Synopsis of the Friday Sermon
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Synopsis of the Friday Sermon delivered by Ameer Mustapha Elturk on Dec 23, 2011
Satan - The Devil (Know your Enemy) Part 5

We must keep reminding ourselves that Satan is our archenemy. He wants us to disobey Allah (SWT) and make us ungrateful to Him. After being cast out of heaven, he had sworn by Allah’s majesty and honor that he would do whatever he could within his means to deceive the children of Adam. He had also declared that most of them would not be grateful and thankful. “You will not find most of them thankful” (al-A’raf, 7:17).

It is a sad fact that Satan has actually misguided most of the human race. “Satan was proved right in his assessment of them, for they followed him except for a group of believers, even though he had no authority over them, so that We may know those who believed in the Hereafter from those who doubt it. And your Lord preserves (and keeps records of) everything” (Saba’, 34:20-21). We are also informed that Satan said, “My Lord, because You misled me, I shall adorn for them (the path of evil) on earth and mislead them all except Your sincere slaves” (al-Hijr, 15:39-40). It is clear from these and other ayat that only the sincere slaves of Allah (SWT) who have conviction (yaqeen) about the Hereafter (al-akhirah) will be protected and saved by Allah (SWT) from being deceived and misguided by Satan.

To have yaqeen or certitude in something is different than to have belief in it. This distinction becomes clear when we reflect on the first few ayat of Surat al-Baqarah: “This is the Book, without any doubt. It contains guidance for those who are God-conscious; who believe in the unseen, establish prayer, and spend from the provision We bestowed on them; who believe in what was sent (the Qur’an) to you (O Muhammad) and what was sent before you (earlier scriptures); and are certain about the Hereafter” (al-Baqarah, 2:2-4). Among other attributes, the muttaqin (God conscious) are described as those who have iman or belief in the unseen and in the revelations while they have yaqeen (conviction) in the Hereafter. Yaqeen, therefore, is at a higher level than simply believing. The Qur’an qualifies these muttaqin as the guided and successful ones. “Only those are guided by their Lord, and only those who will succeed” (al-Baqarah, 2:5).

Satan avowed to Allah (SWT) when he said, “Because You misled me, I will lie in wait for them all on Your straight path” (al-A’raf, 7:16). We learn from a hadith how Satan goes about doing this. Subrah Bin al-Fakih, a companion of the Prophet (SAW) said, “I heard the prophet of Allah (SAW) say, ‘Satan sat in wait for the Son of Adam in all his paths. He sat in the path of Islam, saying, ‘Would you embrace Islam and abandon your religion and the religion of your forefathers.’ However, the son of Adam disobeyed Satan and embraced Islam. So Satan sat in the path of Hijrah (migration in the cause of Allah), saying, ‘Would you migrate and leave your land and sky’ but the parable of the muhajir (immigrant) is that of a horse in his stamina. So, he disobeyed Satan and migrated. So Satan sat in the path of Jihad, against one's self and with his wealth, saying, ‘If you fight, you will be killed, your wife will be married, and your wealth divided.’ So he disobeyed him and performed Jihad. Therefore, whoever among them (children of Adam) does this and dies, it will be a promise from Allah that He admits him into Paradise. If he is killed, it will be a promise from Allah that He admits him into Paradise. If he drowns, it will be a promise from Allah that He admits him into Paradise. If the animal breaks his neck, it will
be a promise from Allah that He admits him into Paradise.”

The above hadith vividly explains the ploys of Satan. How imperative it is for us to remain steadfast on the straight path? No wonder that we are taught to implore Allah (SWT) in every Salah (ritual prayer) to guide us on the right path. “Guide us on the Straight Path” (al-Fatiha, 1:6). In response to this supplication mentioned in Surat al-Fatiha (the opening Surah of the Qur’an), Allah (SWT) blessed humankind with the entire Qur’an and Prophet Muhammad (SAW), who translated its teachings into action through his Sunnah for all times to come.

Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal recorded that `Abdullah bin Mas`ud said, “The Messenger of Allah drew a line with his hand (in the sand) and said, ‘This is Allah's path, leading straight.’ He then drew lines to the right and left of that line and said, ‘These are the other paths, on each path there is a devil who calls to it.’ He then recited, “This is My path and it is straight, so follow it. Do not follow other ways or you will become cut off from His Way” (al-An`am, 6:153). All paths other than Allah’s path lead one astray and every going astray leads one to hell. Promising to subdue and overpower the children of Adam, Satan declared: “I shall subdue his (Adam’s) descendants except for a few” (al-Isra’, 17:62), Allah (SWT) permitted him to go ahead. “Entice any of them you can with your voice, muster your cavalry and infantry against them, share their children and their wealth with them, and make them promises!” And Satan promises them nothing but delusion” (al-Isra’, 17:64). Voice (Saut) in this ayah refers both to the whispering of Satan or the inner voice coming from within that drives one to disobey Allah (SWT) as well as the outer voice that comes from Satan and his agents from men and jinn who work hard to mislead people from Allah’s obedience, be it through music, distractions, or other sinful activities. We learn through a hadith that Satan flows through man’s bloodstream. Ibn `Abbas says that the voices of songs, musical instruments and the noise of fun and games are the voices of Satan that he employs to tear people away from the path of truth.

