

THE DWELLING PLACES OF THE JINN

The jinns too have their homes and dwelling places. They dwell in the desolate places, the wilderness, the ruins and the dirty and unclean places. They also live in the homes of humans by changing their forms. There is an episode relating to the Battle of the Trench [Ghazwah al-Khandaq].

A newly, married, companion of the Prophet (*sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) sought his permission at noontime to go home. He granted him the permission but advised him to take his weapons with him as a safeguard against any treacherous action from the side of Bani Quraidha. On reaching home, he saw his wife, standing on the door. On entering the house he saw a big serpent lying on his bed. He struck him with his spear. But as soon as, he tried to come out of the room the serpent instantly enveloped him and it became unclear, who died first, either the serpent or the companion. When, the Prophet (*sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) was informed of this, he said some jinns, who have become Muslim also reside in Madinah. If you happen to encounter any such thing, give them three days to leave. If they don't depart by, then kill them as they are devils (Muslim).

The Diet of the Jinn

Once the Companions of the Prophet asked him about bones and dung. He said these are the items of the diet of the jinn (Al-Bukhari and Muslim). Likewise, the Prophet (*sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) instructed his companions:

«فَلَا تَسْتَنْجُوا بِهِمَا فَإِنَّهُمَا طَعَامُ إِخْوَانِكُمْ» (مسلم ، أبو داود ، أحمد)

(Translation of meaning) Do not use them for toilet [*Istinjaa*] because they are the food of your jinn brothers (Muslim, Abu Dawood, Ahmad). In the same way, if any food is taken without reciting the name of Allah first [*Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Rahim*] the devils share that food with them. Teaching the manners of eating Allah's Messenger (*sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said:

«إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَحْضُرُ أَحَدَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مِنْ شَأْنِهِ، حَتَّى يَحْضُرَهُ عِنْدَ طَعَامِهِ، فَإِذَا سَقَطَتْ مِنْ أَحَدِكُمْ اللَّفْظَةُ، فَلْيُمِطْ مَا كَانَ بِهَا مِنْ أَدَى، ثُمَّ لْيَأْكُلْهَا، وَلَا يَدْعُهَا لِلشَّيْطَانِ، فَإِذَا فَرَغَ فَلْيَلْعَقْ أَصَابِعَهُ، فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَنْدِرِي فِي أَيِّ طَعَامِهِ تَكُونُ الْبَرَكَةُ» (مسلم)

(Translation of meaning) The devil comes along to you even when you are eating. Therefore, if any morsel of yours falls to the ground consume it after cleaning and don't leave it for the devil. And when you finish your meal lick

your fingers clean because you don't know which part of the food contains the boon [*Barakah*] (Muslim). It is incumbent on every Muslim to observe the Islamic manners of eating, be wary of the devil, recite *bismillah* before eating and take food with his right hand, avoid taking food with his left hand lest the devil share his food. Allah's Messenger (*sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) advised that:

(Translation of meaning) You should never eat or drink with your left hand because it is the manner of the devil to eat and drink with his left hand (Muslim).

Like the human beings the jinns are also divided into believers and non-believers. Both have the same destiny. Both creatures are accountable before Allah the Almighty. Belief in Allah and obedience to Him has been made obligatory for both and both will be accountable on that basis. Allah says in the Quran:

﴿وَلَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ﴾ الأعراف: ١٧٩

(Translation of meaning) “Already have We urged unto hell many of the jinn and humankind” (*Al-A'raf*: 179).

In another place He said:

﴿وَلَكِن حَقَّ الْقَوْلُ مِنِّي لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ﴾ السجدة: ١٣

(Translation of meaning) “but the word from Me concerning evil-doers took effect: that I will fill hell with the jinn and mankind together” (*As-Sajdah*: 13).

It is also a fact that non-believer jinns create temptations for human believers, beautify the acts of sin before them and create doubts in their minds about the existence of Allah. Allah's Messenger (*sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said:

«يَأْتِي الشَّيْطَانُ أَحَدَكُمْ فَيَقُولُ: مَنْ خَلَقَ كَذَا، مَنْ خَلَقَ كَذَا، حَتَّى يَقُولَ: مَنْ خَلَقَ رَبَّكَ؟ فَإِذَا بَلَغَهُ فَلْيَسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ وَلْيُنْتَهَ» (متفق عليه)

(Translation of meaning) The devil approaches you and puts a question who created you, and who created him and then he plants a question in the mind that who created Allah? When the matter reaches that point, the Prophet (*sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) advised, one should seek the refuge of Allah from the devil and desist from such thoughts (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

