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Fatwa no. 7173

Q: I live in a village where most of the villagers seek healing from the soothsayers who treat them by talismans, scattered letters, and some vegetarian recipes which if they are mixed, would cause a very rotten smell. They also use something called "Hujbah" where a sick person has to remain hidden for more than 40 days in a black chamber and no one is allowed to visit him. They ask people to slaughter specific offerings such as a black goat or a black ox. Most, if not all of them, believe that soothsayers are aware of those who mention bad things about them and will punish them with sickness and insanity.

They trace back the causes of some diseases to the revenge of the soothsayer. I want to tell Your Eminence that the issue of their confidence in the soothsayers is unquestionable; it is fruitless to argue with them over this blind attachment.

Now, is it permissible for me to accept the invitation of these villagers and eat the meat they offer in ceremonies such as feasts and marriage ceremonies? Likewise, am I permitted to share their food and assemblies? Do the acts mentioned drive them out of Islam or they are excused for their ignorance of the rulings of religion?

A: Firstly: If this is the case, they are Kafirs (disbelievers) and whoever goes to them seeking recovery believing in their soothsaying is a Kafir (disbeliever) as well. **Secondly:** It is not permissible to accept the invitation of these people or to eat the meat of the animals they slaughter in feasts, marriage ceremonies, and the like, for they are Kafirs, and thus their slaughtered animals cannot be eaten until

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they sincerely make Tawbah (repentance to Allah).

Thirdly: It is impermissible to associate with them except to guide, advise, explain the evil of soothsaying, and warn them against going to soothsayers and believing in them.

Finally, in light of your account, it appears that both the soothsayers and those who come to and believe them are considered out of the fold of Islam, due to the evil acts you mentioned about them.

May Allah grant us success. May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions.

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