

# Islam & Magic

Magic is an old human practice. It is sometimes defined as deception by showing something to an audience, which is contrary to reality. In Islam this is part of magic, which is, however, defined as seeking the help of demons to perform something harmful against somebody.

In the light of the above definition, Islam considers magic to be an act of blasphemy. Thus, the Holy Quran say: Suleiman (Solomon) did not disbelieve, but the devils disbelieved teaching men magic (2:102). In an authentic saying, the Prophet of Islam p.b.u.h. said: Whoever goes to a fortune teller (a soothsayer) or a diviner and believes him, has, in fact, disbelieved in what has been revealed to Muhammad.

Thus Islam condemns magic- even what is called the horoscope or luck or reading one's palm to foretell the future is also prohibited in Islam. This is based on the belief that no one knows the future or the unseen except God almighty. That is why the Quran asserts that even Muhammad does not know the unseen. Concerning this, it says: If I had the knowledge of the unseen, I should have secured abundance for myself, and no evil would have touched me (7:188). Again, God is described in the Quran as the knower of the unseen and the manifest (6:73) and as the holder of the keys of the unseen (6:59).

In another tradition, Prophet Muhammad p.b.u.h. says: "Avoid the seven deadly acts which are: ascribing partners to God, magic, killing the human self which Allah prohibited except with right, eating usury, devouring the orphan's wealth, defecting from the battle-field (without a justified reason) and slandering

chaste, unwary believing women. Thus Islam has closed the door for practicing magic, simply because it is against its teachings, and it is deceptive and harmful.

Let us now review some of the verses of the Holy Quran that refer to magic: In Chapter two verse 101-102, the Quran says: And when there came to them a Messenger from Allah confirming what was with them, a party of those who were given the scripture threw away the book of Allah behind their backs as if they did not know. And they followed what the devils gave out falsely of magic of the reign of Solomon; for Solomon did not disbelieve but the devils disbelieved, teaching men magic and such things that came down at Babylon to the two angels Harut and Marut, but neither of these two (angels) taught anyone (such things) until they had said: we are only for trial, so don't disbelieve. And from them (magicians) people learn that through which they would cause separation between a person and his spouse, but they could not thus harm anyone except by Allah's leave; and they learn that which harms them rather than profits them. And indeed they knew that its practitioner would have no share in the Hereafter. And how bad indeed was that for which they sold their own selves if they but knew" (2:101-2).

Although Solomon was the Prophet and Messenger of God, he was accused by some of his opponents to be practicing magic. Those who claimed this could not distinguish between magic and miracles. Almost all messengers of God were granted miracles as a proof of their authenticity. To name only a few: Moses was granted the staff by which he could divide the sea and make water gush from rocks. Abraham was flung in the middle of a huge raging fire, which Allah made cool and peaceful to him. Jesus Christ could heal the blind and the leper and bring back the dead to life.

If we contemplate these acts we find that miracles are totally different from magic. While magic is always harmful, miracles are useful. Magic is from devils while miracles are from God. When these divine miracles are rejected other miracles are imposed to inflict severe punishments on rejecters. On the other hand, miracles are real while magic is sometimes deceptive.

It may be said that the Prophet Muhammad p.b.u.h. was himself exposed to the effect of magic. How could you explain this? This is true; but God saved him from the spell of magic through the repeated remembrance of God and the recitation of some chapters and verses of the Holy Quran. This took place to confirm the humility of Muhammad p.b.u.h. who was a human like other humans. This made it easier for his followers to imitate him. Two questions are pertinent in context: How to protect one's self from magic? And how to treat a person under the spell of magic?

Prophet Muhammad p.b.u.h. provided us with the recipe through which we can protect ourselves from magic. We shall be immune from magic if we recite - after the five daily prayers - the last three chapters of the Holy Quran which are number 112, 113 and 114 And here is their translation:

## UNITY

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

Say: He is Allah, the One! Allah, the eternally besought of all! He begets not nor was begotten. And there is none comparable unto Him.

## DAYBREAK

In the name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful

Say I seek refuge in the in the Lord of daybreak  
From the evil of that which he created; From  
the evil of the darkness when it is intense, and  
from the evil of malignant witchcraft, And  
from the evil of the envious when he envies.

### **MANKIND**

In the name of Allah the beneficent, the Merciful

Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind, The  
King of mankind, The God of mankind, From  
the evil of the sneaking whisper, Who whispers  
in the hearts of mankind, Of the jinn and of  
mankind.

These chapters are also recommended to be  
recited three times after the dawn prayer and  
three times after the sunset prayer.

Secondly Prophet Mohammed p.b.u.h.  
encouraged us to recite the greatest verse in the  
Quran called the verse of the Throne, translated  
as follows:

Allah! There is no God save Him, the Alive,  
and the Eternal. Neither slumber nor sleep  
overtakes Him. Unto Him belongs whatever is  
in the heavens and whatever is in the earth.  
Who is he that intercedes with Him save by His  
leave? He knows that which is in front of them  
and that which is behind them, while they  
encompass nothing of His knowledge save  
what He will. His chair encompasses the  
heavens and the earth, and He is never weary of  
preserving them. He is the sublime, the  
Tremendous (2:225).

This verse should be recited after each and  
every one of the five daily prayers and before  
going to bed.

The Prophet p.b.u.h. also encouraged us  
Muslims to recite the last two verses of Chapter  
two at the beginning of every night whose  
translation is as follows:

The Messenger believes in that which has been  
revealed unto him from his Lord and (so do)

the believers. Each one believes in Allah and  
His angles and His scriptures and His  
messengers and they say: We hear, and we  
obey. (Grant us) Your forgiveness, our Lord.  
Unto you is the journeying (2:285).

Allah tasks not a soul beyond its scope. For it  
(is only) that which it has earned, and against it  
(only) that which it has deserved. Our Lord!  
Condemn us not if we forget, or miss the mark!  
Our Lord! Lay not on us such a burden as you  
did lay on those before us! Our Lord! Impose  
not on us that which we have not the strength to  
bear! Pardon us, absolve us and have mercy on  
us. You are our Patron; so grant us victory over  
the disbelieving folk (2:286).

Prophet Mohammed p.b.u.h. said: (whoever  
recites the last two verses of the chapter called  
the Cow, they will suffice him). This means  
that they will protect him from every evil.  
Again seeking refuge in Allah and  
remembering his name is an effective  
protection against all evils including magic.  
Two main supplications are recommended in  
this respect. They are:

1. I seek refuge in the complete words of  
Allah from the evils of what He created;
2. In the name of Allah through whose name  
nothing on earth or in heaven can cause any  
harm.

If these two prayers are recited three times in  
the beginning of the day and in the beginning  
of the night, then no harm or evil will approach  
the reciter by the grace of Allah.

It remains to mention how we can treat a  
person under the spell of magic. It is possible,  
on the one hand, to learn magic so that one can  
use the same tactics. All in all, the best cure is  
to recite the Quran and seek God's help.

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