



The Deception of Satan in Causing People to Fall Into Either of Two Extremes¹

By Shams ud Deen Ibn Al-Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah (died 751H)
Trans Aboo Haatim Muhammad Farooq

So from his (i.e. Satan's) strange plot/stratagem is: that he will test the *Nafs* (soul) in order to see what it has with it. This he does to determine which of the two resolutions is a mainstay over it:

- The resolution of fearlessness and bravery; or:
- The resolution of turning away and abstention and contempt.

For if he sees that its mainstay upon the soul is: contempt and abstention, he then begins to hinder him and weaken his endeavour as well as his intent from that which he was commanded with. Thus he makes it burdensome for him, and so he demeans it upon him in order that he should abandon it – such that stage by stage he abandons it; or falls short in it; and so neglects it.

However if he sees that its mainstay over it is: the strength of fearlessness and being strong-hearted; he then seeks to cause his underestimation of that which he was commanded with. Thus he causes him to fall into the illusion that he has not sufficed in it; therefore needing exertion with that along with that which is additional.

So he causes the first type to fall short whilst the second he causes to go to extremes. It is just as some of the Salaf said:

'Allaah The One free of all imperfections never commanded with a command – except that Satan had in it two incitements: either towards negligence and shortcoming; or towards transgressing the bounds and extremism – and he (Satan) does not care to which of them his achievement lies.'

Indeed most of the people have diverged to these two *wadi's* (valleys) – with the exception of lesser than a few. That being the *wadi* of falling short and the *wadi* of transgressing the bounds and transcending.

Yet a very small number of them are firm upon the path which the Messenger of Allaah (Sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam) and his companions were upon.

For there are a people who he caused to fall short in performing the obligatory acts of purification.

Yet there are a people whom he caused to go to extremes such that they exceed such bounds through whisperings.

¹ Taken from: Ighaathatul lahfāan fee massa'id ash-shaitaan (Daar Ibn Al-Jawzee) 1/222-226.

He caused a people to fall short in extracting that which was obligatory from their wealth. Yet there are a people whom he caused to go to extremes such that they sent forth all that was in their hands. Thus left sat at the neediness of the people; looking to that which was in their hands.

He caused a people to fall short in attaining that which they needed by way of food and drink and clothing – such that they were harmed by way of it through their bodies and hearts.

Yet there are a people whom he caused to go to extremes such that they took more than they needed; thus harming their hearts and their bodies.

Likewise he caused a people to fall short in giving the rights to the Prophets and their inheritors – such that they killed them.

Yet he caused others to go to extremes such that they worshipped them.

He caused a people to fall short in regards to mixing with the masses – such that they became solitary from them in the acts of obedience such as the Jumu'ah prayer and the congregational prayers and the Jihaad and seeking knowledge.

Yet there are a people whom he caused to go to extremes such that they mixed with them (the masses) and so partook in oppression and sinfulness and crime.

He caused a people to fall short such that they were unable to slaughter so much as a sparrow or a sheep in order to eat from it.

Yet caused others to go to extremes such that he led them to the audacity of spilling innocent blood.

Likewise he caused a people to fall short – such that he prevented them from busying themselves with knowledge which benefits them.

Yet caused others to go to extremes such that they made knowledge itself as the goal – against implementation of it.

Likewise he caused a people to fall short – such that he made them eat grass and the pastures meant for the creation – other than the nutrition of the progeny of Aadam. Yet caused others to go to extremes such that he made them eat from that which was purely *Haraam* (forbidden).

He caused a people to fall short in such a way that he made alluring to them the abandonment of the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah (Sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam) by way of *Nikaah* (marriage). Thus they turned away from it in totality.

Yet caused others to go to extremes such that they undertook that which led them to commit that which was forbidden.

He caused a people to fall short – such that they left off the Scholars who were from the people of Religion and rectification; and so they turned away from them and did not establish for them their rights.

Yet caused others to go to extremes such that they worshipped them along with Allaah – The Most High.

Likewise he caused a people to fall short – such that he prevented them from the acceptance of the statements of the people of knowledge and giving it their total attention.

Yet caused others to go to extremes such that they made Halaal that which they (the people of knowledge) made Halaal and made Haraam that which they made Haraam. So they gave precedence to their statements over the clear and correct Sunnah of the Messenger of Allaah (Sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam).

He caused a people to fall short – such that they said: 'indeed Allaah The One free of all imperfections does not decree the actions of His servants nor does He will for them (the actions) from them. Rather that they perform them without the will of Allaah The Most High and without His decree.'

