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Indeed, all Praise belongs to Allaah. We praise Him, seek His aid and His Forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allaah from the evils of our souls and the evils of our actions. Whomsoever Allaah guides there is none to misguide and whomsoever Allaah misguides there is none to lead astray. I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allaah , alone, without any partners and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allaah.

To proceed:

The best speech is the book of Allaah and the best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad. The worst of affairs are the newly invented matters and every newly invented matter is an innovation and every innovation is in the Hellfire.



Unfortunately, in the modern times, the muslims have become less conscious of the existence of Shaytaan due to their being occupied with the pursuits and pleasures of this world. He is no longer perceived as a threat or as an enemy. As a result of putting our guard down, Shaytaan has taken full advantage of our heedlessness and weakness to recruit helpers and armies from amongst us to aid him in his mischief and destruction. Allaah has already warned us:

Did I not enjoin upon you O Children of Aadam not to worship Shaytaan, for that he was to you an enemy avowed? ¹

The following is a is brief outline of Shaytaan and includes a description of the ways and means he uses to mislead mankind from the straight path of Allaah. Most of the section on the Ways and Means of Shaytaan in Misleading has been translated and emended from Abdullaah al-Khaatir's book: The Ways of Shaytaan in Attacking the Righteous. We hope that Allaah benefits us by it and that he makes this small effort for His sake alone and in our favour on the Day of Judgement.

Abu Iyaad
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March 1995



¹ Yaa Seen 36:60

PART 1 : THE NATURE OF SHAYTAAN

1. What is Shaytaan?

Is he real? Is he just a concept, an idea? Or he just a symbolic figure? This is an important point in Aqeedah (Belief). Some people actually deny the reality of the Jinn¹ and explain them away saying that they are merely the evil thoughts and suggestions one has or that they are the spirits of the celestial bodies.

Believing in the Jinn is part of the belief in the unseen and no Muslim's faith can be complete until he accepts and affirms the unseen matters regardless of whether it agrees with his understanding and intellect or not. The existence of the Jinn is proven by both revelation and daily experience. Furthermore, the reality of the Jinn and their true nature is explained by the Qur'aan and the Sunnah. Allaah the Exalted said confirming the existence of Jinn:

*I did not create the Jinn and Men except that they may worship me*²

He also said:

*Say it has been revealed to me that a company of the Jinn listened...*³

And also:

*They were some men amongst mankind who would seek refuge with some men amongst the Jinn and they increased them in misguidance*⁴

And the Messenger (sas) said: "There are three types of Jinn. One type of Jinn flies in through the sky, another type is in the form of snakes and dogs and the third type is actually located in one place but travels around".⁵

2. What is the Belief of the Ahl us-Sunnah regarding this matter?

Our belief is that Shaytaan is from the Jinn. Allaah the Exalted said:

¹ i.e. Zafrullaah Khan - a Qadiani - in his translation of the Qur'an says they are merely the elite, professional people of this world who are hidden from the rest of society.

² Dhaariyaat 51:56

³ Jinn 72:1

⁴ Jinn 72:6

⁵ Reported by Baihaqi and Tabarani

And when We said to the angels prostrate to Aadam, they all prostrated except Iblees. He was from among the Jinn and he rebelled from the command of his Lord¹

The Jinn were created before mankind from a smokeless fire:

And the Jinn, We created them aforesaid from the smokeless flame²

So the Jinn lived and existed before mankind and their responsibility is the same as ours: to worship Allaah alone without associating any partners to Him. They have free will and choice as we do and they are also responsible for their actions just like us. We do not know the exact nature of how and where they lived before the creation of Aadam, but if Allaah has not informed us with such details then they have no importance and knowing them would not benefit us in any way. Therefore it is not worth pursuing.

3. The Creation of Aadam.

After the Jinn, Allaah created Aadam. Aadam was the last of all of Allaah's creations. Ibn al-Qayyim in his book 'Al-Fawaa'id' gives ten reasons why Aadam was created last. We will mention a number of them:

One: So that the residing place of Aadam and his offspring is already prepared for them.

Two: That he (Aadam and his offspring) is the end for which everything besides him was created (the heavens, earth, sun, moon, stars, lands rivers and other such things.)

Three: That the most skilled of creators or manufacturers always completes his action with that which is the best and the most perfect (of His creation) just as he began it with its foundations and its pillars.

Four: That Allaah delayed the best of (revealed) books, messengers and communities till the end of time (i.e. Muhammad (sas), the Qur'aan and this Ummah) and made the Hereafter better than the present. Likewise He made the best of His creation last.

4. The Angels prostrate to Aadam and Iblees refuses.

Following the creation of Aadam, Allaah asked the Angels and the Jinn to prostrate to Aadam. The significance in this action was the obedience of the Angels and Jinn to their Maker and Creator. It does not imply worship of Aadam because the command to do so originated from Allaah, the Exalted. All of them prostrated except Iblees. This story is mentioned seven times in the Qur'aan and in different contexts. We will quote one of them from Surah al-A'raaf:

¹ Kahf 18:110

² Hijr 15:27

It is We who created you and gave you shape. Then We said to the angels: Prostrate to Adam, and they bowed down (all of them) except Iblees. He refused to be of those who bowed down. (Allaah) said: What prevented you from bowing down when I commanded you. He said: I am better than him. You created me from fire and him from clay. Allaah said: Get down from here! It is not for you to be arrogant here. Get out for you are amongst the small ones.

