

MODULE 5

Class Title: Satan part 4 (4th part of a 6 lesson series)

Aim of Lesson : To understand the effect of Satan's tactics on human beings

Category : Scripture stories

Lesson format: Power point Presentation, narration & discussion

(Greeting to students) *Assalamu 'alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*
(*Ta'awwudh*) *A 'oodhubillahi minash Shaytaanir Rajeem*
(*Tasmiyah*) *Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem*
(*Du'a*) *Rabbish rahli sadri wa yassir li amri wahlul 'uqdatum mil lisani yafqahu qawli*
[Surah Ta-Ha 20: Verses 25-28]

Slide 1:

Today is our fourth consecutive class on Satan, and I don't know how many more it will take. I don't want to rush because it's such an important subject; it's so important for all of us to understand Satan inside out, to understand the reality, the presence of Satan in our lives that I really don't want to rush with it. Do you remember what we did last week?

We had asked that how come in Ramadan when Satan is locked, we behave badly?
We know through *ahadith* that Satan is locked up in the month of Ramadan, but we still act poorly. We sometimes act worse than the way we act in normal months, so what is the reason? How come, what is affecting us, if Satan is locked up then who has this very, very evil influence on us?

Satan is a very, very busy guy and he only works on you when he feels a resistance from you. He will not continuously keep on working, there will come a time when we might just surrender to him; that's when our soul gets so corrupted that we go on this auto-drive. We're programmed; he programmes us and then he moves on, and he works on other people. He's not always there, actively working on us, inspiring us.
When he sees that we have learnt how to act wrongly in our day-to-day activities, it's time for him to move on and come back when he feels that his affect is fading out.

However, there are times that he moves on when he feels that he can't do anything on you, he cannot affect you. Why can't he affect you? Because you are remembering Allah (swt) all the time, you're asking Allah's (swt) help to protect you from the attacks of Satan so he runs away, but he does come back, repeatedly.

So even though he is not working on us in the month of Ramadan, our soul has been influenced by his attacks. It is very challenging for a lot of us to overcome its effect, because of which we behave inappropriately even when he isn't present.

Slide 2:

Now let's move on: Satan seeks to demoralize the believers.
How does he do that; how does he demoralize us?

He just waits for an opportunity where we fail and that is the best time for him to attack us. An example, which happens pretty often around us, there is a girl or a woman who tries to cover her hair, right. She tries to cover her head, succeeding for a couple of months, maybe a year, or a few weeks, then she feels that it's too much for her and then she stops covering herself.

That is the time when Satan will come and make such a person think, 'I am a loser.' or 'I can't do it.' and 'I'm not strong enough for this right now'. He will suggest demoralizing thoughts, mainly because he wants to make sure that we never ever DARE to take that step again. That's how he demoralizes us.

Slides 3-5:

There are times when we know that what we're just about to do is a sinful deed; we know that, 'If I do this Allah (swt) will not be pleased with me.' but Satan tells us to just do it ONE MORE TIME. Does it happen to you? 'Let me just do it one more time.' and you'll say:

'Ok this is the last time I'm lying.'
'This is the last time I'm doing this or that.'
'This is the last time I'm talking to him or her.'
'This is the last time I'm going to this place, just for a bit.'
'I'm going to talk to him just for a bit.'
'I'm going there just for a bit.'

And then what happens? He will stop you from doing *tawbah*; he'll say, 'Do it once more and then you can do *tawbah*' and then next time he'll say, 'Do it just once more for the last time and then you can do *tawbah*.' and what happens in the end?

You never do *tawbah*.

Yeah, we never get that last opportunity to do that last *tawbah* before we die and there are a lot of people who just pass away thinking, procrastinating that, 'Ok one day I'm going to do *tawbah*, this is something that I have to stop doing' but every time Satan will say, 'Aww just one more time, just one more time.' And they never ever get that opportunity to do *tawbah*.

Slide 6:

Then Satan works on minor concessions; minor concessions given to us in our religion. Can you think of any minor concession that is given to us in our religion? He makes us delay our *salah*. You know there is a time for *salah*, right? He will make us delay our *salah* saying,

‘Come on, you still have time.’ and you will think, ‘Let me just finish my homework, let me just finish watching what I’m watching, let me just be on the internet for a little bit more and then I’ll offer my *salah*, there’s still more time.’

