Synopsis of the Friday Sermon delivered by Ameer Mustapha Elturk on Dec 16, 2011
Satan - The Devil (Know your Enemy) Part 4

Satan Threatens You With Poverty

Today’s sermon is in continuation of the earlier three sermons on the subject “Satan – the Devil (Know your Enemy),” and will focus mainly on how Satan threatens us with poverty and dissuades us from spending in the path of Allah (SWT). We are informed in Surat Fatir, “Satan is your enemy; so treat him as an enemy; he only invites his followers that they may become companions of the blazing fire.” (35:6). After Satan was cursed and cast out of heaven because of his disobedience to Allah (SWT), he swore by Allah’s majesty and honor that he would do whatever he could within his means to deceive the progeny of Adam. “And then Iblis said, ‘Because You caused me to deviate, I will lie in ambush for them all on Your straight path, I will come to them, from their front and their back, from their right and their left, and You will find most of them ungrateful (to You).’” (al-A’raf, 7:16-17). To this Allah (SWT) said, “Go! Whoever follows you from them, hell shall be the reward of you (all), a reward well deserved.” (al-Isra’, 17:63). Further, Allah (SWT) sanctioned Satan to use all his tricks of the trade he could to lure men. “Entice, then, whom you can among them with your voice, muster your cavalry and your infantry against them, share their wealth and their children, and make promises to them!” And the promise of Satan is nothing but delusion.” (al-Isra’, 17:64). Thus we see how Satan has stirred up Allah’s servants and in fact has managed to lead them away from the straight path.

Indeed, most people are quite thankless to all the favors that Allah (SWT) has bestowed upon them. As a result of this, they often find themselves in states of anxiety, depression, and grief. Satan’s control and mastery over man appears quite evident from the fact that we have turned our passions and desires into little gods. Individualism, egoism, and greed are some of the traits that have assumed the role of idols for man.

Satan strikes man at his weakest points. Among the weaknesses of man are his passionate love for wealth and excessive lust for sex. Man loves wealth intensely. Indeed, Allah (SWT), the Creator who knows His creation, explains this in various ways in the Qur’an: “And you have an insatiable love of wealth.” (al-Fajr, 89:20). “Greed for more and more distracts you, until you go down to the graves.” (al-Takathur, 102:1-2). “Woe to every slanderer backbiter, who amasses wealth counting it over, thinking that his wealth will make him immortal.” (al-Humazah, 104:1-3). On one hand, Satan threatens man with poverty so that he may be discouraged from spending in the way of Allah (SWT). On the other, he persuades man to commit immoral deeds. “The devil promises you poverty and orders you to do evil, while God promises forgiveness from Him and favor. God is All-Encompassing, All-Knowing” (al-Baqarah, 2:268). Sexual aberrations including premarital and extramarital spousal relations have always been around, but they have now assumed alarming proportions and have almost become the norm. It was Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), the founder of the discipline of psychoanalysis who postulated that sexual drives are primary motivational forces of human life. His theory helped create a movement that made illicit sex widespread. He also condemned religion because he thought that religion does not let hu-
mans outgrow their childish neurosis and immature reliance on something other than themselves. Satan and his agents lure and entrap people into committing vulgar and shameless deeds. People become slaves of their base lustful desires; so much so that they stoop down to commit sexual perversions like sodomy, lesbianism, pederasty, incest, and even bestiality.

According to the classical interpretation of the ayah, “The devil promises you poverty and orders you to do evil…” (al-Baqarah, 2:268), Satan promises poverty to one who gives zakah (obligatory poor due) or sadaqah (charity) and orders him to do immoral deeds making him disobey God. On the other hand, Allah (SWT) promises that He would cover up a person’s misdeeds by forgiving him and give him more from His bounty when that person spends in charity. According to Ibn Abbas (RA), the first two are from Satan and the last two are from Allah (SWT). Ibn Mas‘ud (RA) reported that the Prophet (SAW) said that both Satan and the angel have an effect on the son of Adam. As for Satan’s effect, it is by his threatening man with evil repercussions and rejecting the truth. As for the effect of the angel, it is by his promises of a good end and believing in the truth. Whoever finds the latter, let him know that it is coming from Allah (SWT) and let him praise and thank Allah (SWT) for it. Whoever finds the former let him seek refuge with Allah (SWT) from Satan. The Prophet (SAW) is then reported to have recited the ayah “The devil promises you poverty and orders you to do evil…” (al-Baqarah, 2:268)

Satan uses all his skills to dissuade man from spending and tries to convince man into thinking rationally and logically that spending money in charitable causes will create a paucity of funds and financial instability that will affect his and his family’s welfare and worldly needs. Thus, Satan often succeeds in diminishing man’s trust in Allah (SWT) and deprives him of Allah’s promise of His bounty and reward for those who spend in His cause. Umar ibn al-Khattab (RA) said that he heard the Prophet (SAW) say, “If you were to rely on Allah as He ought to be relied on, He would provide for you as He provides for the birds. They go out hungry in the morning and return full in the evening.”

