nakir, who interrogate the souls in the grave.

In addition to these named angels, according to the Qur’an, there are two which accompany each of us through life (Kiraman and Katibin) [Q. **6:61, 50:17-18**].<sup>3</sup> One records all our good deeds; the other all the bad things we do. At the Final Judgement, these records will be produced and everyone judged according to their deeds [Q. **17:13-15**].<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Q. **19:64** We [the Angels] do not descend except by the command of your Lord. To him belongs whatever is before us and whatever is behind us and whatever is in between that, and your Lord is not forgetful.

Q. **35:1** All praise belongs to God, creator of the heavens and the earth, maker of the angels [his] messengers, possessing wings, two, three or four [of them]. He adds to the creation whatever he wants. Indeed God has power over all things.

<sup>2</sup> Q. **66:6** O you who believe! Save yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones, over which are [assigned] angels, severe and harsh, who do not disobey whatever God has commanded them, and do what they are commanded.

<sup>3</sup> Q. **6:61** God is the All-dominant over his servants, and he sends guards to [protect] you, until when death approaches one of you, our angels take him away and they do not neglect [their duty].

Q. **50:17-18** When the twin recording [angels] record [his deeds], seated on the right hand and on the left: he says no word but that there is a ready observer beside him.

<sup>4</sup> Q. **17:13-15** We have attached every person’s deeds to his neck, and we shall bring it out for him on the Day of Resurrection as a book that he will encounter wide open. “Read your book! Today your soul suffices as your own reckoner.” Whoever is guided is guided only for [the good of] his own soul, and whoever goes astray, goes astray only to his detriment. No

According to Islam, angels can't by their very nature disobey God. There is, however, a third order of life called *jinn*. If angels are created from light and humans from clay, *jinn* are created from fire. They live in a parallel universe and we can't usually see them, although some people claim to be able to.

The *jinn* have some free will and thus, like us, will be judged by God.

Before human beings or *jinn* were first sent to the earth, God held a 'conference of the souls' of the angels and all the humans and *jinn* that would ever exist [Q. 2:30-34].<sup>5</sup> God asked all human beings "Am I not your Lord?" and they answered "Yes indeed!"; thus no-one can claim to be in ignorance on the Day of Judgement [Q. 7:172-173].<sup>6</sup>

God gave knowledge of the things of the earth to Adam. Then God said that humans were to be sent to the earth as God's regents or representatives. All the angels were commanded to bow down and acknowledge the superior status and knowledge of Adam. They all obeyed at once. But one of the *jinn*, called Iblis, was in the company of the angels and he chose to rebel [Q. 38:71-85, 18: 50].<sup>7</sup> He pitted his judgement

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bearer shall bear another's burden. We do not punish [any community] until We have sent [it] a Messenger.

<sup>5</sup> Q. 2:30-34 And when your Lord said to the angels, "I will place a regent on earth." They said, "Will you place on the earth one who will make mischief and shed blood, while we celebrate your praises and glorify your holy name?" He said, "I know what you do not know." And God taught Adam all the names; then He placed them before the angels, and said, "Tell me the names of these if you are truthful." They said, "Glory to you, we know nothing except what you have taught us: in truth it is you who are the All-knowing and the Wise." He said, "O Adam! Tell them their names." When he had told them, God said, "Did I not tell you that I know the secrets of heaven and earth, and I know what you reveal and what you conceal?" And when We said to the angels, "Prostrate to Adam" and they prostrated. Not so Iblis; he refused and was arrogant; he was one of those who reject faith.

<sup>6</sup> Q. 7:172-173 When your Lord took from the children of Adam, from their loins, their descendants and made them bear witness against themselves, [He said to them] "Am I not your Lord?" They said, "Yes indeed! We bear witness." [This] lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection, "Indeed we were unaware of this" or lest you should say, "Our fathers gave partners [to God] before [us] and we were descendants after them. Will you then destroy us because of what those who speak falsely have done?"

<sup>7</sup> Q. 38:71-85 When your Lord said to the angels, "Indeed I am about to create a human being out of clay. So when I have fashioned him and breathed into him of my spirit, then fall down in prostration before him." At this all the angels prostrated, all of them together, but not Iblis; he acted arrogantly and he was one of those who reject faith. God said, "O Iblis! What keeps you from prostrating before that which I have created with my [own] two hands? Are you arrogant, or are you [one] of the exalted ones?" "I am better than him," he said. "You created me from fire and you created him from clay." He said, "Get out of here, for you are indeed an outcast, and indeed my curse will be on you until the Day of Judgement." He said, "My Lord! Give me a reprieve until the day they will be resurrected." He said, "You are indeed among the reprieved until the day of the known time." He said, "By your might, I will

against that of God and said that he knew best the havoc that humans would create on earth. In this way, Iblis became the *Shaytan* or Satan who, with his party of rebellious *jinn* who decided to follow him, seek to tempt human beings to rebel against the will of God [Q. 7:11-18].<sup>8</sup> God told him that he would have no power over those who are full of *taqwa*, God-consciousness, but those who neglect the guidance of God are prone to rebellion and sin [Q. 20:115].<sup>9</sup>

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surely pervert them all, except your devoted servants among them.” God said, “That is just - and I also say what is just - I will surely fill hell with you and all those who follow you.”

**Q. 18: 50** When We said to the angels, “Prostrate before Adam,” they prostrated, but not Iblis. He was one of the jinn, so he disobeyed his Lord’s command. Will you then take him and his offspring for friends in My place, though they are an enemy for you? How evil a substitute for the wrongdoers!

<sup>8</sup> **Q. 7:11-18** Certainly We created you, then we formed you, then we said to the angels, “Prostrate before Adam.” So they [all] prostrated, but not Iblis; he was not among those who prostrated. God said, “What prevented you from prostrating, when I commanded you?” “I am better than him,” he said. “You created me from fire and you created him from clay.” “Get down from it!” God said. “It is not for you to be arrogant in this matter. Get out! You are indeed among the unimportant ones.” Iblis said, “Give me time until the day they will be resurrected.” God said, “You are indeed among the reprieved.” “As you have consigned me to perversity,” Iblis said, “I will surely lie in wait for them on your straight path. Then I will come at them from their front and from their rear, and from their right and their left, and you will not find most of them to be grateful.” God said, “Get out of here, blameful, banished! Whoever of them follows you, I will surely fill Hell with you all.”

<sup>9</sup> **Q. 20:115** Certainly We had made a covenant with Adam earlier; but he forgot, and We did not find any resolve in him.