Synopsis of Friday Sermon delivered by Ameer Mustapha Elturk on April 06, 2012

This is the tenth and concluding khutba on the topic ‘Satan - The Devil (Know your Enemy)’. These khutbas have been delivered to remind us of our sworn enemy—Satan. From the previous khutbas, we have seen how Satan gains controls over Allah’s servants and invites them to be on his side so that they stand to lose and become his companions in hell.

The first step towards guarding ourselves against Satan is to treat him as an enemy. In order to overcome him and to avoid falling into his trap, we have first to understand that there are two Satans—the one within us and the one outside. According to a Hadith, the Prophet said, "With every one of you there is a devil." The Companions asked, “Is there a devil even with you?” The Prophet said, “Yes, but Allah has granted me protection against him.” According to another version, he replied, “Allah has helped me, and the devil has submitted to me (i.e., he became a Muslim).” In another hadith, the Prophet (SAW) said, “Verily, Satan flows in the bloodstream of Adam's descendents.” This is the first Satan we have to be aware of. We should control him rather than be controlled by him. How to go about doing this? We should seek Allah’s help in the same manner the Prophet (SAW) sought help from Allah (SWT) throughout his whole entire life, and Allah (SWT) helped him. But there is another Satan, and that is Iblis, along with his progeny and his agents from the humankind (ins) and the genie (jinn), and they are spread out everywhere.

The best way to save oneself from the accursed Satan and to avoid following his footsteps is to follow the footsteps of the Prophet (SAW), and to submit willingly, completely, and wholeheartedly to the will of Allah and that is what we have been commanded to do. “O you who believe, enter wholeheartedly into submission to God and do not follow in Satan’s footsteps, for he is your sworn enemy” (al-Baqarah, 2:208). Claiming to be a Muslim is easy but living the life of a devout Muslim is very difficult and calls for nothing less than struggling within, against one’s own desires (jihad al-Nafs). This is only possible when we live in compliance with the teachings of the Qur’an and the Sunnah. This has to do with learning the matters of deen. This is not an option, but an obligation. Seeking Islamic knowledge and then applying it in our lives is indispensible if we want to protect ourselves from Satan. We can appreciate the significance of seeking Islamic knowledge from the Prophetic tradition that says, “One Fagih (scholar of Fiqh) is stronger against Shaitan than a thousand worshippers.” It is important to understand that pursuit of knowledge if not done with the intention of implementing it in one’s life just ends up becoming an intellectual excursion and an exercise in futility, and is very likely to make one a victim of Satan’s intrigues.

We need to keep reminding ourselves about our deen that embraces our individual or private as well as our collective or public lives. “And remind, for indeed, the reminder benefits the believers” (al-Dhariyat, 51:55). What is the Prophetic methodology to keep oneself protected from Satan? This is important to know as the Prophet (SAW) is our model. “The Messenger of God is an excellent model for those of you who put your hope in God and the Last Day and remember Him often” (al-Ahzab, 33:21). Consequently, the daily life of the
Prophet as recorded in hadith represents an ideal code of good conduct. In fact, when the Prophet's wife `A'ishah (RA) was asked about his conduct, she replied, “Kana khuluquhu al-Qur'an.” His character was the Qur'an. Addressing His beloved Prophet, Allah (SWT) says in Surat al-Qalam: “And you are surely on an exalted standard of character”(al-Qalam, 68:4).

The Prophet (SAW) did not let a moment or an occasion pass by without invoking Allah (SWT). Thus he began his day by supplicating Allah at the time he woke up and invoked Allah before going to bed. In between morning and night, he supplicated Allah on all possible occasions and situations—entering home and exiting it, before and after eating and drinking, visiting the marketplace, entering and exiting the mosque, putting on a garment and taking it off, visiting the toilet and coming out of it, making ablution (wudu), visiting the sick, looking into the mirror, travelling to a place and on returning from it, and many more. He would make other supplications glorifying Allah, praising Him, thanking Him, and seeking His mercy, forgiveness and refuge. These supplications for different occasions are found in various books of ahadith and other books of prophetic supplications. It is highly recommended that we should memorize these supplications (in Arabic), as many as we can, and make them a constant source of remembering and invoking Allah (SWT).

By way of sample, we may ponder upon a few Prophetic supplications. While getting up from his sleep, the Prophet (SAW) used to say, “Praise be to Allah who gave me life after death, and to Him is the final return.” And before going to bed, he would say, “In Your name O Allah, I live and die.” In the marketplace, the Prophet (SAW) used to say a du’a meaning “There is none worthy of worship besides Allah. He is all by Himself. He has no partner. His is the Kingdom, to Him is all praise. He gives and takes life. He is all by Himself. He will not die. In His hands is all good and He has control (power) over all things.” Before putting on a garment, he would say, ‘All Praise is for Allah who has clothed me with this garment and provided it for me, with no power or might from myself.” On one instance, admonishing his companions not to follow the footsteps of Satan, the Prophet (SAW) said, “When any of you eat, then let him eat with his right hand and let him drink with his right hand, because Satan eats with his left hand and drinks with his left hand.” A rule of thumb that can be derived from this hadith is that one should do exactly opposite of what Satan incites one to do.

