



The General Presidency for the Affairs of
the Grand Holy Mosque and the Prophet's Holy Mosque

Translation of the Two Holy Mosques Khutbahs
A Joint Project



Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University
College of Languages and Translation

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A Warning against Belief in Bad Omens

His Eminence Sheikh Hussein ibn Abdul-Aziz al-Sheikh, may Allah preserve him, delivered the Friday *khutbah* entitled, “A Warning against Belief in Bad Omens”, in which he talked about the superstitious belief in bad omens, especially in the current month of Safar, stating that this was one of the customs of *jahiliyyah* (the pre-Islamic period of ignorance). He showed that this is a form of associating partners with Allah, citing evidence in support of that. He also mentioned what a Muslim should do in case he falls prey to such beliefs.

Part One

Praise be to Allah, Whose command none can repel and Whose judgement none can put back. All things happen in accordance with His Divine will and decree. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah alone, Who has no partners in His Lordship, His Divinity, or His Names and Attributes; and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger. O Allah! Bestow Your prayers, peace, and blessings upon him and upon his family and Companions.

Now then, O Muslims!

I advise you and advise myself to fear Allah, Majesty and Glory be to Him, for Allah protects those who fear Him and put their trust in Him.

Brothers in Islam!

One of the fundamentals of *tawhid* (belief in the Oneness of Allah –Islamic monotheism) provided by the texts of the Revelation is to guard against all forms of superstitious beliefs and all types of misguidance. One example of the superstitions adopted by some people in the past and at present is to believe in bad omen, i.e. to believe that certain things, seen or heard, which they naturally loathe or are loathed as a result of inherited customs, are portents of evil. Examples include regarding as evil omen the month of Safar, a particular bird, a bad word, or a loathsome sight. Such things may even prevent some people from doing whatever they intend to do or working for whatever goal they intend to achieve. Thus, the object they take as a bad omen stands in their way and prevents them from carrying out their tasks.

In an ascribed *hadith* (*marfu'*, i.e. ascribed to the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him) which is corroborated by different narrations, the Prophet, peace and blessings



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be upon him, said, "An omen is what prompts you to do something or refrain from doing it" (Reported by Ahmad). Al-'Izz ibn Abdus-Salam, may Allah have mercy upon his soul, said, "Belief in bad omen is evil thought in the heart, which may trigger one to act in a specific way."

Such beliefs in bad omens are considered in Islam futile absurdities which do not have a grain of truth in them. They are contrary to the doctrine of true reliance on Allah, the Creator and the Disposer of all affairs, the only One Who can bring benefit or harm to us, for nothing can happen without His leave, will, and decree, in accordance with the predetermined laws He set in the universe.

Fellow Muslims!

The religious texts of Islam warn against such false beliefs with a view to eradicating and uprooting them so that *tawhid* may remain pure and intact. The Noble Qur'an, as Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy on his soul, said, "does not attribute belief in bad omen except to the messengers' enemies, who oppose pure *tawhid* and the untainted doctrine of Islam." Our Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "There is no infection [without Allah's will], nor bad omen, nor *hamah* (evil bird), nor Safar (regarded by pre-Islamic Arabs as an evil month)" (Reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim). This means that such things have absolutely no effect in themselves, and that a Muslim should in no way believe in them or pay any heed to them. A Muslim should not yield to such superstitions or let them divert him from his goals, undermine his will, or impede him from fulfilling his needs and realising his objectives.

Belief in bad omen is a kind of *shirk* (associating partners with Allah), as it is contrary to true belief in the Oneness of Allah, which should be cherished by each Muslim. Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated in an ascribed *hadith* that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "Belief in a bad omen is an act of associating partners with Allah (*shirk*). Belief in a bad omen is an act of associating partners with Allah" (Classified as an authenticated *hadith (sahih)* by a number of *hadith* scholars).

Fellow Muslims!

If someone really believes that whatever he takes as a bad omen is effective in itself and that it can bring benefit and ward off evil instead of Allah, Majesty and Glory be to Him, then he has committed an act of major *shirk*, because he has thus assigned partners to Allah in creating things and bringing them into existence.

Brothers in Islam!

A person who takes something as a bad omen may proceed to fulfil his need even though he believes that it is bound to cause him bad luck. However, he will always feel distressed, worried, and frightened of what he deems an evil omen, fearing that this might



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hurt him. This is forbidden in Islam; it is an act of *shirk* that impairs a person's belief in the Oneness of Allah, Majesty and Glory be to Him, and his trust in Him. If anyone is influenced by anything taken as a bad omen, he should be wary of any evil thought, turn away from it, and repel it; he should put his trust in Allah, Majesty and Glory be to Him, and rely on Him. Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, may Allah be pleased with him, said, "None of us but is subject to it at times, but Allah dispels it when we trust in Him." A Muslim must seek refuge in Allah, Majesty and Glory be to Him, and his heart must be attached to Allah, Glorified be He. He should supplicate Allah, Majesty and Glory be to Him, and implore Him.

Omens were once mentioned in the presence of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, and he said, "The best of these is the good omen. Omens should not drive back a Muslim. If anyone of you sees something he loathes, he should say, 'O Allah! None brings good but You, none wards off evil but You, and there is no might or power except by You.'" One of the supplications attributed to the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, with regard to this matter is, "O Allah! There is no good but Your good, there is no omen but Your omen, and there is no god but You!"

