



Ahmad Ghazali's Satan

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This article studies Ghazali's viewpoint regarding Satan or Iblis. Ghazali's interpretation of Satan is very different from that of traditional ones. Despite the Koran's negative portrayal of Satan, Ghazali elaborates a new transformative theology of Satan. He defends Satan and considers him as the paragon of lovers in self-sacrifice. According to him, Satan's refusal to bow down before God's creation, Adam, signifies that Satan alone manifests the purest devotion to God's oneness and is thus the unrivalled champion of *tawhid*. Ghazali's sympathetic understanding of Satan is a logical outcome of his theory of love. He depicts Satan not only as a sincere worshipper, but also as a true lover. He loves God even though he curses and casts him out. Because of being cursed, he has acquired a long life and a position of power over the whole world.

Keywords: Ahmad Ghazali; Iblis; Satan; Sufism; Love.

Introduction

One of the important and interesting issues in Islamic culture is the story of Satan or Iblis,¹ his worship and disobedience, his refusal to prostration to Adam, his rejection by God and, finally, his hostility to Adam's children until the Day of Resurrection. The Koran does not tell a simple story of Iblis but weaves a complex and suggestive narrative that allows for a range of diverse interpretations. The Koran indeed not only allows its exploration but also invites and encourages it. Therefore, Satan, through the centuries, has been a figure of speculation among Muslim scholars, who have been trying to explain his ambiguous identification.

Traditions on this point are numerous and conflicting. Among Muslim scholars, the Sufis' view of Satan is one of the most controversial and at the same time most attractive categories reflected in their most important texts. But their portrayal of Satan is different, and in some cases opposite. Although some of the Sufis are not in agreement with a positive portrayal of Satan, and their viewpoint on him is much more in tune with Islamic orthodoxy, but a number of them, who believe in the unity of existence, consider Satan's refusal to bow before Adam as full devotion to God alone; consequently, they depict him as an example of a true lover of God and a teacher of monotheism (El-Zein 2017:44).² Therefore, one of the most fascinating aspects of mystical psychology in Islam is the way in which the Sufis have dealt with Satan, the power of evil (Schimmel 1975:193).

Of the three most famous Sufis who defended Satan, two were executed for heresy. Even today they are widely revered by many who consider Sufism to be true Islam, and they are seen as martyrs to a blind puritanical reaction. The first and best known was Husayn ibn Mansur al-Hallaj, executed in Baghdad in A.D. 922 (Wilson 1993:88). The second sheikh who defended Satan was Ahmad al-Ghazali,³ who avoided execution (if not execration) both by the very density

1. In this study, Iblis, Shaytan, Satan and Devil will be used interchangeably. Satan is called by two names in the Koran: Iblis (Koran, 1983 II, 34; VII, 11; XV, 31–32; XVII, 61; XVIII, 50; XX, 116, etc.) and Shaytan (Koran 1983, II, 36; XX, 120, etc.). Iblis is a proper name which 'derives from the root *bls*, because [it] has nothing to expect (*ublis*) from the mercy of God' (Wensinck 1971:668–669). Most Islamic sources explain this name with reference to a verbal root *b.l.s.*, which they define (with reference to *iblis*), 'to be cut off' (*qut'i'a*), 'to become silent' (*sakata*), 'to be despondent' (*ya'isa*), or 'to regret' (*nadima*). Yet even if *b.l.s.* is considered a genuine root (and not invented simply to explain *iblis*); this etymology is problematic, as *iblis* is a nominal form with few parallels, particularly among personal names. His other name Shaytan is more a common name and means 'the Tempter'. Each of these names corresponds clearly to one role that the devil plays. When he is the rebel, the one who refuses God's command to bow to Adam (e.g. Koran, 1983, II, 34; XX, 116), he is *iblis*. When he is the tempter, who leads Adam to sin (e.g. Koran 1983, II, 36; XX, 120), he is *al-shaytan* (see Reynolds 2004:680–681).

2. Satan preferred to be cursed than to prostrate himself before someone else other than the 'Beloved' (here referring to God). Thus Iblis became an example for unrequited love and manifestation of chivalry (Schimmel 1975:195).

