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The Seventh Talk

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَائِفٌ مِّنَ الشَّيْطَانِ تَذَكَّرُوا فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْصِرُونَ

Verily those who guard (themselves against evil) when an evil thought from Satan afflicts them, they become mindful (of God and get awakened) then lo! They see (aright). (Sura al-A'raaf, 7:201)

Be Satan's antagonist

We have said that till a person doesn't maintain a distance from Satan, the true spirit of *Isti'adha* will not manifest in him. The person who indulges in sinning is Satan's subordinate. Allah (S.w.T.) says:

إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَاتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا

Surely the Shaitan is your enemy, so take him for an enemy.. (Sura al-Fatir, 35:6)

He is your enemy from the beginning. You too should reciprocate with enmity. Don't befriend him. But if you commit sins, it will be obedience to your enemy, Satan. And obedience is a component of friendship. Always beware that your treacherous enemy is keeping an eye on you. No man is safe from him for a single moment. If you think that you are safe from him, it is nothing but complaisance.

Does Satan sleep?

Someone asked a pious scholar whether it is mentioned in any traditions about Satan sleeping and taking rest. The learned scholar smiled and gave a very interesting reply, “If that accursed creature ever slept, I would have some respite!”

When you sleep, the accursed Satan is fully awake. He never sleeps. He always guards over men and looks for opportunities to bring harm them.

إِنَّهُ يَرَاكُمْ هُوَ وَقَبِيلُهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا تَرَوْنَهُمْ

He, and his retainers, watch over you from such a place that they can see you and you can't see them. (Sura al-A'raaf, 7:27)

You must remain fortified

What shall men do, then? When the enemy is so powerful and stealthy and can attack through hidden means, it becomes our duty to become fully armed and fortified against Satan. When the enemy is looking for your slightest fault or negligence, then you too must guard against him fully armed. The ammunition for men against Satan is *taqwa* or piety. Adopt piety to meet the onslaughts of Iblis!

Mu'min's arms: mustahabat (non mandatory) prayers and tark al-makruhat, or abstinence from undesirable acts

Offering non-obligatory prayers, to the best of one's physical capabilities, is very effective for warding off the enemy, Satan. Similarly, abstaining from doing or using things, although permissible but not desirable, is very useful. *Tark al-Ghafflah* or Avoidance of Carelessness too might help.

The more a person is careless of the enemy, Satan, the more he will have the propensity to commit sins. With carelessness one might find himself dangerously near the mouth of a serpent. Despite all the friendship and nearness with Satan, the person will not get any support from him when the time for retribution (*mukafaat*) comes. At that moment Satan will turn away his face as if he never knew the person.

Satan intensifies his attacks in stages

The initial attempts of Satan will be to tempt the *mu'min* to commit unsavory things (*makrḥ*). Then he will open the way of the minor sins (*dhunub as-saghira*) to the person.

He puts into the mind of the person that the sins he was committing were very trivial and thus encourages him to inadvertently commit major sins (*dhunub al-kabira*).

The man himself thinks that he was committing minor sins, which thought is itself a major sin¹.

Satan then persuades the person to commit major sins as a habit. In this way he overwhelms the heart and the spirit of the person. He attacks the *mu'min's* faith and puts him in severe doubts and fears. Thus Satan makes him his helpless prey. He doesn't keep the person capable of comprehending that he is the victim of Satan's plot.

Only the people of *taqwa* (piety), with their effective defenses, can save themselves from the maneuvers of Satan. The poor ignorant person cannot meet the onslaught of Satan.

Wudhu or ablution, the sharp instrument of defence of a Mu'min

Of several non-obligatory things that can come to the aid of a *mu'min* is to always maintain the state of *wudhu*. The Prophet (S) says, "*Al-wudhu silaah al-mu'min!*" (*Wudhu is the weapon of a mu'min!*)

It is the duty of a *mu'min* to confront the satans that he is in mortal combat with them. Therefore he must always be clean and with valid *wudhu*.

A person should always be with *wudhu*, and if some time has passed after performing the ablution, he should renew it as a measure of carefulness that it might have gone void without the person noticing it. It is said, "*Al-wudhu nūr wal wudhu 'alal wudhu nūr*" (*Wudhu is a light and performing a wudhu over another is light upon light!*). This is the light that dispels the darkness created by Satan in the hearts of the persons.

