

FUNDEMENTALS OF TAWHID

Part 3

Charms and Omens

Introduction

- In the first session, we discussed.
 - That *Tawhid Ar-Rububiyah* implies the realisation of Allah as the sole Creator and Sustainer.
 - This in turn implies: Good and bad fortune occur according to Allah's will.
- Unfortunately, people throughout history have wanted to gain 'control' over the future.
 - This has typically done through charms and omens.
- It is important to understand what Islam says about these practices due to widespread occurrence.

Charms

- It was the practice of the people during the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to wear bangles, bracelets, beaded necklaces, shells etc.
- Islam opposed such a belief as they provide the ideological basis for idol-worship.
 - “When the Prophet (peace be upon him) saw a brass bangle on a man’s upper arm, he said to him: “Woe be to you! What is this?” The man replied that it was to protect him from a sickness called *al-Wahinah*. The Prophet (peace be upon him) then said: “Cast it off for indeed it will only increase your weakness. And if you died with it on, you would never succeed.” [Ahmed, Ibn Majah & Ibn Hiban]
 - “May Allah cause failure and unrest to whoever wears a talisman or puts it on others.” [Ahmed]
 - The event which transpired regarding the tree of *Dhat Anwaat* [Tirmidhi]
 - In this hadith, the Prophet (peace be upon him) not only rejects good luck charms but also mentions that Muslims will follow the practices of Jews and Christians.

Charms: Common Examples...

- All charms are forms of shirk:
 - “When a group of ten men came to the Prophet (peace be upon him), he only accepted the oath of allegiance from nine. They asked “O Messenger of Allah, why did you take the covenant from nine of us and refuse this man?” The Prophet (peace be upon him) answered: “Indeed he has a talisman on him.” The man then put his hand in his cloak, pulled out the talisman and broke it. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) finished taking the oath from him, he turned and said: “Whoever wears a talisman has committed shirk”” [Tirmidhi]
- Rabbit’s foot
 - Worn on chains and bracelets.
 - Origin: Rabbits spoke with spirits by thumping their feet on the ground.
- Horseshoes
 - Hung in the house, or on bracelets, key chains etc.
 - Origin: From Greek mythology.
 - Horses were considered sacred animals.
 - If pointed upwards: Contained good luck.
 - If downwards: Indicative of bad luck.

FUNDEMENTALS OF TAWHID

Part 7

Magic

Definition of Magic:

- “The seeming control or foresight of natural forces by ritual invocation of supernatural agencies as well as the belief that men can coerce nature by the use of certain rights, formulas and actions.” *[Reader’s Digest Great Encyclopedic Dictionary; (New York: Fund & Wagnalls Publishing Co. 10th ed., 1975, p. 813.)]*

In Islam...

- No difference between black and white...
- *Sihr*: “Whatever is caused by hidden or subtle forces.” [Arabic-English Lexicon, vol. 1, p.1316-7]
- “Indeed some forms of speech are magic.” [Bukhari & Muslim]
- The pre-dawn meal taken before fasting is called Sahur because its time is in darkness at the end of the night” [Taysir al-'Aziz al-Hamid, p. 382]

Magic today...

- In modern time it has become acceptable to deny the effect of magic.
- Magic is explained away as the result of psychological disorders or phenomenon.

Earlier Diversions

- Certain Jews justified their practice of magic within an esoteric mystical system called *Cabala* by claiming that they learned it from Sulaiman (peace be upon him).
- This knowledge was of no real benefit as people only harmed themselves by learning it.
- The Jews who learned these arts knew well that they were cursed because it was forbidden in their own scriptures. The follow can be found in the *Torah* as found today:
 - “When you come into the land which the Lord your God give you, you shall not learn to follow the abominable practice of those nations. There shall not be found anyone among you anyone who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, anyone who practices divination, a soothsayer, or an auger, or a sorcerer, or a charmer, or a medium, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord; and because of these abominable practices the Lord your God is driving them out before you.” [Deuteronomy 18:9-12]
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Magic: Islam's view

- “They followed what the devils related concerning Sulaiman’s kingdom, but it was not Sulaiman who disbelieved, it was the devils who disbelieved by teaching the people magic and that which was revealed to the angels Harut and Marut in Babylon. Although the two would not teach anyone anything until after they warned them saying, ‘indeed we are only a test and trial, so do not commit disbelief.’ But the people went ahead and learned from the two of them what could cause the separation of a man from his wife. However, they could not harm anyone with it except by Allah’s permission. They (in fact) learned what would only harm their own souls and not benefit them. **Indeed they knew that whoever purchases it would have no share in the Hereafter.** Evil indeed was the price for which they sold their own souls if they only knew.”
[Quran 2: 102]

Involvement of the Jinn...

