By Asma bint Shameem

Iblis. Shaytaan. The Devil. Whatever name you call him, everyone knows him. He is the accursed one. The rejected outcast, who was thrown out of Jannah. The one damned to the Fire of Hell forever and doomed until eternity.

Ever wonder how he got there? I mean, really wondered...?

What did he do, or perhaps not do, that condemned him to be the most despicable and humiliated creature in the heavens and the earth?

Yes sure, we all know the story. We've known it since we were babies. We've read it in Qur’aan a million times.

But, have we ever read the story with the eyes of our heart?

Have we really thought about what happened?

Have we ever pondered over it?

What did iblis do that was so wrong?

Let us look at some of Iblis’s actions.

1. Did Iblis not believe in Allaah? Indeed, he did!

Iblis, the accursed believed in Allaah. He knew Allaah is the Master, Owner, Sustainer, the Giver of life and death, the Lord of all things. In fact, he calls Him رَبﱢ, my Rabb, my Lord.

قالَ رَبَّ فَأَنتَظَرْتِي إِلَى يَوْمٍ يُبَعَثُونَ

He (Iblis) said: 'My Lord, reprieve me till the Day they are raised.' (Surah al-Hijr:36)

Why, Iblis even swore by Allaah’s Might, knowing fully well, that it is Allaah Subhaanahu wa Ta’ala, Who is AlMighty and that all Power belongs to Him Alone. Iblis swears:

قالَ ﻓَبِﻌِيزْتِكَ لَأَغْويِّنَهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

He (Iblis) said: 'I swear by Your Might, that I will surely mislead them all. (Surah Saad:82)

2. Did he believe that someone else created him? NO, he knew Allaah is his Creator!

Shaytaan knew very well that Allaah is the Creator of the heavens and the earth and whatever is in them, including himself, all jinn and mankind. He admitted it himself.

قالَ أَنَا خَيْرَ مَنْهُ خَلَقْتُهُ مِنْ ثَارِ وَخَلَقْتُهُ مِنْ طِينٍ

(Iblis) said: 'I am better than he (Adam). You created me of fire and You created him of clay.' (Surah al-'Aaraaf:12)

3. Did Iblis deny the Day of Judgment? No, he acknowledged it!

Iblis also affirmed that there will be a Day when we will all be resurrected and brought back to life, to stand in front of our Rabb, and give account of all that we did. It’s not that he denied the Day of Judgment; rather he believed in it completely.

قالَ رَبَّ فَأَنتَظَرْتِي إِلَى يَوْمٍ يُبَعَثُونَ

(Iblis) said: "My Lord! Give me then respite till the Day the (dead) are resurrected." (Surah Saad: 79)

4. Did Iblis claim that there is a path other than Islaam? NO, he knew Islaam is the Way!

Something to THINK about
Iblis didn’t believe in any other religion to be the Truth. He accepted and recognized that Islaam is the way to salvation and it is only through it that a person will be successful. That’s why he calls it the ‘Straight Path’.

Iblis) said: “Because You have sent me astray, surely I will sit in wait against them (human beings) on Your Straight Path.” (Surah al-‘Aaraaf:16)

5. Did he not believe in Jannah, Jahannum and the Angels? Indeed he did!

Iblis very much believed in the Angels. How could he not? He saw them with his own eyes and was among them until, when Allaah ordered them all to prostrate to Adam (Alayhi salaam) and he refused. Iblis had even seen Jannah and was witness to its blessings before he was thrown out of it, disgraced and humiliated. And he was aware of of Jahannum. So Iblis knew exactly what they all were and acknowledged their existence.

So what is the point of all this???

Does it ever hit you O Muslim, that perhaps we do the same?
Perhaps there's not much difference between us and Iblis!!
Don't we also believe in Allaah? Don’t we also consider Him our Master, our Creator, our Sustainer?? Don't we call Him our Rabb??
Don't we also acknowledge His Power and Might?
Don't we also say we believe in the day of Judgment?
And in heaven and hell and the angels??
Yes, we do!

So what makes us different from Iblis, the Shaytaan???

The difference lies in the obedience of our Rabb, in submitting to His Commands, in conforming to His Orders.

Shaytaan refused to obey Allaah when He commanded him to make sajdah to Adam (Alayhi salaam). He didn't comply to the His Orders. He didn’t submit to his Rabb. There was no compliance. There was no ubudiyyah.

That was the problem. That was what was so wrong that made Iblis the most despicable creature ever.

That’s the point we all have to think about. Long. And. Hard.

How many of us are out there, who are supposed to be Muslim, who believe in Allaah, who know there's a Day of resurrection, who claim they want to enter Jannah, yet are still living a life of sin and desire....a life of defiance and neglect!
How many of us are involved in major, major sins...steeped in disobedience and transgression?!
And how many of us continue in this wrongdoing, obstinately defying Allaah’s Laws....despite the warnings...ignoring all the reminders!

Brothers and sisters, if there's no obedience to Allaah, if there's no submission to His commands, if there is no effort to comply to His Orders, then there is no difference between us and Iblis.
Plain and Simple and Straightforward.
The difference lies in the obedience of this Rabb....In submitting to His Commands....in doing what He says and in staying away from what He prohibited.

If there's no obedience, then where's the difference between us and iblis?
Then how are we any better?
What makes us any different?
That is something to really think about......

And Allaah knows best.