3. Majid al-Din Abū al-Fotuh Ahmad Ghazālī (c. 1061–1123 or 1126), brother of the more famous Muhammad Ghazali, a Persian mystic, writer and eloquent preacher, made his way via Hamadan to Baghdad and took his brother's place when the latter retired from teaching at the Nizamiyya. He is best known in the history of Sufism for his ideas on love, expressed primarily in the celebrated work entitled *Sawānih*. This book, a series of short and very subtle meditations in prose and verse upon the trinity of Beloved, Love and Lover, set a fashion which was followed by, amongst others, Ayn al-Qozat of Hamadan (executed in 1131, the poet Eraqi (d. 1289), and the great Jami (d. 1492). His thought, centred as it was on the idea of love, left a profound mark on the development of Persian mystical literature, especially poetry celebrating love. Many of the topoi (*mazāmin*) used by later poets such as 'Attar, Sa'ādi, 'Iraqi and Hafiz, to name but a few, can be traced to his works, particularly the *Sawāneh*. The most important works of him are *al-Tajrid fī kalimat al-tawhid*, a discussion of the admissibility of *sama'* (Sufi music and dancing), a subtle psychology of love, *Sawānih*, (probably) the *Risalat al-Tayr*, which was the inspiration for the *Mantik al-tayr* of Farid al-Din 'Atta'r, and other minor writings which have not yet been investigated. His sermons were very popular in Baghdad and were collected in two volumes by Sa'īd b. Faris al-Labbani; of these, however, only extracts are preserved in Ibn al-Jawzi. In them he undertook the defence of Satan (*al-ta'assub li-Iblis*), popular in many Sufi circles since Hallaj (see: Mujahid 1376:1–199).

of his mystical language and by having a powerful brother, Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali, famous for the impeccable orthodoxy of his Sufism. Ahmad al-Ghazali,⁴ a Sufi master from the late 11th and early 12th centuries, echoed Hallaj on many points, saying for instance, that 'whoever does not learn adherence to Divine Unity from Satan, is an unbeliever' (Schimmel 1975:195) and 'Though Satan was cursed and humiliated, he was still the paragon of lovers in self-sacrifice' (Ghazali 2013; Wilson 1993:88).

Although Ghazali has been studied by many critics and scholars, no specific study has been made of the image of Satan in his writings. This is when he was the first and influential Sufi who elaborated a new transformative theology of Satan. Even Peter Awn in his *Satan's Tragedy and Redemption: Iblis in Sufi Psychology*, too, has not dealt with Ghazali's views on Satan, *independently and completely*. The purpose of this article is to study his viewpoint regarding Satan.

Many aspects of Ghazali's thought, particularly his emphasis on sympathy for Satan (*ta'assub al-shaytan*), have clear precedents in the early Sufi tradition. The two major apparent sources of Ghazali's representation of Satan are the Koran and the writings of previous Sufis, especially Hallaj's *Tawasin*.⁵

Ghazali's view

According to the traditional Islamic interpretation (e.g. Koran 1983, II, 30–37; VII, 10–19; XVIII, 50; XXXVIII, 71–85), Satan refused to submit to God's command and was sentenced to hell by him for his disobedience. Why would God want the angels to worship something other than God himself, especially something apparently younger and inferior to them? Some of the great masters of Sufism did not agree with the traditional interpretation of the story of Satan's disobedience and were puzzled over God's command and concluded that God could not have truly wanted Satan to worship Adam. To illustrate this point, they told stories depicting conversations with Satan; the following story comes from Ahmad Ghazali:

1. Moses met with Satan on Sinai and said to him: 'Oh Satan, why didn't you prostrate to Adam?' Satan: 'No! I will never bow down before a human being, oh Moses! You made the claim to be a monotheist, but I am a monotheist and have never turned to another.' You, however, said: 'Let me see You!', and then you looked at the mountain. Thus I'm more upright in monotheism than you. He said:

4. Ahmad Ghazzali, one of the most important figures in the development of Persian Sufi literature, in turn initiated and taught the third of our shaykhs, Ayn al-Qozat Hamadani. The least known but perhaps most brilliant, he was imprisoned in Baghdad and executed in his hometown of Hamadan (in northwest Iran) in A.D. 1131 at the age of 33 (Wilson 1993:89).

5. Hallaj is considered to be the first tangible literary representative of the new conception of Satan. A text of Hallaj which has been preserved in the Koran commentary of Rozbihan Baqli goes as follows: When Satan was told: 'Bow down before Adam!', he addressed God and said: 'Has the honour of bowing down (before You) been withdrawn from my interior? Do You no longer wish for prostration so that I should bow down before him? If You've ordered me to do this, You've also forbidden it (earlier)!' God said to him: 'I will torment (punish) you with eternal torment'. Satan: 'Will You not look at me while You torment me?' God: 'Yes, I will'. Satan: 'Then Your gaze directed at me will cause me to endure the sight of the torment (the punishment). Do what You wish with me!' God: 'I will make you into the pelted one'. Satan: 'Isn't it so that nothing else but You has ever penetrated my interior? Do what You wish with me!' (Massignon 1982:866–867; Ritter 2003:556).

