

## QS 41 Q 72

72.1 Say: "It was revealed to me that a handful of *Jinn* gathered to listen, then said:

'We have heard a wondrous Qur'an,

72.2 Guiding to righteousness, so we believed in it,

And shall associate none with our Lord.

72.3 And we affirm – may our Lord's majesty be exalted! – that He took neither wife nor son;

72.4 That the impudent amongst us ascribed to God things far from true;

72.5 That we never imagined that humans and *Jinn* would forge lies on God;

72.6 That some men among humans used to pray for safety to some men from the *Jinn*,

But they only increased them in insolence;

72.7 That they imagined, as you imagine, that God shall resurrect no one;

72.8 That we probed the sky and found it filled with mighty guards and shooting stars;

72.9 That we would seat ourselves in seats nearby, to listen,

But whoever listens now is pursued by a shooting star, lying in wait;

72.10 That we know not whether evil is intended for mankind,

Or whether their Lord intends them good;

72.11 That amongst us there are the righteous, and there are the less so – of diverse persuasions are we;

72.12 That we know we cannot escape God's might on earth, nor escape Him by fleeing;

72.13 That when we heard the Guidance, we believed it,

For whoso believes in his Lord fears neither unfairness nor prejudice;

72.14 That some of us are Muslims and some are transgressors;

That as for the Muslims, these have chosen the path of guidance,

72.15 But the transgressors shall be fire-wood for Hell."

72.16 If only they had kept true to the path, we would have given them much water to drink,

72.17 To test them therewith;

But whoso turns away from the mention of his Lord, He will lead him on the road to a torment ever mounting.

72.1 Dis: «Il m'a été révélé qu'un groupe de djinns prêtèrent l'oreille, puis dirent: «Nous avons certes entendu une Lecture [le Coran] merveilleuse,

72.2 qui guide vers la droiture. Nous y avons cru, et nous n'associerons jamais personne à notre Seigneur.

72.3 En vérité notre Seigneur – que Sa grandeur soit exaltée – ne S'est donné ni compagne, ni enfant!

72.4 Notre insensé [Iblis] disait des extravagances contre Allah.

72.5 Et nous pensions que ni les humains ni les djinns ne sauraient jamais proférer de mensonge contre Allah.

72.6 Or, il y avait parmi les humains, des mâles qui cherchaient protection auprès des mâles parmi les djinns mais cela ne fit qu'accroître leur détresse.

72.7 Et ils avaient pensé comme vous avez pensé qu'Allah ne ressusciterait jamais personne.

72.8 Nous avions frôlé le ciel et nous l'avions trouvé plein d'une forte garde et de bolides.

72.9 Nous y prenions place pour écouter. Mais quiconque prête l'oreille maintenant, trouve contre lui un bolide aux aguets.

72.10 Nous ne savons pas si on veut du mal aux habitants de la terre ou si leur Seigneur veut les mettre sur le droit chemin.

72.11 Il y a parmi nous des vertueux et [d'autres] qui le sont moins: nous étions divisés en différentes sectes.

72.12 Nous pensions bien que nous ne saurions jamais réduire Allah à l'impuissance sur la terre et que nous ne saurions jamais le réduire à l'impuissance en nous enfuyant.

72.13 Et lorsque nous avons entendu le guide [le Coran], nous y avons cru, et quiconque croit en son Seigneur ne craint alors ni diminution de récompense ni oppression.

72.14 Il y a parmi nous les Musulmans, et il y en a les injustes [qui ont dévié]. Et ceux qui se sont convertis à l'Islam sont ceux qui ont cherché la droiture.

72.15 Et quant aux injustes, ils formeront le combustible de l'Enfer.

72.18 Houses of worship belong to God, so call upon none besides Him;

72.19 But when a servant of God began to pray to Him,

They almost fell on him in a mass.

72.20 Say: "I pray solely to my Lord, and associate none with Him."

72.21 Say: "I have no power to do you evil or bring you right guidance."

72.22 Say: "None can grant me shelter from God, nor will I ever find, apart from Him, any hideout.

72.23 I merely convey a proclamation from God, and His messages."

Whoso disobeys God and His Messenger, for him awaits the fire of hell, abiding in it for ever.

72.24 And when they come face to face with what they have been promised, they will know who has the weaker and less numerous supporters.

72.25 Say: "I know not whether what you are promised is imminent, or whether my Lord shall set a longer term for it.

72.26 Knower of the Unseen is He! He discloses His Unseen to no one,

72.27 save to whomever He pleases among His Messengers, and then He stations, before and behind him, sentinels,

72.28 that He may know that they have delivered the messages of their Lord. He knows all that concerns them, and has tallied everything by number."

72.16 Et s'ils se maintenaient dans la bonne direction, Nous les aurions abreuvés, certes d'une eau abondante,

72.17 afin de les y éprouver. Et quiconque se détourne du rappel de son Seigneur, Il l'achemine vers un châtement sans cesse croissant.

72.18 Les mosquées sont consacrées à Allah: n'invoquez donc personne avec Allah.

72.19 Et quand le serviteur d'Allah s'est mis debout pour L'invoquer, ils faillirent se ruer en masse sur lui.

72.20 Dis: «Je n'invoque que mon Seigneur et ne Lui associe personne».

72.21 Dis: «Je ne possède aucun moyen pour vous faire du mal, ni pour vous mettre sur le chemin droit».

72.22 Dis: «Vraiment, personne ne saura me protéger contre Allah; et jamais je ne trouverai de refuge en dehors de Lui.

72.23.[Je ne puis que transmettre] une communication et des messages [émanant] d'Allah. Et quiconque désobéit à Allah et à Son Messager aura le feu de l'Enfer pour y demeurer éternellement.

