85541 - She went to a fortunate teller to find out who the thief was and he accused her brother

the question

A box was stolen from my sister and her husband and children in which there was a lot of money. My sister’s husband was broken-hearted and the people told him about a Shaykh who was said to be able to relieve distress and find lost items by Allaah’s Leave. He (that Shaykh) asked about me, with a cigarette in his hand, and he said to me: I saw you last night, your name is So and so, and you are the thief. This is my work and my source of income, and I will get 25 percent of the stolen goods. Tell me and admit that you are the only thief that everyone is looking for. There was a lengthy discussion between me and him, and I swore by Allaah that I was innocent of what he said, and Allaah is witness to what I said. Please advise me, may Allaah reward you, please relieve me of the wrong and claims that are surrounding me. I am afraid of turmoil among my relatives because injustice leads to a lot of bas consequences.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

The one who claims to know where stolen things are and who the thieves are by means of secret things that the people do not know is one of two things: a fortune-teller to whom the devils come, or a liar who makes the people think that he knows these things in order to consume their wealth unlawfully.

Whatever the case, it is not permissible to go to these people and to ask them or believe them, no matter how righteous they may appear to be, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Whoever goes to a fortune-teller and asks him about something, his prayers will not accepted for forty days.” Narrated by Muslim (2230).

And he (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Whoever has intercourse with a menstruating woman or with a woman in her back passage, or goes to a fortune-teller and believes what he says, has disbelieved in that which Allaah revealed to Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him).” Narrated by Ahmad (9779), Abu Dawood (3904), al-Tirmidhi (135) and Ibn Maajah (936); classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Ibn Maajah.

Al-Baghawi (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: The fortune-teller is the one who claims to have knowledge of things by means of some information from which he figures out where stolen things are or where lost items are etc. Quoted in al-Zawaajir ‘an Iqtiraaf al-Kabaa’ir (2/178)

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: The fortune-teller: it was said that he is the soothsayer, who is the one who foretells the future.

And it was said that it is a general term referring to soothsayers, astrologers, geomancers and their ilk who claim to have knowledge of the unseen by means of some knowledge and information that they use. This is a more general meaning which is indicated by the derivation of the word, as (the Arabic word) ‘arraaf (meaning fortune-teller) is derived from the word ma’rifah (knowledge) so it applies to everyone who deals in these matters and claims to have knowledge of them. End quote from al-Qawl al-Mufeed ‘ala Kitaab al-Tawheed (2/48).

One of those who have repented from fortune-telling and soothsaying said that he used to seek the help of the jinn in order to find out from them details of what was going on in the house of the one whose property was stolen, and his situation with his relatives and neighbours, and his friends and enemies, and sometimes he would blame someone who was under suspicion.

Even if we assume that the fortune-teller is able to point to the real thief and bring the property back by means of his contact with the jinn, it is not permissible to go to him and ask him anything, because of the ahaadeeth quoted above.

Secondly:

Some scholars are of the view that the one who claims to have knowledge of stolen items or that

the jinn tell him about that is a kaafir. Ibn Nujaym (may Allaah have mercy on him) said, discussing the things that constitute kufr: Going to a soothsayer and believing him when he says ‘I know where stolen items are’ or ‘I speak on the basis of what the jinn tell me’. End quote from al-Bahr al-Raa’iq (5/130). As for his saying ‘I speak on the basis of what the jinn tell me’ being kufr, that is because the jinn, like humans, have no knowledge of the unseen, as Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Then when We decreed death for him [Sulaymaan (Solomon)], nothing informed them (jinn) of his death except a little worm of the earth which kept (slowly) gnawing away at his stick. So when he fell down, the jinn saw clearly that if they had known the Unseen, they would not have stayed in the humiliating torment”

[Saba’ 34:14]

This was stated in the commentary on al-Bahr al-Raa’iq.

So asking a fortune-teller or soothsayer about anything is haraam, and that includes asking him about lost or stolen items, or asking him about a disease and the remedy for it.

The scholars of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas were asked: Sometimes we lose some money or gold in our house, and we believe that it has been stolen, so we go to someone who is known as a mukhbir (‘the one with the news’), and tell him about that, and he promises us something good, and sometimes we find the lost item, and sometimes we don’t. What is the ruling on our going to these people?

They replied: It is not permissible for you to go to him because he is a soothsayer, and it was narrated in a saheeh report that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) forbade going to soothsayers and their ilk, and asking them and believing them. End quote from Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa’imah (1/410).

Thirdly:

The one who has gone to this fortune-teller and asked him something has to repent to Allaah, may

He be exalted, by regretting what he has done, resolving not to do it again, and not accusing anyone of stealing on the basis words of the fortune-teller and his helpers among the jinn, because the jinn tell lies, and they may accuse someone who is innocent so as to cause trouble among the Muslims. Repentance in this case is required from the one who went to the fortune-teller and asked him, and of the one who told him to do that, because both have fallen into sin. Please see question no. 32863 for information on repenting from asking and believing fortune-tellers.

The Muslim should turn to Allaah and ask Him to solve problems and difficulties, for all things are in His Hand, may He be glorified, as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Is not He (better than your gods) Who responds to the distressed one, when he calls on Him, and Who removes the evil, and makes you inheritors of the earth, generations after generations? Is there any ilâh (god) with Allaah? Little is that you remember!”

[al-Naml 27:62]

And Allaah knows best.

This applies to your sister and her husband, and also applies to you. You should turn to Allaah and ask Him to relieve you of this accusation and wrong.

We advise your sister and her husband, and anyone who has anything to do with this matter, not to accuse anyone on the basis of the words of a charlatan or fortune-teller, because accusing someone who is innocent is a serious matter. The basic principle is that he is innocent and free of guilt. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Whoever says of a believer something that is not true, Allaah will cause him to dwell in the mud of khabaal until he stops saying that.” Narrated by Abu Dawood 5129 from Ibn ‘Umar (may Allaah be pleased with him); classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood.

Mud of khabaal refers to mud and mire and what comes from the sweat of the people of Hell.

May Allaah help us all to do that which He loves and which pleases Him.

And Allaah knows best.