

## MODULE 5

**Class title:** Satan - Part 2 (2<sup>nd</sup> part of a 6 lesson series)

**Aim of lesson:** To see what tactics Satan uses against us

**Category:** Scripture stories

**Class Format:** Poser point presentation, discussion

(Greeting to students) *Assalamu 'alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*

(*Ta'awwudh*) *A 'oodhu billahi min Ash Shaytaanir Rajeem*

(*Tasmiyah*) *Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem*

(*Du'a*) *Rabbish rahli sadri wa yassirli amri wahlul 'uqdatum millisani yafqahu qawli*

[Surah Ta-Ha 20: Verses 25-28]

All right, What were we discussing last week ? We were discussing Satan.

Slides 1-2:

The history of *Iblees*; we talked about how he rebelled against Allah (swt) and what kind of character he has, what are his weaknesses and flaws and how we usually find these flaws in human beings who follow in his footsteps.

Today *InshaAllah* we will talk about all the tactics used by Satan and there are plenty of tactics he has, like a big bag full of tricks, bag full of traps for us, and it is different for all of us. Just as everybody sitting in this room is very unique, likewise the traps, the techniques he uses for all of us vary too. It differs from person to person. Thus you have to see how he attacks you while I will talk about a few very general tactics that he uses on us and then you can assess and see for yourself.

How many of you run an anti-virus software on your computer? All of us right, and just as we scan our computer every now and then, and are given the option of updating the anti-virus software on a weekly, monthly or daily basis so perhaps it is a good idea to run this anti-Satan program on ourselves every now and then; because viruses are still something that we can protect the computer from, but Satan is working on us all the time, and he is worse than a virus. I was wondering if I could get a program that would actually make me run an anti-Satan program on myself, how frequently would I run it? This is just a computer and I make sure I do it regularly. It takes about an hour, but I wonder if we had such a gadget, such a programme, I would want to run it 10-15 times a day because viruses are still detectable, but this guy is so discreet in his attacks, and his biggest strength is that we can't see him. We do not know what he is up to.

SO it is very important to actually understand the kind of attacks, the traps, the tactics he uses on us before we can decide on an appropriate defense. It is very important to understand the enemy; the strengths and weaknesses of your enemy. We will see the tactics one by one.

Slides 3-7:

The most important thing we need to understand about Satan is that he is extremely, extremely discreet in his attacks. Most of us do not even realize that he is working on us, we are not even aware of it. He is very good at what he is doing and he is pretty much everywhere but he'll never come up to you and say, 'Hey I'm Satan and I want you to burn in hell.' He is not going to do that, I wish he did, but he doesn't.

There is a *hadith* where the Prophet (pbuh) said that Satan runs in the body of Adam's (as) son (i.e. man) as his blood that circulates through it [Bukhari].

Yes, he is **that** close to us and that is how he is inside us, attacking us from within. I wish that just as we have burglar alarms, fire alarms and smoke alarms, we had Satan alarms too; because there are still times when you can detect smoke, you can smell the smoke before the alarm goes off; or perhaps you could actually see somebody walking in before your burglar alarm goes off, but when Satan attacks us, most of us have absolutely no clue.

He tempts us and makes us imagine things. He makes us think that those thoughts are products of our own minds, as if we came up with them. Whenever there is an evil thought, or whenever there is a fear in us or whenever there is something stopping us from doing what we should be doing, he makes us think that there is something wrong with us, that it is because of our own weakness and he will make us concerned about very shallow and baseless worries, for example:

The fear of losing old friends, the fear of the supposed restrictiveness in the religion, or the fear of being unable to maintain the demands of the religion.

These are the basic fears that we have, don't we?

What if I lose the place that I have made for myself in school?

What if my friends start making fun of me?

What if I'm not as strong as other people are? and

I can't be making new friends now, you know, I'm too old for that.

Does that mean I will have to abandon all the friends I have?

I am not strong enough to do it.

I don't do it because I know I'm going to fail.

Slide 8:

These are the fears he puts in our minds and then of course there is this one line..... Satan has done a lot of deep thinking and come up with this line that he puts in our minds and that is ... 'Please.... I need time.'