72.24 Puis, quand ils verront ce dont on les menaçait, ils sauront lesquels ont les secours les plus faibles et [lesquels] sont les moins nombreux.

72.25 Dis: «Je ne sais pas si ce dont vous êtes menacés est proche, ou bien, si mon Seigneur va lui assigner un délai.

72.26.[C'est Lui] qui connaît le mystère. Il ne dévoile Son mystère à personne,

72.27 sauf à celui qu'Il agrée comme Messager et qu'Il fait précéder et suivre de gardiens vigilants,

72.28 afin qu'Il sache s'ils ont bien transmis les messages de leur Seigneur. Il cerne (de Son savoir) ce qui est avec eux, et dénombre exactement toute chose.

#### سورة الجن

قُلْ أُوْحِي إِلَيَّ أَنَّهُ اسْتَمَعَ نَفَرٌ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ فَقَالُوا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا قُرْآنًا عَجَبًا (1) يَهْدِي إِلَى الرُّشْدِ فَآمَنَّا بِهِ وَلَنْ نُشْرِكَ بِرَبِّنَا أَحَدًا (2) وَأَنَّهُ تَعَالَى جَدُّ رَبِّنَا مَا اتَّخَذَ صَاحِبَةً وَلَا وَلَدًا (3) وَأَنَّهُ كَانَ يُفَوِّلُ سَفِينَهُنَا عَلَى اللَّهِ سُطُطًا (4) وَأَنَا ظَنَنَّا أَن لَّنْ نَقُولَ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا (5) وَأَنَّهُ كَانَ رِجَالٌ مِّنَ الْإِنْسِ يُعْوَدُونَ بَرِجَالٍ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ فَزَادُوهُمْ رَهَقًا (6) وَأَنَّهُمْ ظَنُّوا كَمَا ظَنَنْتُمْ أَن لَّنْ يَنْبَغِ اللَّهُ أَحَدًا (7) وَأَنَا لَمَسْنَا السَّمَاءَ فَوَجَدْنَاهَا مُلَيِّنَاتٍ خَرَسًا شَدِيدًا وَشُهْبًا (8) وَأَنَا كُنَّا نَقْعُدُ مِنْهَا مَقَاعِدَ لِلسَّمْعِ فَمَنْ يَسْمَعُ الْآنَ يَجِدْ لَهُ شِهَابًا رَّصَدًا (9) وَأَنَا لَا نَدْرِي أَشَرٌّ أُرِيدُ بِمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ أَرَادَ بِهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ رَشَدًا (10) وَأَنَا مِمَّا الصَّالِحُونَ وَمِمَّا دُونَ ذَلِكَ كُنَّا طَرَائِقَ قِدْدًا (11) وَأَنَا ظَنَنَّا أَن لَّنْ نُعْجِزَ اللَّهَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلِنُعْجِزَهُ هَزَبًا (12) وَأَنَا لَمَّا

سَمِعْنَا الْهُدَى أَمَّا بِهِ فَمَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِرَبِّهِ فَلَا يَخَافُ بَخْسًا وَلَا رَهَقًا (13) وَأَنَا مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَمِنَ الْقَاسِطِينَ فَمَنْ أَسْلَمَ فَأُولَئِكَ تَحَرَّوْا رَشَدًا (14) وَأَمَّا الْقَاسِطُونَ فَكَانُوا لِجَهَنَّمَ حَطَبًا (15) وَأَنْ لَوْ اسْتَقَامُوا عَلَى الطَّرِيقَةِ لَأَسْقَيْنَاهُمْ مَاءً غَدَقًا (16) لِنُفِثَنَّهُمْ فِيهِ وَمَنْ يُغْرِضْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ رَبِّهِ يَسْلُكْهُ عَذَابًا صَعَدًا (17) وَأَنَّ الْمَسَاجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلَا تَدْعُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ أَحَدًا (18) وَأَنَّهُ لَمَّا قَامَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ يَدْعُوهُ كَادُوا يَكُونُونَ عَلَيْهِ لِبَدًا (19) قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَدْعُو رَبِّي وَلَا أُشْرِكُ بِهِ أَحَدًا (20) قُلْ إِنِّي لَا أَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا رَشَدًا (21) قُلْ إِنِّي لَنْ يُجِيبَنِي مِنَ اللَّهِ أَحَدٌ وَلَنْ أَجِدُ مِنْ دُونِهِ مُلْتَحَدًا (22) إِلَّا بَلَاغًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِسَالَاتِهِ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَإِنَّ لَهُ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا فِيهَا أَبَدًا (23) حَتَّىٰ إِذَا رَأَوْا مَا يُوعَدُونَ فَيَسْئَلُونَ مَنْ أَعْصَفُ تَنْصِرًا وَأَقَلُّ عَذَابًا (24) قُلْ إِنْ أَدْرِي أَقْرَبُ مَا تُوعَدُونَ أَمْ يَجْعَلُ لَهُ رَبِّي أَمَدًا (25) عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَىٰ غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا (26) إِلَّا مَنِ ارْتَضَىٰ مِنْ رَسُولٍ فَإِنَّهُ يَسْلُكُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ رَصَدًا (27) لِيُعَلِّمَ أَنْ قَدْ أُنْبِغُوا رِسَالَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَخَاطَبًا بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ وَأَخْصَىٰ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عَذَابًا (28)