On another occasion the Prophet (SAW) is reported to have said, “When a person enters his house and he remembers Allah’s name, as well as, when he eats, Satan says, ‘There is no way that we can inhabit and sleep here or eat at this house.’ However, when he enters the house without remembering Allah, Satan says, ‘we have a place to live tonight’; and if he does not remember the name of Allah at the time of eating, Satan says, ‘we have tonight a place to stay and food to eat.’”

Abu Bakr (RA), the Prophet’s closest companion, said to him once: “O Messenger of Allah! Teach me something to say, morning and evening.” The Prophet told him to say, “My Lord, You know all that lies beyond the reach of human perception and all that is witnessed. You are the Creator of the heavens and the earth. Everything is in Your hand. I bear witness that there is no deity other than You. I seek Your shelter against the evil that is in my soul and the evil of Satan and his tricks.” He then told him to say this prayer morning and evening, and also when he lies down to sleep.

The importance of making du’a and seeking refuge with Allah from Satan is so crucial that one is advised to do so even before starting to have spousal relationship with one’s wife. The du’a taught for this occasion is: Bismillah, Allahumma jannibna ash-Shaitan, wa Jannib ash-Shaitana ma razaqtana (O Allah! Save us from Satan and prevent Satan from that which you have granted us). The Prophet (SAW) informed us that if it is destined that they should have a child, then Satan will never be able to harm him.

Marriage is the institution of family and the building block of society. It is no wonder that nothing is more pleasing to Satan than to sow discord between married couples until such time that they separate from each other. We are informed through a hadith that Iblis places his throne upon water; he then sends detachments (for creating dissension); the nearer to him in rank are those who are most notorious in creating dissension. One
of them comes and says, “I did so and so.” And he says, “You have done nothing.” Then one amongst them comes and says, “I did not spare so and so until I sowed the seed of discord between a husband and a wife.” Satan goes near him and says, “You have done well.” He then embraces him.

It is reported that two persons were cursing each other in the presence of the Messenger of Allah (SAW). The face of one became red and his jugular veins swelled. The Prophet (SAW) said, “I know a word if he (or she) says it then the person with anger will cool down. The person with anger should say, “I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed Satan.” On another occasion, the Prophet (SAW) said, “Anger is from Shaitan and Shaitan was created from the fire and nothing can extinguish fire except water. Therefore if anyone of you gets angry, perform wudu.”

Having good company and frequenting the masjid for congregational prayers helps a person to keep himself or herself protected from Satan’s attacks. In a hadith, the Prophet (SAW) explaining the importance of holding on to the jama’ah (collectivity) and the consequences of not doing so said, “Satan is like the wolf that preys on sheep, taking the isolated and the stray among them; therefore, avoid factionalism and keep to the congregation and the collective and the masjid.”

Satan may appear in many garbs; as a financial adviser, a consultant, a family counselor, a teacher, a well-wisher, a sympathizer, and so on. One has to be wary and reject the intrusions of Satan, however, helpful and sincere he may appear to be. Indeed, it is sad but true that there are few individuals among the Muslim community, here in the USA, who get caught in Satan’s trap of adopting unethical and dishonest practices in professional and business dealings, such as in the area of healthcare, as has come to light recently. Such people begin to rationalize their malpractices on the ground that America is an aggressor. It has launched war against sovereign Muslim nations, and kills innocent Muslims with impunity. As such, their unlawful and unscrupulous conduct is justified. This argument is against all dictates of reason and conscience.

We have to be cautious that there are two distinct types of people about which the Qur’an says, “Some He has guided and some are doomed to stray: they have taken evil ones rather than God as their masters, thinking that they are rightly guided”(al-A’raf, 7:30). Using our best judgment, having faith and trust in Allah (SWT) and seeking His refuge from Satan and his agents, we have to befriend the guided ones and avoid the misguided and evil ones. “Allah is the Protector of those who have iman. He brings them out of darkness into the light. As for the disbelievers, their allies are false gods. They take them out of the light into darkness. It is they who are destined for the fire, therein to abide.” (al-Baqarah, 2:257).

Now that we know some of the deceptive ways in which Satan approaches man, let us be utmost cautious and not fall prey to his plots and machinations. Man is weak. “God wills to lighten for you (your burdens), for human has been created weak (liable to err)”(al-Nisa’. 4:28). However, with strong determination, sincere repentance, and constant remembrance of Allah (SWT), we can, with His help, ward off Satan and his evil designs.

There is a hadith qudsi that says, “O son of Adam, so long as you call upon Me and ask of Me, I shall forgive you for what you have done, and I shall not mind. O son of Adam, were your sins to reach the clouds of the sky and were you then to ask forgiveness of Me, I would forgive you. O son of Adam, were you to come to Me with sins nearly as great as the earth and were you then to face Me, ascribing no partner to Me, I would bring you forgiveness nearly as great as it.” …
While Satan invites us towards doom and destruction, Allah (SWT), the All-Compassionate, the All-Merciful, and the All-Forgiving calls us towards ultimate success and salvation. “So race for your Lord’s forgiveness and a Garden as wide as the heavens and earth, prepared for those who believe in God and His messengers: that is God’s bounty, which He bestows on whoever He pleases. God’s bounty is infinite” (al-Hadid, 57:21). Our only prudent option should be to run towards Allah’s bounties rather than ruin and destroy ourselves in both worlds by falling into the trap of our archenemy—Satan.

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