There are differences of opinion among scholars regarding music. While some consider it haram (impermissible), others say it is halal (permissible). There are still others who argue that as long as music is not vulgar, inviting one to evil, or distracting one from religious obligations and if listened to in moderation, then there is no harm. It may be suggested with confidence that the inherent urge of music can be best satisfied through divine music of the Qur’an.

Islam never discourages one to enjoy or have fun, provided the same is done within the bounds of shariah. The Prophet (SAW) himself had an extraordinary sense of humor and would often laugh and joke. We learn through a hadith that an old woman came to the Prophet (SAW) and said, “O Messenger of Allah, pray to Allah that I will enter paradise.” He said jokingly, “O Mother of so-and-so, no old woman will enter Paradise.” The old woman went away crying, so the Prophet (SAW) said, “Tell her that she will not enter paradise as an old woman, for Allah (SWT) says, ‘We have brought maidens into being, and made them virgins’” (al-Waqi`ah, 35:36). He said this to mean that everyone will be young in heaven and not old. There are numerous traditions that speak about the Prophet’s ever smiling disposition and ease of manner when dealing with people.

The “muster your cavalry and infantry against them” in the ayah (17:64) mentioned above is allegorical making it interpretive of various meanings. According to Ibn Abbas, Mujahid, and Qatada, cavalry and infantry refer to Satan’s troops from men and jinn who mislead people. We learn through the books of Sirah how Satan helped the mushrikeen (polytheists) of Quraish fight the believers in the Battle of Badr and other battles. Today, we witness this phenomenon in the use of sophisticated weaponry such as drones, missiles, bombs, and other lethal weapons of destruction used by oppressive powers to subjugate nations and kill innocent people. Likewise, Satan sharing with humans their wealth implies all ill-gotten wealth acquired through all types of unlawful means including Riba (usury/interest). Satan’s sharing in children could be either through having children out of wedlock or having children aborted in the early or late stages of pregnancy. It could also be through giving such names to children that are suggestive of polytheistic names such as Abd al-Shams, Abd al-Masih, Abd al-Uzzah etc. The superstitious practices of making children wear charms and beads to ward off evil are also among the ways to let Satan share in one’s children. It could also mean to nurture and bring up one’s children through haram sources of earnings. We learn through a hadith that Allah (SWT) said, “I created my servants Hunafa’ (i.e., monotheists), then the devils misled them from their religion.” Although all children are born in a
state of fitrah, the influence of the environment is decisive; parents may influence the religion of the child by making him a Christian, Jew or Magian. The Prophet (SAW) said, “If anyone of you, when intending to have a sexual intercourse with his wife, says, ‘Bismillah, Allahumma jannibna-ash-shaitan, wa jannib ash-shaitana ma razaqtana’, ‘In the name of Allah, O Allah, keep us away from the devil and keep the devil away from what You bestow on us’ and if the couple are destined to have a child (out of that very sexual relation), then Satan will never be able to harm that child.” Invoking Allah’s name on all occasions is a shield and protection against Satan and his army. The ayah under study ends with “The promise of Satan is nothing but delusion.” This message is repeated elsewhere as follows: “He makes promises to them and fills them with false hopes. But what Satan promises them is nothing but delusion” (al-Nisa’, 4:120).

Satan creates doubts in people’s minds about life of the Hereafter, about the torments of the grave, about heaven and hell, and about the very existence of God Almighty. That is why we see a huge segment of the world’s population sunk into the swamp of agnosticism if not outright atheism. Satan does not have to worry much about those individuals who are already busy in sinful activities without any sense of shame or guilt. Satan struggles hard to turn aside those individuals from the straight path who try hard to remain on it. We have an uphill struggle against Satan. The truth will be revealed on the Day of Judgment. Satan’s stratagem will be exposed when he makes his final discourse (supposedly in Hell) to those who have followed him, “And when the matter is decided Satan will say, ‘Allah made you a promise, a promise of truth, and I too promised you but I failed in my promise to you. I had no authority over you, except that I called you and you responded to me. Do not, therefore, blame me but blame yourselves. I cannot come to your aid nor you to mine. I reject the way you associated me with Allah before.’” Verily, the wrongdoers will have a painful punishment” (Ibrahim, 14:22).

Having yaqeen in the Hereafter is in essence the shield against Satan. Unless this yaqeen is strengthened through the Qur’an and Sunnah, it gets weakened until one finds oneself on the threshold of kufr (disbelief). “Like the example of Satan, who says to man, ‘Do not believe!’ but when man disbelieves, (Satan will) say, ‘I disown you; I fear God, the Lord of the Worlds” (al-Hashr, 59:16).

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