



MUJAAHADATU-SH-SHAYTAAN

Resistance against Sheytaan

Prepared by Abul-Layth

Allah says,

As for those who strive hard in Our cause, We will surely guide them to Ours Paths (Allah's religion) [Sooratu-l-'Ankaboot, 29: 69].

Therefore, guidance is dependent upon striving hard, not just making an effort, but to truly struggle with all one's might! The word Allah uses for striving is 'jaahada'. From the verb (a doing word if you like) 'Jaahada' come the words 'jihaad' and 'al-mujaahadah'. Ar-Raaghib al-Asfahaanee (rahimahullaah) defines these words in his famous book on the language of the Qur'an, 'Mufradaatu-Ghareebi-l-Qur'aan' thus: 'the words jihaad and al-mujaahadah both mean to exhaust ones resources to resist the enemy. Jihad is of three types:

1. Resisting the apparent enemy
2. Resisting the shayateen (Iblees)
3. Resisting the temptations of the self.

Shaykh Abdu-l-Qaadir al-Jilaanee (rahimahullaah) has mentioned that there are four targets for the plots of Shaytaan: the qalb (the heart), the nafs (lower self), the 'aql (the mind), and the hawa (passionate instincts/ desires). Concerning this he said,

'On the one hand the angel is inculcating law in the heart. The devil, on the other hand, is busy instilling fujoor (moral depravity) in to the nafs. As a result the nafs tries to persuade the qalb to use the limbs and organs of the body for impious and immoral purposes.

Within the physical constitution there are also two target areas: the 'aql (the mind) and the haw aa (passionate instincts). The functioning of each of theses is subject to the will of a controlling influence, namely, that of helpful guidance (taawfeeq) and that of seductive [satanic] temptation (ighwaa').

Allah says,

Say: 'I take refuge with the Lord of Mankind, the King of mankind, the God of mankind, from the evil of the slinking whisperer' [Sooratu-n-Naas, 114: 1-4]

Mullah (rahmatullah) said regarding these ayat, ' This means that Sheytaan likes to make himself comfortably at home in the heart of the human being. When someone remembers Allah, he slinks away and feels ill at ease, but whenever a person becomes forgetful, he stretches himself out in comfort over his heart.' Similarly Muqaatil (rahmatullah) said,

'He [the slinking whisperer] is the Devil in the shape of a pig attached to the heart within the physical body of the son of Adam, where he infiltrates himself smoothly as the flow of blood. Allah has given him control over that human being. Such is the import of His words:

[The slinking whisperer] who whispers in the breasts of men [Sooratu-n-Naas, 114: 5].

Thus, when the son of Adam becomes absentminded, the Devil insinuates his suggestions into his heart, until he swallows up his heart completely. He is called the

Slinker [khannaas] because, when the son of Adam remembers Allah, he slinks away from his heart, leaves it and makes his exit from that person's physical body.'

Shaky al-Jilaanee (rahmatullah) further mentions in his book 'al-Ghunya', the inner nature of the struggle that we must all take care of:

The struggle with Sheytaan is an inner struggle, for it is waged by the heart in the core of one's being, and by faith (eman). When you struggle with him, therefore, your help and support is Ar-Rahmaan (the All-Merciful), your mainstay is the Al-Malik (the King) and Ad-Dayyaan (the Judge), and your hope is in the Face of Al-Jaleel Al-Mannaan (the Majestic Benefactor).

The jihad against the Kuffar is the outer battle with the sword and the spear, in which your support is provided by the ruler and the armed forces, and in which your hope is to enter the gardens of Paradise. If you are slain in the struggle with the unbelievers, your reward will be life everlasting in the abode of perpetuity. But if you are killed in the course of waging war on Sheytaan and while you are committed to opposing him, due to the expiration of your appointed term and because your moment to die has arrived, your reward will be the Face of Ar-Rabbi-l-'Aalameen (the Lord of all the Worlds) at the meeting with Him. If you are slain by a kaffir, you will be a martyr. But if you are killed by the Devil through following him obediently and carrying out his orders, you will be an outcast, banished from the nearness to Al-Malik Al-Jabbaar (the All-Compelling King).

The jihad against the kuffar has an end and there comes a time when it is over. But the jihad against the Devil and the nafs is one that has no final limit and no point of termination. As Allah has said:

And serve your Lord until the Certainty comes to you [Sooratu-l-Hijr, 15:99].

That is to say, till death and the meeting [with Him], for ibadah is performed by offering opposition to Sheytaan and hawaa (passionate instincts/ desires).

Allah has said:

The they will be thrown on their faces into it (the Fire of Hell) - they and the ghaawoon (the devils, the perverse, and those who were in error), and the hosts of Iblees, all together [Sooratu-sh-Shu'araa', 26: 94-95].

