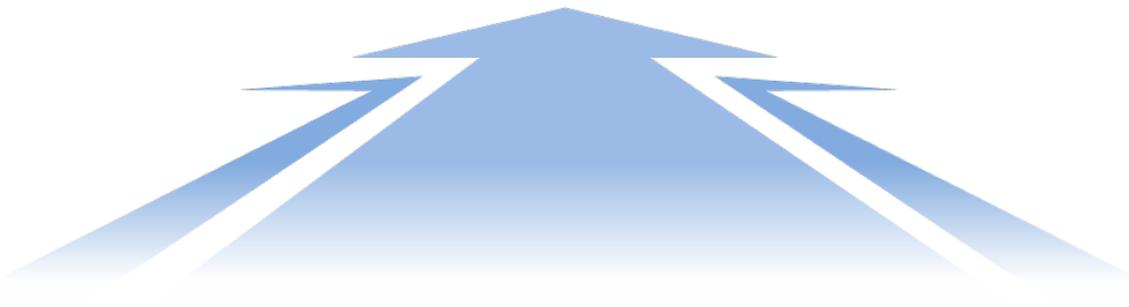


Six Things that cause someone to go astray

Hasan al-Şumālī



Allāh has created us upon al-Fiṭrah, upon a natural inclination to worship Allāh and to obey his commands.

Allāh says

Allāh's fiṭrah (i.e. Allāh's Islāmic Monotheism), with which He has created mankind.
[30:30]

Allāh, the mighty and majestic, created mankind upon that natural inclination (al-fiṭrah) to worship Him alone, obey His commands and stay away from His prohibitions.

Part of this natural inclination (fiṭrah) is loving the truth and hating falsehood, because the truth is sweet, it is delicious to the heart and it is bitter for the soul. As Muādh bin Jabal said: There is light upon the truth. The truth is apparent and visible for anyone that wants it. As Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said: The truth is loved to the fiṭrah.

In this sermon, we will discuss the causes that lead people astray. Knowing these causes will help us stick to the truth. The truth will give a person a light in this world.

The first thing from the things that lead people astray is:

Al-Jahl (Ignorance): The truth is clear and apparent for those who want to become acquainted with it. It is easy for them to locate it and find it.

Allāh says in the Qur'ān,

We have made this Qur'ān easy to understand and easy to recite
[54:17]

The Prophet (ṣallā Allāhu 'alayhi wa-sallam) emphasises this point in the Sunnah: **The ḥalāl is clear and the ḥarām is clear, and between them is doubtful things.**

Ignorance allows falsehood to spread, like a fire spreads in the forest. When the people are ignorant of the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of the Prophet (ṣallā Allāhu 'alayhi wa-sallam) and the way of the companions, ignorance will spread and falsehood will spread like fire.

This is a historical example that no two people can reject. Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said: the person that innovated the belief of the shia was a heretic, a disbeliever, an enemy to Islam and an enemy to the Muslims.

A clear example is how people accept this falsehood and misguidance; the belief of the shia, because they are ignorant, because if one doesn't have knowledge, somebody can present filth and the person may believe it to be gold. That's why a jeweller is proficient in his trade, if somebody brings in a diamond he can recognise it and our religion is more valuable than that.

So one needs to be able to recognise those who are lying and faking, from those who are upon the truth.

The second thing from those things that lead people to go astray: **Al-khawf (fear)**.

Allāh informs us in the Qur'ān, that fear prevented a people from believing in Mūsá because they feared the trial and prosecution that Fir'awn (pharaoh) would inflict upon them.

Allāh says

Only a few people from the offspring of Mūsá believed in him because they feared the prosecution of Fir'awn (pharaoh) and his people.

[10:83]

Another example from the sunnah is Hercules. When the Message of Islam reached him, he recognised it to be the truth. He knew it was the truth but he chose disbelief over Islam even though the truth was clear to him. Why? Because he feared the blame of the blamers, he feared how the people will respond to him. So how weak are we? Look in our times when people are scared to have a beard, because they worry about what people may say about them. Women are scared to wear the islamic dress, because they're scared about what people may think about them. Brothers and sisters are scared to take the true stance, because they're scared what people may think about them.

If we behave in this way, that we're scared of the people, we're cowards. Bravery is not to have a billion muscles on your body and pretend that your hard. Bravery is as the Prophet clarified: it is to speak the truth when you hear it or see it. As the Prophet said: Do not let the fear of the people prevent you from speaking the truth. That's the one who is brave, whereas the one that remains silent when he sees falsehood being uttered because he's worrying about the reaction of the people, is a coward.

