42919 - Meaning of the hadeeth: “The Shaytaan has despaired of ever being worshipped by the worshippers in the Arabian Peninsula”

the question

It is narrated that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “The Shaytaan has despaired of ever being worshipped by the worshippers in the Arabian Peninsula.” In another hadeeth it says: “Night and day will not cease until al-Laat and al-‘Uzza are worshipped.” And in another hadeeth it says: “Until the buttocks of the women of Daws bump into one another going around Dhu’l-Khalasah.”
My question is: from the first hadeeth it may be understood that no shirk will ever be committed in the Arabian Peninsula. Whereas the second hadeeth indicates that it will be committed.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

One of the things that are established by the scholars is that shirk will take place in the ummah as is indicated by the sound texts, and reality confirms this.

Many of the Arabs apostatized after the death of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), and many of them went back to worshipping idols.

The mujaddid (renewer of the Faith) Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhaab said: “Chapter: Reports that some of this ummah will worship idols”, then he mentioned some ahaadeeth which indicate that.

With regard to the hadeeth: “The Shaytaan has despaired of ever being worshipped…” the scholars have interpreted it in several ways:

1 – That the Shaytaan has despaired of ever getting all worshippers to unite on kufr.

This view was favoured by the great scholar Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali. Al-Darar al-Sunnah, 12/117.

2 – That this is a report of the despair that befell the Shaytaan when he saw the conquests and how the people entered the religion of Allaah in crowds. So the hadeeth is telling us what the Shaytaan thought and he expected to happen. Then what really happened was something other than that, for a reason decreed by Allaah.

This view was favoured by Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him). Al-Qawl al-Mufeed, 1/211.

3 – That the Shaytaan despaired of the believers whose faith is complete, because the Shaytaan has no hope that they will worship him.

This view was favoured by al-Aloosi. See Da’aawa al-Munaawi’een, 224.

4 – That the “al-” in the word “al-musalloon” (worshippers) refers to a specific group of worshippers, and that what is meant is the Sahaabah.

All of these interpretations are close in meaning, and the most likely is the second. And Allaah knows best.

See Ahaadeeth al-‘Aqeedah allati yuwahham Zaahiruha al-Ta’aarud fi’l-Saheehayn, 2/232-238 .