### Azaiez

Je m'en tiendrai ici à quelques remarques d'ordre structurel. Tout d'abord, l'imperatif *qul* est une forme rhétorique avérée plus de 350 fois dans le Coran (Kassis 1984: 936 – 946). J'ai dénombré 251 occurrences qui impliquent une injonction directement adressée à un allocataire coranique ou destinataire premier du message, presque autant que les contre-discours présents ou citations des propos des adversaires du Coran (Azaiez: 2012). De plus, on a noté que cette forme rhétorique est quasi absente de la partie finale du corpus coranique à l'exception des sourates 109 et 112 – 114. Par contraste, on dénombre 31 occurrences de cet impératif pour la seule sourate 6. On s'est déjà interrogé sur la fonction d'une telle formulation (Wansbrough 1977: 14 – 15; Radscheit 1997). Pour notre part, elle revêt trois fonctionnalités : théologique (souligné par Dye, il s'agit de créer un locuteur divin), prophétologique (souligné par Radscheit 1997, il s'agit d'asseoir l'autorité prophétique de l'allocataire coranique), performative (chaque nouvelle lecture ou audition du Coran reproduit et réactualise *de facto* cette relation). Dans le cas présent, le *qul* introduit un procédé de mise en abyme. Un premier discours en enchâsse un autre. L'effet produit ici est de troubler l'auditeur qui pourrait s'interroger sur l'identité de celui qui parle (l'allocataire coranique ou les *ġinns*).

### Crone

Q 72 consists of two parts, one spoken by the *ġinn*, and the other by the Messenger (not God, except in verses 16f).

**72:1 – 15:** The first part runs from verse 1 to verse 15, and it, as other participants note, is one out of many passages in the Qur'ān about supernatural beings called now *šayāṭīn* and now *ġinn* who try to eavesdrop on proceedings in heaven, whereupon they have balls of fire thrown at them. Several participants in the Notre Dame gathering wanted these beings to be fallen angels, meaning those “sons of God” who descended to mate with the “daughters of men” according to Gen 6:2–4 and whose story is developed in 1 Enoch (the Enoch book preserved in Ethiopic). This seems impossible to me. For one thing, there is absolutely nothing in the tradition on the fallen angels at any time in its long history to suggest that these angels

tried to, or even could, fly back to eavesdrop on proceedings in heaven; and the *ǧinn* in Q 72 are never actually called angels. What is more, in 1 Enoch, or more precisely that section of it called the Book of Watchers, we are told that the two leaders of the wayward angels, Asael and Shemihazah, “and the others with them” were bound by obedient angels and cast into underground pits to stay there in darkness until the day of judgment, when they would be led away to everlasting punishment (1 Enoch 10:4–6; 11–13; cf. also 21:10). In the Islamic tradition, too, they are immobilized, here by being hung upside down in a well in Babylon, where people come to them for knowledge of magic (told *ad* Q 2:102). They were not in a position to fly around. On top of that, the Qur’ān and the Islamic tradition know of only two fallen angels, Hārūt and Mārūt (2:102), though originally there were 200 (for the process whereby the number of angels was reduced to two, see Crone 2013: 24–6). By contrast, the *ǧinn* of Q 72 come across as a whole population.

In addition, angels and *ǧinn* belonged to two quite different species, and in principle, the dividing line between them could not be crossed. The *ǧinn* lived on the earth, where they formed a parallel society to that of humans: there are believing and unbelieving *ǧinn* already in the Qur’ān, with many more categories in the tradition. By contrast, the angels lived with God in heaven and did nothing but execute His will; the fallen angels are the only exception. There are two exceptions to the rule that a demon cannot be an angel, however. First, according to the Christian Athanasios (d. 190), the angels who “fell” from heaven haunt the air and the earth, no longer able to rise to heavenly things. “Along with the souls of the giants, they are the demons which wander about in the world.” Of these, he says, there were two classes, the demons proper and the angels who (still?) act in accordance with the lusts they indulged (cited in Forsyth 1998: 354). Athanasios is confusing the spirits (or “souls”) of the slain giants with the angels who were the fathers of these giants (or alternatively, he is simply following 1 Enoch 19:1), but here at least the fallen angels are classified as demons and may even haunt the air. I have found no trace of this in either the Qur’ān itself or the tradition, however.

The second exception is Satan/Iblīs. Satan in the sense of the devil originated as a fallen angel, but the Christians preferred the story of Adam and Eve as the fatal event that corrupted human history and so moved the introduction of sin, and him along with it, from the pre-history of the flood to the pre-history of mankind, a move which seems to have been accomplished between the first and the third centuries (cf. Forsyth 1998: parts 3 and 4, and cf. esp. pp. 222, 271, 383). The Qur’ān duly gives us to understand that Iblīs was an angel (7:11; 15:30; 17:61; 38:73 f); but it also explicitly says that he was of the *ǧinn* (18:50), perhaps because it was felt that a disobedient heavenly being could not be an angel. In any case, demoting him to a demon was a solution with long roots in the Christian tradition: Theophilus of Antioch (d. 180s), for example, describes him as an evil demon, also called Satan, who was originally an angel (II, 28). To the exegetes, however, the question whether Iblīs was an angel or one of the *ǧinn* was a big problem, nicely discussed in Ṭabarī (de

Goeje, I, 78–86), where some ingenious solutions are proposed. It does not, however, have any bearing on Q 72.

