

Satan: Humankind's Worst Enemy (part 2 of 2)

Description: A discussion of the means Satan uses to misguide people and fulfill his long term goal of leading as many people as possible to Hell.

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Lesson Objectives:

- To learn about the motives and methodology of Satan in order to avoid his traps and tricks.

Arabic Terms:

- *Shaytan*- sometimes spelled *Shaitan* or *Shaytaan*. It is the word used in Islam and the Arabic language to denote the devil or Satan, the personification of evil.
- *Al-Azlam* - is the practice of casting featherless arrows to predict situations. It was prevalent in pre Islamic Arabia (includes such things as drawing lots, and trying to predict the future).

The means used by Shaytan to misguide people

Making lies and deceptions appear attractive. *Shaytan* makes falsehood appear in the guise of truth and truth appear in the guise of falsehood. He does this by planting doubts in people's mind in exactly the same way as he tempted our Father and Mother Adam and Eve. Whispers, doubts and delusions are all part of his bag of tricks. Nowadays we see unlawful activities being practiced by many; they are made to appear attractive and are given names that draw a person towards it. God has given us a great line of defense; once we equip ourselves with the knowledge of the laws of Islam, this will unveil the plots of Satan and make it clear to us his intent.

Tempting people to extremism or negligence. If Satan finds a person is serious and cautious, always trying to do the right thing, he tempts him to strive to excess. He whispers, do not sleep when others sleep, do not break your fast when others do and so on. If Shaytan sees that a person is lazy or prone to look for the easy way he will tempt him to be indifferent or negligent. He encourages procrastination and laziness. To protect oneself from this, one should stay close to the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad, may Allah praise him.

Making false promises. Quran stresses this evil ploy several times with great

emphasis. **oeShaytan makes promises to them, and arouses in them false desires; and Shaytan's promises are nothing but deceptions.”(Quran 4:120)** Satan fills people’s heads with vain desires and wishes and keeps them busy working on false dreams and rewards. This distracts them from the more important things and working for the Hereafter. He calls humankind to sin and transgression yet he claims to be giving sincere advice.

Gradually misleading people. Satan makes minor sins appear to be nothing until they are piled high upon one another. Whenever Satan tricks a person into committing a sin, he leads him straight on to another sin, and then another and each time the sins become greater until finally he causes a person to commit the greatest sin of all, disbelieving in Allah, or ascribing partners to Him.

Causing people to forget what is in their best interest. Human beings are forgetful. It is a trait that is in all of us and Our creator knows this very well. **oeAnd indeed We made a covenant with Adam before, but he forgot, and We found on his part no firm will-power.” (Quran 20:115)** Satan takes this a step further by whispering until a person forgets exactly what is good for him and what things will lead to sin. One example where this could happen is where the religion of Allah is being mocked in a light-hearted way. Allah cautions us not to take part in such conversations. He says:

oeAnd when you see those who engage in a false conversation about Our Verses (of the Quran) by mocking at them, stay away from them till they turn to another topic. And if Satan causes you to forget, then after the remembrance sit not you in the company of the wrongdoing people.” (Quran 6:68)

Making people afraid of his allies. Another way Satan misguides people is to make them afraid of his (Satan’s) troops and allies. He has surrounded himself with evil minions, jinn and human beings. He instills the thoughts that they are powerful and fearsome, and if not obeyed they can harm us.

oelt is only Shaytan that suggests to you the fear of his supporters and friends; so fear them not, but fear Me, if you are (true) believers.” (Quran3:175)

Satan misguides a person through what he loves and desires. Satan finds out what we love or desire and uses it against us. He also passes this information on to his helpers and they attack us with the very things we are attached to. How often are our prayers disturbed by thoughts of our children or spouse? Are we guilty of shopping and delaying our prayer? Satan senses what we like and then sets about to twist our thoughts.

By instilling doubts. *Shaytan* does not want anyone to turn to Allah in repentance, regretting (past mistakes) and turning towards what is right and good. Instead he wants to divert people away from Allah by using many kinds of temptations and baseless arguments. He instills doubts to make a person feel anxious and uncertain.

Through alcohol, gambling, idolatry, witchcraft and fortunetelling. Although Allah

warns us against these practices, human beings are weak and Satan takes advantage of this by making these practices look attractive or worthwhile. He encourages people to engage in these practices because they can easily lead to evil consequences and bad results. People may engage in this sort of behavior thinking it will be fun or interesting and they soon find that the consequences are neither of those things. Gambling is a serious addiction that destroys wealth and lives; alcohol makes people behave like fools and encourages one to engage in risky behaviour; idolatry is fraught with evil consequences, the worst being the sin of worshipping something other than Allah; believing in witchcraft and fortunetelling is a sign of irrational thinking and an irrational person has no control over himself. He could easily be led into evil situations that pull him further and further away from Allah.

oeOh you who believe! Intoxicants (all kinds of alcoholic drinks), and gambling, [sacrificing on] stone alters [to other than Allah], and *Al-Azlam* are an abomination of *Shaytan's* handiwork. So avoid (strictly all) that (abomination) in order that you may be successful.” (Quran 5:90)

Encouraging negligence. If the believer adheres firmly to the straight path and calls on Allah to protect himself, *Shaytan* is prevented from leading him astray or misguiding him. However, if he is negligent or lazy *Shaytan* takes full advantage to attack while the believer's defenses are down. Immersing oneself in all the aspects of Islam is the way to be safe from *Shaytan*. Being negligent about our Islamic obligations keeps one away from the constant flow of Allah's mercy.

When a person grows strong in Islam and his faith is firmly entrenched in his heart, *Shaytan* is the one who is afraid.

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