

## Ḥadīth One

# The existence and prevalence of sihr (magic)

And they followed [instead] what the devils had recited during the reign of Sulaimān. It was not Sulaimān who disbelieved, but the devils disbelieved, teaching people magic and that which was revealed to the two angels at Babylon, Hārūt and Mārūt. But the two angels do not teach anyone unless they say: We are a trial, so do not disbelieve [by practicing magic]. And [yet] they learn from them that by which they cause separation between a man and his wife. But they do not harm anyone through it except by permission of Allāh. And the people learn what harms them and does not benefit them. But the Children of Israel certainly knew that whoever purchased the magic would not have in the Hereafter any share. And wretched is that for which they sold themselves, if they only knew (2:102).

وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُو الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَانَ ۗ وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ وَلَٰكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَى الْمَلَكَيْنِ بِبَابِلَ هَارُوتَ وَمَارُوتَ ۗ وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّى يَقُولَا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ ۗ فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِ ۗ وَمَا هُمْ بِضَارِّينَ بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ ۗ وَلَقَدْ عَلَّمُوا لَمَنِ اشْتَرَاهُ مَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَاقٍ ۗ وَلَبِئْسَ مَا شَرَوْا بِهِ أَنفُسَهُمْ ۗ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

Then We sent after them Mūsā and Hārūn to Pharaoh and his establishment with Our signs, but they behaved arrogantly and were a criminal people. So when there came to them the truth from Us, they said: Indeed, this is obvious magic (10:76).

ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِم مُوسَىٰ وَهَارُونَ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَئِهِ بِآيَاتِنَا فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا وَكَانُوا قَوْمًا مُّجْرِمِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُم الْحَقُّ مِنْ عِنْدِنَا قَالُوا إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَسِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٧٦﴾

[The Day] when Allāh will say: O Jesus, Son of Mary, remember My favour upon you and upon your mother when I supported you with the Pure Spirit and you spoke to the people in the cradle and in maturity; and [remember] when I taught you writing and wisdom and the Torah and the Gospel; and when you designed from clay [what was] like the form of a bird with My permission, then you breathed into it, and it became a bird with My permission; and you healed the blind and the leper with My permission; and when you brought forth the dead with My permission; and when I restrained the Children of Israel from [killing] you when you came to them with clear proofs and those who disbelieved among them said: This is not but obvious magic (5:110).

ذُ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ ادْكُرْ نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَتِكَ إِذْ أَيَّدتُّكَ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ تُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا ۗ وَإِذْ عَلَّمْتُكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ ۗ وَإِذْ تَخَلَّقُ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ بِإِذْنِي فَتَنْفُخُ فِيهَا فَتَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِي ۗ وَتُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَةَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ بِإِذْنِي ۗ وَإِذْ تُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِي ۗ وَإِذْ كَفَفْتُ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَنْكَ إِذْ جِئْتَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ إِنْ هَٰذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١١٠﴾

Have the people been amazed that We revealed [revelation] to a man from among them [saying]: Warn mankind and give good tidings to those who believe that they will have a [firm] precedence of honour with their Lord? [But] the disbelievers say: "Indeed, this is an obvious magician (10:2).

أَكَانَ لِلنَّاسِ عَجَبًا أَنْ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى رَجُلٍ مِّنْهُمْ أَنْ أَنْذِرِ النَّاسَ  
وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنَّ لَهُمْ قَدَمَ صِدْقٍ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ قَالَ الْكَافِرُونَ  
إِنَّ هَذَا لَسَاحِرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢﴾

There lived a king before you and he had a court magician. As the magician grew old, he said to the king: I have grown old, send some young boy to me so that I should teach him magic.

عَنْ صُهَيْبٍ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ كَانَ  
مَلِكًا فِيمَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ وَكَانَ لَهُ سَاحِرٌ فَلَمَّا كَبُرَ قَالَ لِلْمَلِكِ  
إِنِّي قَدْ كِبَرْتُ فَابْعَثْ إِلَيَّ غُلَامًا أُعَلِّمَهُ السِّحْرَ

The king sent to him a young boy so that he should train him [in magic]. And on his way to the magician the young boy found a monk sitting there. He listened to his [the monk's] talk and was impressed by it. It became his habit that on his way to the magician he met the monk and set there and he came to the magician [late]. The magician beat him because of the delay.

فَبَعَثَ إِلَيْهِ غُلَامًا يُعَلِّمُهُ فَكَانَ فِي طَرِيقِهِ إِذَا سَلَكَ رَاهِبٌ  
فَقَعَدَ إِلَيْهِ وَسَمِعَ كَلَامَهُ فَأَعْجَبَهُ فَكَانَ إِذَا أَتَى السَّاحِرَ مَرًّا  
بِالرَّاهِبِ وَقَعَدَ إِلَيْهِ فَإِذَا أَتَى السَّاحِرَ ضَرَبَهُ

The young boy made a complaint of that to the monk and he said to him: When you feel afraid of the magician, say: My family had delayed me. And when you feel afraid of your family, say: The magician delayed me.