Yet caused others to go to extremes such that they said: 'they do not perform an action whatsoever; rather it is Allaah The One free of all imperfections Who is The One who performs those actions in reality. So it is His action not their action, so the servants have neither the ability and nor perform the action at all.'

He caused a people to fall short – such that they said: 'indeed The Lord of the creation The One free of all imperfections is not inside His creation; and nor is he distinct from it. Likewise He is not above them and nor is He below them, and neither is He behind them and nor is He in front of them; and neither is He on their right hand side and nor is He on their left hand side.'

Yet caused others to go to extremes such that they said: 'He is in every place in His essence – just as the air is found in every place.'

He caused a people to fall short – such that they said: 'The Lord Who is free of all imperfections does not speak with even a single word – at all.'

Yet caused others to go to extremes such that they said: 'He has not ceased to and does not cease to and is always speaking saying:

'O Iblees; what prevented you from prostrating to that which I created with My own Hand?'²

And He says to Moosaa:

'Go to Fir'awn'³

So He does not cease to speak with this and it is heard from Him, such is the case of the attribute of life with regards to Him also.'

He caused a people to fall short – such that they said: 'Indeed Allaah The One free of all imperfections does not allow anyone to intercede for anyone else – at all. Nor does He have mercy upon anyone due to the intercession of anyone.'

Yet caused others to go to extremes such that they claimed that the creation can intercede along with Him without His permission, just as the one with authority and their likes can intercede with Kings.

He caused a people to fall short – such that they said: That the Eemaan (belief) of the most wicked of people and the most oppressive of them is like the Eemaan of Jibreel and Mikaeel ('Alaihimus salaam) – let alone that of Aboo Bakr and 'Umar.

² Soorah Saad: 75

³ Soorah An-Naazi'aat: 17

Yet caused others to go to extremes such that they exited people from the fold of Al-Islaam due to having committed a single major sin.

He caused a people to fall short – such that they denied the realities of the Names of The Lord The One free of all imperfections and Most High – as well as His attributes; and they changed the meanings of them for Him.

Yet caused others to go to extremes such that they resembled Him with His creation and gave Him similarities to them.

He caused a people to fall short – such that they became enemies towards the people of the household of Allaah’s Messenger (Sallallaahu ‘alaihi wa sallam) – such that they killed them and made lawful their sanctity⁴.

Yet caused others to go to extremes such that they claimed that there was found in them the qualities of Prophethood from the likes of infallibility and other than it; and perhaps even claimed divinity in regards to them.

Likewise he caused the Jews to fall short with regard to the Messiah – such that they declared him a liar. They accused him and his mother of that which Allaah The Most High freed them both from.

Yet caused the Christians to go to extremes such that they made him the son of Allaah; and they made him as a Deity to be worshipped along with Allaah.

He caused a people to fall short – such that they denied the reasons (of occurrence) and the power and that which is natural as well as the natural disposition.

Yet caused others to go to extremes such that they made these affairs as necessary matters which are unchangeable and nor are they replaceable; and possibly go on to make some of them independent due to effect.

He caused a people to fall short – such that they worshipped with that which was impure – and they are the Christians and those that resemble them.

Yet caused others to go to extremes such that he brought them to demolition and shackles through whisperings – and they are those that resemble the Jews.

He caused a people to fall short – such that they made alluring for the people as well as make apparent for them actions and aspects of worship that they would then make praises upon them for.

Yet caused others to go to extremes such that they made apparent for them (the people) from those foul things and from the evil actions as would cause their dignity to fall with them – and they call themselves ‘Al-Malaamatiyyah’⁵

He caused a people to fall short – such that they fell into disregard concerning the actions of the heart – and so they did not pay attention to that. Instead enumerating it as excess or a matter of secondary importance. Yet caused others to go to extremes such that they fell short in their glance and their practice upon it and instead didn’t pay attention to many of the actions of the limbs saying instead that: ‘for the one who knows, then his

⁴ I.e. violated their sanctity. (Translators note)

⁵ An off-shoot group from the groups of the Soofiyyah al-Baatiniyyah.

inspiration/ notion⁶ does not diminish due to the specified time of day or night devoted to worship.⁷

This chapter is of great expanse; for if we pursued it then the matter would reach a vast extent; for we only intended to give indication to it in the slightest way.

⁶ I.e. their claim of possessing divine faith and inspiration and thought.

⁷ Meaning: that they do not abandon/need to abandon these thoughts/notions in place of the specified time of day for legislated worship such as: recitation of the Qur'aan, *tasbeeh* and *dhikr* (remembrance) and voluntary prayers.