A Muslim also believes that it is Allah who protects him from all the evil-doings of the jinn and mankind. A believer, therefore, should strictly abide by the commandments of Allah because those who keep away from the path of Allah become an easy target of their evil-doings. Hadrat Abi Ibn Ka'b (RadhiAllahu Anhu) reported that once I sitting in the company of Allah's Messenger (sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam) when an A'rabi [villager] came to him and said his brother was suffering from some affliction. The Prophet (sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam) asked what affliction? He said "he's haunted by some spirit". Allah's Messenger (sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam) asked him to sit in front of him then recited Surah Fatiha and then blew over him. The person became well as if nothing had happened to him (Ahmad, Ha'kim). A similar story is narrated from Hadrat Ya'la Bin Murrah (RadhiAllahu Anhu) who said that:

We were leaving on a journey with Allah's Messenger (sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam) when a woman came with an infant. She said the infant was suffering from fits many time in the day. He took the child in his own hands, opened his mouth and blew thrice in it and recited:

« بِسْمِ اللَّهِ أَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ أَخْسَأُ عَدُوَّ اللَّهِ »

“In the name of Allah, I am a slave of Allah, Move away O enemy of Allah”. Then he gave back the child to the mother and told her to meet him on the same place when he comes back from the journey and report his condition. So she came back with three goats. The Prophet (sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam) asked her about the condition of the child. She said by the entity Who Has sent you with the right word the child is well till now. She presented him with the three goats as gift. The Prophet (sallAllahu 'alayhi wa sallam) accepted one and returned the rest to her (Ahmad). Allah has Himself mentioned the trouble-making of the devil in these words:

﴿الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا لَا يَقُومُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ الَّذِي يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ مِنَ الْمَسِّ﴾ البقرة: ٢٧٥

(Translation of meaning) “Those who swallow usury cannot rise up save as he ariseth whom the devil hah prostrated by [his] touch. (Al-Baqarah: 275).

A believer's way of life in this material world should be like a warrior who should be aware that all the time he is confronting the Devil and an army of jinns and human beings commanded by him, who are busy all the time in

inciting disobedience to Allah and spreading evil. The believer defends himself against all their strikes and takes precautions against all their manoeuvres. Allah proclaims:

﴿إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَاتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا ۚ فَاطِر: ٦﴾

(Translation of meaning) “Verily, the Devil is your enemy, so take him as an enemy” (Fa’tir: 6). In another place He proclaimed:

﴿أَلَمْ أَعْهَدْ إِلَيْكُمْ يٰبَنِي آدَمَ أَنْ لَا تَعْبُدُوا الشَّيْطَانَ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ۚ يٰسِينَ: ٦٠﴾

(Translation of meaning) “O children of Adam did not I bound you that you will not worship the Devil. Verily, he is your open enemy” (Yasin: 60).

Anybody who recognizes his real enemy will be cautious against him and keep his guard against his machinations. It is the devil who persuaded the past communities to take co-partners of Allah, it is he who incited the people to disobey the messengers of Allah, it is he who had vowed to mislead the progeny of Adam from the right path, who is cited in the Quran in these words:

﴿قَالَ فَبِعِزَّتِكَ لَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ۝٨٢ إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمُ الْمُخْلَصِينَ ۝٨٣﴾

(Translation of meaning) “He said: Then, by Thy might, I surely will beguile them every one, save Thy single-minded slaves among them” (Sad: 82-83).

How did Iblis beguile the former nations has been described in the Quran in these words:

﴿لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ فَهُمْ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ ۝٢٤﴾

(Translation of meaning) “Satan made their works fair-looking unto them and thus he deflected them from the [right] path so they will not be rightly guided” (An-Naml : 24).

Satan always stalks the man and tries to deflect him away from the obedience of Allah. Whenever a slave of Allah tries to keep away from evil deeds he tries to bring him near to them. His purpose is to keep the man away from the worship of Allah and His obedience. That is why even during the performance of *salat*, or supplications, or recitations of the holy Quran he tries to infuse doubts in his heart. Every believer must keep his guard against him. Allah says in the Quran:

﴿وَمَا يَنْزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ نَزْعٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ﴾ ^ط **فصلت: ٣٦**

(Translation of meaning) “And if a whisper from the Devil reach thee [O Muhammad] then seek refuge in Allah. Lo! He is the Hearer, the Knower” (Fussilat: 36).

Allah's Messenger (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) said:

« إِذَا نُودِيَ بِالصَّلَاةِ أَذْبَرَ الشَّيْطَانُ وَلَهُ ضُرَاطٌ، فَإِذَا قُضِيَ أَقْبَلَ، فَإِذَا تَوَبَّ بِهَا أَذْبَرَ، فَإِذَا قُضِيَ أَقْبَلَ، حَتَّى يَخْطُرَ بَيْنَ الْإِنْسَانِ وَقَلْبِهِ، فَيَقُولُ: أَذْكَرُ كَذَا وَكَذَا، حَتَّى لَا يَدْرِي أَثَلَاثًا صَلَّى أَمْ أَرْبَعًا، فَإِذَا لَمْ يَدْرِ ثَلَاثًا صَلَّى أَوْ أَرْبَعًا، سَجَدَ سَجْدَتَيِ السَّهْوِ » (متفق عليه)