The defenders of the thesis that the *ġinn* of Q 72 are fallen angels also claimed that there is an important Enochic substratum in the Qur’ān. This may well be true (there are certainly *some* Enochic elements in it), but it does not prove that the *ġinn* of Q 72 form part of that substratum. There are references to the demonic aspect of false worship in the Qur’ān, such as, for example, the charge that the *muš-rikūn* have made the *ġinn* partners of God, i. e., as his sons or daughters (6:100; cf. also 34:40 f; 41:29) and that they have set up a genealogical relationship between Him and the *ġinn*, again meaning by crediting Him with sons or daughters (37:158, where the *ġinn* themselves know better). This idea did indeed originate in the Book of Watchers (part of 1 Enoch), where the giant offspring of the wayward angels are killed but leave behind evil spirits that lead astray, do violence and cause illnesses (1 Enoch, 15:8–11; 16:1), or it is the spirits of their jailed fathers who make mankind worship demons (1 Enoch 19:1). But the theme had been taken over by Christians, who developed it to explain Greek and Roman idolatry: each image was inhabited by a demon, seeking worship at the expense of God (cf. Reed 2005: chs. 5–6). The theme of the false gods as demons is ubiquitous in their literature. It appears in their inscriptions too, including one of 514 from Zorava (*Zor’a*) near the Dead Sea celebrating the fact that “The abode of *daimōnes* has become the house of God” (Trombly 1993–94: 2:363). It was presumably from Christians that the theme had passed to the Messenger and his followers. The tradition abounds in stories about horrid demons appearing when an idol was destroyed or a holy tree was cut down. All this is very interesting, but it does not show that Q 72 has anything to do with Enoch. (Cf. also my comments on QS 32.) So much for the first part.

**72:16–17:** God briefly explains that it would have been better for them, apparently meaning the evil-doers mentioned by the *ġinn*, if they had stayed on the right path and that He would in that case have tested them with plenty of water (rather than drought, one assumes) and punished anyone who turned away from *ḍikr Allāh*. This forms the linkage to the second section.

**72:18 f:** “The *masāğid* belong to God, so don’t call upon anyone along with God [in them]”: the interest of this lies in the implication that the Messenger’s “polytheist” opponents would conduct their religious services in places of worship called *masāğid* and audibly invoke their objects of worship there, presumably by way of *du‘ā*. The continuation says that when the servant of God (*‘abd Allāh*) stands up and calls upon Him (alone?), they press in on him (or the like); the wording is difficult, but the meaning seems to be that the servant of God who denies that God has partners is made to feel unwelcome. The “servant of God” is probably the Messenger himself, though the reference could be generic. Some people take the passage to refer to a specific event in the past rather than something experienced by the Messenger or any believer now, but this runs counter to the parallelism between the two parts of the *sūra*: the *ġinn* preach against the foolish unbelievers among their people in the first part, and the Messenger does the same among his own people in the second.

**72:20–28:** In the final portion the Messenger affirms his monotheist belief, saying that he has no power over his opponents, but that nobody can deliver him from God, whose message he must deliver, namely that anyone who disobeys God will go to hell. He does not know when this will happen since God alone knows the *ḡayb*, and He does not share His knowledge *except* with whatever messenger He is pleased with and then equips with guards (*raṣad*) in front and behind, so that He may know that *they* (rather than he) have delivered the message of their lord; He encompasses (in His knowledge) everything *they* have and counts everything. Apart from the *raṣad*, the apparent admission that the Messenger does know the *ḡayb* or some of it after all, and the sudden shift to the plural in v. 28, there are no surprises here. The whole *sūra* is a monotheist sermon.

### Dye

La sourate peut être divisée en trois parties : 1–15, 16–19, 20–28. Les vv. 1–15 constituent un long discours rapporté, à un double niveau (« dis », « il m’a été révélé »). Il s’agit, d’une certaine manière, d’une *apocalypse*, remarquable en ce que la prédication du message divin est transférée du monde humain à un monde non-humain, celui des *ḡinns*. Pourquoi un tel dispositif littéraire et rhétorique – y aurait-il un lien entre le *contenu* du texte, et sa *forme* ?

V. 1, *qul* : ajout relevant du travail éditorial et rédactionnel des scribes, destiné à présenter le Coran comme une parole émanant de Dieu.

V. 3 : *ta’ālā* est en principe une locution autonome, qui fait référence à Dieu, et non à l’une de ses qualités. Kropp (2011: 259–260) propose de lire, non pas *ḡadd*, mais l’araméen *ḥad*, et reconstruit une formule tripartite, anti-polythéiste et anti-trinitaire : *‘innahū ta’ālā ḥad ! / rabb(i)nā mā ttaḥad / ṣāḥibatan wa-lā waladan*.

Les vv. 1–15 mettent en scène les *ḡinns*, qui apparaissent comme des démons et des anges déchus (voir commentaire du QS 32) – et cela ne concerne pas que le désir d’entendre le concile divin (vv. 8–9). Comparer v. 6 et Q 2:14 ; 6:71, 121 ; 7:27, 30 ; 43:37. Les démons, et les *ḡinns*, enseignent un savoir trompeur (ou illicite) aux hommes.

Or il y a ici une idée centrale pour la mise en perspective historique du texte : on assiste à une démonisation de l’hérésie (et de l’idolâtrie) chez les hérésiographes chrétiens, à partir du II<sup>e</sup> siècle (Athénagore, Irénée, Tertullien, plus tard Lactance, etc. : cf. par exemple Reed (2005: 160–189) pour quelques références). S’inspirant de traditions énochiennes, ces auteurs font des démons ceux qui enseignent l’idolâtrie et les hérésies. La sourate 72 reprend à son compte ce *topos* chrétien mais, en faisant témoigner certains *ḡinns* contre d’autres, elle le renverse – contre, notamment, les chrétiens, puisque parmi les cibles de la profession de foi du v. 3, il y a le christianisme et la thèse de Jésus fils de Dieu !