Fasting and charity break the backbone of Satan

In the armory of a *mu'min* there are certain arms about which the Prophet (S) has made a particular mention. He (S) said:

*"Fasts of a mu'min blacken the face of Satan. Sadaqa or charity breaks the backbone of Satan. Istighfar — entreaty with Allah for mercy — will cut Satan's vein of life, and love of Allah and good deeds of the person uproot Satan."*²

When you fast the face of Satan, your enemy, will be blackened. If the curtains are raised from your eyes, you will notice that Satan's face has turned black on account of your fasts.

But Satan is not so weak and emaciated that only by fasting you get his face blackened and with a strike of charity you shatter his backbone. You have to perform every action with absolute sincerity that they pass through the seven curtains and break Satan's backbone and destroy him.

Now let us talk about *Sadaqa* or charity. According to what the Prophet (S) has said, it does break the backbone of Satan. But there is a condition that your charity should be acceptable to Allah (S.w.T.).

I have seen Satan's mother

It is narrated in *Anwār Jazairi* that once during an acute famine a preacher was speaking from the pulpit in a mosque. He said, "If someone wants to give *sadaqa*, seventy satans cling to his hand and try to prevent him from doing the good turn." One *mu'min* who was seated very near the foot of the pulpit told to his friends with surprise, "What has Satan to do with *sadaqa*? I have some wheat at home. I shall go home just now and bring it to the mosque to give away in charity. I shall see how the satans prevent me from doing it!"

The man got up and went home. On reaching home, when his wife became aware of his intention, she shouted at him, "In these days of acute famine you have no care of your wife and children! Perhaps the famine conditions might prolong and we might all die of starvation because of shortage of wheat." Therefore, getting engulfed with doubts the *mu'min* returned to the mosque empty handed.

The friends asked him, "What has happened. You have returned from home without the wheat? Alas! The seventy satans had clung to your hands and prevented you from doing the *sadaqa*." The man said, "I didn't see the satans, but definitely I have seen their mother who came in the way of my doing the good deed!"

This proves that man tries to take cudgels with Satan but many a time his wife or others distract him from the good turn.

Sadaqa is also not giving a few coins reluctantly because:

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ

By no means shall you attain to righteousness until you spend (benevolently in the way of your Lord) out of what you love. (Sura Aal Imran, 3:92)

What is your financial position? If you are really affluent, Satan's backbone will not break unless you do a sizeable charity. There will be another condition attached to your charity that you should not brag

about it to the beneficiary nor to other friends. Belittling the person who has received your help by reminding of your good deed can render your *sadaqa null and void*.

Penitence: another weapon in the hands of a Mu'min

Satan makes all his possible efforts to put man in the morass of sin. But if the man expresses penitence at that time from the depths of his heart, Satan's heart would then shatter into smithereens with disappointment.

But the enemy is very cunning. He strives hard to see that the person fails to reach the threshold of penitence and forgiveness. Satan now infuses an inspiration into the heart of his subject, "What has happened? What big sin you have committed that you are so ashamed! Don't you notice around you that others are committing bigger sins and happily living! You are still young. Even if penitence is necessary, you can do that when you are old. At that time penitence will be ideal that you will be weak and sickly and you may not have strength to break your resolve of penitence. This is the time of your youth. How do you expect to keep your promise of abstinence after expressing penitence?"

Two more powerful weapons to defeat Satan

Two more weapons that, according to the Prophet of Allah (S.w.T.) (S), are most effective in defeating Satan are: Sincere obedience of Allah (S.w.T.) and steadfastness in doing good deeds.

It is a *Jihad al-Akbar* when a person, just for the sake of Allah (S.w.T.) and His friendship, ignores his personal profits and gains. This is better than the *Jihad* fought with the infidels because this is confrontation with *Nafs al-Ammara* or the vile personal instincts. If one fails in this *Jihad*, he may not succeed in the other! The cause of the defeat will definitely be the instigation and temptation by Satan. In this defeat the person will not only die but also be given retribution in the Hereafter.

Imam as-Sajjad (a.s.) says in one of his supplications:

"O Allah (S.w.T.)! I seek you protection from my enemy! O Master of the House! The ferocious dog is attacking me. Come to my rescue and save me from the harm that it can cause to me!"

Iblis bites the foot of Imam as-Sajjad (a.s.)