He said: Give me respite till the day they are raised up. Allaah said: You are among those who have respite. He said: Because you have made me go astray, I will lie in wait for them on Your Straight Path. Then I will attack them from before them and behind them, from their right and their left. And you will not find most of them thankful.¹

So Iblees refused out of arrogance, claiming he was better than Aadam. He also tried to put the blame on Allaah by saying 'because you have made me go astray'. Then, knowing he was doomed he asked for respite in order to mislead mankind. He also made it clear that he will attack the progeny of Aadam from every single avenue possible, regardless of its nature and significance. This is something to be cautious and aware of and which we shall expand upon in the next chapter inshaa'allaah.

5. Adam, Eve and Iblees get expelled from Paradise and are sent to the Earth.

Allaah placed Aadam and Eve in the Garden where Shaytaan came to them, swore to them he was their sincere adviser and deceived them into disobeying their Lord. Allaah then said to both parties:

He said: Get down all of you from this Garden, as enemies one to another. And if, as is certain, there comes to you guidance from Me, whoever follows My guidance will not go astray, nor will he fall into misery. But whoever turns away from My guidance for him is a narrowed down and constricted life and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Judgement.

He will say: O my Lord! Why have you raised me up blind while I had sight before. He will say: Thus did you, when Our signs came to you, disregard them and so likewise on this Day will you be disregarded.²

Then Allaah decreed that the livelihood of Aadam and his offspring would be upon the Earth for a determined period. Their enemies, Shaytaan and his troops, would also live with them in order to put them to trial and mislead them from the Straight Path of Allaah to all the other divergent paths, the paths of sin, innovation, disbelief, associating partners with Allaah, being ungrateful for His favours and bounties, dishonouring the parents, being unjust to other muslims, abandoning the religion and not learning it and other such matters.

6. What is the goal of Shaytaan?

Allaah has informed us that Shaytaan is an avowed enemy to mankind:

¹ A'raaf 7:11-18

² Taa Haa 20:123-126

Did I not enjoin upon you O Children of Adam not to worship Shaytaan, for that he was to you an enemy avowed? ¹

Out of His Mercy and care for his servants, Allaah the Exalted has informed them about Shaytaan, his goals, his ways and means in order to help them against him. He said regarding one of the greatest goals of Shaytaan:

He only invites his adherents so that they become inhabitants of the Blazing Fire ²

That they may become inhabitants of the Fire due to disbelief, associating partners with Allaah, disobedience to Allaah, committing sins and other such enticements. Allaah also informs how he whispers to mankind then turns on his heels fearing Allaah himself:

Like the example of Shaytaan when he says to man: Disbelieve (or be ungrateful)! So when he disbelieves (or is ungrateful) he (Shaytaan) says: I am free from you. Indeed I fear Allaah the Lord of all the Worlds.

3

We will now look at some of the many ways and means that Shaytaan uses for his goals and objectives with regard to those who are enemies to him, namely, us.

PART TWO : THE WAYS AND MEANS OF SHAYTAAN IN MISLEADING

There are many ways which Shaytaan has at his disposal. This is so because he also has friends and allies from among mankind. Sometimes these friends and allies are not conscious that they are in fact working for him (these include muslims). Shaytaan is a master planner and all the mischief in the world is a result of his misguidance, however, all of his handiwork is under Allaah's control and will and wisdom. In the sight of Allaah and to the believers, the plan of Shaytaan is very weak:

¹ Yaa Seen 36:60

² Faatir 35:6

³ Hashr 59:16

*So fight against the allies of Shaytaan, the plan of Shaytaan is indeed weak.*¹

1. Inciting Discord and Bad Suspicion

The Messenger (sas) said: **Indeed, Iblees has despaired that the righteous may worship him ... but he will strive to incite discord amongst them.** [Reported by Muslim]

Meaning that he will cause them to argue and hold grudges against one another, to spread trials amongst them and make them occupied with each other making them forget Allaah, their Lord. In another narration from Imaam Muslim, the Messenger (sas) said: **Shaytaan has despaired that the performers of prayer in the Arabian peninsula may worship him.**

Having evil thoughts and suspicions is also a habit which Shaytaan induces. The wife of the Prophet (sas) and Mother of the Believers, Safiyyah (ra) said: The Messenger (sas) was in seclusion in the mosque. I came to visit him at night time and conversed with him. Then I got up to leave and return to my house and he got up with me to accompany me. Two men from the Ansaar walked passed us - may Allaah be pleased with them - and when they saw the Prophet (sas) they hurried. The Messenger (sas) then said: **Come Here! She is Safiyyah bint Hayy.** The two men then said: How free is Allaah from all shortcomings O Messenger of Allaah. Then the Messenger (sas) said: **Indeed Shaytaan flows through the Son of Aadam like the blood flows (in his veins) and I feared that he might throw some evil into your hearts so that such and such might be said.** [Reported by Bukhaaree].

It is obligatory therefore, when you stand in a place and a bad opinion or suspicion is being formed about you that you explain to the one who is watching you or listening to your speech until no chance remains for any doubts or suspicions. Suspicion is one of the areas from which Shaytaan attacks. He makes you constantly observe people and listen to their words so that you misinterpret them and form a bad opinion accordingly.

Another way this happens is that he makes you suspicious of yourself in your prayer, or when performing wudhoo'. He suggests in your mind that perhaps you did not do such and such or recite such and such, why don't you do it again. So many people end up confused due to these evil and mischievous whisperings and find discomfort when performing these acts of worship.

2. Beautifying Innovations

A way in which Shaytaan beautifies innovations is by whispering to someone: The people in this time have left the Deen and their returning to it seems difficult. Why don't we do some acts of worship and add to them so that the people are attracted by them to the religion. He also comes to people and says: 'People are far away from the Deen, perhaps if we bring some hadeeths which will instill fear

¹ Nisaa 4:76

into them or increase their aspirations they will return to the Deen'. So as a result they invent hadeeth attributing them to the Messenger (sas). They then say: We do not lie against the Messenger, we lie for him!!