There IS a concession given to us for *salah*, we *can* say it later on, but he will just make sure that we keep delaying it, and we say it right at the eleventh hour, that is provided we don’t miss it altogether!

Or when you fast, even if you have the mildest ailment, you know, you have a cold or you’re sneezing away, he’ll say, ‘Aww, you know what, it’s allowed to skip your fast if you’re not feeling well.’ whereas deep in your heart you know it’s something you can bear with, you don’t need to necessarily skip your fast. There is a concession given to you but he’ll make you utilize all the concessions in the religion.

Why do you think he makes you do that? And what’s wrong in utilizing all the concessions? He wants us to remain mediocre; he does not want us to excel in our worship, he does not want us to achieve excellence so he will make sure that we remain mediocre. Just like if you’re fine with 50% marks in a subject, you will never excel. You have to target 100% in order to get 90%, you cannot target 60% in order to get 80%. So what he makes you do is, he makes you target the bare minimum things that are allowed in Islam.

And what happens is that it weakens our faith, so much so that a time actually comes when you start missing your *salah*, and you don’t actually fast.

Slide 7:

And then one very important attack of his is, he makes us think, ‘What is the big deal, I’m just thinking about it.’, it’s just a thought. However, the fact is that an evil thought is just the tip of the iceberg, there’s actually a sinful deed hidden under it and a sinful thought cannot lead you to the Hellfire, but a sinful thought does lead one to a sinful deed.

So he makes you focus on, ‘Oh you’re just thinking, Allah (swt) will not throw you into the Hell fire because you’re just thinking of the boys or you’re thinking of going out with them, or you’re thinking of this, this and this movie, or song or a romantic scene, you know, you’re just thinking,’ right? Well that thought WILL, WILL always end up in a deed, it will eventually, because nobody goes and commits a deed directly; it’s always a thought first.

Slide 8:

And then he seeks to turn people away from the verses of Allah (swt). Now how does he do that? How does he turn us away from the verses of Allah (swt) and who is he going to attack for this particular thing, the non-Muslims?

Or the people who are really intense in their religion?

He will attack the people who are showing an interest in the religion, people who are intense in the religion. Anybody worth his or her salt will never deny the truth of the Qur'an, would you say, 'Oh I don't agree with that.'? nobody would do that. So what does he do then? He will make you go away from the religion because of the way you lead your life, because of the lifestyle that you have.

Why do you all come to Perceptions?

You wanted to come because you like to learn more about your religion so that you can apply it in your life, so what is the bottom line that we're looking for?

Practicing it in our lives, right? And that IS the bottom line that all of us should have. Is just knowing the religion enough? Why is it not enough?

Because that is what Satan did, he had a lot of knowledge of the religion, he knew everything about Allah (swt) but he did not obey what Allah (swt) said. He did not practice, a command was given to him and he did not obey. Just the knowledge is not enough for our salvation, we need to practically apply it. So ideally speaking it should not be, 'Because my mum sent me here'. The main reason for us being here at 'Perceptions' should be what she said, "To learn more about the religion so that I can practice it in my life.", and that is exactly what Satan attacks us on.

Slides 9-13:

What does he do? As far as the 'Idol worshippers' are concerned, or the 'non-believers' are concerned, they are already away from the verses of the Qur'an, so he's not going to attack them. It's actually us, the Muslims that he's going to attack and he's going to make us think that at least we know everything, one day we're going to practice it too. That's the attack that he has.

We shouldn't be judgmental about people, but have you ever met certain people in your lives who say, 'Oh yes I have been through the Qur'an many times and I know what Allah (swt) says in the Qur'an and when you actually look at their lifestyles, they are not practicing anything of it, they are not following the religion, they just claim to know it. And as you grow older you will meet a lot of such people; so that's Satan working on them.

Slides 14-17:

Then he causes forgetfulness and absent-mindedness. Satan employs this trick on people in different situations, where he makes us forget stuff. How does he actually make a believer forget certain things?

E.g. our responsibilities; oh I just missed my *salah*, I forgot to offer my prayers.

