

What Is Satan and What Characteristics Does He Have?

What Is Satan, and What Are His Characteristics and Strategies?

- What is Satan?
- Is Satan a real personality or an imaginary and delusional being?
- What are Satan's strategies, and how does it generate thoughts in human minds?

Have you ever experienced disturbing and unsettling thoughts? Have you had restless and distressing dreams and woken up in fear? Have you had suspicions about those around you and unintentionally felt hatred towards them? Does worry about an uncertain future and regret over the past weigh heavily on your heart and take away your peace of mind? How do you think such thoughts are generated? Does our mind make them, or do they result from external influences beyond our control?

Satan is a familiar name, known by people worldwide, and followers of all religions believe in his longstanding enmity with humans and his efforts to disrupt their peace and lead them astray from the path of truth. However, in any current psychological or educational theories, there is no place for knowing Satan as a being that disrupts individuals' lives by producing negative thoughts and jeopardizing their mental health. If someone seeks help from psychological or psychiatric clinics for the disturbing and intrusive thoughts that come to his mind involuntarily, almost none of them point to the role of Satan in this regard since they lack information about it.

Due to this lack of awareness, the individual's friends and family members often wrongly blame him and pressure him to fight these thoughts. Since people are unfamiliar with the mechanism behind the formation of these thoughts, their efforts to combat them often end in failure; this makes the crisis worse and leads the patient to reactions that ultimately benefit Satan! However, if people know the type of attacks Satan makes, they can quickly identify the direction and source of these thoughts upon their emergence, ward off these poisonous thoughts, and prevent them from taking root. But what is Satan, and how does it attack us?

What Beings Are Called Satan?

The first question we encounter in knowing Satan is, "Who or what is Satan?" Most people consider Satan equivalent to Iblis. They assume that Satan is simply the being who was expelled from the divine presence due to not prostrating to Adam and disobeying God's command. However, that person is Iblis. Iblis is a specific name for one of the jinn or genies who had elevated ranks due to extensive worship and was among the angels, but out of jealousy towards Adam, he was expelled from the divine presence.

However, what is Satan? Satan is a general term used for any being that intends enmity towards humans and misleads them. Therefore, both Iblis and his followers who are from the jinn are considered Satan, as well as the humans under his influence who misguide others. Thus, throughout life, we face not only the individual Iblis but also armies of devils from the jinn and humans. Sometimes, we deviate from the guardianship of God and join the army of Satan, encouraging others to commit wrong deeds and sins.

What are Satan's strategies, and how does he mislead human beings from the straight path?

Satan's Strategies and Types of His Attacks

We mentioned that God, in His first manifestation, initially created humans, and then other beings were created based on the structure of the human soul and for serving humanity. This discussion yields two important results: First, Satan's creation, like the creation of other beings, is for the benefit of humans and their perfection. Second, the type of attacks by Satan perfectly aligns with the structure of the human soul. We will delve into the first topic, i.e., the benefits of Satan for humans, in later lessons. Regarding the second topic, i.e., Satan's attacks coordinating with the structure of the human soul, we must first understand the concept of the "straight path." Satan has promised to stand on the straight path and attack humans from four directions: front, back, left, and right.

The concept of the straight path has been explained earlier. Considering the Law of Proportion and the relationship between this world and the hereafter, the straight path is easily understandable. The straight path is essentially a path that leads to a healthy birth and prepares the human soul for benefiting from the conditions of the hereafter and Heaven. Therefore, the straight path is not a physical road on earth but a spiritual reality. Based on this, humans are divided into two groups: The first group of people are not on the straight path and are considered companions and soldiers of Satan. The second group who are believers are on the straight path and are consequently exposed to constant attacks from the first group and other soldiers of Satan.

With the definition provided for the concept of the straight path, it becomes clear that Satan's attacks also occur within the human soul; in fact, our battle and war with Satan is not an external and earthly one, but an internal and spiritual one. Satan attacks our souls from the front, back, right, and left, targeting our weaknesses and launching attacks wherever we are most vulnerable. Most of the time, Satan's attacks are hybrid, wearing us down with continuous assaults from one side, then completely catching us off guard with a sudden attack from another direction.

We will fully describe each of Satan's attacks in future articles. However, for now, as an introduction to and a summary of the current discussion, we will briefly introduce these attacks:

- The attack from the front includes baseless worries that create anxiety and fear about unknown future events.
- The attack from the back is accompanied by highlighting mistakes, reminding people of past failures and displeasures.
- The attack from the left exploits individuals' weaknesses and slip-ups to tempt them towards sin.
- Finally, the attack from the right is considered the most dangerous one; it instills self-conceit and arrogance by reminding individuals of materialistic and spiritual perfections.