They impute lies against the Messenger and invent hadeeth to scare the people. So they describe Hellfire in a strange and unheard of way and likewise for Paradise, thinking they are doing good. Shaytaan has certainly deceived them. Sufyaan ath-Thawree (rh) said: *Shaytaan is more pleased with innovation than sin, because one can repent from sin whereas one cannot repent from innovation because he thinks it is something good.*

Innovation is from the handiwork of Shaytaan and occurs in both belief and action. It is more destructive than sin because the damage falls upon the religion itself and the unity of the muslims. The effects of sins do not harm the religion and fall upon people only. This is one of the most powerful of Shaytaan's tools and has indeed been used effectively by him in all the muslim lands, each of which possesses unique, different innovated acts of worship and a variety of conflicting ways of performing them.

You will also find that this is the way Shaytaan has used to instil enmity and hatred into the muslims hearts, one to another. He seduces some of them to abandon the Sunnah, from remaining firm and patient upon it and then make an innovation, or a new idea, or a way of thinking which was never known to the Companions of Messenger (sas) or to the Pious Predecessors of this Ummah. Then people rally around this new idea and form a group and begin to like and dislike, love and hate on its basis thereby tearing their hearts apart. This shows the necessity of adhering to the Sunnah in all matters and giving it the utmost importance.

Al Irbaad bin Sariyyah, one of the Companions said: The Messenger of Allah gave us a sermon by which our hearts were filled with fear and tears came to our eyes. We said: "O Messenger of Allah, it is as though this is a farewell sermon, so counsel us." He said: "I counsel you to fear Allah and to give absolute obedience even if a slave becomes your leader. Verily he among you who lives [long] will see great controversy, so you must keep to my sunnah and to the sunnah of the rightly-guided Khalifahs - cling to them stubbornly. Beware of newly invented matters, for every invented matter is an innovation and every innovation is a going astray, and every going astray is in Hell-fire."

So innovating and innovations are one of the most destructive things to this Ummah and it is necessary for every truthful and sincere muslim to root them out from himself, from his family and from his offspring, whether they are matters of belief, action or even ideas and methodologies which are in opposition to and contradict the the understanding of the Companions of the Messenger (sas), the Pious Predecessors.

3. Exaggerating One Matter over all others

This can occur on an individual level and a collective level.

The Individual

1. Some people commit many sins and acts of disobedience and think that because they perform the prayer - the fact that it is one of the pillars of the religion and is the first thing that the servant will be held to account for on the Day of Judgement - there is no harm in committing sins! He exaggerates the position of the prayer - and no doubt it is one of the greatest acts of faith - to such an extent that he thinks it will compensate his shortcomings in other acts of worship. This is a false and wrong type of reliance. The prayer is a part of the religion but it does not constitute the whole religion.

One should know that the prayer does in fact remove evil deeds and use that to purify himself from sins but this should not be a pretext for committing sins and feeling safe and at ease with the fact that prayer removes evil deeds. This is also a deception from Shaytaan.

2. Another person will say that the religion is nothing but dealing and interacting with people. That the most important thing is to behave well with the people, do not lie about them and do not deceive them. He will believe this to such an extent that he will not even pray, because, he says, the Messenger (sas) said: **The religion is but dealing with people**. This is true but where in this does one's worship of Allaah lie?

3. Another person will say that the most important thing is good intention. Keep your heart clean. Do not be envious or jealous and do not hate people. Such people abandon the acts of worship and the righteous deeds of which good intention is a necessary condition. Good intentions are never a replacement for the acts of worship which are supposed to be built upon them.

4. Another very common deception is that Muslims will compete in the memorisation and recitation of the Qur'aan. They perfect their Tajweed (correct manner of recitation) and make it beautiful to listen to and limit themselves to that thinking that this is enough as service to Allaah and therefore abandon other things. What is required is not reciters and memorisers but those who act.

The mistake in all of these situations is not that people are concerned about certain things or aspects but that they have exaggerated them over other things which are equally or even more important.

The Community

This matter also occurs to the Ummah on a collective level.

1. A group will say: the most important thing is that we should know all about the position and situation of the Muslims, and that of their enemies. The most important things are the political affairs. We no longer live in the time of the dervishes. Meaning by that, matters such as belief and prayer are not important and play no role in the well-being of the Ummah in the modern era.

You will recognise such people straight away. They will have learnt everything regarding the communists, the secularists, the freemasons, the socialists but when you ask him about a simple matter about Islam or the prayer he doesn't know his knee from his elbow! Another characteristic is that they will give little importance to the correct belief in Allaah, worshipping Him upon Tawheed and not associating any partners with Him. These things are what determine the well being of the Ummah and its security. And these things are the basis and foundation of the Islamic State. However, you will find that the people calling to these things pay very little attention to these matters, often brushing them aside and making great compromises with respect to them.

The political or economical way is not the way of reform. Nor is imitation of the disbelievers the way of reform. The way of reform is obedience and gratitude to Allaah¹ since ingratitude to Him is the cause of the removal of His help as is evident and clear from His Book:

¹ It was one of the greatest concerns of the Messenger (sallallaahu-aihi-wasallam) for his companions (radii-allaahu-anhum) and of the companions for their successors (rahimahu-llahu) and of the great scholars for their flock (the general people) and in fact of the Salaf (Pious Predecessors) of this Ummah for its people, that their Eemaan (Faith/Belief) was correct and firm, that they were in possession of and were acting upon that type of knowledge the acquisition of which is an obligation upon every single muslim, male and female; that they were practising those things which Allaah had obligated upon them and refrained from those things that Allaah had forbidden them, that they remained upon this path not deviating from it in terms of belief or action, while constantly striving to increase their Eemaan and correct actions, and as a result of all this, that they became protected from the Fire and increased their chance of entry into Paradise. Every directive, command, advice or suggestion always had this concern underlying it. There is no need to cite examples as they are vast, numerous and easily accessible for the one who is in need of them. And this is where the honour lies. Not in material success but in the sincere and correct worship of Allaah Azzawajall, in enslavement to Him alone and absolute obedience to his Messenger (sallallaahu-aihi-wasallam)

{And to Allaah belongs all Honour}[Munaafiqoon 63:8]

It was precisely on account of this that the Ummah was blessed with things such as material success, great advancement and authority in the land, for as long as Allaah willed, and not due to anything else. Allaah only gives increase to this Ummah on account of its being grateful to Allaah and its being grateful to Allaah is not achieved except by worshipping Him in the precise manner requested by Him in what He has sent down for us as Guidance.