That is the basic way, the very general basic way that he makes us forget; we forget to offer our *salah*, we forget about our responsibilities, we forget about our commitments. Let's go into a little more detail, since *Alhamdulillah* we are the senior most module here, so we can understand a little more detail about this particular attack, that he makes us forget things.

There are times when we do good deeds in our lives; it can be any humanitarian work, perhaps you volunteer somewhere. Have you ever volunteered anywhere to do some project?

Alhamdulillah. So we will know what we are talking about. Why did you all do this? You wanted to please Allah (swt). Why did you want to help? So that you would get *ajr* for it. We did it because we wanted reward for ourselves, right?

Most of you must have worked in teams, there were other people with you, most of the time. Now what Satan does is that he gets you so involved in working with the other team members and co-workers, sometimes making it very, very challenging. You have your own opinion, the other person has his or her own opinion, so you're focusing a lot on other people around you. He makes you focus SO MUCH on people around you, on how to deal with them, not do what the other person is saying because he or she is wrong, etc. How to get your way, especially when there is a disagreement, he makes you involved in so many unnecessary things that you actually forget the actual reason as to why you were doing that work.

And what was that? To please Allah (swt)!

So you become so overly involved in dealing with people around you, that you start doing stuff that actually displeases Allah (swt). You backbite, you snap at people sometimes, you dislike certain people, you want your way, there are so many things that people do get involved in without realizing that, 'Hey, I'm here to please Allah (swt) and what I'm doing is just the opposite, I'm displeasing Him; so what is the use of my taking out so much time, coming here and doing all these, when the bottom line is that I'm displeasing Allah (swt).'

So he makes you focus on the small things and you forget about the big things. Do you understand how he makes the believers forget certain things?

Slide 18:

Another very, very powerful attack that he has against the believers is that he will make you perform all the good deeds; you offer your *salah*, you keep your fasts, you read the Qur-an, you're kind to people around you and he will encourage you, Satan will encourage you to remain in some kind of worship throughout the day. You're doing '*ibadah*'; but he makes you do it mechanically.

Your emotions are not there!

Your intentions are good, but you're doing it mechanically. What happens when you do it mechanically? You offer your *salah* mechanically, you keep your fast mechanically, you are helping out people mechanically, you don't have the *emotional* link with Allah (swt), your heart is not in it, you're just doing it. There are so many people who fall into this particular trap where you do everything mechanically. You're standing for your *salah* you're yawning away or you're thinking about the homework that you've got, you're thinking about the next TV programme. Physically you're doing everything. If somebody does not know what's going on in your heart and mind they would think, 'Wow! Look at her, what a pious person.' but your heart is not there.

Allah (swt) knows better if He's going to accept that *salah* or not, but if you're not connecting with Allah (swt) or you're not making an effort; you don't know if such a *salah* is accepted or not. We need to understand that these are attacks from Satan, where he takes away your thoughts, he takes away your emotional attachment with Allah (swt) and he encourages you to go to Perceptions or offer your prayers; he's the one who'll remind you, but if you're going to come here and sit and think 'What will they serve for snacks?' or 'Look at her clothes.' or 'I have to tell her this and this after the class.', you are just mechanically sitting here. Your hearts and minds are not involved in the reason for which you are here.

That is Satan working on you and this is very, very dangerous because apparently nobody can tell that something is wrong or that Satan is attacking you, most of the time even you don't realize that Satan is attacking you.

Why do you need to know this? Because it is like lying, just imagine, you've taken out time to come to Perceptions, you have exams coming up, we all need to give more time to our studies, however you TOOK OUT the time to come to Perceptions; but what is the use? It is good for nothing because you're just here mechanically .

Slides 19-21:

Satan also inspires you to take your commitments lightly. Again you have registered yourselves at Perceptions, you cannot possibly forget to come here, even if you do your moms will remind you, you have a commitment to keep.

But what will Satan make you think? 'Oh I'm so tired today, I had a very, very tough day at school.' or 'Oh I have a test coming up on Monday; there is no way I can take out time this afternoon.' or ' My friend has called me over, I don't get to go to my friend's house often so I don't want to miss this opportunity.' or 'Oh Perceptions, it is an on-going programme, we have it every Friday, so what's the big deal if I don't go just this Friday?' this is all coming from Satan. He wants you to break your commitment for Fridays.