Slide 9:

Anywhere in the Qur-an, does Allah (swt) say, ‘Do this, this and this... but if you feel you’re not prepared for it, take your time?’ You’re probably too young to have gone through the Qur-an cover to cover but have you ever heard anyone say that Allah (swt) said in the Qur-an that you are supposed to do this, but take your time, do it when you think you’re ready. NO! I’m sure when you hear people quoting the Qur-an there is a sense of urgency in there, because Allah (swt) knows that this is exactly what *Shaytaan* wants; he wants time, he wants to extinguish that burning flame of faith which is inside us, and for that he wants us to procrastinate. And you say, ‘I know what I’m supposed to do but I need time’, right, and then he’ll make you think, ‘At least I’m better off than that person!’ Because you’ll see people around you who are worse than you in following Islam and when you compare yourself to people who are worse than you in their deeds, then you think ....at least I’m better off than them.....at least I don’t have a boyfriend.....at least I don’t go out dating, etc.

Well that’s provided that you do that **at least**.

So you might be better than them, let’s not doubt that, but we have to look at ourselves and evaluate ourselves from the eyes of Allah (swt). If somebody is getting 2/10 and you’re getting 3/10, does that make you pass just because your marks are better than a couple of children in your class?

My son has a habit that whenever he gets bad marks he always comes and tells me about children who got worse than him as if that will make me happy. I say, “No, tell me about the ones who got better than you.” So we’ve got this thing inside us, ‘See, at least I’m better than them’. But what you really need to see is the passing grade. If you are not qualifying to be passed in your exams or what Allah (swt) expects from you, then it doesn’t matter if you’re better off than a few people.

It really doesn’t make much of a difference, they may go to a worse part of hell, but you’ll be ending up in hell too, right? You’re not qualified for Jannah if you’re not doing certain things; it’s as simple as that!

Slide 10:

As far as this fear factor is concerned, it is a very natural thing. It’s very natural to be afraid of things, and a very good example is that of Prophet Musa (as), when Allah (swt) asked him to go to Pharaoh with his message, he was scared, he was afraid. But that did not stop him from going to Pharaoh, and that is the important thing; you can be very scared, but your fear should not stop you, it should not paralyze you. It’s fine if you’re afraid, it’s a very natural thing.

If you’re feeling that you’re going to lose out on certain things in your life, it’s very natural to have that fear, as long as it does not stop you from doing what you’re supposed to do.

Slide 11:

(Teacher-Students interaction)

How is Satan active against the believers?

He causes disagreements amongst them; that's a very common thing. Do you disagree with people around you?

Not on a basis of religion but on other matters perhaps? Do you?

When you do, what happens?

You get angry, frustrated.

We did a module on 'Anger management' and we know that anger comes from Satan, right?

Slides 12-13:

Another technique he actually uses on believers is that he sometimes gets them so involved in their worship, or they are so overly involved in their good deeds that their other responsibilities get neglected. We have to be 'All-rounders'. It's important to have that balance in our lives. He creates this dis-balance in a believer's life.

Student: Isn't being more intense in your religion a good thing?

Teacher: Not if you're neglecting your other responsibilities; I'm not saying that you're so involved in your religion that you neglect going and watching a movie. No, that's not the point, the point is that when you're involved in certain parts of your worship; see, a practicing Muslim's life is worship throughout, even if he is eating, that's part of the worship, but what *Shaytaan* does, is that he makes you involved in one aspect of worship so much that your other responsibilities get neglected. For example, you might be covering yourself appropriately, you might be saying all five prayers, you might be fasting, but if you're not a good daughter and you don't respect your parents, then you lack that balance that is required in a Muslim.

Don't think that just because you're saying your *salah* properly, Allah (swt) will forgive you for being disrespectful towards your parents. Satan will make you think, 'Well see, at least I'm doing this, at least I'm offering my prayers, at least I'm fasting, at least I'm covered up properly, so what's the big deal if I'm slightly disrespectful towards my parents?' That's how he makes you think.

Slides 14-17:

He also fosters pride in us, how does he do that?

There are times when Satan fills our thoughts with this 'Holier than thou' attitude. How does he do that?

He makes you think that what you're doing is like WOW, you have that WOW factor for yourself and then you say 'Look at the people around me.' So you might be doing your *tahajjud*, you might be fasting, doing your optional fasts, but if you feel 'YES I'm doing it', there is a serious problem. Because you need to ask yourself, you are doing what you are supposed to do, who is helping you here? It's Allah (swt); you're getting a lot of support from Him, lots of blessings.

He is giving you this opportunity to do what you're doing. But when we start having this WOW factor for ourselves, we become a little arrogant, and we want to take the credit completely and totally disregard the kind of help that we get from Allah (swt), it does happen sometimes. And it does not stop there, then you want to be appreciated by people, right, and that leads to boasting, which is again a trap from Satan and does it stop there? No, it doesn't! Because then what happens is that your level of tolerance for people around you gets really low.