If you are grateful I will give you increase[braheem 14:7]

Increase in sustenance, wealth, resources and other such things of benefit and blessing.

Furthermore this great blessing of success was not taken away except by the deviation of the muslims from the clear and straight path, in terms of belief and action, and thus the disbelievers were allowed, by Allaah's permission and design, to gain mastery in the land and to take from us our nobility, strength, resources and knowledge. It is not correct that our present condition is due to the weakness of the muslims and their lack of technology and resources. That is a symptom not a cause and the wise doctor's concern is to remove the cause.

The Messenger (sallallaahu-aihi-wasallam) said:

“When you deal in a transaction, take hold of the tails of cows content yourself with agriculture and abandon Jihaad; Allaah will cover you with humiliation and will not lift this humiliation, until you return to your Deen” [Saheeh-Related by Abu Daawood (n.3426) and Bayhaqee in his Sunan (5/316)]

He (sallallaahu-aihi-wasallam) also said:

And Allaah sets forth a parable: (Consider) a town safe and secure to which its means of subsistence come in abundance from every quarter. But it became ungrateful to Allaah's favours. Therefore Allaah made it to taste the utmost degree of hunger and fear because of what they used to do ¹

This is how we lose our safety and security from Allaah. Muslims become ungrateful to Allaah. They don't worship Him or they don't worship Him in the manner He has prescribed and requested but rather stick to their own ways and inventions. They abandon the Sunnah of the Messenger (sas) in their lives and homes.

A large number of the problems that exist today existed at the time of the Prophet (sas) - alcohol, prostitution, illegal forms of marriage and sexual relations, wars and fighting (between the tribes). However the Messenger (sas) did not tackle any of these problems first. He did not decide to unite the muslims first and make the whole of Arabia politically stable before calling them to 'Laa ilaaha illallaaha' (There is none deserving of worship except Allaah alone). Neither did he form a feminist movement to remove the oppression of women, nor did he abolish alcohol or interest and other such matters. Nor did he make Arabia economically strong first and then proclaim his message. This refutes those who say that we need to change the environment (from a structural point of view) first before anything else. We need to impose the Islamic system by force,

"...And never do the people break the covenant of Allaah and His Messenger except that he gives their enemies mastery and control over them so they take some of what they used to possess[Saheeh-Related by Ibn Maajah in his Sunan]

Humiliation is what we find ourselves in, from whatever aspect we look at; oppression, wealth, knowledge, technology, resources etc. And this will never be raised until we fulfil our covenant (that is to unify all worship and direct it to Allaah alone, to imitate the Messenger (sallallaahu'alaihi-wasallam)) and return to our straight and upright Deen, the religion of Ibraheem:

Say: Indeed My Lord (Rabb) has guided me to the Straight Path, the upright and true Deen, the religion of Ibraheem, the Haneef (firm and true in Allaah's worship and in His Obedience) and he was not of the Mushrikeen. Say: Verily, my prayer, my sacrifice, my life and my death are all for Allaah the Rabb of all the worlds. He has no partner (equal). With that I have been commanded and I am the first of those who submit
[An'aam 6:161-163]

This is what we need and this indeed should be our concern. In fact, that the people achieve such a position (of knowledge and action), as mentioned in the above verse, first, is of the highest priority as their need for success in the Hereafter is greater than their need for success in this world. Success in this life does not guarantee success in the next.

Thus any moves for reform, correction and betterment of this Ummah should be unrestrictedly tied to and utterly dependant upon this concern and this concern should be the overgarment and undergarment of all the arrangements and solutions that are proposed. This is what is correct, best, in the real interests of the people (i.e. entry into Paradise and safety from the Fire) and most noble.

¹ Nahl 16:112

disregarding the fact that Shirk still exists and is widespread in the Ummah and needs to be removed or that people have deviated from the correct beliefs and actions. When ones beliefs are correct and sound it makes ones faith firm and sound. This in turn allows a person to accept willingly and happily any command or law of Allaah.

If the Islamic system was imposed today their would be a big revolution. By whom? By the muslims themselves!! Because they do not want it. They do not love it and this is because their hearts are far from Allaah, veiled from Him. They do not know Him and do not know how to believe in Him. And this prevents them from developing the love of Him, the love of His Messenger (sas) and the love of His religion which He has chosen for us. They do not understand what is Tawheed and what is Shirk. They do not understand what is Sunnah and Bid'ah and certainly, this is true for most of the muslims today. Because of this they do not understand the rules and regulations, nor do they have an open heart for them. How excellent and true is what Aaishah (ra) said: "The first part of the Qur'aan to be revealed was a soorah giving a detailed account about Paradise and Hell. Then when the people entered into the fold of Islaam, came the revelation of what is halaal (lawful) and haraam (unlawful). Had the first revelation been: "Do not drink wine", they would have said: "We shall never give up wine". Had the first revelation been: "Do not commit adultery and fornication", they would have said: "We shall never give up adultery and fornication".¹