Slides 22-25:

Then he encourages sentimentality.

Satan encourages a person's emotions to get carried away to a level that is not prescribed in the Qur-an; he becomes so emotionally involved in certain things and does certain things that are not prescribed by Allah (swt). Do you have any example for that in your mind, something that we find very, very common nowadays?

Suicide bombers. Yes, that's a classic example, killing innocent people, suicide bombing, target killing, they do it in the name of the religion. How can Satan not be behind this? Their emotions get carried to a level where they say *Allahu Akbar* before actually killing an innocent person, so it's not that they feel that they're doing a wrong thing, but Satan takes their emotions to a level which goes out of the boundary prescribed by Allah (swt), and they start doing stuff claiming that they're doing it for Allah (swt), to please Allah (swt), to go to *Jannah*!

But look at what they're doing, what they're doing is not allowed in Islam. And they just go blind, they don't know what they are doing, what kind of sins they are committing. So any kind of emotion which takes you outside the boundary of Islam, is wrong.

What is the other extreme? One is to kill innocent disbelievers, what is the other extreme? Harboursing any kind of love for disbelievers is not allowed. You cannot love them; yes you have to be nice to them, you can't take away their rights, you cannot be cruel to them, you have to be very courteous. Let's say if your neighbour is a Christian or a Buddhist or a Hindu you have to give him his rights, yes, but you cannot get emotionally involved with them! Because when you love somebody you get carried away and you start getting influenced by that person.

For example, if there is a Hindu girl in your class, you have to be very nice to her, very courteous to her, help her out whenever she needs your help, but she cannot become your best friend where you are discussing everything with her; because when we start becoming emotionally involved with people, I'm not talking about a girl-boy relationship, I'm talking about having somebody close to you where you can confide in that person. Being friends with one is fine but if you take what she says very seriously, then there's a problem because what happens is that there will be nine out of ten times when she'll be right, which are common in her religion and your religion but there is this ONE TIME that she will tell you something that is contrary to the commands of Allah (swt) and you will not even realize that you're being influenced by something which is having a negative effect on your *eemaan*.

It's not about the religion at all, it's not that she's going to make you a Christian tomorrow, that's not the point, the point is that her way of life is going to have an effect on yours, eventually it will, because what is that saying? You are recognized by your company.

So nine out of ten things that they do are probably right for us but there are certain things they do which are fine for them but not for us as Muslims and that is eventually going to have an effect on us. Again the bottom line, the one thing that we need to remember is that there are certain things for which 'But why?' is not applicable, it's Allah's (swt) command and our minds are not big enough to understand a lot of things that Allah (swt) can see and perceive.

Slides 26 -27:

Satan influences people to fixate on irrelevant discussions.

Can you relate to this?

All these 'Why' questions for example, rather than focusing on our duties. Can you think about conversations that we have, drawing room conversations that have absolutely no impact on our *aakhirah*? It's not going to effect our *aakhirah* at all, but we love to talk about it.

From the religious angle, he makes you fixate on irrelevant discussions about the religion. Let's put it this way; have you ever heard people talking about Mother Theresa - whether she's going to Hell or to Heaven? Or people debating about face covering being compulsory or optional when they don't even cover their heads?

Satan makes focus on the logic; 'Oh! I need to understand why, because I feel that it's not fair.' He makes you focus so much on the command from this particular angle that you forget that you are to obey the command of Allah (swt), this is all that you need to focus on.

You can't stand on the Day of Judgement in front of Allah (swt) and say, 'You know what Allah (swt), I didn't do this, this and this, because I felt that they were not fair!!' Will you be able to say that? Or 'I didn't do that because I was confused.' or 'I didn't do that because half the people were saying this and half were saying that, so I decided not to do it.'

No, you will be responsible for your actions. Allah (swt) will not ask you, 'So.... sweetie what do you think about Mother Theresa?' NO, no that's not going to happen. He'll talk to you about your own deeds, He won't talk about who covered her face and who did not, He'll ask about your thing, 'Did you cover your head?' 'Did you cover yourself the way you were supposed to?'

This discussing things about other people, it's being judgmental and it's not allowed.