The third thing from those things that lead people to go astray is: **al-Kibr (Haughtiness/Arrogance)**: "I already know that, I'm better than him". The Prophet clearly explained what arrogance is. The Prophet (ṣallá Allāhu 'alayhi wa-sallam) said in an authentic narration: **Noone will enter paradise who has a mustard seed of haughtiness/arrogance/pride in their heart.**

When Ibn 'Umar heard this narration he started to cry. They understood the gravity of these words. Noone will enter paradise who has a mustard seed of arrogance or pride in their heart. Because arrogance and pride will cause you to reject the truth. The Prophet (ṣallá Allāhu 'alayhi wa-sallam) explained what arrogance is, he said: Arrogance is that one rejects the truth and looks down upon the people. That is why if people are arrogant they do not learn and they stay ignorant most of the times.

The fourth affair that leads people to go astray is: **al-hasad (Jealousy)**. The first thing that Allāh was disobeyed with in the heavens was because of envy and jealousy. Iblīs was jealous and envious of Ādam due to the station that Allāh gave Ādam. He refused to prostrate to Ādam, a prostration of respect, and he chose disbelief over īmān (faith). Look how envy can cause a person to lose their mind. One of the first sins to occur on the earth was because of envy and jealousy.

Envy and jealous caused the brothers of Yūsuf to plot against him and try to harm him. Envy and jealous caused the Jews, who were present at the time of the Prophet (ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam) to reject the message of Muhammad (ṣallā Allāhu ‘alayhi wa-sallam) even though they used to boast about the coming of a Prophet from amongst their midst. They would boast to the illiterate Arabs. But when the Prophet (ṣallā Allāhu ‘alayhi wa-sallam) appeared they rejected the message of Muhammad (ṣallā Allāhu ‘alayhi wa-sallam) because they were jealous that the Prophet did not come from their race.

As Allāh informs us in the Qur’ān,

Those whom we gave the scriptures, they recognise the him [Prophet Muhammad (ṣallā Allāhu ‘alayhi wa-sallam)] as they recognise their own children

[6:20]

Envy and jealousy. There is an Arabic saying: the people in the same profession will tend to be jealous of one another. So (If) the brother is a builder, many times one will find him hate on the work of other people, except if Allāh saves him from that. Even students of knowledge as Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymīn said: people who have knowledge may be jealous and envious of the other person because of the acceptance that they have and therefore they are spoken against due to jealousy. Envy and jealousy can corrupt a persons worldly affairs and harm their hereafter.

The next thing that can cause a person to go astray is: **mixing with the people of falsehood.** Mixing with the people of falsehood, misguidance and bad companionship. Allāh warned us from mixing with these types of people. They could influence one and cause them to go astray. They invite a person to the disobedience of Allāh whilst that person they invite to evil may have been a person that was busying themselves with things that Allāh loves and is pleased with.

Allāh says

If you see those people that argue and dispute about our verses (the people of falsehood/misguidance) than stay far away from them

[6:68]

This is why the Prophet said in an authentic narration: The blacksmith is the like that of a bad companion, either he will burn your garments or you get from him a repugnant smell. So anyone who mixes with the people of wickedness and sin or people who are upon innovation and misguidance has not been given wisdom as Fudayl Ibn 'Iyaḍ said. Because wisdom will tell one to run away from this type of person. If one mixes with them it will cause them to depart and deviate from the truth. This is why the Salaf would warn against the people of innovation.

Sins are another reason that cause people to go astray. Allāh warned us against sins. He said:

In their hearts there is a sickness and Allāh will increase that sickness

[2:10]

Disobeying Allāh can cause a person to go astray. (Allāh says:)

When they started to deviate, Allāh caused their hearts to deviate

[61:5]

Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah said: If a person was to shut their two eyes, even though they were not blind, they would not be able to see anything. When one shuts their eyes for a moment, they will not be able to see anything even though they are not blind. He said: Likewise the heart, if it is covered in sin it will not be able to recognise the truth. Even though the heart is not blind with the blindness of Kufr (disbelief).

Sins blind the heart, that is why Allāh says

And do not be like those people who forgot about Allāh and (Allāh) caused them to forget their own-selves

[59:19]

How does one forget their own-self? They forget by being unable to recognise that which is beneficial from that which is harmful. They view that which will bring about destruction as being enjoyment, and that which is beneficial in the world and hereafter as being something repugnant.

Sins, imagine, one left and closed their eyes, they will never make it home. So imagine the person whos heart is blinded by sins, imagine how his path to please Allāh is going to be difficult because he is blind. That is why we are not heedless and lax about these things. The religion of Allāh is balanced, we do not go to extremes and we do not fall short.

May Allāh make us firm upon the truth and protect us from anything that may lead us astray.
May Allāh make us firm upon the truth.