

## The Third Talk

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

وَقُلْ رَبِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ هَمَزَاتِ الشَّيَاطِينِ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ رَبِّي أَنْ يَخْضُرُونَ

***And say: O my Lord! I seek refuge in Thee from the evil suggestions of the Shaitans; And I seek refuge in Thee! O my Lord from their presence. (Sura al-Muminun, 23:97-8)***

### [The jealous nature of Iblis](#)

Because of his jealous nature, Iblis has been exiled from the Heaven. He cannot bear man, whom he thought inferior in comparison to himself, attaining nearness to Allah (S.w.T.). Satan has expressed to Allah (S.w.T.), ‘You have made me with fire and have created Adam (a.s.) with soil. Fire is superior to soil and your ordering me to prostrate before Adam (a.s.) is gross injustice!’

Despite all this, man reaches august position and Satan has been repudiated by Allah (S.w.T.) thus, ‘Get away from here! You are inferior and contemptible. You have no right to brag about your superiority here!’

The human being wishes to achieve nearness to the Creator through prayer. But Satan tries with all his faculties and stratagems to create hurdles in the way of the person’s progress towards the goal. This he does to satisfy his instinct of jealousy. Satan is such an accursed creature that if he is unable to cause major impediments to the efforts of the person, he will satisfy himself even with small disturbances to the man. For example, if Satan is unable to turn a person into an infidel or hypocrite, he will satisfy himself with making the person commit lesser sins.

## **Jealousy and pride have nothing to do with Heaven**

Hadrat Amir al-Mu'minin (a.s.) says in the *Sermon of Qaasiya* quoted in the *Nahj al-Balaaghah*:

*"O people! Satan has rendered himself accursed because of his jealousy. Beware, you too might get involved in jealousy meet the same fate as Satan. Allah (S.w.T.) banished Satan from the Heaven because of his jealousy. He earned the displeasure and ire of Allah (S.w.T.) because of his pride and jealousy. How will you expect to achieve Heaven if you too are proud and jealous! When the mentor of the angels, Iblis, was sent out of the Heaven because of his pride and jealousy, how can ordinary mortals like you dream of entering the Heaven if they practice these undesirable traits."*

Satan was busy supplicating to Allah (S.w.T.) for long years but for one act of pride he earned the displeasure of Allah (S.w.T.) to be banished from the Heaven for all time. It must be remembered, therefore, that pride and greatness is only for Allah (S.w.T.)! Allah (S.w.T.) says, 'Magnificence and Greatness only suit Me! You humans! What use your bragging? Conceit and pride are not your raiment. Talking big doesn't suit you. All men in the eyes of Allah (S.w.T.) are beggars and needy. Allah (S.w.T.) says, 'Worship Me that there is no god other than Me!'

If man becomes proud and conceited, he will become a partner of Satan!

## **The Wish of Iblis Fulfilled**

It is narrated that when Satan was ordered out of the Heaven, he submitted to Allah (S.w.T.) in the following manner:

'O Allah (S.w.T.)! What has happened to my supplications offered over a long span of seven thousand years?'

Allah (S.w.T.) replied, 'We shall reward you what you ask for as a compensation for your prayers.'

Satan said, 'O Allah (S.w.T.)! Give me respite till the Day of Judgment.'

Allah (S.w.T.) replied, 'You are given the respite!'

Satan said, 'My second wish is that I am given the faculty to create doubts and fears in the hearts of the human beings.'

This wish of Satan too was also granted. In granting this wish Allah (S.w.T.) had a strategy in view.

Hadrat Adam (a.s.) beseeched Allah (S.w.T.) thus, 'O Creator! You have not only provided respite to this

formidable enemy of my progeny till the Day of Judgment, you have also given him faculty to cause fears and temptations in the hearts of poor progeny! They will be helpless at the mercy of Satan!

Allah (S.w.T.) said, ‘O Adam (a.s.)! Don’t be disturbed! With every Satan there will be an angel created by us. These angels will help your progeny to guard against the trap set by Satan.’

## **Angels too have Power of Inspiration (Ihhām)**

Whenever Satan creates doubts in the hearts of men, the angels inspire virtue in their heart. Satan says, ‘Don’t go to the mosque!’ The angel encourages the person to go there. Satan encourages the person to commit certain sins that he can make reparation later on. The angel says that the person might die before he expresses his repentance for the sins. And even if he expresses repentance there is no guarantee of acceptance by Allah (S.w.T.).