'Bow down before the other!' I didn't bow down, but you turned toward the mountain'. At this point, Ahmad Ghazali inserted: 'Whoever doesn't learn monotheism from Satan is a heretic (*zindiq*)'.

2. Moses: 'Your external form has been transformed from the angelic to the demonic'. Satan: 'This is only a state of the moment which is transitory and will change again. Oh Moses, the greater His love becomes for someone other than me, the greater my love becomes for Him'.
3. Moses: 'Do you still recollect Him (do you still mention His name)?' – Satan: 'I'm mentioned along with His mention (when He says (Koran 1983, XXXVIII, 78)): 'And upon you is My curse (*wa 'inna 'alayka la'nati*)'. 'Does He not use the pronoun of the second and the first person together?'
4. And he (Ahmad Ghazali) said: 'When Satan was repudiated, neither his service, nor his love, nor his recollection of God was thereby decreased'. (Ghazali 1376:13; Ibn al-Jawzi 1986:77; Ritter 2003:558–559)⁶

This story contains a motif which must have particularly enticed the mystics to formulate a reinterpretation. The demand to bow down in worship before a created being, someone other than God, is in fact a direct slap in the face to the most sacred command of mystical monotheism. Strictly speaking, the refusal to prostrate oneself before a being other than God must have seemed to them an act of genuine monotheistic adoration of God. In this way, Satan now becomes, so to speak, more monotheistic than God himself, unless God wants something other than what he ordered. In fact, the latter is what comes to be taught (Ritter 2003:555).

Satan's refusal to bow down with all the other angels before God's creation in human form signifies that Satan alone manifests the purest devotion to God's oneness. He will not compromise his adherence to this monotheistic ideal even if God himself commands him to. Satan the disobedient thus becomes the improbable champion of *tawhid*, the unwavering conviction that God is eternally and essentially one and alone to be worshipped. Satan practises pure worship of God contrary to the explicit command of God. He becomes cursed for his disobedience to God's command, which, however, was really an act of exclusive adoration as God had otherwise demanded (Ritter 2003:555). Therefore, his disobedience was because of his love and single-heartedness (see Ghazali 2013:75). Ghazali was the classical representative of Satan's rehabilitation, who dared to say: '*who does not learn tawhid from Satan, is an infidel*' (Ibn al-Jawzi 1986:221) – a remark that infuriated the orthodox but found an echo in many later Sufi writings (Schimmel 1975:194).

6. Ghazali's version of this story is somewhat different, although it reflects the influence of al-Hallaj (see Hallaj 1913:45–47). Louis Massignon claims that Ahmad al-Ghazali read portions from the *Tawasin* in his sermons at the Behruz Ribat in Baghdad (Massignon 1982: vol. 2: p. 162). This may be so, but it is not substantiated by the sources. There is enough variation in their respective accounts to indicate that al-Ghazali could have received this indirectly through an oral tradition, rather than having direct access to a text. Both accounts portray Iblis as a sincere worshipper of the one God. But whereas Hallaj has him criticise Moses, al-Ghazali uses Moses as a mere interlocutor. Al-Hallaj has Iblis deliver a lesson regarding the nature of gnosis, but in Ghazali's account Iblis explains only the nature of his particular relationship with God. This may demonstrate that al-Ghazali or those from whom he received the account, agreed with al-Hallaj regarding the nature of Iblis' trial, but did not agree that Moses was to be criticised for the nature of his worship.

In several instances, Ghazali follows the standard Islamic teaching in which Satan is presented as a disobedient *Jinn*, who had risen to the level of the angels but was then obstinate when ordered to prostrate before man, claiming 'I am better than him. You created me from fire and created him from clay' (Koran 1983, XXXVIII, 76). Having been cursed by God, he then became the enemy of both man and God, who will be punished for his intransigence (Ghazali 1376:26, 29, 32, 52). But at the same time, in his *Majalis* and in several excerpts from his sermons preserved in the biographical tradition, he portrays Satan as the greatest lover and the foremost of God's servants in testifying to unity (*tawhid*). According to this strange and touching theory, he is represented as the great lover who did not want to worship anything other than God and therefore refused to prostrate, obedient to the Divine Will, yet disobedient to the Divine Command (Schimmel 1993:208).