V. 18 : *al-masāḡida* ne désignent pas nécessairement les lieux de culte des « musulmans » (traduire par « mosquées » est anachronique). Rapprocher de Q 9:17–18. Gallez (2005: 250–251) voit là un reproche adressé aux chrétiens, qui se prosternent dans leurs églises, alors que leur foi n’est pas pure. L’idée est plausible.

### Hawting

The allusions in vv. 1–19 to the activities of the *ǧinns* are the subject of a disagreement among some colleagues as to whether the *ǧinns* might overlap with the fallen angels of Biblical tradition (and who appear in the Qurʾān in the forms of Hārūt and Mārūt (Q 2:102). In an original online post for the Qurʾān Seminar, I did assume such an overlap, and in an earlier article (Hawting 2006) asserted it more strongly, without attempting an analysis of all the evidence. Pace Patricia Crone’s strong arguments against (commentary on QS 41), it still seems likely to me that, in the Qurʾān, *ǧinns*, *šayāṭīn* and fallen angels are not always distinguishable (cf. QS 32). One argument made by Crone is that it is a characteristic of the fallen angels that they had fallen from heaven, not that – as we read of the *ǧinns* in the passage under consideration – they try to get back up to it. Louis Ginzberg, however, did refer to some midrashic developments of the story of the Tower of Babel (a place associated with Hārūt and Mārūt in Q 2:102) in which the builders of the tower are identified as *nefilim*, the name given to the fallen angels in Genesis 6:4. The builders of the tower, of course, were motivated by their desire to attain heavenly knowledge. In the Qurʾānic passages about the attempts of the *ǧinns* or the *šayāṭīn* to access the secrets of heaven, a number of myths and ideas that had circulated in the pre-Islamic Near East are alluded to and developed, and it is not at all easy to be precise about the various ingredients. One could envisage the transference of themes and motifs between various categories of “demons.” The occurrence of *raṣad* in v. 9 and again in v. 27 possibly echoes the idea of the angels as “watchers” in 1 Enoch. A major concern in the Qurʾān is to deny that (any of) the revelation is of demonic origin, and in that connection it may be noted that the follower of Marcion, Apelles, asserted that a fiery angel (*angelus igneus*), which had spoken to Moses out of the burning bush, is the source of all the lies, fables, absurdities, and inconsistencies in the Old Testament (Harnack, 1920 [1990], 119–20; Schoeps, 1949, 148–9).

Vv. 18–19 serve as a transition to the following vv. 20–28 which emphasise the role of the Qurʾānic prophet as a faithful messenger with no knowledge or power other than what has been given to him by God. Looking for evidence of composition in the organisation of this *sūra*, one could suggest a contrast between the attempts of some of the *ǧinns* to obtain knowledge for themselves and the prophet’s faithful transmission of God’s words. In vv. 18–19, Crone’s argument here that we should envisage a shared place of worship where the servant of God who stood in prayer was jostled or harassed by those around him seems very plausible. It is the sort of scenario envisaged in the traditions about the Satanic Verses (where, again, a concern to reject the charge that the revelation was corrupted by Satan is evident), and it is just how one would imagine a new sect began to emerge.

### Khalfallah

C’est le discours rapporté le plus long du Coran. Il contient 13 propositions complétives, toutes commencées par la conjonction de subordination: *inna*, impliquée



par l'impératif : *qul*. Cependant, le rapporteur de ces 13 séquences est double. Il est d'une part Dieu qui a révélé ces phrases à Muḥammad. D'autre part, il est le Prophète lui-même qui transmet ce que Dieu lui avait rapporté. L'objet de ces séquences est l'ensemble des phrases prononcées par un groupe de *Ĝinns* (*nafar*). Les questions que soulève ce passage sont en effet nombreuses. Hormis la croyance ou pas au monde invisible qui ne relève pas de la recherche scientifique, nous sommes en droit de nous interroger sur la nature même de la parole *ĝinnienne*. Première difficulté. Pour la résoudre, on a supposé que le verbe : *qālū*, attribué aux *Ĝinns*, n'est qu'une métaphore signifiant : [1] le fait de transmettre cet événement à leurs semblables selon les modes de communication qui sont les leurs. [2] la parole intérieure, idées traversant « leurs esprits », *kalāmnafsī*.

Pris au premier degré, ce passage indique que les *Ĝinns* possèdent le même mode d'entendement que les humains. Par conséquent, ils s'étonnent, croient, réfutent le polythéisme et l'exagération. Ils émettent des conjectures (*ẓann*) ; s'inquiètent pour les humains et font, comme eux, la distinction entre les Justes et les Injustes...Cet entendement passe-t-il par la compréhension des structures sémantiques de l'arabe, propres au Coran, qu'ils avaient entendues? Ou s'agit-il d'un « échange entre eux » que Dieu avait révélé au Prophète pour qu'il en informe ses contemporains. Cet échange a été coulé dans les moules des notions, verbes et images que les arabophones connaissent. Nous sommes enfin en droit de nous interroger : dans quelle mesure le Coran engage-t-il les *ĝinns*? Son Message les concerne-t-il ou pas?

