

# Jinn in the Machine: Approaching Jinn and Angels in Islam

Gary R. Bunt

Moodle version (excluding copyright materials)



*@garybunt*



PRIFYSGOL CYMRU  
Y Drindod Dewi Sant  
UNIVERSITY OF WALES  
Trinity Saint David

# Gabriel *Jibrīl*

## FIRST REVELATION

c.610 – Muhammad retreats to a cave on Mount Hira, in the month of Ramadan [II 105];

“The apostle would pray in seclusion on Hira every year for a month to practice *tahannuth* as was the custom of Quraysh in heathen days. *Tahannuth* is religious devotion.” [II 105]

According to bibliographical sources, Muhammad had a pre-disposition towards meditation, and often secluded himself away.

Muhammad has an encounter with Jibril,

It was during this visit that he heard these words – Revealed by God through the Angel Gabriel – that according to tradition formed the first Revealed portion of the Qur’an

***"In the name of God, the Compassionate,  
the Merciful,  
Read in the name of your Lord, Who  
created  
He created man from a clot.  
Read, by your Most Generous Lord,  
Who taught by the Pen,  
He taught man what he did not know."***

*Surah al'Alaq 'the blood clot', 96:1-5; [F]*

[Recitation – al-Husary \(Mujawwad\)](#)

[Recitation – Abdul Rahman Al Sudais](#)

[Also Life of Muhammad – Yusuf Islam – 9'05" on](#)

## بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

أَفْرَأَ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ① خَلَقَ  
الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ② أَفْرَأَ وَرَبُّكَ  
الْأَكْرَمُ ③ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ④ عَلَّمَ  
الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ⑤ كَلَّا إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ  
لَيَخْلَعُ ⑥ أَنْ رَءَاهُ اسْتَعْجَلَى ⑦ إِنَّ  
إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ الرَّجْعَى ⑧ أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي  
يَنْهَى ⑨ عَبْدًا إِذَا صَلَّى ⑩ أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ

## **Angels in Islam**

*mulk* – rule, reign, supreme authority, power

*malik* – king, sovereign

*malak* – angel

*malaki* – angelic

# Angels in Revelation

“If We had sent unto thee a written (Message) on parchment, so that they could touch it with their hands, the Unbelievers would have been sure to say: ‘This is nothing but obvious magic!’”

“They say: ‘Why is not an angel sent down to him?’ If we did send down an angel, the matter would be settled at once, and no respite would be granted them.

“If We have made it an angel, We should have sent him as a man, and We should certainly have caused them confusion in a matter in which they have already covered with confusion.”

[Qur’an *An’am* – Cattle, 6: 8-9]

“And the Trumpet shall be blown: "That will be the Day Whereof Warning (has been given)

“And there will come forth every soul: with each will be an (angel) to drive, and an (angel) to bear witness.

"(It will be said:) Thou was heedless of this; now have We removed by thy vile, and sharpest eyesight this Day!

"And his Companion will say: "Here is (his Record ) ready for me!

"(The sentence will be:) "Throw, throw into every contumacious Rejecter (of God)!-" [Q *Qaf* 50: 16-24]

## Angels on the Day of Judgement

“The Day the heaven shall be rent asunder with clouds, and angels shall be sent down descending (in ranks), -

“That Day, the dominion as of right and truth shall be (wholly) for (God) most Merciful: it will be a Day of dire difficulty for the Misbelievers.” [Q 25: 25-6 *al-Furqan* ‘The Criterion’]

## Angels as Observers

“It was We Who created man, and We know what dark suggestions his soul makes to him: for We are nearer to him than (his) jugular vein

“Behold, two (guardian angels) appointed to learn (his doings) learn (and not them), one sitting on the right and one on the left.

“Not a word does he utter but there is a sentinel by him, ready (to note it),

“And the stupor of death will bring truth (before His eyes): ‘This was the thing which thou was trying to escape!’

**Cont/d**

By the (Angels) who tear out (the souls of the wicked)  
with violence;

By those who gently draw out (the souls of the  
Blessed);

And by those to glide along (on errands of Mercy),

Then press forward as in a race,

Then arrange to do (the Commands of their Lord)

Q *Nazi'at* – 'Those who tear out' 79 1:5

A key event associated with angels interacting with Muhammad is found in the Night Journey

Image sources and further reading: <http://www.harekrsna.de/artikel/islam-al-buraq.htm>

البراق    *al-Burāq* " = *lightning*

Glory to (Allah) Who did take His Servant for Journey by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Farthest Mosque whose precincts We did Bless in order that We might show him some of Our Signs: for He is the one Who heareth and seeth (all things). *Isra, 17:1*

*Night Journey – 622CE*

**Hadith:** "God created the Angels from intellect without sensuality (shahwah), the beasts from sensuality without intellect, and mankind from both intellect and sensuality. So when a person's intellect overcomes his sensuality, he is better than the angels; but when his sensuality overcomes his intellect, he is worse than the beasts." Nasafi comments: "the angels are luminous existence, while the beasts are tenebrous\* existence. Neither the angels nor the beasts have more than one of the two worlds, but man has both."

