7873 - A person claims to know where stolen items are

the question

One of the liars claims to know about thieves after they have stolen without anybody knowing, and he does that through means with which not many people are familiar. For example, he calls for a dish of water, and a child who has not yet reached puberty, who was breastfed by his mother for two full years, and who has never been scared by a dog. Then he starts to recite something from the Quran, and some unintelligible words, then he asks the child, “Do you see anything in the water that is in the dish?” The child then describes the thief in detail and where he hid the stolen goods. What is the Islamic ruling on this? Is it permissible to pray behind this man and to keep in touch with him in good times and in bad – knowing that we have tried to advise him, but he did not accept the advice and he says that he is following the truth

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Undoubtedly this man is a practitioner of witchcraft or magic, and this is the work of the shayaateen (devils), because this is beyond the capabilities of human beings. No one knows the unseen except Allah, and revelation comes only to the Messengers – and Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was the Seal of the Prophets and there is no Prophet after him. No doubt the Shaytaan appears to fortune-tellers and describes the thieves to them, and tells them where stolen goods are, whether this is seen in this dish of water or in some other way. It is not permissible to ask these people anything or to believe them. “Whoever comes to a fortune-teller and believes him has disbelieved in what was revealed to Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him”.

(Saheeh – narrated by Ahmad, 2/408; Abu Dawood, 3904; al-Tirmidhi, 135; Ibn Maajah, 639; al-Haakim, 1/8). On this basis it is not permissible to appoint him to lead you in prayer, or to pray

behind him, or to keep in touch with him in good times and in bad, or to give him anything even if he is in need, until and unless he repents. And Allah knows best.