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Q. We are going to come on again to look at what Salafis consider should be the punishment for those who engage in magic. But before we reach that stage, in general terms at least, in Islam is there a division between different forms of magic?

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A. Yes. Generally speaking, the Muslim scholars have divided between what we can for shorthand call black magic and white magic (sometimes called natural magic, the second one is sometimes called natural magic), and the division is essentially for some scholars between magic which is used to help and enable the individual to gain benefit is white magic and black magic is generally used in order to harm an individual. So classic examples of white magic in the literature are if someone wishes to become pregnant and if a woman is having problems getting pregnant then there might be a set of spells and incantations which enable her to conceive; this would be an example of white magic because you are harnessing supernatural powers in order to benefit the individual. On the other hand, if you had an enemy and if you wanted to do them harm, there is also forms of magic whereby you could cause them to become unwell or even be killed through casting a spell upon them or performing some sort of magical practice and directing it at them, and this is normally considered black magic. So the two forms which the Muslim thinkers have defined, which we would call white magic and black magic (they refer to them as white magic and black magic or natural magic and black magic) they refer to two different forms of magical practice, and generally speaking those scholars which allow people to practise magic allow them to practise white magic, and black magic is almost always considered to be forbidden or at least reprehensible; this is something that you should not get involved in, according to the Muslim scholars.

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Q. So some forms of Islam regard white magic as acceptable, but no form regards black magic as acceptable.

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A. Yes, that I mean would be the general position that black magic is considered almost by definition forbidden because you are harnessing supernatural powers to do other people harm and that doing other people harm in a supernatural manner is not permitted under the Islamic law.

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Q. Does white magic often involve the use of charms, incantations and amulets?

A. Yes, so these are the common mechanisms whereby a skilled magician will be able to