Changing the environment is a factor but is not the most important or fundamental one. The establishment of Tawheed in the hearts and removal of Shirk from the hearts is the most important factor. The presence of gratefulness to Allaah and the absence of its opposite is a factor. The presence of the correctness of ones actions and its agreement with the Sharee'ah and the absence of its opposite is a factor. The presence of loving and hating for the sake of Allaah alone and being loyal to the criterion of truth, the understanding, way and methodology of the Pious Predecessors and not ones group or party is a factor. We cannot achieve this except by acquiring the sound and authentic knowledge from the correct sources and then nurturing ourselves upon it. This is what in turn would make the desired and conducive change in the environment. This is why having the correct belief in Allaah is vital. Because the rest of ones actions and perceptions depend on this belief, are shaped and nurtured by it. This is why some of the Pious Predecessors used to say: *Whoever does not know his Lord does not know himself*. And this is one of the reasons why it is not possible to compromise with those who hold on to heretical notions and beliefs about Allaah and who then try to bring about change and reform through avenues other than the correct belief in Allaah, since they are the furthest away from that.

We must also remember that the Messenger (sas) was under the guidance and supervision of Allaah the Exalted and the first thing that the Messenger called to, and in fact all of the Messengers, was the sincere and correct worship of Allaah, with the correct belief in Him, upon the Messenger's Sunnah. The Messenger called to this for years and many battles were fought on

¹ Reported by Bukhaaree

account of this Tawheed. The Companions (ra) conquered peoples hearts with their Tawheed and beautiful manners **first**, then they conquered the lands with their Jihaad, and made Allaah's Deen predominant.

2. There are others whose logo is: The most important thing is unity. Has not Allaah said:

And hold onto the rope of Allaah, all of you, and do not separate¹

They make this matter the most important one, even if it includes making compromises in our belief. This is stupidity, ignorance, and a lack of understanding. The principle is correct, that we need to unite, but the means is from the handiwork of Shaytaan - that we forget our differences and come together. They forget the first part of the verse which is "*And hold onto the rope of Allaah, all of you*" meaning: hold on to the revelation, that is the Qur'aan and the Sunnah. And the Qur'an and the Sunnah are not held on to except in the manner of the Pious Predecessors. Amongst the Muslims are those who have problems with the very first pillar of Islaam, the correct belief in Allaah. Yet there are others who have place themselves outside the fold of Islaam on account of the false beliefs they have invented and stuck to - in spite of being corrected and warned. High and Exalted is Allaah from what such criminals and extremists have attributed to Him and have invented and innovated into his Deen. Then there are others who urinate upon the Sunnah of the Messenger, raising their intellect and the refuse of their understanding up and above it. Denying that which Allaah confirmed and revealed through the tongue of His Messenger and affirming that which Allaah denied through the tongue of His Messenger and making a mockery of the religion. Making their own invented conditions for accepting the words of Allaah and the words of the Messenger (sas) thus enabling them to impose their own thoughts, understandings, whims and desires.

Rather we should unite upon the fundamentals of the religion, which is our Aqeedah (belief), we should unite upon establishing Tawheed and eradicating Shirk, we should unite upon the Sunnah of the Messenger (sas) and the example of our Salaf (Pious Predecessors). We should love and hate on this basis, give and withhold on this basis, make friends and break them on this basis and choose our company on this basis. This is the true model for unity and is indeed the very way the Messenger (sas) united his followers.

3. There also others who are extremists. They are those who have turned to asceticism. Detaching themselves from this world and fleeing from its trials. This is no doubt a virtue from one aspect. But not when it entails the failure to fulfil ones responsibilities to others or causes people not to adhere to the ways and means which Allaah has decreed for his servants and by which they ought to seek help and sustenance.

¹ Aali Imraan 3:103

What is meant here is that such people stay in the mosques for long periods of time and recite the Qur'aan for hours on end thinking that this is reliance and is enough for ones sustenance amongst other things. This is not so. A man was brought to Umar's (ra) attention. He used to pray for long hours in the mosque and neglected his livelihood. Although the people praised him Umar said: "This is a foolish man."

Reliance is to use every method which is within ones capacity in order to achieve or acquire what is desired (and such things are the means and ways which Allaah has decreed for His servants which we have just mentioned - such as learning a skill or getting an education etc.). A similar answer is given to those who say: If Allaah has decreed our sustenance for us what is the point in supplicating then? It is said: Sit around and see if you get a child without marriage. Sit around and see if your hunger is removed without food. Sit around and see if you get employment without a qualification or skill! In other words Allaah has decreed certain rules by which this creation works and revolves around. If you don't eat your hunger will not be removed. If you don't work and make an effort, you won't see and enjoy the benefits.

It is likewise for supplication. Allaah has made du'a (supplication) one of the ways and means by which He bestows His sustenance to the creation. And abandoning it means that ones sustenance and well-being are jeopardised. How excellent is what Ibn Taymiyyah (rh) said. One day in the mosque a man asked him: O Abul-Abbaas, has not Allaah written for the servant his portion of happiness and sadness in the life of this world? Ibn Taymiyyah said: Of course! He said: Then what is the value of supplication? And why do we ask Allaah and call to Him? Ibn Taymiyyah said: Do you not believe, my brother, that whether you receive my answer to this question of yours or not has already been decreed? He said: Of course our shaikh, in truth! Ibn Taymiyyah replied: Then why did you ask me if the matter has already been decided?!¹

This shows that sticking to the ways and means designated in the Sharee'ah is what constitutes true reliance upon Allaah and the way to bring about and actualise what is desired.

Therefore, it is very important to weigh out all these matters because one of the ways Shaytaan attacks people is to exaggerate one matter to the detriment of other equally if not more important matters.