### Pregill

The testimony of the believing *ĝinn*. As I have noted elsewhere, the traditions on the *ĝinns* eavesdropping on Heaven seem to me like evidence of a significant 'Enochic substrate' informing Qur'ānic mythology and cosmology (cf. the narratives on the fall of Iblīs, and perhaps also the depiction of the Daughters of God). Arguably, Qur'ānic demonology represents a fusion of the Enochic traditions common to both Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity (cf. Reed 2005) with a particularly Christian polemical tendency to represent varieties of false worship not only as idolatrous (cf. Hawting 1999) but as demoniacal as well.

In this connection, the possible etymology of *ĝinn* is significant; two possibilities that link these beings to discourses surrounding demonolatry and idolatry in Late Antiquity present themselves. First, as Tesei points out (Tesei QS 33), *'ashtārôt* of 1 Sam 7 and elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible becomes *genyātā* in the Syriac of the Peshitta – "hidden" or "shameful" things, understood as idols in the original context, but commonly taken to refer to a demon or demons as well. A second possibility is a connection to Latin *genius*, presumably reflecting an older Christian polemic against the familial gods of Roman religion – a tantalizing possibility given the implication in Qur'ānic discourse that the opponents take *ĝinns* as their protectors and intercessors.



If the *ǧinn* may be understood as fallen angels or demons who take some humans as their confederates but ultimately lead them astray, then what do we make of the depiction of some *ǧinns* as believers here? I would argue that this represents a unique development in the Qurʾān; just as Iblīs’ portrayal is not entirely unsympathetic, and his rehabilitation is hinted at in some Qurʾānic verses (and fully developed in later exegesis, esp. among Sufis; cf. Awn 1983), so too does the Qurʾān hold out the possibility of these demonic beings rising above their fallen natures and responding to divine guidance. Just as the Qurʾān acknowledges that there are evil forces in the world, but insists that they cannot really infringe upon divine sovereignty, so too are His mercy and justice so bountiful that even demons – and the Devil himself – may be redeemed if they genuinely repent.

V. 11: *kunnā ʔarāʾiq qidadan*: “we are divergent paths,” presumably for those who follow them.

V. 14: Some are *muslim*, and some deviant. Note Donner’s (2010) critique of *muslim* as signifying the disposition of believers (or “Believers”) who have no other guidance to follow; believing Christians are Christians, believing Jews Jews, but demons, like pagan Arabs, can only become submitters, *muslim*.

V. 18: The places of worship are God’s alone – perhaps pointing to the demonolatrous context.

Vv. 23 and 28: *balāġ*: true revelation as opposed to false teachings, revelation being a central theme in Enochic tradition.

### Reynolds

The first part of this *sūra* (vv. 1–17) has *ǧinns* complain of their banishment from the heavenly council in a way that seems to identify them with the *šayāṭīn* spoken of in Q 15:17–18; 37:6–8 and 67:5. These passages all describe heaven as something like a heavenly fortress into which the *šayāṭīn* are prevented from entering. In vv. 8–9 of our passage the *šayāṭīn* are called *ǧinns*. Islamic tradition, of course, insists that these two names refer to two different sorts of creatures, i.e. that the genus of *ǧinns*, made from fire, might become believers but the genus of *šayāṭīn*, who are fallen angels, may not. Yet this distinction seems to be prompted by v. 11 of the present *sūra*. Indeed it seems better to think of *šayāṭīn* and *ǧinns* as two names for the fallen angels; the notion that fallen angels might believe is already found in Jas 2:19 (“You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe – and shudder.”).

One should connect cosmological passages such as this one with the story of the fall of the devil upon his refusal to bow before Adam (Q 2:35–38; 7:11–24; 15:28–35; 17:61–63; 38:71–78). In that story the devil is sent *down* from the heavenly realm where God speaks to his council of angels (notice the command in Q 7:13, *fa-hbiṭ minhā*). In this passage (as in Q 15:17–18; 37:6–8; and 67:5) the devil’s hosts are trying get back up to where they once belonged.

### Rippin

Vv. 18–19 are joined by their use of *tad'ū /yad'ū*, ‘calling’. The use of *masāḡid* needs to be taken as a general reference to places of worship, as is common in the use of the plural (as distinct from the usage of *al-masāḡid al-ḡaram*). The idea that these places “belong to God” is notable. That God is to be called upon (the emphasis not being upon prayer in a technical sense here) in these places draws attention to the ambivalent nature of this act/term of “calling upon” which, in the Qur’ān, can be either negative or positive: people are spoken of as calling both on Allah and on other divine beings. The relationship between *du'ā* and *ṣalāt* as actions in the Qur’ān might be worthy of extended attention. When ‘Abd Allāh calls out to God (which he did after *qāma*, note, again with *ṣalāt* in mind), “they” swarm him. This sounds negative, *kādū yakūnūna ‘alayhi*, but the traditional interpretation sees this as the *ḡinns* who are crowding around to listen to Muḡammad’s words (with enthusiasm, it seems). This makes the passage a reference back to v. 1, although that is far from obvious.

### Stefanidis

Corroborating previous declarations that categorically deny any access to occult knowledge to the *ḡinns* (or the *ṣayāṡīn*), the Qur’ān puts here on stage, so to speak, the *ḡinns* themselves and has them admit their own powerlessness (vv. 8–10). The capacity of the Divine voice to summon different characters beyond any time and space constraints is a remarkable and powerful component of Qur’ānic argumentation. Q 5:116–117, where Jesus himself is said to denounce any kind of trinitarian worship, provides a similar example.

