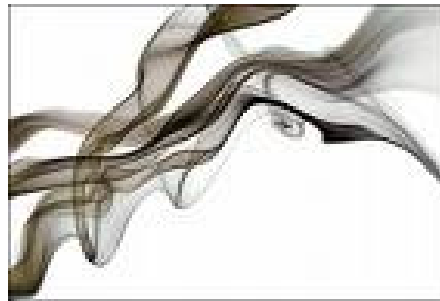




## Angels, Devils & Jinn, Oh My!

According to Arabic mythology, Jinn are supernatural spirits below the level of angels and devils. Jinn are beings of flame or air that are capable of assuming human or animal form and are said to dwell in all conceivable inanimate objects—stones, trees, ruins—underneath the earth, in the air, and in fire. They possess the bodily needs of human beings and can even be killed, but they are free from all physical restraints. Jinn delight in punishing humans for any harm done them, intentionally or unintentionally, and are said to be responsible for many diseases and all kinds of accidents; however, those human beings knowing the proper magical procedure can exploit the jinn to their advantage.

There are three classes of jinn: **ghul**, treacherous spirits of changing shape; **ifrit**, diabolic, evil spirits, and **si 'la**, treacherous spirits of invariable form.



## Jinn in Islam

The jinn are said to be creatures made by God (Allah) from *smokeless fire* in the same way humans were formed of earth. According to the Qur'an, jinn possess free will, and Iblis flaunted this freedom in front of Allah by refusing to bow to Adam when Allah told him to do so. By refusing to obey the will of Allah, he was thrown out of the Paradise and renamed Shaitan (or Satan). Jinn are frequently mentioned in the Qur'an; Sura 72 (named Al-Jinn) is entirely about them. Another Sura (Al-Naas) mentions the jinn in the closing verse. The Qur'an holds that Mohammad was sent as a prophet to serve both "humanity and the jinn."

## Three Main Creations

The Qur'an teaches that there are three main creations in the world: *angels*, *humans* and *jinn*.

**Angels** are made from light. In Islam they are known as the *Light of God*. They do not commit any sin or disobey God, and they always worship him.

**Humans** are created from earth and are given free will to do good or bad in this life. They will be held accountable for their choices on the Day of Judgment; those who follow and obey God will be rewarded with paradise/heaven. In Islam it is told that angels are pure and innocent but humans have the "fault" of

desire; in other words, some do good deeds and some do bad deeds. But this same flaw also grants humans a higher status than angels by God, because they have free will to overcome their base desires and do good works instead of committing sin.

**Jinn**, like humans, possess free will. They are invisible to humans because they are made of smokeless fire, yet exist in far greater numbers. Jinn have the power to fly and fit into any space, making them suitable for life in remote areas such as mountains, seas, in trees, or even in the air itself. While we can't see them, they also can't see us very clearly; humans look like a blurry image to most jinn. Like humans, jinn will also be held accountable on judgment day and will be sent to heaven or hell according to the life they have led.

Jinn are split up into two groups: Muslim and non-Muslim. The non-Muslim jinn form part of an army or group, collectively known as a shaitan. Every human is assigned a special jinni—called a *quareen*—to whisper into that person's soul and encourage them to give in to their evil desires. It is said that the Prophet Mohammed's quareen, upon hearing the recitation of the Qur'an, found it so beautiful that he converted to the Muslim faith and spoke only good from that point on.

## Jinn in the Bible...(sort of)

Many older Arabic and Persian translations of the Bible commonly used the words Jinn, Jann and Majnoon to refer to 'familiar spirits' and Iblis (the chief of the jinn) to indicate Satan himself. Examples of these references can be found in Lev 19:31, Lev 20:6, 1Sa 28:3, 1Sa 28:9, 1Sa 28:7, 1Ch 10:13, Mat 4:1, Mat 12:22, Luke 4:5, Luke 8:12, and John 8:44 in those versions.

Also, in the *Testament of Solomon*, a questionable-at-best apocryphal work purportedly written by King Solomon (but most likely penned sometime after 1 AD), the author describes particular demons—Jinn—that Solomon enslaved to help build the temple. He questions them about their deeds and asks how they could be thwarted. In turn, their answers provide a kind of "self-help" manual to fight demonic activity.

Although it remains unclear whether specific references to jinn and their ilk are contained within the Bible itself, or simply inspired by whimsical and imaginative Arabic folklore, their stories and mythology have fascinated readers of all ages for hundreds of years.



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