فَشَكَكَ ذَلِكَ إِلَى الرَّاهِبِ فَقَالَ إِذَا خَشِيتَ السَّاحِرَ فَقُلْ  
حَبَسَنِي أَهْلِي وَإِذَا خَشِيتَ أَهْلَكَ فَقُلْ حَبَسَنِي السَّاحِرَ

It so happened that there came a huge beast [of prey] and it blocked the way of the people, and the young boy said: I will come to know today whether the magician is superior or the monk is superior. He picked up a stone and said: O Allāh, if the affair of the monk is dearer to You than the affair of the magician, cause death to this animal so that the people should be able to move about freely. He threw the stone at it and killed it and the people began to move about [on the path freely].

فَبَيْنَمَا هُوَ كَذَلِكَ إِذْ أَتَى عَلَى دَابَّةٍ عَظِيمَةٍ قَدْ حَبَسَتْ النَّاسَ  
فَقَالَ الْيَوْمَ أَعْلَمُ السَّاحِرُ أَمْ الرَّاهِبُ أَفْضَلُ؟ فَأَخَذَ  
حَجْرًا فَقَالَ اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كَانَ أَمْرُ الرَّاهِبِ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ أَمْرِ  
السَّاحِرِ فَاقْتُلْ هَذِهِ الدَّابَّةَ حَتَّى يَمْضِيَ النَّاسُ فَرَمَاهَا فَفَتَلَهَا ،  
وَمَضَى النَّاسُ

The young boy then came to the monk and informed him and the monk said: Son, today you are superior to me. You have reached a level where I see that you would soon be put to a trial, and in case you are put to a trial don't mention my involvement.

فَأَتَى الرَّاهِبَ فَأَخْبَرَهُ فَقَالَ لَهُ الرَّاهِبُ أَيُّ بَيْتِي أَنْتَ الْيَوْمَ أَفْضَلُ  
مَعِي قَدْ بَلَغَ مِنْ أَمْرِكَ مَا أَرَى وَإِنَّكَ سَتُبْتَلَى فَإِنْ ابْتُلِيتَ فَلَا  
تَذَلَّ عَلَيَّ

The young man began to treat the blind and those suffering from leprosy and he in fact began to cure people from [all kinds] of illness.

وَكَانَ الْعُلَامُ يُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَةَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ وَيُدَاوِي النَّاسَ مِنْ سَائِرِ  
الْأَدْوَاءِ

When a companion of the king who had gone blind heard about him, he came to him with numerous gifts and said: If you cure me all these things collected together here would be yours. The young boy said: I myself do not cure anyone. It is Allāh Who cures and if you affirm faith in Allāh, I shall also supplicate Allāh to cure you. He affirmed his faith in Allāh and Allāh cured him.

The man came to the king and sat by his side as he used to sit before. The king said to him: Who restored your eyesight? He said: My Lord. Thereupon he said: Do you have a Lord besides me? He said: My Lord and your Lord is Allāh, so the king seized him and tormented him until he disclosed information about the boy.

The young man was thus summoned and the king said to him: Boy, it has been conveyed to me that you have become so much proficient in your magic that you cure the blind and those suffering from leprosy and you do such and such things. Thereupon he said: I do not cure anyone; it is Allāh who cures, and the king seized the boy and tormented him until he revealed information about the monk.

The monk was thus summoned and it was said to him: Turn back from your religion. He, however, refused to do so. The king ordered for a saw to be brought, he placed it on the middle of his head and it was cut until the parts fell to the ground.

Then the courtier of the king [who had been cured of blindness] was brought and it was said to him: Turn back from your religion. He refused to do so, and the saw was placed in the middle of his head and it was cut until the parts fell to the ground.

Then that young boy was brought and it was said to him: Turn back from your religion. He refused to do so. The king handed him over to a group of his courtiers and said: Take him to such and such mountain; make him climb up that mountain and when you reach its top ask him to renounce his faith; if he refuses to do so, then throw off the mountain. So they took him and made him climb up the mountain and he said: O

فَسَمِعَ جَلِيسَ الْمَلِكِ كَانَ قَدْ عَمِيَ فَأَتَاهُ بِهَدَايَا كَثِيرَةٍ فَقَالَ مَا هَاهُنَا لَكَ أَجْمَعُ إِنْ أَنْتَ شَفَيْتَنِي فَقَالَ إِنِّي لَا أَشْفِي أَحَدًا إِلَّا مَا يَشْفِي اللَّهُ فَإِنْ أَنْتَ آمَنْتَ بِاللَّهِ دَعَوْتُ اللَّهَ فَشَفَاكَ فَأَمَّنَ بِاللَّهِ فَشَفَاهُ اللَّهُ