In "*Madinat al-Muajiz*" it is said that Imam as-Sajjad (a.s.) was busy one day in his prayer. Iblis wanted to cause disturbance to the Imam's concentration. He ordered one of his retainers to disrupt the Imam's concentration by causing him bodily harm. The narrator says that the accursed Satan came to the Imam

in the shape of a big python.

We have already mentioned earlier that satans have the faculty to appear in any shape and form they wish to.

Anyway, he went near the Imam (a.s.) who was fully absorbed in his prayer. The accursed creature bit one of the toes of the Imam (a.s.). But the pain of the bite was not felt by the Imam (a.s.) nor was his concentration disturbed an iota. At that moment a loud sound of Allah (S.w.T.)'s anger was heard and the accursed creature was punished. Then the herald said, "*Anta Zayn al-'Abidin – indeed, you are the adornment of the worshippers!*"

Warn People against Satanic Deceptions

O people of wisdom! Keep people informed of the machinations of Satan. The aberrations of peoples' morals have already given some satisfaction to Satan. Don't endorse his accursed wishes any further. *Nahi 'anil Munkar* (abstinence from the prohibited) is obligatory on every believer. At least express abhorrence of the satanic actions. There is no precondition attached to doing this. It is the bounden duty of all of us to save ourselves from such a situation!

Those who witness some foul act of their friends and, instead of advising them to abstain from such acts, encourage and abet them in doing more such acts, then they too will be deemed partners in the commitment of the undesirable acts. It is observed that a person abstains from going to cinema theatres and clubs to avoid getting looked down upon in the society. But he does have a desire to visit such places.

This would mean that he is not afraid of Allah (S.w.T.) but fears his fellow men! Despite his abstinence from going to places of ill repute, he is committing a sin because of his evil desires.

Thinner than the hair and sharper than a sword

Beware of becoming the companions of Satan that he penetrates into your person. We might be carrying a hallucination that we are performing good deeds and, in actual fact, our actions are all at the instigation of Satan. This situation is so delicate that it is thinner than the hair and sharper than the sword.

According to Hajji Noori some people die with the false pride that they are the friends of Imam 'Ali (a.s.) and think that by making such claims they will earn a place in the Heaven.

If they are true friends of Imam 'Ali (a.s.) then they would implicitly comply with all the commandments of the Faith. It is quite possible, if they are making empty claims of friendship with Imam 'Ali (a.s.), they are acting on the instigation of the accursed Satan!

Beware O hapless Muslims! Your faith is in danger! If Satan puts you in doubts at the time of your death, what would happen to you? In your own false pride you claim to be Imam ‘Ali (a.s.)’s friend!

Where are you heading? In whose obedience you are indulging? If that is Satan, then he is your friend and guide. The friendship of ‘Ali (a.s.) too might be there in your heart. But let it not be dominated by other evil influences! Confess whether you value your worldly desires more than the love of Imam ‘Ali (a.s.)! If your concern is fulfillment of worldly desires, are you not concerned for the Hereafter?

[The Hereafter depends on the worldly desires](#)

The hearts have been conquered by satans. Who is worried about the Hereafter? When people go to the *Majlis* of *Hadrat Abul Fadl al-Abbas*, they seek his intercession for the fulfillment of their worldly desires. If their wishes were fulfilled without the intercession, they might not have gone to the *majlis*!

Has it ever happened that you have sought intercession that your end comes with love of ‘Ali (a.s.) in your hearts and you don’t become the victims of Satan at the time of death!

[A difference of three hundred thousands years](#)

It has been narrated in the traditions that some of the friends of Hadrat (a.s.) will reach him after three hundred thousand years of retribution.

This is true because your heart is for Imam ‘Ali (a.s.) in a thousand ways! But before reaching the presence of the Imam (a.s.) the curtains have to be raised. First, the traces of love for others have to be removed before one could get access to ‘Ali (a.s.) “O Amr al-Mu’minin! You must yourself show kindness to your friends!”

We should hope that we die with the love for ‘Ali (a.s.) in the depths of our hearts and Allah (S.w.T.)’s Beneficence is on us!

[1.](#) The books written by Ayatullah Dastaghaib, *Dhunuz al-Kabira* (The Greatest Sins) and *Qalb as-Saleem* (The Tranquil Heart) cover this subject at great length.

[2.](#) *Safinat al-Bihar*, vol 2, page 62

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