

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

سورة الجن

Sura Jinn

Introduction

Sura al-Jinn is the seventy-second chapter in the current sequence of the Quran, and has twenty-eight verses.

The occasion of revelation reported for the Sura, mentions that it was revealed when the Prophet was returning from his journey to the city of Ṭā'if.

If that is the case, this incident must have taken place in around the tenth or eleventh year of the Prophetic mission, that is, a couple of years prior to the Prophet's migration to Medina.

Introduction

The surah commences with the story of a group of *jinn* who happened to listen to some verses of the Quran and were attracted to it such that they ultimately professed belief in it.

This group of *jinn* heard the Quran as the Holy Prophet was reciting the night prayer at a place called Baṭn al-Nakhlah upon his return from the city of Ṭā'if.

Introduction

It is said that the revelation of this chapter contains an indirect reproach to the polytheists of Mecca considering that the *jinn* took precedence over them in accepting the Quran.

Most exegetes consider the event surrounding this sura to be the one also mentioned in 46:29-32.

However, this cannot be correct since the information we receive from the two are different.

Introduction

We read in Sura al-Ahqaf:

وَ إِذْ صَرَفْنَا إِلَيْكَ نَفَرًا مِّنَ الْجِنَّ ۖ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقُرْءَانَ فَلَمَّا حَضَرُوهُ قَالُوا أَنصِتُوا فَلَمَّا قُضِيَ ۖ وَلَّوْا إِلَىٰ
قَوْمِهِم مُّنذِرِينَ

When We dispatched toward you a team of jinn listening to the Qur'an, when they were in its presence, they said, "Be silent!" When it was finished, they went back to their people as warners. (46:29)

Introduction

قَالُوا يَا قَوْمَنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا كِتَابًا أُنزِلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مُوسَىٰ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْحَقِّ وَإِلَى طَرِيقٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

They said, "O our people! Indeed we have heard a Book which has been sent down after Moses, confirming what was before it. It guides to the truth and to a straight path. (46:30)

يَا قَوْمَنَا أَجِيبُوا دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ وَءَامِنُوا بِهِ يَغْفِرَ لَكُمْ مِّن ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَ يَجُزَّكُمْ مِّنْ عَذَابِ أَلِيمٍ

“O our people! Respond to Allah's summoner and have faith in Him. He will forgive you some of your sins and shelter you from a painful punishment.” (46:31)

Introduction

While in Sura Jinn the *Jinns* are either polytheists or Christians:

قُلْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ أَنَّهُ اسْتَمَعَ نَفَرٌ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ فَقَالُوا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا قُرْآنًا عَجَبًا

Say, "It has been revealed to me that a group of the jinn listened and said, 'Indeed, we have heard an amazing Qur'an. (72:1)

يَهْدِي إِلَى الرُّشْدِ فَآمَنَّا بِهِ وَلَنْ نُشْرِكَ بِرَبِّنَا أَحَدًا

It guides to rectitude. Hence we have believed in it and we will never ascribe any partner to our Lord. (72:2)

وَأَنَّهُ تَعَالَىٰ جَدُّ رَبِّنَا مَا اتَّخَذَ صَاحِبَةً وَلَا وَلَدًا

And [it teaches] that exalted is the nobleness of our Lord; He has not taken a wife or a son. (72:3)

وَأَنَّهُ كَانَ يَفُولُ سَفِيهُنَا عَلَى اللَّهِ شَطَطًا

Indeed the foolish ones among us used to utter atrocious lies concerning Allah. (72:4)

الميزان: ظاهر قولهم المنقول في سورة الأحقاف: «إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا كِتَاباً أُنزِلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مُوسَى مُصَدِّقاً لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْحَقِّ» أنهم كانوا مؤمنين بموسى و مصدقين للتوراة و ظاهر آيات هذه السورة أنهم كانوا مشركين لا يرون النبوة و لازم ذلك تغاير الطائفتين

Detailed Discussion

قُلْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ أَنَّهُ اسْتَمَعَ نَفَرٌ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ فَقَالُوا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا قُرْآنًا عَجَبًا

Say, "It has been revealed to me that a group of the jinn listened and said, 'Indeed, we have heard an amazing Qur'an. (72:1)

Nafar is a collective noun (like team) that according to lexicographers refers to a group of less than ten.

الصافي: قُرْآنًا عَجَبًا: كتاباً بديعاً مبيناً لكلام الناس في حسن نظمه و دقة معناه

Verse 1

The expression “*it is revealed to me*” indicates that the Prophet was not aware of the encounter when it happened.

