

Satan: Humankind's Worst Enemy (part 1 of 2)

Description: Who is Satan? Is he the fallen angel, the devil mentioned in Christian literature? In this lesson we learn about his creation and fall from grace, and his supreme enmity towards humankind.

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Lesson Objectives:

- To recognise Satan and understand his mission.

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.
- *Jinn* - A creation of Allah that was created before humankind from smokeless flame. They are referred to at times as spirit beings, banshees, poltergeists, phantoms and so forth.
- *Shirk* - a word that implies ascribing partners to Allah, or ascribing divine attributes to other than Allah, or believing that the source of power, harm and blessings comes from another besides Allah.
- *Khushoo* - the act of being completely solemn, submissive and humble towards Allah during the prayer.

Unlike the descriptions of the devil in Christian doctrine, *Shaytan* is not a fallen angel; rather he is a *Jinn* who can think, reason and has free will. Allah allowed him to reside amongst the Angels, but because of his pride and arrogance that you can read about in the story of Prophet Adam on the website www.islamreligion.com, he despairs of ever knowing Allah's mercy and has vowed not to inhabit the depths of Hell alone. Satan's wish is to take as many human beings with him to the Hellfire as he can. Make no mistake about it; Satan is humankind's mortal enemy. He is cunning, crafty and supremely arrogant. Quran warns us of his enmity over and over.



oeO children of Adam. Let not *Shaytan* deceive you...” (Quran 7:27)

**oeSurely *Shaytan* is an enemy to you so take him as an enemy...”
(Quran 35:6)**

oe...And whoever takes *Shaytan* as a protector or helper instead of Allah, has surely suffered a manifest loss.” (Quran 4:119)

It is important to understand that even Satan himself recognises the Oneness of Allah and His right to be worshipped. Allah has informed us that the promises of Satan are nothing but deceptions and lies, and Satan concurs, for he can offer nothing.

oeAnd *Shaytan* will say when the matter has been decided: "Verily, Allah promised you a promise of truth. And I too promised you, but I betrayed you. I had no authority over you except that I called you, and you responded to me. So do not blame me, but blame yourselves...” (Quran 14:22)

Every act of disobedience that is hated by Allah is loved by *Shaytan*, he loves immorality and sin. He whispers into the ears of the believers, he disrupts prayer and the remembrance of Allah. One of Islam's greatest scholars, Ibn ul Qayyim, may God have mercy on him, said: oeOne of his (Satan's) plots is that he always bewitches people's minds until they are deceived, he makes attractive to the mind that which will harm it".

Satan has wide-ranging experience in the field of deception; he has tricks and temptations and he whispers relentlessly. Satan is able to pinch and poke, implanting thoughts and desires. However Allah has not left humankind defenseless. He has provided us with weapons and one of the greatest is information. Satan is our mortal enemy and in order to combat his tricks and illusions we need to know him well. The long term goal of Satan is to deprive as many people as possible of Paradise and to lead them to Hell. To achieve this aim he has set many short term goals. Being aware of these goals means we are able to arm ourselves with weapons of defence.

Short Term Goals

1. To cause people to commit the great sin of *shirk*. Everyone who worships something other than Allah, be it an idol, a statue, the sun, the moon, a person or a principle, is in essence worshipping Satan.[\[1\]](#)
2. To encourage people to commit sins and acts of disobedience. When Satan despairs of ever being worshipped he is content with being obeyed in matters that seem insignificant.[\[2\]](#) He loves immorality and sin because it has a direct effect on a person's religious commitment.
3. To prevent people from doing good deeds. Satan not only causes people to commit sin and acts of disobedience, he is also content with preventing them from doing acts of good. Satan is patient; he lays in wait, filling our minds with doubts, and superstitions. When a person is planning on doing a good deed or action, he whispers to them to avoid

it and plants small nagging doubts in their mind.

4. To damage acts of worship. If Satan is not able to prevent people from obeying Allah and performing righteous actions, he strives to corrupt their acts of worship. When a person is praying he whispers and distracts him. Satan's desire is to prevent a person from taking their reward for praying with *khushoo* and eventually to lead him or her away from Allah altogether.
5. To cause mental and physical harm. In addition to causing believers to commit acts of *shirk*, Satan also aims to cause physical and mental harm. For instance he sends bad dreams to cause a person distress and fear. He disturbs people from the time they are born right up until the moment of death. In their final moments, he continues his whispering and harassment to prevent a person from calling on Allah and confirming their belief in God alone.

Endnotes:

[1] Sh. Omar al Ashqar in *The world of the Jinn and Devils*.

[2] *At-Tirmidhi, Saheeh Muslim*

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