

## Satan's Attack from the Right

### How Does Satan Exploit Our Positive Attributes?

#### Satan's Attack from the Right: How Our Virtues and Strengths Can Hurt Us?

Satan's attack from the right means Satan tempts us and deviates us from the right path through our spiritual perfections, virtues, and strengths. Typically, thinking about Satan reminds us of sin, broken morals, weaknesses, or different kinds of immorality. However, we often overlook the fact that one of Satan's main tactics is to exploit our own positive attributes and virtues. The things we consider as our soul's assets may be used as tools in Satan's attack from the right.

In this attack, Satan targets the assets we perceive as our virtues or strengths. When Satan cannot tempt us to sin, he seeks to corrupt our acts of worship and positive attributes to achieve his goals.

Satan's attack from the right makes us self-absorbed, arrogant, and overly complacent, to the point where we become enamored with our positive qualities and mistakenly believe we have acquired our qualities independently from God. Qualities such as beauty, being academically successful, being an outstanding religious person, getting involved with charities for many years, all may lay the ground for Satan's attack from the right.

This attack makes us feel superior to others and become self-righteous. As a result, we forget that all our achievements and possessions are gifts from God and in fact, everything belongs to Him. Consequently, when we perform our human duties, we consider ourselves independent from God, forgetting that without God's will, we cannot accomplish any good deeds.

Now, the question arises: How can we protect ourselves from Satan's attack from the right? Should we refrain from doing good deeds or not want to have positive attributes anymore? In fact, to prevent this attack, we must nourish and strengthen our supra-rational faculty. The reason is that if our human aspect, i.e., our supra-rational faculty, is not strong enough to rule over our other dimensions, our positive attributes and sacred actions will lack a solid foundation and will be under the control of our animal dimension. As a result, our positive attributes and sacred actions easily become targets of Satan, turning into weaknesses rather than sources of happiness.

### **Methods of Satan's Attack from the Right**

So how does Satan attack us from the right? How does he divert us from the purpose of our creation? In usual circumstances, it may not even cross our minds that our religiosity could act as a factor that leads us to atheism.

Sometimes, Satan pushes us into going extremes in certain religious matters or imposes obligations that God has not asked us to fulfill them. In previous lessons, we discussed that the world is built based on precise measures and relationships; religious rules are no exception. In fact, the difference between religion and superstition lies in the rules and measurements that make religion a precise plan. When Satan hinders us from acting based on precise measures that God has determined based on His wisdom and planning and compels us to follow our low desires, we fall victim to the attack from the right.

Also, sometimes when Satan wants us to neglect our main duties or prevents us from doing a specific sacred task, he distracts us with another sacred act. For example, he may compel us to abandon striving [*jihad*] in God's cause under the

pretext of pursuing knowledge or to neglect our duties toward our parents while involving in charity work. In such cases, a sacred act serves as a veil, and we may never realize our mistakes while believing we are doing good.

Satan may also exploit our sacred matters and possessions to create opportunities for us to commit sin and forbidden actions. For instance, when we reach fame because of involving in charity work or performing acts of worship for many years, Satan uses our fame to make us self-righteous.

### **Recognizing Satan's Attack from the Right**

Now, what is our duty? When we struggle to choose between two good and sacred actions, which one should we choose? Is there a limit on how many times Satan can attack us from the right? How can we discern which of our good deeds leads us to happiness and which may lead to our downfall?

Choosing between two good options is not easy; however, applying God's principles to our life and following His rules is always helpful. For instance, if we are familiar with the hierarchy of love, we know that we should prioritize God, Prophet Muhammad's Household (Peace be upon them), and striving in His cause over our homes, wealth, business, and family relationships <sup>1</sup>. We must not forget that God and Prophet Muhammad's Household (Peace upon them) have identified our duties in different situations in these relationships and regarding these rights.

For example, we should not ignore our spouse, parents, or children's rights under the pretext of participating in religious ceremonies or nourishing our human dimension. This is because Satan can extend his influence even to our

supra-rational dimension. However, this does not mean that supra-rational dimension's inclinations are satanic; rather, they can be misused by Satan.

For instance, when we obligate ourselves to attend various ethics and education courses while neglecting our children's needs, we not only fail to achieve the purpose of our creation but also damage our relationship with our children. As a result, we cause them problems in the future.

The most important strategy for recognizing Satan's attack from the right is that we should be aware that Satan always wants us to be engaged in sacred matters for the sake of our false self. For example, he encourages us to pursue education so that we boast about our accomplishments in the future, or he may convince us to pursue knowledge so that we can serve others, distracting us from our main duty that is serving the infallible Imam. Thus, apart from meeting our basic needs, obedience to God often contradicts our desires; it also puts pressure on our false self and material dimension.

In truth, among all our actions, assets, and choices, there is only one path to happiness: the straight path that brings us closer to the purpose of our creation, and Satan always hinders us on this path <sup>2</sup>. We must organize all our actions, even the most sacred ones, in a way that they align with the purpose of our creation and the acquisition of a sound heart. Otherwise, any action that aligns with our lower desires and our lower self will always be vulnerable to Satan's attack, even if it is a sacred act.

In this lesson, we explored the various matters that fall under Satan's attack from the right. We noted that not only our moral and personal weaknesses but also our positive qualities can be used as tools by Satan to attack us. We examined the methods Satan employs for this attack and concluded by discussing how we

can distinguish between sacred actions desired by Satan and good deeds that bring us closer to the purpose of our creation.

Do you think you are under Satan's attack from the right? How much do your good deeds, virtues, and positive qualities bring you inner peace and happiness?

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<sup>1</sup>. Quran, 9:24

<sup>2</sup>. Quran, 7:16