Give attention to your own hearts! Whether there are thoughts of good or of evil in your heart, you will always have doubts about these thoughts! When Satan upbraids you to commit a sinful act, the angels guide you against it. If Satan tries to prevent you from doing a good turn, the angels encourage you to go ahead with it.

## **At the Cross-roads**

Man is therefore at the cross-roads! Either he loses himself in the valley of greed and vanity or is guided by the angels to the path of virtue and salvation. Allah (S.w.T.) has created man with the faculty of making his own decisions for his actions. Allah (S.w.T.) has categorically said in the Holy Qur'an,

فَكُلُّاً أَخْذَنَا بِنَبِيٍّ فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِ حَاصِبًا وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ أَخْذَنَا الصَّيْحَةَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ خَسَفْنَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ أَغْرَقْنَا وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَظْلِمُهُمْ وَإِنْ كَانُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ

*...and it did not beseem Allah that He should be unjust to them, but they were unjust to their own souls. (Sura al-‘Ankabut, 29:40)*

## **The door for repentance is always open**

Allah (S.w.T.) has further said, ‘If We had imposed Iblīs over your progeny and has given him respite till the Day of Reckoning, we have kept the doors of repentance open for you progeny too’. If men are caught in the web of the accursed Satan, they can express repentance like their ancestor, Adam (a.s.) and seek forgiveness from Allah (S.w.T.). Remember that Adam (a.s.) after doing repentance reached the august status of Prophet-hood and was one of the choicest of Allah (S.w.T.). Allah (S.w.T.) says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْنَطَفَى آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآلَ عِمْرَانَ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ

**Surely Allah chose Adam and Nuh and the descendants of Ibrahim and the descendants of Imran above the nations (Sura Aal- 'Imran, 3:33)**

Repentant men too can achieve the status of *tawwabeen* (penitents) and become the dear ones of Allah (S.w.T.). Allah (S.w.T.), as such says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ

**...surely Allah loves the penitent. (Sura al-Baqara, 2:222)**

## **Allah (S.w.T.)'s blessing is for men till the end**

All the people of the previous epochs had the doors of repentance open for them. But the conditions for acceptance of their penitence were very severe. It is the felicity of the presence of the Last of Prophets (a.s.) that his people, who are called the *Ummat al-Marhooma* (*The Nation Dealt with Mercy*), have a very wide door for repentance available to them. This concession is because their Prophet (S) is *Rahmat li'l Aalameen* (A Mercy for All the Worlds) and *Tauba*, and its acceptance, too is one of the aspects of blessing.

*Bihar al-Anwār*, volume three, quotes a tradition of the Prophet (S), "Every person who repents for his past sins one year before his death, will be pardoned." Then said, "One year is too long a period. If a person repents for his sins a month before his death, he may be pardoned." The Prophet (S) further added, "One month too is rather a long period. If the person repents a day prior to his death, his sins might be pardoned." The Prophet (S) then said, "A day too is a long time. If the person repents at the moment of death, in the *Barzakh* (the Purgatory) or before Izrael looks into his eyes, the person might be pardoned by Allah (S.w.T.)." It proves that if a Muslim repents even while he is dying, he stands a chance of getting pardoned for his sins.

Blessed is the heart that is busy in the Remembrance of Allah (S.w.T.). Can the Blessing be more encompassing than what the *Ummat al-Marhooma* has been endowed with. Despite the evil presence of Satan and his temptations to men to commit sins, Allah (S.w.T.)'s Blessings are unfathomable!

## **Hasan Basri asks a question and Imam Zayn al-Abidin (a.s.) replies**

It is narrated that once during the Hajj Hasan Basri said:

*Al-‘ajab kul al-ajab, man najaa kaifa najaa?*

*The most amazing thing is the one who gets saved; how does he get saved?*

It is very surprising that man escapes from the clutches of the powerful Iblis.

This talk of Hasan Basri reached Imam Zayn al-Abidin (a.s.) He said:

*Al-‘ajab kul al-ajab, man halaka kaifa halaka?*

*The most amazing thing is the one who gets ruined; how does he get ruined?*

It is surprising that the unlucky person was deprived of the all pervading Blessing of Allah (S.w.T.) that spreads over the entire Universe.”

## **Illness before death is a blessing**

After spending a long life the time for departure has come nigh. Perhaps it is the kindness of Allah (S.w.T.) that men get afflicted with disease and remain in this stage for some time before death. In this time they prepare themselves to meet their Creator. This is, perhaps, the reason that sudden deaths are considered a calamity. One who remains in the deathbed for a period, say a month, and doesn't awake to the fact and forgets to express penitence for his past sins before dying will be a very unfortunate person.

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