Slides 18-19:

So if you feel that you cannot handle, or you despise people because of their weaknesses, then there is a serious problem in you. Perhaps it started off with certain good acts in your life and slowly and gradually you started disliking people around you because you thought that, 'Oh! If I can do it, why can't she? If I can cover myself properly why can't she?' that is a trap from Satan and I don't know how many of you actually practice Islam as much you should be doing, but if you are, then you have to be very careful. Because then you are a very, very important prospect for Satan.

He's not going to work on people who go clubbing, he is not worried about them, the damage has been done over there, he is going to work on people who are **trying** to become good Muslims, or who are already good Muslims. So intolerance towards other people is a satanic trait, you must understand that. If you feel that your level of tolerance for people around you is not good, Satan is working on you!

Student: What do you mean by low tolerance? Do you mean anger?

Teacher: It could be anger; it could be not giving enough leverage to the other person. So it's connected to just a person's personality, their weaknesses makes you angry.

We are looking at this from the religious angle; if you are religious enough and you see people around you not as religious as they should be, and if you have these thoughts of contempt for them or you just despise them, then it is wrong of you because everybody cannot keep the same pace, everybody cannot have the same speed.

Some people are blessed by Allah (swt), they might not have had as many tests as perhaps

you've had in your life, right. So I have to show my patience for you, I need to help you out rather than show my contempt; that's the point.

Slides 20-21:

Then he also causes people to **Idolize** others besides Allah (swt). Billions of people misunderstand this concept of associating partners with Allah (swt). If I asked you what exactly does it mean, what is *Shirk*, to deify others besides Allah (swt), what would you say? Who comes to mind when I talk about *Shirk*?

Idols!

Idolaters, yeah, or maybe like the unbelievers, right. They are the ones who do *shirk*. And then Satan, again he's working on us; he's making us think, 'This is one thing I don't have to worry about'.

'This is something I'm absolutely safe from!' but the fact is, what is *shirk*? Is it only 'idol worshipping'?

It can be anything, *shirk* could include that you're watching television, missing your prayers on purpose even though you know that you **have** to go say your prayer. That could be *shirk* because you're giving more attention to television or your desires than your prayer, that could be a minor *shirk*.

Student: Idolizing somebody more than Allah (swt), as in you give them more importance, is also *shirk*.

Teacher: As far as *shirk* is concerned, considering anything or anyone other than Allah (swt) as a protective force, is *shirk*; OR fearing anything else other than Allah (swt) could be a shade of *shirk*, so those fears that we have talked about, they could convert into *shirk*, if because of those fears you are not doing something that you're supposed to do, that could be *shirk*. OR feeling a particular kind of love for anyone else other than Allah (swt) that actually overpowers your love for Allah (swt); that's *shirk*. So we see that *shirk* has a lot of categories.

Slide 22:

Adopting guidance is also *shirk*; can anyone tell me how? When you are following somebody blindly that's *shirk*. Have you heard people saying, 'Oh *meray tou dada pardada* used to do it, so are you trying to tell me that my *dada* is going to hell because he taught me to do this, this and this?' but if it's contradicting what is mentioned in the Qur-an and *Sunnah* then it's *shirk*, because you are giving more importance to what your *dada* told you. We are supposed to have a lot of respect for our elders, but if you are giving him more respect than Allah (swt) and HIS commands then that's *shirk*.

Slides 23-25 :

Another factor that leads to *shirk* is misdirection of love; can anyone tell me how that becomes *shirk*? How can misdirection of love convert into *shirk*?

Student: In Christianity, they loved Jesus (as) more than Allah (swt)!

Yes, but for the time being, let's just focus on ourselves. How do our emotions lead us, especially those emotions which we have for other people in the form of love, lead us towards *shirk*?

If you love your parents or your friends or your popularity or the place that you have within your friend circle; if the love for these things is more than that for Allah (swt), it is *shirk*, and this is a good example of misdirected love.

How do you come out of it? Firstly, you don't actually know whether you love your friends more than Allah (swt). So how do you prove your love for someone?

If you tell your mum today, 'Mum I love you so much, but I'm not going to listen to you', what will your mum say? 'Yeah! Sure you love me.' So love is very strongly connected to obedience, so how do you know that you love Allah (swt) more than your parents?

You will obey HIM more than anyone else.

What happened to Prophet Ibrahim (as), he was put to this test where he had his father's love on one side and Allah's (swt) obedience on the other side, what did he choose?