We must renew our efforts, redouble our defences, and strive to clothe ourselves in the armour of Allah's protection from the evil of Sheytaan and of our own selves, for all good is from Allah alone. And as al-mujaahadah can also be described as at-tazkeeyah we need to recognise that it is unattainable by the greatest of all our efforts unless it is to Allah alone to Whom we turn for all our requirements and all help, as Allah has informed us,

Oh you who believe! Do not follow the steps of Sheytaan Whoever follows the footsteps of Sheytaan, then indeed He commands al-fahshaa (indecency, etc.) and al-munkar (evil deeds, polytheism, etc.). And had it not been for the grace of Allah and His Mercy upon you, none of you would be pure from sins. But Allah purifies whom He wills, and Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower [Sooratu-n-Noor, 24:21].

Abdu-l-Ghaneen an-Naabulsee said in encouraging striving, 'Al-Mujaahadah against the nafs is a form of ibadah Only those who have 'ilm (knowledge) acquire this. However, it is an obligation upon every Muslim' [Sharhu-t-Tareeqati-l-Muhammadeeyah, 1/323].

In encouraging us not to waste time, we find a succinct advice from Shu'bah ibnu-l-Hajjaaju-l-Basree, 'Do not sit idle, for indeed Death is seeking you!'

If al-mujaahadah can be described as at-tazkeeyah, then what can we learn about at-tazkeeyah? At-Tazkeeyah is to purify, and it is one of the tasks of the Prophet

Muhammad (SAW), and by extension a task before us all. Allah said,

It is He Who has sent to the unlettered ones a Messenger from amongst themselves, reciting to them His signs, purifying them and teaching them the Book and the Wisdom, whereas before that they had been in clear misguidance [Sooratu-l-Jumu'uah, 62:2].

Tazkeeyah comes before teaching, as Allah has given precedence to it over teaching, and that is because tazkeeyah is one of the fruits of acting upon knowledge. Therefore, one should be aware that if his knowledge increases but he does not increase in taw, then there is something wrong with his knowledge and something wayward with his actions. Connected to this we must know that the greatest of all the fruits of tazkeeyah is sabr (patient perseverance) and zuhd (praiseworthy abstinence from the world), and the fruit of ilm (knowledge) is surely yaqeen (certitude and certainty). 'So he who gains both... is one of the Imams of the Deen; and this is testified to by the saying of Allah,

And We made leaders, giving guidance by Our Command, whilst they had sabr and had yaqeen in Our Signs' [Sooratu-s-Sajdah, 32:24].

Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymeeyah used to say, 'Through sabr and yaqeen leadership in the deen is attained' This is indeed the case as both are the actualisations of two of the Prophet's (SAW) tasks and who other than he (SAW) is the leader of all the Imams!

'Abdullah ibnu-l-Mubaarak used to say, 'the latter part of this ummah will not be rectified, except by that which rectified its first part: zuhd and yaqeen!' And zuhd cannot be attained except by means of sabr, which cannot be attained except through tazkeeyah, which is itself, mujaahadah. And yaqeen cannot be attained except through purified Shareecah knowledge.

This process of mujaahadah will drive away the trials of the heart, namely the trials relating to false desires and the trials relating to doubts. Ibnu-l-Qayyim said, 'the first causes intentions and desires to be corrupted, and the second causes knowledge and beliefs to be corrupted'.

So how can we begin on this road of struggle? Then I can only suggest to you and me both dear brothers the advice of Ibn cAwn when he said, 'remembrance of people is a disease and the remembrance of Allah is the cure'. Imam ath-Thahabee commented on this, 'Indeed, by Allah! It is very strange how we ignore the cure and race towards the disease! Allah said,

So remember me and I will remember you [Sooratu-l-Baqarah, 2:152]

And, The remembrance of Allah is greater

And He said,

Those who believe and whose hearts find tranquility in the remembrance of Allah Indeed, in the remembrance of Allah do the hearts find satisfaction [Sooratu-r-Ra'd, 13:28].

However, this will not be achieved except by the grace of Allah And whoever persists in supplication and in knocking at the door, it will be opened for him.'

And the best speech is the Speech of Allah, so I leave you, my dear brothers with the greatest reminder from our Rabb, so merciful, wise and gentle upon His slaves,

Whoever hopes for the Meeting with Allah, then Allah's Term is surely coming, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower. And whoever strives, strives only for himself. Verily, Allah is free of all wants from the 'aalameen (all creation) [Sooratu-l-Ankaboot, 29: 5-

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May Allah grant the Muslims the ability and guidance to strive in His way always until they meet Him.

Wal-hamdulillaahi Rabbil-'aalameen.



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