[Suchiko Murato, 'The Angels' chapter in 'Islamic Spirituality', Ed. S.H. Nasr) (London SCM Press, 1989) citing Nasafi *Insan-i kamil*, 323]

\* Tenebrous – shut off from the light

**Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi (1207-1273):** "Man's situation is compatible to an angel's wing that has been attached to a donkey's tale so that perhaps, through the angel's radiance and companionship, the donkey may itself become an angel."

Suchiko Murato, 'The Angels' chapter in 'Islamic Spirituality', Ed. S.H. Nasr) (London SCM Press, 1989) 340-1 citing Rumi, *Fihi ma fihi*, 107

Angels also figure in Qur'anic accounts with other Prophets, for example Abraham.

Angels appear in battles, assisting Muhammad and his forces.

Angels also interceding so-called mystical experiences, bringing an individual closer to Muhammad or God, thus promoting their religious and spiritual credibility.

In biographies of "saints", angels may appear.

They also feature in certain Islam-influenced art. Within a cosmological book, an analysis of the Islamic sources revealed 14 kinds of angels.

Angels have also been used to demonstrate different forms of intellect and aspects of God's attributes.

# Jinn

- “Every individual, said the Prophet, has been given an angel by God to assist him in the right path, and an evil jinn by Satan to mislead him. Although the spirit (*ruh*) of man is always pure, it has become almost inactive because of these evil forces, including those forces within the self that are generated by the worldly elements that constitute his body and attract him towards this worldly life. In the case of many human beings, the self has become deaf to the suggestions of the angel, and it deliberately leads man toward the path of spiritual destruction.”

[Syed Ali Ashraf, “The Inner Meaning of the Islamic Rites: Prayer, Pilgrimage, Fasting, Jihad.” chap. In Islamic Spirituality: Foundations ed. Seyyed Hossein Nasr. (London, SCM Press Ltd, 1989 , 128]

# The creation of jinn I

“We created man from sounding clay, from mud moulded into shape;

“And the Jinn race, We had created before, from the fire of a scorching wind.” Q 15:26-7 *al-Hijr*  
(Rocky Tract)

Jinn also listen to the Qur'an,  
and have a 'voice' in the Qur'an:

“Behold, We turned towards thee a company of Jinns (quietly) listening to the Qur'an: when they stood in the presence thereof, they said, ‘Listen in silence!’ When the (reading) was finished, they returned to their people to warn (them of their sins).

“They said, ‘O our people! We have heard a Book Revealed after Moses, confirming what came before it: it guides (men) to the Truth and to a Straight Path ...

[Q.46:29-30 *Ahqaf* (Winding Sand-tracts)]

In the Qur'an, there is a Sura named *Jinn*:

“Say: It has been revealed to me that a company of Jinns listened (to the Qur'an). They said, ‘We have really heard a wonderful Recital!

““It gives guidance to the Right, and we have believed therein: we shall not join (in worship) any (gods) with our Lord.

““And exalted is the Majesty of our Lord: He has taken neither a wife nor a son.

““There were some foolish ones among us, who used to utter extravagant lies against God.

““But we do think that no man or spirit should say aught that it untrue against God.

# Surah *Jinn* [extract cont/d]

“There are among us some that are righteous, and some the contrary; we follow divergent paths.

“But we think that we can by no means frustrate God throughout the earth, nor can we frustrate Him by flight.

‘And as for us, since we have listened to the Guidance, we have accepted it: and any who believes in his Lord has no fear, either of a short (account) or of any injustice.

“Amongst us are some that submit their wills (to God), and some that swerve from justice. Now those who submit their wills - they have sought out (the path) of right conduct:

“But those who swerve, - they are (but) fuel for Hell-fire.”

Q.72:1-15 *Jinn*

# Contemporary approaches to jinn and angels

Selected Online Materials referred to:

[BBC, Possession, Jinn and Britain's backstreet exorcists](#)

[Muslim Matters, Conversation with a Jinn](#)

[Islam Universe, Exorcism](#)

[IslamicExorcism.com](#)

# More information

*@garybunt* 

[www.virtuallyislamic.com](http://www.virtuallyislamic.com)