

22233 - Does Iblees have any offspring?

the question

Does Iblees have any offspring? If so, is the via marriage? And does he have a wife?

Detailed answer

Shaykh al-Shanqeeti said in his commentary on the aayah (interpretation of the meaning):

“Will you then take him (Iblees) and his offspring as protectors and helpers rather than Me...?”[al-Kahf 18:50]

The word dhurriyah (offspring) in this aayah indicates that the Shaytaan has offspring. The claim that he does not have offspring clearly contradicts this aayah as you can see. Everything that clearly contradicts the Quran is undoubtedly false. But there is no clear text concerning the way in which his offspring come into being, whether that is through marriage or otherwise, and the scholars differed concerning this matter. Al- Shu’bi said: A man asked me whether Iblees has a wife? I said, “That is a wedding party I never attended!”, then I remembered the aayah (interpretation of the meaning):

“Will you then take him (Iblees) and his offspring as protectors and helpers rather than Me...?”[al-Kahf 18:50]

Then I realized that he could not have offspring unless he had a wife, so I said, Yes.

Something similar to what al-Shu’bi understood from this aayah, that having offspring implies having a wife, was also narrated from Qutaadah. Mujaahid said: the way in which his offspring came into being is that he inserted his private part into his private part, then he laid five eggs, and this was the origin of his offspring. Some of the scholars said that Allaah created a penis on his right thigh and a vagina on his left thigh, so he impregnates himself in this manner and ten eggs are laid every day, from each of which emerge seventy male and female devils.

It is obvious that these views are unreliable, because they are not supported by any text in the Quran or Sunnah. The aayah indicates that he has offspring, but as to how these offspring are born, there is no reliable text concerning that, and such matters cannot be known through mere opinions.

Al-Qurtubi said in his commentary on this aayah: I say: what is proven in saheeh reports concerning this matter is that which was narrated by al-Humaydi in al-Jam' bayna al-Saheehayn from Imaam Abu Bakr al-Burqaani, who narrated in his book with an isnaad from Abu Muhammad 'Abd al-Ghani ibn Sa'eed al-Haafiz from the report of 'Aasim from Abu 'Uthmaan from Salmaan that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Do not be the first one to enter the market-place or the last one to leave, for there the Shaytaan lays his eggs and there they hatch." This indicates that the Shaytaan has offspring from his loins.

Those who interpreted this report literally (may Allaah forgive them) said that this hadeeth indicates that he (the Shaytaan) lays eggs and that they hatch. But there is nothing to indicate that these eggs are from a female, namely his wife, or otherwise. This hadeeth may be interpreted differently, because the Arabs often speak of laying eggs and hatching them by way of metaphor. So the words "he lays his eggs and they hatch" may be interpreted as meaning that he does whatever he wants to misguide and tempt people, and whisper insinuating thoughts to them, and so on, as a metaphor. The wording of metaphors does not change, regardless of the context.