4. Procrastination and Saying 'Soon'

Another one of Shaytaan's favourite tricks is to make people think and say: I will do such and such soon, in a little while, maybe tomorrow, no next week and so on. He makes them delay their actions making them feel secure and happy with the present. Some people have named this 'The Great Obstacle'.

¹ Fee Wajhit-Toofaan of Muhammad Abdul Hameed Ahmad p.20

A person will place in front of himself a matter such as studying. Then he will say: When I have finished studying, then I will repent, learn my religion and practise it. When he finishes his studies he says: When I receive that job I will repent. He does not. Then he says: When I have performed Hajj, when I am married and so on.

He is constantly putting obstacles in front of himself, delaying things and delighting in his current situation of ease and happiness. He will continue in this way until he dies and yet his real, true life will not even have begun (i.e. that of faith and righteous actions)

What Shaytaan really intends is to completely prevent you from a matter or at least to delay you from it. For those who are righteous this a great danger. Shaytaan will come and whisper to someone: You are not worthy of studying the Islamic knowledge or calling people to the religion. Wait a while until you have studied. Yet we have been commanded to teach the meaning of even one verse of the Qur'aan if that is all we know.

Ibn al-Qayyim (rh) said: *And how many people of firm intent and resolution are there, whom Shaytaan has delayed by causing them to say 'Soon'. And how many strivers has he stopped. Maybe a Faqeeh (scholar of fiqh) intends to return to his studies and Shaytaan will say to him: Relax for an hour. Shaytaan will not stop in making laziness and inactivity beautiful and appealing to a person so that he keeps delaying his actions. He will say to the servant who worships at night: Time does not stop, the night is long. Until the morning arrives and he has not even prayed.*

How excellent is what the poet said:

*You sleep for time - woe be to you the while you snore
Until when you die then will you have truly awoken*

And take a lesson from what Abu Abdur-Rahmaan al-Maghaazilee reports. He said: There was a wise woman in Makkah who was much given to worship and her brothers came to her. She wept for a long time and then said: *"My brothers, (you are) the pleasure of my eye, depict the Day of Judgement in your heart's eyes and relate to yourselves the actions you have sent forth. Whatever you think will be accepted on that day, aspire and hope in your Master for its acceptance and perfect blessings in it and whatever you fear will be rejected on that day then attend to its correction today. Do not be unmindful of your own souls."*¹

5. False perfection

Shaytaan will come to a person and make him think that he is perfect. He will say to him: You are better than others. You pray but most others do not. You fast and most others do not. He will make you look at others who are less than you in good actions. However, this is only to prevent you from doing good deeds.

¹ Ibn al-Jawzee in Sifat us-Safwah (2/278-279)

Shaytaan will also say: Your actions will intercede for you - then he engages you in permissible things which bring no harm or benefit - only to stop you from good actions again. He will say: Rest for a while, you are very busy, you are better than others.

What is desirable, however is the opposite of this. Look at so and so who fasts on Mondays and Thursdays and you do not, look at so and so who prayers superogetary prayer and you do not, look at so and so who has acquired an occupation for himself and you have not. Look at so and so who has learnt how to recite the Qur'an and you have not. Look at so and so who fulfils the needs of his family and you do not.

6. Not Having the Correct Perception of Oneself

Shaytaan has two ways for corrupting peoples perceptions of themselves:

1. A perception of amazement and deception. Shaytaan will make someone look at himself with amazement (i.e. be pleased with himself) so that he is inflicted with arrogance and deception. He then begins to look down upon others and hold them in contempt. He refuses to accept the Truth out of arrogance and will not accept that he is wrong when he makes a mistake. He refuses to attend the circles and meetings in order to learn from others.

Some people who attend circles where they recite the Qur'aan make mistakes. Then they do not come to the circle again until they have corrected their mistakes, while fearing that their position and reputation in the sight of other people would be damaged. If such a person had only reflected for a short while he would have realised that so and so, who is a skilled reciter, was once in the same position as him, then he learnt by attending the circles and having his mistakes corrected. Mujaahid said: *There are two people who will never learn: A mustakbir (someone who is arrogant) and a mustahiyiy (someone who is shy.)*¹

2. A perception of lowliness coupled with modesty. Shaytaan will say to you: You must be modest, whoever is modest and humble Allaah will raise him, you are not the right person for this matter. Yet this person is an outstanding one to the people, of much benefit. Shaytaan's goal is to distance you from what you can achieve due to your powers and capabilities. Every one of us has powers and capabilities granted to him and if they are not used we will be held to account for them. Such a person who responds to Shaytaan's call is not being modest but rather he is fleeing from his responsibility.

Shaytaan will say: Leave this magazine for someone who is better than you. Calling to Allaah is a noble matter, leave it for the skilled few. This is how Shaytaan comes and makes people err.

¹ Reported by Bukhaaree

He also makes a person hold himself in contempt and lowliness until this person never thinks for himself. The person begins to say: Who am I compared to this person? Who am I compared to a scholar. So he does not think except with the intellect of his scholar and he does not spread or divulge except what his shaikh says.

The principle is that we should return to the Sharee'ah. It is possible that this man in front of you can make mistakes. So his words are evaluated with the words of Allaah and His Messenger (sas). Whatever agrees with them is accepted and whatever does not, we refuse it.

7. Doubt

Doubt is another dangerous point of entry for Shaytaan upon the unmindful servant and he does this in many ways:

1. Shaytaan will cause a person to doubt the path and way of a man who is on the correct and straight path with the right belief and good actions - someone who holds the right belief in Allaah, sticks to the commands of Allaah and avoids His prohibitions - especially when he is amongst many bad people, people who are not strict and have deviated from the Sunnah and the way of the Companions (ra). Shaytaan will whisper to him saying: Are all of these people in the Fire? And you are in Paradise?

