

Verses on Satan

Muslims believe that the Devil does exist, to deny his existence is equal to denying the Qur'an. The Devil, named Iblees or Shaitaan (Satan) in Islam, is a being from amongst the Jinn, a species separate to the Angels, Humans and Animals.

It is a core belief in Islam that Iblees is not an Angel, as Angels are not beings that have free will and therefore it is impossible for them to disobey God.

From amongst the Jinn, Iblees (Satan) was the most pious and righteous of all, in fact he had reached such a high level that he was in the company of the Angels in the heavens due to his piety, it was when Allah (God) created Adam, the first human being, that Iblees' downfall began.

As mentioned in the Qur'an, Allah decided to create the first human being, Adam, from clay. Once Adam was fully created, Allah commanded everyone in the heavens to bow down to Adam out of respect, not out of worship in the way that Muslims prostrate to Allah.

“And we have certainly created you, [O Mankind], and given you [human] form. Then we said to the angels, “Prostrate to Adam”; so they prostrated, except for Iblees. He was not of those who prostrated.”[Qur'an: Al-A'raaf 7:11]

As mentioned in the above verse, the command was given to everyone including Iblees who is mentioned together with the angels.

This verse often causes confusion amongst people who don't have knowledge of the Arabic language, and on the face of the translation it suggests that Satan was an angel instead of a Jinn, fitting into the Judeo-Christian theology. However this type of phrase is common in Arabic i.e. to mention two separate types of people in one group, for example “All of the students left, except the teacher.” It does not mean that the teacher is a student, however it is an easier way to describe the situation.

Iblees refused to obey the command of Allah, the following verse tells us the reason why he did not bow down.

“[Allah] said, “What prevented you from prostrating when I commanded you?” [Satan] said, “I am better than him. You created me from fire and created him from clay.” [Qur'an: Al-A'raaf 7:12]

Iblees was in essence the first racist to ever exist, this stemmed from his immense arrogance and pride over who he was, which ultimately led to his downfall, described in the next verse.

“(Allah) said: “(O Iblees) get down from this (Paradise), it is not for you to be arrogant here. Get out, for you are of those humiliated and disgraced.” [The Qur’an: Al-A’raaf 7:14]

Allah then punished Iblees by removing him from Paradise, citing arrogance as the reason and reminding Iblees that he has been humiliated. Instead of repenting and feeling regret for disobeying a direct order from Allah, Iblees chose to further his violation against Allah, as described in the following four verses:

“(Iblees) said: “Allow me respite till the Day they are raised up (i.e. the Day of Resurrection).” (Allah) said: “You are of those allowed respite.” (Iblees) said: “Because you have sent me astray, surely I will sit in wait against them (human beings) on Your Straight Path. * Then I will come to them from before them and behind them, from their right and from their left, and you will not find most of them as thankful ones (i.e. they will not be dutiful to you).”[Qur’an: Al-A’raaf 7: 14-17]

It is clear from the above verses that Iblees had no regret over what he did, and then chose to carry on in his disobedience against Allah by asking permission to have respite until the Day of Judgement so that he can try and mislead as many humans as possible to prove to Allah that they are a foolish and weak creation.

However Allah warned Iblees regarding those who believe in Allah and worship Him alone in the following verses:

“[Iblees] said, “My Lord, because you have put me in error, I will surely make [disobedience] attractive to them on earth, and I will mislead them all, except, among them, Your chosen servants.” (Allah) said: “This is the Way which will lead straight to me.” (Allah) said: “Certainly, you shall have no authority over my servants, except those who follow you of the deviators.” [Qur’an: Al-A’raaf 15:39-41]

As Allah mentioned, Satan will not have any authority over the people who believe in Allah and submit to Him. After this Allah banished Iblees from the heavens as mentioned in the following verse:

“(Allah) said (to Iblees) “Get out from this (Paradise) disgraced and expelled. Whoever of them (mankind) will follow you, then surely I will fill Hell with you all.” [Qur’an: Al-A’raaf 7:18]

The end of the Devil

It is mentioned clearly in the Qur’an what will be the final destination of Iblees and his followers:

“And Satan will say when the matter has been concluded, “Indeed, Allah had promised you the promise of truth. And I promised you, but I betrayed you. But I had no authority over you except that I invited you, and you responded to me. So do not blame me; but blame yourselves. I cannot be called to your aid, nor can you be called to my aid. Indeed, I deny your association of me [with Allah] before. Indeed, for the wrongdoers is a painful punishment.” [Qur’an: Ibraaheem 14:22]

He will reject them all and they will all be cast into the hell-fire as recompense for their actions.

Muslims are commanded to seek refuge with Allah from the evil of Iblees, he will not miss a chance to misguide an individual in any way possible, and since he has been around since the beginning of the human race, he knows how we think and live, thus taking advantage of our weaknesses. In the Qur’an he has many different titles such as:

“Chief Deceiver” [Qur’an: Faatir 35:5],

“Enemy” [Qur’an: Faatir 35:6],

“Arrogant” [Qur’an: Saad 38:74].

In summary, Islam tells us everything that we need to know about the Devil, including his origins, his mission to turn humanity away from God and what will be his and his follower’s final end. Muslims are repeatedly warned about the traps of the Devil by Allah in the Qur’an, as in the following verse:

“O you who have believed, enter into Islam completely [and perfectly] and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy.” [The Qur’an: Al-Baqarah 2:208]

Imam Baqir a.s. narrated that his Noble Father, Imam Sadiq a.s. said: 'Satan, the enemy of Allah groaned four times in utter desperation. This occurred on the day that he was cursed by Allah, the day he was sent down to earth, the day the Prophet Mohammad was appointed as Prophet and the Day of Ghadeer'.

Imam Sadiq a.s. said: "There are three first fathers: Adam who had a believing son, Yahya who had both a believing and an infidel son, and shaytan who had an infidel offspring who does not reproduce in the usual. They lay eggs and a new male is produced. There are no females in their line'.

Imam Ali a.s. said, condemning those who follow the shaytan: "They have taken shaytan as the controller for their affairs, and he has in turn adopted them as his partners (used them in his traps).

He has laid eggs and hatched them i their chests, and crawled into their laps, until he saw through their eyes and spoke with their tongues.

Thus does he lead them to commit errors and glamorizes their own foolish deeds to them, l like the act of one who shaytan has made partner i his domain, speaking lies through his tongue'.

The Prophet Mohammad a.s. said: 'Refrain from the colour red, for it is the most favourite ornament of the shaytan'.