The aural/oral dimension of the Qur’ānic proclamation is underlined in this passage: it is by listening to it that the *ḡinns* convert.

The repetitive and equivocal use of the verb *ḡanna* (to think, to believe) in vv. 5, 7 and 12 is intriguing. Although the noun *ḡann* is used in the pejorative sense of “false opinion” (e. g. Q 53: 27–8, Q 38: 27, Q 4:157), as a verb it sometimes refers to beliefs that are true as is the case in v.12: “And we know (*ḡanannā*) that we cannot escape from God in the earth, nor can we escape by flight” (see also Q 2:46). How then should we understand v.5: *wa-annā ḡanannā an lan taḡūla al-insu wa l-ḡinnu ‘alā llahi kaḡīban?* Does this mean that the *ḡinn* rightly know that God does not let anyone lie about himself (without incurring punishment)? Or is it to be understood as a theologically loaded statement that God *does* let people and *ḡinns* profess enormities about him? This latter understanding brings to mind passages where the *muṣṡrikūn* argue that, had God willed, he would not have let them worship other beings beside him (Q 6:148; 16:35; 43:20).

### Tengour

La sourate *al-Ġinn* a pour thèmes: [1] La soumission d'une partie des djinns au dieu coranique après avoir entendu le *Qur'ān* ; [2] La dénégation des Mecquois à qui, pourtant, le *Qur'ān* se destine. Les djinns qui se voient consacrer près de la moitié de la sourate (vv. 1–15) prennent directement la parole dans une double adresse destinée à leurs semblables et aux Mecquois. Il s'agit, avec Q 46:29 d'un passage unique dans tout le Coran où l'émerveillement d'un groupe, *nafar*, de djinns suscité par l'écoute du *Qur'ān* est là pour confirmer leur soumission de plein gré au dieu coranique.

C'est dans les raisons perceptibles de cette adhésion qu'il est possible de discerner l'argument rhétorique qu'emploie la parole coranique pour convaincre la tribu dénégatrice. Ce que le Coran dit substantiellement c'est que même des êtres aussi insoumis que les djinns se sont ralliés à la cause de Muḥammad quand il leur a été donné d'ouïr le *Qur'ān*.

L'argument devait trouver un écho d'autant que, dans les versets 8 à 10, les djinns vont, de leur propre aveu, admettre n'être plus ce qu'ils étaient jusque-là et ne plus accéder au *Ġayb* depuis que le ciel est gardé. Cette reconnaissance confirme *a contrario* qu'ils y avaient accès avant que le dieu coranique ne s'approprie les espaces célestes (thème qui apparaît en milieu de période mecquoise), de même que le passage est en contradiction avec Q 34:14 où la parole coranique s'évertue à démontrer que déjà à l'époque de Salomon, les djinns qui lui étaient pourtant soumis n'avaient aucune connaissance du *Ġayb*. D'un point de vue historique, ces décalages doivent être soulevés si l'on veut se faire une idée sur la chronologie des passages étudiés. À cet égard, la séquence formée des versets 8, 9 et 10 de la sourate *al-Ġinn* est peut-être plus ancienne que le passage relatif à la mort du roi biblique dans Q 34:14.

Remarquons enfin qu'après « l'émerveillement des djinns », ce sont les thèmes du dieu coranique comme dieu Créateur et Résurrecteur qui sont présentés et donnés comme autant de raisons qui amènent une partie des djinns à croire en *Allāh*.

### Tesei

The idea that the *ġinns* may be believers possibly parallels James 2:19: "You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that and tremble." Referring to this passage, Ḥenana of Adiabene (d. 610) states: "Also demons [*šēdē*] know the Truth" (cf. *PO* VII: 66). Given the Enochic reminiscences in the Qur'ānic demonology (*vide infra*), one may also refer to 1 Peter 3:19–20 where Jesus preaches to *the spirits* of the Watchers enchained in Sheol (cf. VanderKam 1996: 62–3). By contrast, the recurring statement that *ġinns* will be judged at the end of time (e.g. Q 37:158) parallels the widespread idea that demons will be punished alongside sinners. Among the most interesting examples is the statement in *the Cave of Treasures* that those who accept the demonic teachings on astrology "will be punished with the demons on the day of judgment" (27:17–22). In the 6<sup>th</sup> cen., Jacob of Serugh defended this

view against Stephen Bar Sudaili's claim – later shared also by Isaach of Nineveh – that demons will receive God's mercy.