فَأَتَى الْمَلِكَ فَجَلَسَ إِلَيْهِ كَمَا كَانَ يَجْلِسُ فَقَالَ لَهُ الْمَلِكُ مَنْ رَدَّ عَلَيْكَ بَصْرَكَ؟ قَالَ رَبِّي قَالَ وَلَكَ رَبُّ عَيْبِي؟ قَالَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكَ اللَّهُ فَأَخَذَهُ فَلَمْ يَزَلْ يُعَذِّبُهُ حَتَّى دَلَّ عَلَى الْعُلَامِ

فَعَجِيَءَ بِالْعُلَامِ فَقَالَ لَهُ الْمَلِكُ أَيُّ بَيْتٍ قَدْ بَلَغَ مِنْ سِحْرِكَ مَا تُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَةَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ وَتَفْعَلُ وَتَفْعَلُ فَقَالَ إِنِّي لَا أَشْفِي أَحَدًا إِلَّا مَا يَشْفِي اللَّهُ فَأَخَذَهُ فَلَمْ يَزَلْ يُعَذِّبُهُ حَتَّى دَلَّ عَلَى الرَّاهِبِ

فَعَجِيَءَ بِالرَّاهِبِ فَقِيلَ لَهُ ارْجِعْ عَنْ دِينِكَ فَأَبَى فَدَعَا بِالْمِثْثَارِ فَوَضَعَ الْمِثْثَارَ فِي مَفْرَقِ رَأْسِهِ فَشَقَّهُ حَتَّى وَقَعَ شَقَّاهُ

ثُمَّ جِيءَ بِجَلِيسِ الْمَلِكِ فَقِيلَ لَهُ ارْجِعْ عَنْ دِينِكَ فَأَبَى فَوَضَعَ الْمِثْثَارَ فِي مَفْرَقِ رَأْسِهِ فَشَقَّهُ بِهِ حَتَّى وَقَعَ شَقَّاهُ

ثُمَّ جِيءَ بِالْعُلَامِ فَقِيلَ لَهُ ارْجِعْ عَنْ دِينِكَ فَأَبَى فَدَفَعَهُ إِلَى نَعْرٍ مِنْ أَصْحَابِهِ فَقَالَ ادْهَبُوا بِهِ إِلَى جَبَلٍ كَذَا وَكَذَا فَاصْعَدُوا بِهِ الْجَبَلَ فَإِذَا بَلَغْتُمْ ذُرْوَتَهُ فَإِنْ رَجَعَ عَنْ دِينِهِ وَإِلَّا فَاطْرَحُوهُ فَدَهَبُوا بِهِ فَصَعِدُوا بِهِ الْجَبَلَ فَقَالَ اللَّهُمَّ اكْفِنِيهِمْ بِمَا شِئْتُمْ فَرَجَفَ بِهِمُ الْجَبَلُ فَسَقَطُوا وَجَاءَ يَمْشِي إِلَى الْمَلِكِ فَقَالَ لَهُ الْمَلِكُ مَا فَعَلَ أَصْحَابُكَ؟ قَالَ كَفَانِيهِمُ اللَّهُ

فَدَفَعَهُ إِلَى نَعْرٍ مِنْ أَصْحَابِهِ فَقَالَ ادْهَبُوا بِهِ فَاحْمِلُوهُ فِي قُرْفُورٍ فَتَوَسَّطُوا بِهِ الْبَحْرَ فَإِنْ رَجَعَ عَنْ دِينِهِ وَإِلَّا فَاقْدِفُوهُ فَدَهَبُوا بِهِ فَقَالَ اللَّهُمَّ اكْفِنِيهِمْ بِمَا شِئْتُمْ فَانْكَفَأَتْ بِهِمُ السَّيْفِينَةُ فَعَرَفُوا وَجَاءَ يَمْشِي إِلَى الْمَلِكِ فَقَالَ لَهُ الْمَلِكُ مَا فَعَلَ أَصْحَابُكَ؟ قَالَ كَفَانِيهِمُ اللَّهُ

Allāh, save me from them [in any way] You like, and the mountain began to quake and they all fell down. The young boy came walking to the king. The king said to him: What has happened to the people with you? He said: Allāh has saved me from them.

The king again handed him to some of his courtiers and said: Take him and carry him in a small boat and when you reach the middle of the ocean ask him to renounce his religion, but if he does not renounce his religion throw him [into the water]. So they took him and he said: O Allāh, save me from them and what they want to do. It was quite soon that the boat turned over and they were drowned and the young boy came walking to the king, and the king said to him: What has happened to the people with you? He said: Allāh has saved me from them.

