

## Q. 75. What is Al-Kahanah? And what is the ruling on going to a Kahin?

**A.** *Al-Kahanah* is derived from *Al-Takahhun*, which means to fabricate lies, or to search for the truth in ways which are without any basis. During the *Jahiliyyah*, it was the work of people who used to be contacted by the devils who would eavesdrop on what was said in the heavens and inform the people of it. Then the people would take the words that were conveyed to them by those devils, and add things to it, then they would tell the people. So if anything they had said occurred, the people would be deceived by them and refer to them for judgements in matters between them, and they would seek knowledge of what the future held from them, which is why we say that a *Kahin* (seer) is one who informs about the unseen knowledge of the future.

As for those who go to a *Kahin*, they are divided into three categories:

1. That he goes to the *Kahin* and he asks him, but he does not believe him. This is unlawful, and the punishment for one who does so is that his prayer is not accepted for forty days, as confirmed by a *Hadith* in *Sahih Muslim* in which the Prophet ﷺ said:

«مَنْ أَتَى عَرَّافًا فَسَأَلَهُ لَمْ تُقْبَلْ لَهُ صَلَاةٌ أَرْبَعِينَ يَوْمًا أَوْ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً»

“Whoever went to a seer and asked him something, his prayer will not be accepted for forty days, or forty nights.”<sup>(1)</sup>

2. That he goes to the *Kahin* to ask him about something, and he believes what he tells him. This is an act of disbelief in Allāh, the Almighty, the All-Powerful, because he has believed in his claim to know the unseen, and believing a human being who claims to

<sup>(1)</sup> Reported by Muslim in the Book of Salutations, in the Chapter on the Unlawfulness of *Al-Kahanah* and Visiting the *Kahin* (2230).

have knowledge of the unseen is a rejection of Allāh's, Words:

﴿قُلْ لَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ﴾

"Say: None in the heavens and the earth knows the Ghaib (unseen) except Allah."<sup>[1]</sup>

This is why it has been reported in an authentic *Hadith*:

«مَنْ أَتَى كَاهِنًا فَصَدَّقَهُ بِمَا يَقُولُ فَقَدْ كَفَرَ بِمَا نَزَلَ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ ﷺ»

"Whoever went to a Kahin and believed in what he said, has disbelieved in what was revealed to Muhammad ﷺ."<sup>[2]</sup>

3. That he goes to the *Kahin* and asks him something in order to expose the *Kahin* to the people, so they know that he is misleading the people with his fortune-telling. There is no objection to this; and the evidence for that is that when Ibn Sayyad came to the Prophet ﷺ, the Prophet ﷺ said to him:

«إِنِّي قَدْ خَبَأْتُ لَكَ خَبِيئًا»

"I have kept something (in my mind) for you, (can you tell me that?)."

Ibn Sayyad said, "It is Ad-Dukh (the smoke)."<sup>[3]</sup>

The Prophet ﷺ said:

[1] An-Naml 27:65

[2] Reported by At-Tirmithi in the Chapters on Purification, in the Chapter: What Has Been Said Regarding the Hatred of Approaching the Menstruating Woman (135) and by Ibn Majah in the Book of Purification, in the Chapter: The Prohibition of Approaching the Menstruating Woman (639) and authenticated by Al-Albani, may Allah have mercy on him, in *Irwa'ul-Ghalil* (6817).

[3] When the Prophet ﷺ said to Ibn Sayyad: "I have kept something (in my mind) for you," he meant *Surat Ad-Dukhan*. Ibn Sayyad answered imperfectly, saying only part of the word: Ad-Dukh. In this way, the Prophet ﷺ proved that Ibn Sayyad was just a soothsayer to whom the devils conveyed nonsensical fragments of information.

«أَحْسَبُ فَلَنْ تُعَدَّوْ قَدْرَكَ»

“May you be in ignominy. You cannot exceed your limits.”<sup>[11]</sup>

So, these are the three possible circumstances of a person who visits a *Kahin*:

1. That he comes and asks him without believing him, and without intending to make his case clear and this is forbidden. The punishment of the one who does it is that his prayer is not accepted for forty nights.
2. That he asks him and he believes him and this is disbelief in Allâh, the Almighty, the All-Powerful, and it is incumbent upon a person who does so to repent and return to Allâh, the Almighty, the All-Powerful. If he does not, he dies as a disbeliever.
3. That he goes to him and asks him in order to test him and to make his case clear to the people and there is no objection to this.

**Q. 76. What is the ruling on worship if it is combined with *Riya*?<sup>[2]</sup>**

**A.** The ruling on worship which is combined with *Riya* is that it is said: The combination of *Riya* (with worship) is in three forms:

1. That the primary motive behind the worship is to be seen by the people, such as one who prays to be seen by the people, in order to be praised by them for his prayers and this invalidates the act of worship.

<sup>[1]</sup> Reported by Al-Bukhari in the Book of Funerals, in the Chapter: If a Young Boy Embraces Islam and Then Dies, Should He be Prayed Over (1354) and by Muslim in the Book of Trials, in the Chapter: Mention of Ibn Sayyad (2924).

<sup>[2]</sup> *Riya*: To perform a righteous deed with the intention of being seen and praised by the people.