But how are these two opposite viewpoints brought together by Ghazali and how he explains the rest of the Koran's negative descriptions of Satan. In reply to this problem, it must be said that Ghazali's understanding of religion and God is different. His thoughts go far beyond the institutionalised religion and its doctrines. He transcends all artificial boundaries and looks inward. For him the major thrust of religion is love. God is the ultimate object of man's love.

Ghazali does not abrogate the established theological and legal schools, nor does he dismiss their relevance. But, according to him, apart from established religions, there is another religion, 'religion of love'.⁷ The Sufis of the 'religion of love', including Ghazali, assert that those scholars who deny the primacy of love and limit themselves to the 'externals' are 'highway robbers and immature children' (Safi 2003). The lovers of God follow the *madhhab-i 'ishq* [path of love] and *madhhab-i khuda* [God's path] (Hamadani 1994:115–116). The Sufis of the path of love were presenting not a new religion, but a fresh, dynamic and ever-transforming understanding of themselves, the world around them and the Divine based primarily on love (Safi 2003).⁸ After quoting the Koranic verse 'He loves them and they love Him' (Koran V, 54), Ghazali (2013) moves on to a quatrain which identifies the *madhhab* followed by him and other members of the path of love:

From before existence
our steed set out with love.
Our night forever illuminated
from the lamp of Union.
Until we return to non-existence
you will not find our lips dry
from that wine
un-forbidden in our path (madhhab). (p. 17)

7.'The religion of Love is apart from all religions. For lovers, the (only) religion and creed is – God' (Rumi 1926:vol. 2, p. 312).

8.Religion of love is rooted in the first principle of Islamic thought – the fact that there is no god but God, no being but the true Being, no beloved but the true Beloved, no lover but the true Lover – it follows that lovers see themselves and all things existing at the pleasure of the Beloved. His lovers love him as he is, not as they imagine him to be. This means that they embrace him in all his beauty and majesty, mercy and wrath, gentleness and severity. Hence, they experience constant ups and downs, all of them reflecting the joy of union and the pain of separation (see Chittick 1983:45–47).

Ghazali's depiction of Satan can only be understood within the general framework of his Sufic thoughts, especially his religion of love. His sympathetic understanding of Satan is a logical outcome of his theory of love. Therefore, Ghazali's Satan should be seen from a mystical point of view. It is interesting to note that the central theme of Ghazali's works, that is, love, is explained here by Satan.

His Satan does not give up his love for God, no matter what happens to him. A lover's duty is to love even if the beloved decides to send the lover away for some time or even if the beloved decides to afflict sufferings upon the lover. Satan's refusal to bow to man is thus a deep expression of sincere monotheism and hence of pure love. The lover is one who accepts without questioning, one who surrenders completely to the will of the beloved.

Ghazali's Satan claims that God's Will (*Iradah*) was that he should not bow down to anybody except him, and his Command (*Amr*) to bow down to Adam was only a test for him. Thus he remains loyal to God's Will and disobeys his Command. Here Satan's action of disobedience derives from his single-headed devotion to God. He remains faithful to God's first Will regardless of its consequences. Ghazali sees Satan as a perfect example of ardent lover. His refusal was not out of disobedience or pride but out of jealousy. He wants to have all the love of the beloved for himself and does not want to share the love of his beloved with anybody else.

Therefore, Ghazali, though a true Muslim, is not a follower of institutionalised religion. That is why his Satan does not literally correspond with the Koranic image. He, as a result of his inheritance of a rich Sufi tradition, interprets the Koran in a new way and presents a different image of Satan.