The truth is that greatness in number should not be compared with small numbers. The Truth is what agrees with the words of Allaah and His Messenger (sas). Abdullaah bin Mas'ood said: *The Jamaa'ah is whatever agrees with the Truth, even if you are alone.* The point of reference is not the majority of people but what agrees with the truth even if you are one person, alone. Allaah the Exalted said to the Messenger:

And most of mankind, even though you ardently desire it are not believers [1]

He also said:

Say: the good and the bad are not equal even though the abundance of the bad may please you, so be careful of (your duty to) Allaah O men of understanding that you may be successful[2]

The Taabi'ee, Na'eem bin Hamaad said: *The Jamaa'ah is what agrees with Allaah's Obedience - so when the Jamaa'ah is corrupted then it is upon you to stick to that what the Jamaa'ah was upon before it was corrupted and if you are alone then you are the Jamaa'ah.* And Ishaq bin Raahawaayah (d. 238), teacher of Imaam Bukhaaree said: *If you were to ask the ignorant people about the Great Majority they would say: The majority of people. They do not know that al-Jamaa'ah is the Scholar who clings to the*

¹ Yoosuf 12:103

² Maa'idah 5:100

*narrations from the Prophet (sallallaahu-alaihi-wasallam) and his way. So whoever is with him (the scholar) and follows him, then he is al-Jamaa'ah.*¹

2. Another point of entry for Shaytaan is a persons intention. He will whisper to someone: You are showing off, you possess riyaa (showing off), you are a hypocrite. You are only doing this for the sake of the people. He does this to make you abandon the action.

An example of this might be when a man decides to give charity and another man sees him. This person then says to himself: If so and so sees me he will think that I am showing off so it is better that I don't give this charity.

However, we have been commanded to purify our intentions from showing off, not to abandon the action. This is the desire of Shaytaan. Ibraheem bin Adham (one of the Taabi'een) said: *I have seen thirty Companions of the Messenger (sas) all of them fearing for themselves that they are doing actions without sincerity.*

Returning to ones soul and judging it is required, but the purpose of this is not to make you abandon actions but to purify your intentions and increase your good actions. Al-Haarith bin Qais said: *When Shaytaan comes to you while you are praying and he says to you: You are showing off, then increase the length of your prostration.*

8. Fear

Shaytaan has two ways for making the people fearful:

1. He makes them fear his allies. Shaytaan will make a person fear his army, his allies and the people of disobedience and rebellion. He will say: Be cautious of them! They have strength which you do not know about.

Allaah the Exalted says:

*Indeed it is only Shaytaan that makes you fear his votaries, but do not fear them and fear Me (alone) if you are really believers*²

He also makes people scared of the disbelievers with regard to the religion. He makes them feel inferior and whispers to him: These people will mock your religion, the religion which orders the cutting of hands and makes women cover from head to toe. The religion which makes people starve for a month. So the person conceals the fact that he is a muslim and has no concern for learning it and acting upon it due to saying of these disbelievers - who are but fuel for Hellfire. Listen to the response of Salmaan al-Farsee (ra) to the pagan when he said to him, out of jest: This Messenger of yours, he teaches you so much until he teaches you toilet manners. So Salmaan (ra)

¹ Reported by Abu Nu'aym in Hilyatu'l-Awliyaa

² Aali Imraan 3:175

said: *Of course! And he has taught us not to use the right hand or to face the Qiblah or to use less than three stones or to use bones (for cleansing oneself)!*

And yet this was a reply to what? Relieving oneself - yet we nowadays have fear complexes about the hijab, fasting, growing the beard and other such things. This is all from the handiwork of Shaytaan and is a sign of the weakness present in the muslims hearts. We pray to Allaah that He strengthens our hearts and establishes them upon His religion.

2. Fear of Poverty. Allaah the Exalted says:

*Shaytaan promises you poverty and bids you to shameful conduct*¹

Shaytaan says: If you leave this job where will you find another one? You will become very poor. So a person fears poverty and indulges in what is unlawful such as selling alcohol.

We hear the one who takes interest saying: How shall I live? People have become rich and I am poor! Indeed Shaytaan has spoken through him.

As for the true believer then the following words are constantly in front of him - and are there words which are more beautiful and reassuring than these:

*And whoever fears Allaah, He will make for him an easy way out and provide for him sustenance from sources he could never imagine. Whoever places his reliance upon Allaah, Allaah will suffice Him. Indeed Allaah is one who can achieve His purpose and He has appointed a measure for everything.*²

Shaytaan makes you resort to unlawful means and ways with the excuse of poverty and as a result Muslims make many many compromises in their religion.



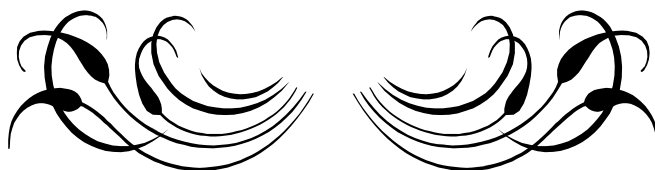
So these are some of the ways by which Shaytaan fools, deceives and misleads mankind, in order to lead them to the Blazing Fire. It is pertinent to end this section with the following verse which describes the scene on the Day of Judgement after the people of the Fire have been entered into it, and we seek refuge in Allah from it:

And Shaytan will say when the matter is decided: It was Allaah who gave you a promise of Truth. I too promised but I failed in my promise to you. I had no authority over you except to call you, but you listened to me: So reproach me not but reproach your own souls. I cannot listen to your cries, nor can

¹ Baqarah 2:267

² Talaq 65:2-3

you listen to mine. I reject your former act of associating me with Allaah. For the wrong-doers there must be a grievous penalty. ¹



PART THREE : MEANS OF PROTECTION

There are many ways by which the muslim can protect himself from Shaytaan. Amongst them are:

1. Knowledge

Seeking knowledge is an obligation upon every male and muslim female. The most important type of knowledge is the knowledge of Allaah and His Tawheed. This is what a muslim learns

¹ Ibraheem 14:22

first before anything else. The greater this knowledge is, the more fear a person has of Allaah and the less likely he is to disobey Allaah and follow Shaytaan. Allaah said:

Know, that there is none worthy of worship except Allaah (alone)¹

And He also said:

Only those amongst Allaah's servants who have knowledge fear Him²

And the Messenger of Allaah (sas) said: "I am the most-knowledgeable of Allaah amongst you and I fear Him the most."³ So he (sas) made a direct link between knowledge of Allaah and the fear of Allaah.