(Translation of meaning) When *Adzan* is called Satan flees out of exasperation and comes back when it is over. He retreats again when *Iqamat* is recited and comes back when it is over. He begins inspiring doubts in the heart of the worshipper and makes him attend to other worldly matters so the worshipper forgets whether he completed three cycles or four cycles of his salat. In all such cases the worshipper should perform two *sajdah-i-sahw* [prostration twice] for forgetfulness] (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

The first bid of Satan is to make a believer involved in acts of ascribing part partners of Allah [the offence of *shirk*], which is in the eyes of God the greatest crime committed by a man. When he fails in this he tries to make the man commit major sins and involve in innovations. When he fails in this he persuades the man to commit minor sins. His last bid is to get the man do something evil and does not admit defeat in this struggle at any time. Allah says in the Quran:

﴿الشَّيْطَانُ يَعِدُكُمُ الْفَقْرَ وَيَأْمُرُكُم بِالْفَحْشَاءِ﴾ ^ط **البقرة: ٢٦٨**

(Translation of meaning) “Satan promiseth you destitution and enjoineth on you lewdness [obscenity]. But Allah promiseth you forgiveness from Himself with bounty. Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing” (Al-Baqarah: 268).

It is Satan who is responsible for spreading conflicts and dissensions, for creating ruptures between the kinsfolk and infuses envy, hatred and ill-will among them. Allah proclaims in the Quran:

﴿إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ فَهَلْ

أَنْتُمْ مُنْهَوْنَ﴾ ^ط **المائدة: ٩١**

(Translation of meaning) “ *Satan seeketh only to cast among you enmity and hatred by means of strong drink and games of chance, and to turn you from remembrance of Allah and from [His] warship. Will ye then desist [from these]* ”(Al-Maedah: 91)

According to a Hadith:

Iblis spreads his throne on the surface of water and from there despatches the groups of his army to all sides. The nearest to him and his most favourite is one who is most wicked and greatest mischief-maker. At the end of their work they come to report about their performance to Iblis who keeps on commenting that you people did nothing significant. Then one of his agents comes to him to tell that he pursued a couple consistently till he succeeded in getting them separated from each other. On hearing this report Iblis becomes overly pleased and gives him a tap on the back (Muslim).

The sole function assigned to Satan is to mislead the followers of Allah *Ta'ala*. The sole safeguard against his mischief is seeking refuge in Allah *Ta'ala*. One should not be negligent in remembering Allah even while he is coming back to his home, because if he does not take the name of Allah Satan enters his home along with him. Allah's Messenger (*sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said that:

« إِذَا دَخَلَ الرَّجُلُ بَيْتَهُ، فَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ عِنْدَ دُخُولِهِ وَعِنْدَ طَعَامِهِ، قَالَ الشَّيْطَانُ: لَا مَبِيتَ لَكُمْ، وَلَا عَشَاءَ، وَإِذَا دَخَلَ، فَلَمْ يَذْكُرِ اللَّهَ عِنْدَ دُخُولِهِ، قَالَ الشَّيْطَانُ: أَذْرَكْتُمُ الْمَبِيتَ، وَإِذَا لَمْ يَذْكُرِ اللَّهَ عِنْدَ طَعَامِهِ، قَالَ: أَذْرَكْتُمُ الْمَبِيتَ وَالْعَشَاءَ » (مسلم).

(Translation of meaning) When one of you enters his home remembering Allah and when he recites *bismillah* before taking his meal Satan says I missed tonight's supper as well as lodging. (Muslim)

However, if on the contrary one enters his home without remembering Allah and takes food without reciting His name Satan says tonight both the supper and lodging have been arranged for me.

Satan has been an enemy of Allah's prophets and messengers, too. Allah proclaimed in the Quran:

﴿ وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا شَيْطَانِ الْإِنْسِ وَالْجِنِّ يُوحِي بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ زُخْرُفَ الْقَوْلِ غُرُورًا وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ مَا فَعَلُوهُ فَذَرْهُمْ وَمَا يَفْتَرُونَ ۝۱۱۲﴾ الأنعام: ۱۱۲

(Translation of meaning) [*“Thus have We appointed unto every Prophet an adversary—devils of humankind and jinn who inspire in one another plausible discourse through guile. If they Lord willed, they would not do so; so leave them alone with their devising” (Al-An’am: 112).*

Once Hadrat Ayesha (RadhiAllahu Anha) inquired from Allah's Messenger (sallAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) whether Satan accompanies her, too? He replied:

Yes he accompanies you. Then she asked whether he accompanies other persons, too. He said yes he accompanies every person. Then in the end she asked whether he is also in your company. He replied yes but with Allah’s help I have conquered him and he has become obedient to me (Muslim).

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