Satan as a lover and sincere worshipper

The tragic situation of Satan inspired Ghazali to express his sympathy with him whose predicament, in a certain sense, foreshadowed the difficulties humans would have to undergo in this world. It was Ghazali who elaborated a new transformative theology of Satan. Of course, as previously observed, this is not entirely his own; he owes a debt to earlier masters, and especially to al-Hallaj. The latter, after all, had been bold enough to declare:

There was no monotheist like Satan among the inhabitants of the heavens. When the essence revealed itself to him in stunning glory, he renounced even a glance at it and worshipped God in ascetic isolation. . . . God said to him, 'Bow!' he replied, 'To no other!' He said to him, 'Even if My curse be upon you?' He cried out, 'To no other!'. (Awn 1993:124; Hallaj 1913:43–44; Ormsby 2008:36)

For Ghazali, Satan is a tragic lover of God. Ghazali defends him by saying, 'The poor guy didn't know that the claws of Providence draw blood when they scratch and that

the arrows of Predestination kill quickly when they fly' (Ibn al-Jawzi 1413:vol. 9:p. 261; Ritter 2003:557). This unexpected transformation of Satan may not be unconnected with the renewal and gradual elaboration of the doctrine of the love of God that spread among Muslim mystics and was to become one of the defining characteristics of Sufis in later centuries. Some Sufi Muslims held to a view of Satan which emphasises his love for God as the motivation for his decision not to bow to Adam (see Hallaj 1384:52–53; Nuri Öztürk 1382:331–332; Zarrinkoob 1393:141). Sufi teachers such as Hallaj present the story of Satan as a predestined scenario in which Satan plays the role of a tragic and jealous lover of Allah who, unable to perceive the Divine Image in Adam, was compelled to disobey the divine mandate to bow down to him (see Hallaj 1913:52–53; *Nicholson* 1923:31–33).

Satan, as a lover of God, was confronted with a tragic dilemma. Either he must dishonour the 'Beloved' (God) by bowing down to something lesser, or he must disobey him and accept the banishment and condemnation. Satan was faced with a predicament presenting a choice between God's will and his command. The myth of Satan in an allusive and paradoxical way explains the demands of a total lover for God above even the obedience to God set forth in his commands. This love was an affliction (*bala'*) – affliction in love. This affliction was not merely the trial that the lover – here Satan – had to endure; it was the 'jewel of God's treasury'. Ahmad Ghazali (2013) connects this affliction to a sophisticated love theory:

Love, in its true nature, is but an affliction (*bala'*), and intimacy (*uns*) and ease are something alien to it and are provisionally borrowed. This is because separation in love is indeed duality while union is indeed oneness. (p. 36)

Ghazali depicts Satan not only as a sincere worshipper, but also as a true lover. The ultimate significance of Satan is found in an account related by Ibn al-Jawzi in which al-Ghazali says, '*whoever has not learned tawhid from Satan is a dualist (zandiq)*' (Ibn al-Jawzi 1413:vol. 17: p. 239). It is interesting to notice that the central theme of Ghazali's works is love, and his sympathetic understanding of Satan is a logical outcome of his theory of love. The relationship between God and his creatures is depicted as the relationship between the beloved and the lover. As the lover has been separated from his beloved, he is restlessly and constantly searching for that state of union again. Even Satan functions within the love of God. For him there is nothing that can function outside the sovereignty of God's love. Everything is in love with God and desires him. Ghazali believes that all of creation must necessarily have a face of beauty turned towards the beloved, otherwise it could not exist. From this perspective, the ugliness of Satan as he turns towards creation is because he knows that God alone possesses true beauty.

His refusal to bow to a human is thus a deep expression of sincere monotheism and hence of pure love. Ghazali's Satan

here is very different from that of the Koran. It is not a matter of disobedience and pride but a matter of love. Satan is depicted as a lover, and not simply an admiring but a devoted and sincere lover.

For Ghazali, as for Hallaj before him, Satan is perfect in testifying to unity. His refusal to bow to Adam results not from arrogance, but from the purest and most sincere love of God. He is, therefore, a model for those who follow the path of love.

Satan is in one sense the ultimate lover of God. He loves God even though God curses and casts him out; indeed, he loves God because God banishes him. To be singled out by God in such a way is, perversely, to assume the badge – perhaps 'scar' would be the better word – of a radical distinction. To love God against God is to love God for his own sole sake. No reward for such love may be expected. And with the removal of reward, love is based purely upon itself (Ormsby 2008:37).

