

Is Iblīs from the Angels?

Shaikh bin Bāz رحمه الله تعالى

This has within it a well-known difference between the scholars; some of them said that he is from the Angels, but then he was expelled and cursed. However, other scholars said that he is from the Jinn.

As Allāh the Mighty & Majestic said:

إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ كَانَ مِنَ الْجِنِّ فَفَسَقَ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِ

“...except *Iblis* (Satan). He was one of the jinns; he disobeyed the Command of his Lord.”

[Al-Kahf:50]

So Allāh clarified that he was from the Jinn, and the Jinn are known, they are the second creation with burden of responsibility upon them in worshipping Allāh and following the Sharī’ah (along with humans).

Some of the people of knowledge said that he is their father, just as Ādam is the father of humankind, and so Iblīs is the father of the Jinn – and among them are the shayātīn, the rebellious ones. However, other people of knowledge said that the Jinn are actually a particular group from the Angels known as “jinn”, because they concealed themselves, and so they were known as “Jinn” (since that word comes from the meaning of concealment in Arabic), so they are actually from the creation of the Angels overall.¹

These two opinions are well known, however a group of the Islamic analysts & scholars of precise research have concluded that the Jinn are actually a different entity to the Angels altogether, since the Angels were created from light, and the Jinn were created from Fire. Allāh said:

وَالْجَانَّ خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ مِنْ نَارِ السَّمُومِ

And the jinn, We created aforetime from the smokeless flame of fire.

[Al-Hijr:27]

However, Iblīs was with the angels, and used to pray, and worship alongside them, and that is why the command (which was addressed to

¹ This therefore explains the āyah that seems to be clear in supporting the opinion that Iblīs was from the Jinn, if we say that the Jinn are actually just a specific segment of the Angels, then Iblīs is from the Angels upon that understanding, and so those who follow the opinion that he was from the Angels would explain it in this way.

the angels to prostrate) included him, but when he refused, rejected obedience, and was arrogant, he was cursed and expelled - we seek refuge with Allāh - and from his progeny arose the shayātīn. And the jinn, from them are the believers, the disobedient, and the disbelievers, as Allāh said:

وَأَنَا مِنَّا الصَّالِحُونَ وَمِنَّا دُونَ ذَلِكَ

‘There are among us some that are righteous, and some the contrary; we are groups each having a different way (religious sect, etc.).

[Al-Jinn:11]

And so Shaikh ul-Islām ibn Taymiyyah and a group of the Scholars selected this opinion and said: He was from the Jinn, and is their father, Allāh created him from a smokeless fire and he is not from the Angels, however, he was in the heavens and worshipped alongside them, but when he displayed arrogance he was expelled and cursed.

Translation: Abū Mu’ādh Taqweem

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