Allah (swt)'s obedience, at the cost of losing his father. And it's a big test for anyone, big test! Personally, I don't think that we are strong enough for Allah (swt) to actually put us to that kind of test, but yes, we might sometimes have that fear that we might lose our parents' pleasure, our parents' love if we don't listen to them in certain matters.

See, *Alhamdulillah* as Muslims we don't have this problem, because most of the things that our parents tell us are what the Qur-an and *Sunnah* tell us as well.

If we're doing something out of love for our parents and it is also mentioned in the Qur-an and *Sunnah* then all you need to do is to just make your intentions very, very clear. You are in the right direction, all you need to do is tell yourself, I am doing this, I love my parents because Allah (swt) told me to do so, I am obeying my parents because Allah (swt) told me to, then you have everything in line *Alhamdulillah*! No contradiction.

If you feel, 'I am obeying and listening to my parents because I love them', then that's it, why do you love them? A good Muslim; a *mu'min* has to convert everything he does in a day into *'ibadah*.

I am eating because I have to take care of this body that Allah (swt) has given me, that's one way of looking at it. Or I'm eating this burger because I love it and I can't resist it, that's another way of looking at it. One becomes '*ibadah*', the other one does not. So you have to maneuver your intentions, your *niyyah* all the time.

*InshaAllah* now I am going to talk about how Satan tames our intentions, he works big time on our intentions. So all you need to do is whatever you do in the day, just clarify your intention and focus it towards Allah (swt).

For example, I love coming to these classes but then I have to tell myself that I'm one of those lucky people who get to do something they love and it's also worship. But I have to understand that it is only worship if I'm doing this for Allah's (swt) pleasure. So liking something does not mean that it cannot be worship; it's not necessarily an 'either/or' situation. It can be both, you can love something and it can be worship.

Slide 26:

Then *Shaytaan* also causes doubts in our minds, and that's another trap, and what a trap that one is!! Do you know what the opposite of doubt is? Faith, *eemaan*. Every time you decide to make a certain change in your life Satan becomes very active and he starts putting wrong ideas, very shallow doubts in your mind.

For example:

..What if what they are saying is really not required? (A doubt)

..Well there are so many people who are not doing it out there, so are all of them going to hell?

..Let me take a second opinion.

..Let me see if the other person is telling me the same thing or not. (All doubts)

And usually he will help you to take this second opinion from a person who will tell you what you want to hear. This is how Satan works on your doubts.

Slide 27 :

In every society from the time of the prophets, the majority of people were very, very intelligent, very smart, but most of them were wrong, Most of them were going to hell because they did not listen to the prophets, they had doubts about the prophet and about the book, although they were very smart, very intelligent people.

If a person is not far-sighted enough however, or if he is not thinking about his or her *aakhirah*, then how can the person be smart? So a person can apparently be very intelligent, very successful in this world, but he is not the benchmark for you, because he could be completely misguided and end up in hell, because for all we know, he is not at all farsighted.

Now tell me something, how many people do you think are going to hell? Any idea? If I were to ask you the ratio between hell and heaven what do you think the ratio would be?

Student: Most of them would be in hell.

Teacher: Why?

Student: Because we're too distracted from our religion and wherever you look there's bad stuff happening, generally and there are very few places where really good stuff happens, so technically, if you compare that, then there's more bad stuff happening.

Teacher: She is giving a very logical answer as to why she feels most of the people are going to hell.

Anyone else? What do you think the ratio would be, just guesswork.

Student: The people in hell will be a lot more than the people in heaven.

Teacher: Why do you think the number of people going to hell will be more?

Student: Most of them don't even *believe* before they die, there are a lot of unbelievers in this world.

Teacher: Not just unbelievers, a lot of people who we think are born Muslims are only Muslims in name; even if they wear the *hijab* and everything but inside the faith is just not there; the *eemaan* is just not there.

Student: I feel that as Muslims we're very weak, it's like this is the real world, how can all of them be wrong?

Teacher: Ok, let me just make things easier for you, in the Qur'an, Allah (swt) tells us very, very clearly that most of mankind is going to end up in Hell **REFERENCE**, we don't need to use our logic to come to that conclusion and since you guys haven't been through the Qur'an yet, so next time when you think about this question, you should have a clear cut answer in black and white.

So next time when you get this feeling or *Shaytaan* puts this feeling in you or this thought in you, 'How can all of them be wrong, is everyone going to Hell?' you remind yourself of this particular verse in the Qur'an where Allah (swt) says that most of us, most of mankind are going to end up in Hell.