One of the allegations directed against the Prophet by the polytheists was that he was a soothsayer,

That is, either he had connections with the jinn and devils from whom he used to obtain information, or he used to speculate the unseen.

Verse 1

The Quran strongly rejects these accusation elsewhere by asserting:

إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ وَ مَا هُوَ بِقَوْلِ شَاعِرٍ قَلِيلًا مَّا تُؤْمِنُونَ وَ لَا بِقَوْلِ كَاهِنٍ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ

It is indeed the speech of a noble messenger, and it is not the speech of a poet. Little is the faith that you have! Nor is it the speech of a soothsayer. Little is the admonition that you take! (69:40-42)

Verse 1

As such, the phrase: *Say: 'It has been revealed to me ...'* denies any such connections or conjecture on the part of the Prophet.

It emphasizes that the only source of information about the incident and what transpired thereafter has been revelation (*wahy*).

نَفَرٌ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ

Jinn – genie or jinni in English, is the plural *jinni* in Arabic.

What Is Jinn

It is a collective noun derived from the root verb *janna* meaning to hide, to cover, or to veil. According to Rāghib, it implies invisibility from the senses.

فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ اللَّيْلُ رَأَى كَوْكَبًا

When night darkened over him, he saw a star (6:76)

Thus, the specific type of creation referred to as *jinn* is named as such due to their being hidden from the physical senses.

What Is Jinn

The word *jinn* has appeared twenty-two times in the Quran.

Jinnah جِنَّه is another term that refers to this type of creature, and has been used five times in the Quran, like .

وَجَعَلُوا بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ الْجِنَّةِ نَسَبًا ۖ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمَتِ الْجِنَّةُ إِنَّهُمْ لَمُحْضَرُونَ

And they have set up a kinship between Him and the jinn, while the jinn certainly know that they will indeed be presented[before Him]. (37:158)

It is a collective noun for *jinn* as *nās* is a collective noun for humans.

What Is Jinn

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ 1 مَلِكِ النَّاسِ 2 إِلَهِ النَّاسِ 3 مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ 4 الَّذِي يُوَسْوِسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ
5 مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ 6

Say, “I seek the protection of the Lord of humans, Sovereign of humans, God of humans, from the evil of the sneaky tempter, who puts temptations into the breasts of humans, from among the jinn and humans.” (114:1-6)

What Is Jinn

Another term used in this relation is *Jānn* جَانٌّ which is used for both plural and singular.

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ صَلْصَالٍ مِّنْ حَمَإٍ مَّسْنُونٍ وَ الْجَانَّ خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ مِنْ نَّارِ السَّمُومِ

And We created man out of a dry clay [drawn] from an aging mud, and created the Jānn earlier out of a piercing fire (15:26-27).

What Is Jinn

خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ صَلْصَلٍ كَالْفَخَّارِ وَ خَلَقَ الْجَانَّ مِنْ مَّارِجٍ مِّن نَّارٍ

He created man out of dry clay, like the potter's, and created the Jānn out of a flame of a fire. (55:14-115)

مجمع البيان: مارج من نار: أي من نار مختلط أحمر و أسود و أبيض عن مجاهد

و قيل المارج الصافي من لهب النار الذي لا دخان فيه

What Is Jinn

فِيَوْمَئِذٍ لَا يُسْأَلُ عَنْ ذَنْبِهِ إِنْسٌ وَلَا جَانٌّ

On that day neither humans will be questioned about their sins nor Jānn (55:39).

There are different opinions about what *Jānn* is.

An opinion is reported from early exegetes that *Jānn* is Iblis.

تبيان: «وَالْجَانُّ خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ» المراد به إبليس، خلقه الله قبل آدم- في قول الحسن و قتادة

What Is Jinn

قَمِي: الْجِنُّ مِنْ وُلْدِ الْجَانِّ مِنْهُمْ مُؤْمِنُونَ وَ مِنْهُمْ كَافِرُونَ وَ يَهُودٌ وَ نَصَارَى وَ تَخْتَلِفُ أَدْيَانُهُمْ وَ الشَّيَاطِينُ مِنْ وُلْدِ
إِبْلِيسَ وَ لَيْسَ فِيهِمْ مُؤْمِنٌ

Tafsir al-Qummi regards *Jānn* as the father of *jinn* and says that they have believers and disbelievers, Jews and Christians, and religions differ.

But the devils are the descendants of Iblis and there is no believer among them.