

FORTUNETELLING (PART 3 OF 3)

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Description: A glimpse of how the practice of fortune-telling differs from Islam. Part 3: Islamic belief in fortune-tellers.

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The Islamic Ruling on Fortune-telling

Because of the sacrilege and heresy involved in fortune telling, Islam has taken a very strong stance towards it. Islam opposes any form of association with those who practice fortune-telling, except to advise them to give up their forbidden practices.

Visitation of Fortune-tellers

The Prophet, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, laid down principles, which clearly forbade any form of visitation of fortune-tellers. Safiyyah reported from Hafsa (wife of the Prophet) that the Prophet said, **“The *Salaah* of whoever approaches a fortune-teller and asks him about anything will not be accepted for 40 days and nights.”** (*Saheeh Muslim*) The punishment in this Hadeeth is for simply approaching a fortune-teller and asking him questions out of curiosity. This prohibition is further supported by *Mu’aawiyah Ibn al-Hakam asSolamee’s* Hadeeth in which he said, “O Messenger of God, verily there are some people among us who visit oracles. The Prophet replied, “Do not go to them”. Such a severe punishment has been assigned for only visitation because it is the first step to belief in fortune-telling. If one went there doubtful about its reality, and some of the fortune-teller’s predictions come true, one will surely become a true devotee of the fortune-teller and an ardent believer in fortune-telling. The individual who approaches a fortune-teller is still obliged to make his compulsory *Salaah* throughout the 40 day period, even though he gets no reward from his prayers. If he abandons the *Salaah* all together, he has committed another major sin.

Belief in Fortune-tellers

The Islamic ruling with regard to anyone who visits a fortune-teller believing that he knows the unseen and the future is that of *Kufr* (disbelief). Abu Hurayrah and al-Hasan both reported from the Prophet, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, that

he said, "Whosoever approaches a fortune-teller and believes what he says, has disbelieved in what was revealed to Muhammad." Such a belief assigns to creation some of God's attributes with regard to the knowledge of the unseen and the future. Consequently, it destroys *Tawheed alAsmaa was-Sifaat*, and represents a form of *Shirk* in this aspect of *Tawheed*.

The ruling of *Kufr* includes, by analogy (*Qiyaas*), those who read the books and writings of fortune-tellers, listen to them on the radio or watch them on the T.V., as, these are the most common means used by 20th century fortune-tellers to spread their predictions.

God clearly states in the Quran that no one knows the unseen besides Him. Not even the Prophet Muhammad. God says: With Him are the keys to the unseen and none knows it except Him alone."

Then he told the Prophet Muhammad, **"Say! I have no power to bring good to myself nor avert harm but it is only as Allah wills. If it were that I knew the unseen, I would have multiplied the good and no evil would have touched me."**

And he also says: **"Say! None in the heavens nor the earth knows the 'unseen except Allah'."**

Therefore, all the various methods used around the world by oracles, fortune-tellers, and the likes, are forbidden to Muslims.

Palm-reading, I-Ching, fortune cookies, tea leaves as well as Zodiacal signs and Bio-rhythm computer programs, all claim to inform those who believe in them about their future. However, God has stated in no uncertain terms that He alone knows the future: **"Verily the knowledge of the Hour is with God alone. It is He who sends down the rain and knows the contents of the wombs. No one knows what he will earn tomorrow nor in which land he will die, but God is all-knowing and aware."**(*Surah Luqmaan 31:34*)

Therefore, Muslims must take utmost care in dealing with books, magazines, newspapers as well as individuals who, in one way or another, claim knowledge of the future or the unseen. For example, when a Muslim weather-man predicts rain, snow, or other climatic conditions for tomorrow he should add the phrase, "*In ShaaAllaah* (If God so wishes)". Likewise, when the Muslim doctor informs her patient that she will deliver a child in 9 months or on such and such a day, she should take care to add the phrase "*In ShaaAllaah*", as such statements are only estimations based on statistical information.

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