- The author states: “If these basic facts about the Jinn’s abilities are kept in mind, all of the supernatural and magical incidents which are not hoaxes can be easily explained.”
- For example:
 - Haunted houses
 - Seances
 - Ouija board
 - Produce money
 - Cases of reincarnation (i.e. Shanti Devi)

Jinn entering Humans

- The phenomenon is famously known amongst Christians (i.e. Speaking in tongues).
- Also known through Sufi orders through their *dhikr* sessions.

Exorcism

- Exorcism became a widespread practice in Europe during the middle ages.
- Christian exorcism is based on numerous accounts of Jesus (peace be upon him) exorcising possessed people in the Gospels.

Three methods for removal

- 1) Summoning another Jinn [FORBIDDEN]
- 2) Confirming *shirk* [FORBIDDEN]
- 3) Using the Qur'an and *Isti'azah*.

- Ya'la ibn Marrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "Once I went travelling with the Prophet (peace be upon him) and we came across a woman sitting with her child in the road. She said, "O Messenger of Allah, this boy has been afflicted and has caused us many trials. I don't know how many times a day he is seized by spells!" The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "Give him to me." So she raised him up to him and the Prophet (peace be upon him) put the boy in front of him in the middle of his saddle. Then he opened the boy's mouth and blew in it thrice saying: "*Bismillah!* I am a slave of Allah, so get away, O enemy of Allah!" Then he returned the boy to the woman and said: "Meet us here on our return and tell us what happened." Then we went and on our return we found her at the place. She had with her three sheep, so the Prophet (peace be upon him) asked: "How is your boy?" She replied: "By the One who has sent you with the truth we haven't noticed anything wrong with him since then, so I've brought you this sheep." The Prophet (peace be upon him) said to me: "Dismount and take one. Then return the rest to her." [Ahmed]

- Umm Aban bint Al-Wazi reported that: “When her grandfather Zari went with a delegation from their tribe to see the Messenger of Allah, he brought along with him a son of his who was insane, so I have brought him for you to pray for him.” The Prophet (peace be upon him) told him to bring him. So he took off his son’s travelling clothes and put on some good clothes, then carried him to the Prophet (peace be upon him). The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “Bring him to close to me and turn his back to me.” The Prophet (peace be upon him) then grabbed the boy’s clothes and began to hit him severely on his back. While he was hitting him, he said “Get out, enemy of Allah! Enemy of Allah get out!” The boy then began to look around as if he were alright. The Prophet (peace be upon him) sat him down in front of him and called for some water. He wiped it on the boys’ face and made a prayer for him. After the Prophet’s (peace be upon him) prayer, there were none in the delegation who was better than the boy.” [Ahmed]

- “Once when we left Allah’s Messenger’s company, we came upon a Bedouin tribe. Some of them said: “We have been told that you have come with some good things from that man (i.e. The Prophet (peace be upon him)). Do you have any medicine or incantation for a man possessed?” We answered yes, so they brought a madman bound in a spell. I recited *Surat Al-Fatihah* over him every morning and evening for three days. Every time I completed the recitation, I would gather my saliva and spit. Finally he got up as if he broke free from being tied in bonds. The Bedouin then brought me a gift as payment, so I said to them: “I can’t accept it until I ask Allah’s Messenger.” When I asked the Prophet (peace be upon him), he said “take it... Whoever eats by way of false incantations will bear the burden of his sin. But you have earned that wage with an incantation of truth.”” [Abu Dawud]

Islamic ruling on magic

- Then penalty for anyone caught practicing magic without repenting is death.
- Jundub ibn Ka'b (may Allah have mercy on him) reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "The prescribed punishment for the magician is that he be executed by the sword." [Tirmidhi]

After the Prophet...

- Bajjalah ibn 'Abdah reports that Umar ordered to kill every fortuneteller and magician they found in Persia.
- Muhammad ibn 'Abdur-Rahman reported that Hafsah had a servant-girl of hers executed because she worked some magic on her.

After the Khulafa Ar-Rashidin...

- The Umayyad rulers allowed fortunetellers and magicians to practice their arts.
- They also introduced them into their courts.
- Caliph Al-Waleed ibn Abdul-Malik (705-715 AD)
- The story of Jundub Al-Azdi (may Allah be pleased with him)