Many people read this *ayah* and say “Oh no! We’re going to end up in hell, there’s no point in being good.” Isn’t it more sensible that we’re being given this warning that we could go to hell?

So why did Allah (swt) say that ALL of you are going to Hell?

I mean majority, you may be within the majority because we don’t know anything yet.

Alright, how would you know that you’re in that majority?

Student: You’re disobeying every single rule of His.

Forget about that. Is there any sign, is there any way of knowing if you belong in that majority group or not?

Teacher: There is; just judge yourself. If you are trying to do something which is very, very challenging and it’s in the Qur’an or the *Sunnah*, and if you feel that you’re all alone on that path, and if Satan is putting thoughts in your mind that ‘How come the rest of them are not doing it, how come I’m the only idiot on this path?’ I think that is enough of a sign for us to know that *Alhamdulillah* I’m on the right path!

Student: I would like to give an example here, it’s like you go to class and the teacher says that most of you are going to fail in your test.

Yes, very good example, the teacher tells you that most of the children in the class are not preparing as they should be preparing for the test and she thinks that most of them are going to fail, right, so will you do what the majority of the class was doing? Are you going to take your studies as lightly as they are? No! If you pay more attention, you may be the only idiot who is giving attention or a few more, that’s a sign! That’s a sign that you are one of those who are going to pass, because you are not acting like most of the people in the class.

Since you don’t know whether you’re one of those minorities or majorities, Allah (swt) has left that up to you to decide whether you want to be part of that majority or you want to be in the minority and He has given you very clear ‘do’s’ and ‘don’ts’.

If you do this, this and this you’re in the minority and if you do this, this and this then you’re in the majority, simple as that. It shouldn’t demoralize you, and I think this concept of being demoralized is also a trap from Satan, you think ‘Aww it’s good for nothing, let me just not make any effort....’.

Slide 28 :

Satan also lightens the concept of the Hellfire. I’m sure you must have heard a lot of jokes.

Some people assume that Hell’s more fun than Heaven, it’s more interesting.

And there are so many books, he inspires people to crack jokes based on these misconceptions. One of the biggest misconceptions that I have heard, is that all the celebrities will be there in hell so how can one be bored? All the saintly boring people will be in heaven, and all the fun people will be in hell so hell will be more entertaining.

Well I just want to say one thing on this particular concept, we did this class on 'Hell' and *InshaAllah* we'll do it again by the end of the term, we'll do that presentation again.

It's not just going to be physical and emotional torture in Hell; it's also going to be a torment, a pain of loneliness that you'll feel there, you won't see anyone, you'll feel that you're all alone and remember it's for eternity. it's not only for a few days. Try being all alone in a room where you don't even feel any physical discomfort, for a month. You'll go mad, even if there's no physical discomfort!

In Hell, we're talking about physical discomfort, we're talking about emotional discomfort and discomfort is actually not even the right word; torture, physical torture, emotional torture, and this torture of being alone... FOREVER. I mean the people who make these jokes, who crack jokes about Hell, basically *Shaytaan* wants to lighten up the concept of the hell fire, and it does that.

If somebody had asked me when I was like ten years old, I would have thought it's not as bad as it really will be, until I actually went through the Qur-an and different *ahadith* to understand the concept of Hell. And that's the reason why I'm going to do the Concept of 'Hell and Heaven' with you guys by the end of this term *InshaAllah*. This devil will go to any lengths, any lengths to confuse you. Do you think the fact that the devil is making an effort to confuse you is good news?

Student: No.

Slide 29:

Yes, it is good news. Why? Because you have made the devil upset, he's panicking and he's putting his most important traps in your path by confusing you. He knows this is the only way. He won't go and confuse somebody who is out there doing something wrong, he's not going to confuse that person because he is already misdirected, and he's already away from the religion. He's going to confuse US, people who are trying to understand the word of Allah (swt).

So if you ever feel this confusion in your life, all you need to do is to say your *ta'oozz* and understand that Satan is working on you; and as long as some command reaches you through the Qur'an, or *Sunnah*, just blindly follow it, and forget about all the fears, because Allah (swt) will take care of it!

*InshaAllah* we're going to stop here and continue with our discussion next week.

(Du'a for end of a gathering) *Subhana Rabbika Rabbul 'Izzati 'amma yasifun wa salaamun 'alal mursaleen, walhamdulillahi Rabbil 'aalameen*

(Parting salutation to students) *Assalamu 'alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*