Now the question of *ǧinns*/fallen angels. That the *ǧinns/šayāṭīn* are kinds of demonic entities is suggested by their being subjected to Solomon (Q 21:82; 34:12–23; 38:37–38). This idea is indeed inspired by extra-Biblical traditions about Solomon's control over the *demons* (e. g., already Josephus in *Ant.* VIII, II, 5). It is also noticeable that a Mandaic magic bowl mentions the "ǧinnēe (𐌸𐌸) of King Solomon" with reference to a demoniac entity (cf. Montgomery 1913: 105; two more bowls are mentioned in Davilla 2001: 220). Crone rightly points out that the closest parallel to the *ǧinns'* attempted ascension occurs in the *Testament of Solomon*, where demons and not fallen angels try to reach heaven. However, her claim that the *ǧinns* in Q 72 are extraneous to any Enochic mytheme (cf. Crone QS 41) does not take into account that it is just in relation to traditions about Solomon that the Qur'ān reports its own version of the story of the fallen angels (Q 2:102). This points to a possible association of stories about the Watchers and Solomon in the Qur'ān's context. Furthermore, there is a strong indication that the Qur'ān perceives the story of the *ǧinns'* failed ascension as related to that of Satan's fall, which – as Crone herself notices (Crone QS 41 & 2013: 32–3) – is reminiscent of the myth of the Watchers. In fact, the episode of Iblis' rebellion is very likely alluded to in Q 72:4, where the *ǧinns* complain that "the fool among us spoke against God outrage" (on Iblis as a *ǧinn* see Tesei QS 2). Furthermore, it is noticeable that the adjective *raǧīm* is used to designate both Iblis/šayṭan at the moment of his banishment (Q 15:34; 38:77; 3:36; 16:98; 81:25) and the *ǧinns/šayāṭīn* who try to ascend to heaven (Q 15:17). It is likely that the Qur'ān reflects the ambiguous relationship between demons and fallen angels, documented in several late antique sources, such as the *Cave of Treasures* (cf. Tesei QS 2) or in Tatian's and Athanasios' receptions of the myth of the Watchers (on the former cf. VanderKam 1996: 65; on the latter, cf. Crone QS 41). Nevertheless, at least in one case the Qur'ān seems to acknowledge the distinction between the two categories of evil beings. In fact, it is meaningful that in the Qur'ānic version of the myth of the Watchers, the two angels Hārūt and Mārūt are presented as playing a positive role while rebellious acts are attributed to the demons (*al-šayāṭīn*). This suggests that the Qur'ān intentionally transfers to demons the rebellious actions of the Watchers, probably as a rejection of the embarrassing Enochic concept of the angelic sin.

### Zellentín

Only part of the *ǧinns* manage to listen to the heavenly discourse (v. 1), and it seems that even the ability of this group seems to have been curtailed by fire (v. 8–9). This passage should perhaps be understood against the background of, as a reaction to, and a further development of two broad discourses: the ignorance of heavenly beings and their possible transformation towards sinfulness.

Firstly, the competition between humans and angels, as discussed in my comments on QS 2, include the fact that God taught the original names to Adam, but

not the angels. God hence chooses to privilege humans over angels, which may explain why the *ǧinns* likewise profess their past ignorance: they used to think that God has taken spouse or son until they listened to the Qur’ān (v. 3, in their “Christian” error, the *ǧinns* apparently had a very concrete concept of how the alleged son of God was conceived). The *ǧinns*’ ignorance of and appetite for the Qur’ān in the present context moreover recalls God’s decision to withhold the Torah from the angels in the rabbinic tradition: In *Leviticus Rabbah* 31:5, for example, we learn that the Holy One, blessed be He, said to the angels that the Torah is not found in the land of the living, i. e., it is not intended for the undying angels (see also *Bavli Qiddushin* 54a). In *Song of Songs Rabbah* 8:15, finally, we learn that even Gabriel and Michael fled from the Torah, and that the angels engaged in a long discourse with God, trying to convince him not to divulge the Torah to humans. Likewise, in the [likely medieval Midrash] *Deuteronomy Rabbah* 7:9, we learn that the ministering angels (*ml’ky hšrt*) coveted God’s Torah.

Most importantly, the Babylonian Talmud classifies demons as half-way in between angels and humans: “in regard to three, they are like the ministering angels; and in regard to three, like human beings” (*bHagiga* 16a). As noted by Crone, they eavesdrop and learn about the future fate of humans “from behind the veil” (*ibid.*), offering precisely the scenario presupposed in v. 9 and 10, before God barred them from doing so (see also Q 42:51).

Likewise, when the *ǧinns* now learn Qur’ān from the mouth of God’s messenger (in v. 1–2), it seems to me that we are witnessing a further turn of the hermeneutical screw: not only did God choose to teach heavenly discourse to humans rather than to angels, the *ǧinns* even become dependent on one particular human to learn Qur’ān in order to safeguard their own salvation!

But are then the *ǧinns* angels? It surely seems to me that they must be placed in this class of beings, since God created the *ǧinns* “earlier (than man), from the smokeless flame of fire” (Q 15:27, see also Q 55:15). The sequel of the passage (“when your Lord said to the angels...” Q 15:28), God’s address to the angels, only makes sense if we allow for a clear affinity or even subclassification between angels and *ǧinns*, akin to what we saw in the Talmud.

This leads us to the angels’ corruptibility. We may be well advised not to presuppose *all* of the Enochic tradition as informing the Qur’ān; the rabbis likewise distance themselves from it. Yet I think the Qur’ān very clearly responds to some idea of “fallen” or at least degenerate angels – how could they teach erroneously about God’s spouse and son if they hadn’t fallen, and how can we account for their banishment from heaven in v. 9? The Syriac *Cave of Treasures* introduces Satan as the head of the “low order of the spirits” (*tgm’ hn’ thth’*, Bezold 1883:16–7). Likewise, the *Clementine Homilies* (8:12–3) teach that “the *spirits* who inhabit the heaven, *the angels who dwell in the lowest region*,” ask for permission to mingle among men in order to test them. They end up corrupting themselves, however, and then become “unable to turn back to the first purity of their proper nature, their members turned away from their fiery substance: for the fire itself, being extinguished by the weight of lust, and

changed into flesh, they trod the impious path downward. For they themselves, being fettered with the bonds of flesh, were constrained and strongly bound; wherefore they have no more been able to ascend into the heavens.” The Qur’ān’s *ǧinns*, like the Clementine spirits, may well be the lower angels who compromised their pure fiery nature, which explains why the heavenly fire now thwarts their ascent—again a further development of a clearly recognizable tradition.