The next type of knowledge which a muslim acquires is the knowledge of the acts of worship which Allaah has made obligatory upon him and what Allaah has asked him to refrain from. So he constantly acquires and acts upon this knowledge making his conduct thereby, wholesome and sound, beyond reproach. He also learns the manner in which worship is to be performed saving himself as a result of that, from falling into innovations and having his actions rejected.

Knowledge is a strong tool and it scares Shaytaan more than an ardent worshipper. A poet said:

And it (knowledge) is a mighty sword which does not swerve

You strike with it the vital parts of the one who attacks you

Knowledge is the building block of Eemaan (Faith) and Eemaan is a big barrier in the face of all of Shaytaan's callings and whisperings. This is the first thing a muslim should attend to in order to protect himself.

Among the best of books to start with is 'Fundamentals of Tawheed' by Abu Ameenah Bilal Phillips and 'Tawheed versus Shirk' by Shaikh Muhammad al-Jibaaly.

2. Sincerity

Shaytaan has no mastery over those who are sincere and he himself has said:

By Your (Allaah's) Power I will mislead them - all of them. Except your servants amongst them who are sincere and purified⁴

¹ Muhammad 47:19

² Faatir 35:28

³ Reported by Bukhaaree

⁴ Saad 38:82-83

So striving to make all of ones efforts sincere and for the sake of Allaah alone also removes a person from susceptibility to Shaytaan and his plans. Sincerity is also one of two pillars without which no action is acceptable to Allaah. And sincerity is: The sanctification of your speech and action from every blemish of the soul's desire. For example, desiring your beautification in the hearts of people, desiring their praise so that they say 'a scholar', 'what a brave man' or 'a doer of good', running away from the criticism of the people (i.e. abandoning certain actions because people may criticise or become angry), seeking people's magnification of yourself, their aid and assistance, the fulfilment of your needs or desiring other peoples wealth and possessions and other such things.

Among the best of books on sincerity and its reality is 'Kitaabul-Ikhlaas' (The Book of Sincerity) by Hussain al-Awaa'ishah, available in the English language.

3. Remembrance

The remembrance of Allaah puts one into the protection of Allaah and safeguards a person from Shaytaans whisperings. Allaah has commanded:

O you who believe! Bring Allaah to mind often with abundant remembrance¹

Many remembrances have been reported from the Messenger (sas) which he used to say in all moments and situations and it is necessary for a muslim to closely imitate the way of the Messenger (sas). Among the most useful of books on supplications is 'Authentic Supplications of the Prophet' by Waleed al-Essa available in the English language.

4. Seeking Refuge in Allaah

When someone finds that Shaytaan whispers evil suggestions to him he should immediately seek refuge in Allaah the Exalted by saying 'A'oodho billaahi min as-Shaytaanir-Rajeem' - I seek refuge in Allaah from Shaytaan the Rejected. Allaah the Exalted said:

And if a false imputation from the Shaytaan inflicts you, seek refuge in Allaah. Surely He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing²

5. Reciting the prescribed portions of the Qur'aan

Reciting the following portions of the Qur'aan with knowledge of their meaning and firm conviction protect a person from the Shaytaan and have been reported authentically from the Messenger (sas)

- Aayatul Kursi (The Verse of the Throne) Surah Baqarah 2:255
- The last two verses of Surah Baqarah (2:285-286)
- Reciting Surah Baqarah prevents the Shaytaan from entering the house.

¹ Ahzaab 33:41

² A'raaf 7:200

- The Mu'adhhdhatain - the last two surahs of the Qur'aan. (113-114)

Pronouncing the Aadhaan is also repels Shaytaan and his handiwork. It makes him stick his fingers into his ears and flee on his heels.

6. Keeping good company

It is vital that the correct company is kept as Shaytaan will not fail to mislead you on account of the company you keep. The Messenger (sas) said: "The example of the good and bad company is that of a musk-seller and an iron-monger. Even if you do not buy from the musk-seller the fragrance will remain with you and even if your clothers do not get burnt by being in close proximity to the iron-monger the bad smell will remain with you."¹ The Messenger (sas) also said: "Do not be a companion except to a believer".²

And the poet spoke the truth when he said:

*Choose among the people, one who will guide you
Indeed, by a friend does one guide himself
And accompanying the evil ones is blindness and a disease
It increases the sick heart in sickness
So if you are a follower of the Sunnah
Then avoid the evil companionship*

So be zealous of keeping good company and remaining only with good muslims, those who fear Allaah much and strive to worship Him. If you do so, you will never be able to count the good you will acquire, and with Allaah lies all success.



So these are some of the means of protection from Shaytaan the Accursed, the one who caused our Parents to be expelled from Paradise and who has promised to mislead all of us by his treachery and deception. May Allaah protect us from him and his troops by making us of those who are sincere, remember Him often and turn to Him in repentance. Aameen.

All Praise is due to Allaah alone and Peace and Blessings upon the Messenger after whom there is no prophet

¹ Reported by Bukhaaree

² Reported by Abu Daawood



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