Allah (SWT) in His infinite wisdom gives what He pleases to whom He pleases. We know this truth from numerous ayat in the Qur’an such as, “Say, my Lord gives in abundance to whomever of His servants He wills, and restrains it for him; And whatever you spend (in His cause) He will replace it; He is the best of providers” (Saba’, 34:39). We should, therefore, shun the evil whisperings of Satan and give whole-heartedly for the pleasure of Allah (SWT) without the slightest fear of poverty or harboring of the thought that giving will diminish our wealth. We should also know that Allah (SWT) is well aware of our needs. “Your Lord expands the provision of anyone He wills and restricts it. He is aware of and sees His slaves” (al-Isra’, 17:30).

The ayah, “The devil promises you poverty and orders you to do evil…” (al-Baqarah, 2:268) is in the center of the other ayat that promote spending in the cause of Allah (SWT). Beginning with ayah 261 of Surat al-Baqarah, an entire section has been dedicated to spending in the way of Allah (SWT). “Those who spend their wealth in God’s cause are like grains of corn that produce seven ears, each bearing a hundred grains. God multiplies for whoever He wishes. He is All-Encompassing, All-Knowing. Those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah, and do not follow their spending with reminders of their benevolence or hurtful words will have their reward with their Lord. On them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.” (al-Baqarah, 2:261-262). Naturally, the 700 folds increase in the wealth spent in the cause of Allah (SWT) is an allegorical explanation and not restricted to that figure. Allah’s generosity is limitless. The ayah preceding the central ayah “The devil promises you poverty…” Allah (SWT) commands the believers, “O you who believe, spend from the good things that you have earned…” (al-Baqarah, 2:267). It is to be understood that any act of goodness must be accompanied with sincerity of intention. Almost all books of hadith open with the well known hadith, “Actions are but by intentions and every man shall have only that which he/she intended…” Whatever good we do should not be accompanied with even an iota of showing off or a desire to seek praises from others. We are reminded of this in the ayah, “We feed you only for the sake of Allah. We do not want any reward from you nor any thanks” (al-Insan, 76:9). A complete section comprising of fourteen ayat are dedicated to the philosophy and importance of giving. The section ends with the ayah, “Those who give away their wealth by night and day, secretly and openly, will have their reward with their Lord. On them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.” (al-Baqarah, 2:274). Imme-
diately after this section Allah (SWT) discusses the *ayat* on *Riba* (usury/interest).

Since its inception, IONA has consistently helped other organizations to raise funds for their causes. We believe that no one should be deprived of seeking help for a good cause, especially when it is for Allah’s cause. We also believe that any project for the cause of Allah (SWT) is an opportunity not to be missed. We all need such opportunities in the hope that Allah (SWT) may expiate our sins and reward us in both worlds. People are generally unaware of the concept of wealth in Islam. Man’s role as Allah’s vicegerent on earth and the use of its resources by him as Allah’s *amanah* (trust) to him gives a much deeper meaning to the concept of ownership in Islam. It implies that in the Islamic society, ownership whether private or public is not absolute. Resources are only an *amanah* whose actual owner is Allah (SWT). Whatever one owns is actually what one holds in trust and must be used to achieve just ends. “*Any blessing you have is from Allah...*” (*al-Nahl*, 16:53). Moreover, Allah (SWT) may at anytime claim anything back. This phenomenon is witnessed day in and day out and is not limited to human beings but even to huge organizations and corporations whose operations thrive at times and decline or even fail at other times.

While others have a legitimate right over our wealth and possessions—the poor and needy among others, it is Allah (SWT) whose right comes first and foremost. It is His right that His houses (mosques), Islamic centers, and other Islamic institutions be well maintained and adequately taken care of. Give without hesitation for the sake of Allah (SWT), and He will, in sha Allah, replace it many folds.

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