If a person falls into Satan's trap by believing in a bad omen, and if this prevents him from doing what he has intended to do, then he may be induced to fall into the very thing that he was trying to escape, as a punishment for turning away from true monotheism, which requires him to faithfully trust in Allah, Glorified be He, and rely on Him alone.

Therefore, fear Allah, servants of Allah, and beware of succumbing to superstitions which may prevent you from carrying out your duties. Beware of false thoughts which contradict the pure creed of professing the Oneness of the Lord of the earth and the heavens, for all matters are in the Hand of Allah; none can reverse His decree and none can repel His favour. Al-Fudayl ibn 'Iyad once said, "If Allah sees that you have freed your heart from depending on any of His creatures, He will grant you whatever you desire."

May Allah bless you and me. I have said what you have heard, and I ask forgiveness of Allah for myself, for you, and for all Muslims, for any sin we have committed. Ask Allah for forgiveness. He is the Oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.



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Part Two

I praise my Lord and thank Him. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah alone, Who has no partners, and I bear witness that our prophet, Muhammad, is his servant and messenger. O Allah! Bestow Your prayers, peace, and blessings upon him and upon his family and Companions.

Brothers in Islam!

A Muslim's heart should be attached to Allah alone. A Muslim should completely trust in Allah and turn to Him in order to bring benefits and ward off harm. He should know that the time he spends in obedience to Allah is a blessed time, and that the time he spends in disobedience to Allah will bring an evil fate to him and to his society. As Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali, may Allah have mercy on his soul, said, "Bad omen indeed lies in disobeying Allah." He went on to say, "Overall, there are no bad omens other than acts of disobedience and sins, for they cause the displeasure of Allah, Majesty and Glory be to Him. If Allah is displeased with a servant of His, the servant will be miserable in this life and in the hereafter, just as he will become happy in both worlds if Allah is pleased with him."

Abu Hazim, said, "Whatever distracts you from Allah, be it your family, children, or wealth, is a bad omen for you." A person who disobeys Allah is an evil omen for himself as well as for others, for he may be struck by a punishment that will affect others as well, especially those who do not object to his evil deeds. Similarly, a Muslim must keep away from places where acts of obedience are committed so as to avoid the punishments for such acts, as evidenced by the texts of the Revelation.

Allah has commanded us to do a glorious deed, namely, to invoke His peace and blessings upon the Noble Prophet.

O Allah! Bestow Your prayers, peace, and blessings upon our beloved prophet and master, Muhammad, and be pleased with the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and Imams, along with all the Prophet's Companions and his family, and those who follow them in righteousness until the Day of Judgement.

O Allah! Grant power and glory to Islam and Muslims. O Allah! Destroy the Muslims' enemies. O Allah! Destroy the Muslims' enemies. O Allah! Foil their plots and evil schemes, O Lord of the Worlds!

O Allah! Forgive the sins of all believers, men and women, and the sins of all Muslims, men and women. O Allah! Make us blessed wherever we may be. O Allah! Make us blessed wherever we may be.

O Allah! Give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and save us from the torment of the Fire.



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O Allah! Relieve our distress and the distress of all Muslims. O Allah! Remove our grief and the grief of all Muslims. O Allah! Cure the sick among us and the sick among all believers. O Allah! Cure the sick among us and the sick among all believers. O Allah! Cure the sick among us and the sick among all believers.

O Allah! Guide our ruler to what You love and accept. O Allah! Grant him a long life full of obedience to You, O Owner of Majesty and Honour! O Allah! Guide him and his two deputies to what You love and accept, O Owner of Majesty and Honour!

O Allah! Guide all the rulers of the Muslims to do that which serves the best interests of their subjects. O Allah! Make the best among Muslims the ones who rule them. O Allah! Protect them from the evil-doers among them, O Owner of Majesty and Honour!

O Allah! Protect the Muslims everywhere. O Allah! Protect the Muslims everywhere and at all times. O Allah! Put an end to the sedition in their midst. O Allah! Put an end to the sedition in their midst. O Allah! Remove their afflictions. O Allah! Remove their afflictions, O Owner of Majesty and Honour! O Allah! Bring them together upon the word of truth and upon piety. O Allah! Bring them together upon the truth and upon piety.

O Allah! You are the Free of all wants and needs, the Worthy of all praise! O Allah, send down rain upon us. O Allah, send down rain upon us. O Allah, send down rain upon us. O Allah! Grant us rain! O Allah! Send down rain upon our land and upon all Muslim lands. O Allah! Send down rain upon our land and upon all Muslim lands. O Allah! Send down rain upon our land and upon all Muslim lands. O Allah! Let the rain bring forth mercy with it, O Ever-Living! O Self-Subsisting! O Allah! Let the rain bring forth mercy with it, O Ever-Living! O Self-Subsisting! O Free of all needs! O Worthy of all praise!

O Allah! Answer our supplications. O Allah! Fulfil our hopes. O Allah! Fulfil our hopes. O Allah! Fulfil our hopes.

Servants of Allah!

Remember Allah much and glorify Him morning and evening.