He then said to the king: You cannot kill me until you do what I tell you to do. The king said: What is that? He said: You should gather people in a plain and tie me to the trunk [of a tree]. Then take hold of an arrow from the quiver and say: With the name of Allāh, the Lord of the young boy; then shoot an arrow and if you do that then you would be able to kill me.

So the king summoned the people in an open plain and tied the boy to the trunk of a tree, then he took hold of an arrow from his quiver and then placed the arrow in the bow and then said: With the name of Allāh, the Lord of the young boy; he then shot an arrow and it hit his temple. The boy placed his hands upon the temple where the arrow had hit him and he died and the people said: We believe in the Lord of this young boy, we believe in the Lord of this young boy, we believe in the Lord of this young boy.

The courtiers came to the king and it was said to him: Do you see that Allāh has actually done what you aimed at averting. They [the people] have affirmed their faith in the Lord.

The king commanded ditches to be dug at important points in the path. When these ditches were dug, and the fire was lit in them, it was said [to the people]: He who would not turn

فَقَالَ لِلْمَلِكِ إِنَّكَ لَسْتَ بِقَاتِلِي حَتَّى تَفْعَلَ مَا أَمُرُكَ بِهِ قَالَ  
وَمَا هُوَ؟ قَالَ تَجْمَعُ النَّاسَ فِي صَعِيدٍ وَاحِدٍ وَتَصْلُبُنِي عَلَى جِدْعٍ  
ثُمَّ تَحْدُ سَهْمًا مِنْ كِنَانَتِي ثُمَّ ضَعِ السَّهْمَ فِي كَبِدِ الْقَوْسِ ثُمَّ قُلْ  
بِاسْمِ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعُلَامِ ثُمَّ ارْمِنِي فَإِنَّكَ إِذَا فَعَلْتَ ذَلِكَ قَتَلْتَنِي

فَجَمَعَ النَّاسَ فِي صَعِيدٍ وَاحِدٍ وَصَلَبَهُ عَلَى جِدْعٍ ثُمَّ أَخَذَ سَهْمًا  
مِنْ كِنَانَتِهِ ثُمَّ وَضَعَ السَّهْمَ فِي كَبِدِ الْقَوْسِ ثُمَّ قَالَ بِاسْمِ اللَّهِ رَبِّ  
الْعُلَامِ ثُمَّ رَمَاهُ فَوَقَعَ السَّهْمُ فِي صُدْغِهِ فَوَضَعَ يَدَهُ فِي صُدْغِهِ  
فِي مَوْضِعِ السَّهْمِ فَمَاتَ فَقَالَ النَّاسُ آمَنَّا بِرَبِّ الْعُلَامِ آمَنَّا  
بِرَبِّ الْعُلَامِ آمَنَّا بِرَبِّ الْعُلَامِ

فَأَتَى الْمَلِكُ قَبِيلَ لَهُ أُرَائَيْتَ لِمَ أُرَائَيْتَ مَا كُنْتَ تَحْذَرُ؟ قَدْ وَاللَّهِ نَزَلَ بِكَ  
حَذْرُكَ قَدْ آمَنَ النَّاسُ

فَأَمَرَ بِالْأَخْدُودِ فِي أَفْوَاهِ السِّبْكَ فَحُدَّتْ وَأَضْرَمَ النَّبْرَانَ وَقَالَ  
مَنْ لَمْ يَرْجِعْ عَن دِينِهِ فَأَحْمُوهُ فِيهَا أَوْ قَبِلْ لَهُ أَقْتَنِحْ

فَفَعَلُوا حَتَّى جَاءَتِ امْرَأَةٌ وَمَعَهَا صَبِيٌّ لَهَا فَتَقَاعَسَتْ أَنْ تَقَعَ  
فِيهَا فَقَالَ لَهَا الْعُلَامُ يَا أُمَّهُ اصْبِرِي فَإِنَّكَ عَلَى الْحَقِّ

back from his [boy's] religion would be thrown in the fire or it would be said to them to jump in that.

The people continued to die and not renounce their religion until a woman came with her child and she hesitated jumping into the fire [on account of the child] but the child said: O mother, endure [this ordeal] for you are upon the Truth.

Recorded in Muslim.

**Points of benefit:**

1. Siḥr was not only known and taught within societies, it was utilised to its maximum level.
2. The powerful have always utilised siḥr to manipulate the people's emotions and perceptions.
3. Ēmān, tawḥīd, bonding with Allāh and tawakkul (trust/reliance) in His power are the only ultimate protection from all evil and harm.
4. Duās are a means to protect and cure oneself from siḥr and any other illness, when every other method of treatment and remedy fails.