You are not allowed to discuss and especially by names. If generally speaking I say that there are certain people who feel that, for example covering the head is not compulsory, that's fine that's not being judgmental, that's not backbiting, that's not something wrong. But if I say, 'Such and such person thinks this and they do this and they don't do that, that's being judgmental. Why do we need to quote people anyways? We need to talk about people's attitude because we don't want to commit the same mistakes ourselves, not because we're

judging them. We just need to make sure that there are certain trends in our society that we do not follow.

Slide 28 -31:

There is a saying, ‘An empty mind is the devil’s workshop.’ When you don’t utilize your time constructively then you get involved in things that are a complete waste of time and sometimes they take you towards sinful deeds.

If you’re not doing anything he (*Shaytaan*) comes in and poisons your mind. If you are sitting idle, Satan will slowly and gradually cajole you towards something wrong, like ‘Ok let me just check what’s coming on TV, I won’t watch what I’m not supposed to.’ That’s the first thought that will come in your mind. ‘What’s the harm in it, I just want to see what’s on the news.’ and then slowly and gradually you start switching the channels and then you stop on one channel and then you say, ‘Oh I’m not supposed to watch this.’ and then you go onto the next one and then you see something really, really interesting and you forget that you’re not supposed to watch it and you say, ‘Aah just two minutes, just let me see what she does next.’ Doesn’t it happen? It happens to most of us.

Why is that you can’t watch a kissing scene, for example; is there a reason? If you watch it, you want to do it. It’s really as simple as that! Whether you admit it to yourself or not. Satan will not make you do something indecent suddenly in a split second, he knows it will not work on us, so very slowly and gradually, he cajoles us towards indecent things and it begins by watching such things on TV.

So coming back to this devil’s workshop, yes you are right, empty minds are actually devil’s workshops, mainly because when we are free we can be inspired to things that we are not supposed to do. Another way of looking at it, which I expect you guys to understand now, is that if we are involved in some kind of a physical activity; you guys don’t drive, but say you are going in your car, commuting, going to school, or cleaning up your cupboard or baking a cake; activities where you’re physically involved, what happens mentally, what do you usually do? What are you thinking about? You don’t really concentrate, ‘Ok now the driver will take a right....’ You think about other stuff, your mind is empty. You get the most random thoughts because your mind is empty. Apparently you’re very busy, you’re doing something, you’re cleaning up your cupboard or you’re going to school, but your mind is constantly going on and that’s an empty mind. Satan loves empty minds and that’s the time he’ll come and put wrong thoughts in your mind. So what do we need to do?

We have to be alert mentally and we have to get into the habit of doing *dhikr*, remembering Allah (swt). If you’re going to school; a 20 minutes drive, what do you need to do?

Any kind of *dhikr*, ‘*la ilaaha illAllah Muhammadur rasulAllah*’, ‘*SubhanAllah*, *Alhamdulillah*, *Allah u akbar*’, ‘*Subhanallaahi wa bi hamdihi*, *subhanallaahil adheem*’,

durood sharif ... anything, keep your mind busy. Its' s a very good habit and you can build this habit now, because later in the age it becomes difficult and that's the way to keep Satan away.

Another example of how he works on an empty mind is, on the day of 'Eid; most of us do intense 'ibadah in Ramadan, we go for *taraweeh* offer our *salah* and our *salah* is a lot better than our usual *salah*, we try and concentrate more, we read the Qur'an, do everything. All of a sudden, what happens on the day of 'Eid?

We go crazy. Why do we go crazy? We feel we're finally free, but we forget that *Shaytaan* is also free. What happens is that all of a sudden we stop remembering Allah (swt). You might not be doing a sinful deed, you'll say, 'At least I'm not doing a sinful deed, all I'm doing is concentrating on my clothes, what's she wearing, what's he wearing, the food, let's go to her house, chit-chatting with your friends, there's nothing wrong with it.'

But you know what, you even miss your prayers!

Why do you miss your prayers?

Because you are so involved in your clothes...

We forget Allah (swt), our minds are empty, all of a sudden they become empty on 'eid and that's the best time for Satan to attack us. He makes us forget things, he makes us involved in unnecessary talk, he makes us procrastinate, he can attack us in any form.

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

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