According to his theory Satan, or Iblis, was a true lover of God, and his disobedience was because of his love and single-heartedness. As he says (Ghazali 2013):

Love has a (high) aspiration (*himmat*) so that the lover desires a beloved who has a sublime quality. Thus he does not accept as his beloved just any beloved who may fall in the snare of union. (p. 75)

This is why when Satan was told (by God): 'My curse shall be upon you' (Koran 1983, XXXVIII, 78), he responded: 'I swear by Thy Glory' (Koran 1983, XXXVIII, 82). By this he meant (Ghazali 2013):

I myself love this manifestation of Glory from Thee, for no one is worthy of being needed by Thee, nor is anyone suitable for Thee, for if anything (or anyone) were suitable for Thee, then the Glory would not have been perfect. (p. 75)

Benefit of being cursed

Being cursed of Satan in Sufi literature, especially in Ghazali's understanding, comes to be evaluated positively. Satan, within his feelings, sees himself as a true lover. Having the curse placed on him has not been completely without benefit for Satan. Because of it, he has acquired a long life and a position of power over the whole world (cf. Koran 1983, XVII, 62 'Verily, if You allow me to live until the Final Day, I will surely force his [*Adam's*] descendants to be under my power except for a few'). And he stands continually at God's door.

Being cursed also appears to be a distinction which is intended on God's part and not just perceived as such by Satan. Only outwardly does it have the character of an unmasking to conceal the real intimacy. Satan himself wants this distinction, the curse. He wants to possess something special which distinguishes him from all the other angels and creatures.

That which would be an evil for everyone else is a precious gift for Satan. Satan behaves like the authentic lover who

gladly endures whatever the beloved does to him, indeed experiences it as something that makes him happy because in such a case the beloved focuses his will on him (Ritter 2003:563–565).

As a real lover, he goes further than this and considers his being cursed by God as a felicitous distinction because, in contrast to all the other angels, he has become the object of an expression of God's will aimed especially at him (Ritter 2003:556).

Ghazali stresses rather emphatically the viewpoint that the beloved's cruelty because it entails active attention given to the lover, must signify happiness and joy for the latter. Indeed, the beloved, when he punishes the lover, confers distinction on him by being attentive to him, whereas he may be utterly indifferent towards others. Bad treatment, after all, amounts to establishing a relationship. If the archer wishes to hit you with his arrow, he must turn his face towards you completely. To hit you he must focus his mind on you completely (Ritter 2003:408–409); as he says: 'How can such a connective bond not be enough for you? After all, in this way he has given preference to one above all the others'. 'Take an arrow with my name out of the quiver and draw it on your strong bow! Are you looking for a target? Here's my heart! Your part is to strike hard, my part is to cry: 'Woe!' (Ghazali 1359:20). Finally, Ghazali has great sympathy for Satan and believes that he was a martyr and his martyrdom was a martyrdom of love (Hayes 2003:163).

Conclusion

The foregoing passages and references indicate that despite the Koran's negative portrayal of Satan, Ahmad Ghazali defends Satan and considers him as the paragon of lovers in self-sacrifice. His mystical interpretation on the paradoxical struggle of Satan centres on his apparent disobedience to God's second command (to bow before Adam), in order to remain faithful to God's first command to worship only God. He believes that Satan refused to bow not because of his pride, but because of his extreme fidelity to God. Satan was only doing what he had been created to do. Ghazali attempts to rehabilitate Satan, so he dares to say: 'who does not learn *tawhid* [monotheism] from Satan, is an infidel'. Satan's refusal to bow down before God's creation, Adam, signifies that Satan alone manifests the purest devotion to God's oneness and is thus the unrivalled champion of monotheism. Ghazali's sympathetic understanding of Satan is a logical outcome of his theory of love. Ghazali sees love as the essence of God and the substance from which all else is woven. From this perspective, every existent thing is a self-disclosure (*tajalli*) of the God. He depicts Satan, not only as a sincere worshipper, but also as a true lover. Satan is in one sense the ultimate lover of God. He loves God even though God curses and casts him out. Having the curse placed on him has not been completely without benefit for Satan. Because of it he has acquired a long life and a position of power over the whole world. As a real lover, Satan considers his being cursed by God as a felicitous distinction because, in

contrast to all the other angels, he has become the object of an expression of God's will aimed especially at him. Finally, Ghazali's image of Satan is both similar to and different from that of the Koran. The difference comes back to Ghazali's mystical perspective and his theory of love. As a result of this perspective, he presents a new interpretation of the Koranic verses and a different image of Satan. In the framework of his mystical thoughts, especially his religion of love, in a true sense of the word Islam (submission), Satan is a Muslim because he submits totally to God, his Beloved. Satan is only playing the role that has been assigned to him by the Almighty God. Satan is a lover of God and perhaps the true lover of God because he loves him regardless of all the suffering and pain that he has to endure. But there is still a question, if he was a true lover, why he did not completely succumb to God's command and refused to prostrate before Adam?

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I declare that I am the sole author of this research article.

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