

# The Islamic Ruling Concerning

# TASWEER

The background of the cover is a vibrant blue with a subtle pattern of concentric ripples, suggesting water or light waves. In the center, a glowing lightbulb is visible. Overlaid on this are several key elements: a camera lens with the text '1:1.8 D' on its inner ring, a gold-colored picture frame with intricate scrollwork, and a portion of a computer keyboard with keys like '3', '4', and '5' visible. The word 'TASWEER' is written in large, bold, black letters with a white outline, positioned across the middle of the composition.

Two and Three Dimensional  
Images, Drawings, Paintings,  
Photography and Sculptures

Collection, Arrangement and Translation  
by Abu Muhammad Abdur-Ra'uf Shakir

# The Islamic Ruling Concerning At-Tasweer

Authored and Translated by  
Abu Muhammad Abdur-Ra'uf Shakir

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ISBN 0-9660327-0-5

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First Edition, 1419 AH/1998 CE

The Islamic Ruling Concerning At-Tasweer

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Cover Design by Sajid Butt

Printed in United States of America.

Co-Published and Distributed by:

Zakee Muwakkil Books & Articles  
P.O. Box 28883  
Philadelphia, PA 19151

CWP Publishing & Distribution  
P.O. Box 370  
South Orange, New Jersey 07079

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## FOREWORD

All praises are due to Allah, Alone. We praise Him, seek His help and ask His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah from the evil of ourselves and from our evil deeds. Whomsoever Allah Guides, there is no one to lead him astray. And whomsoever Allah leads astray, there is no one to guide him.

I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah Alone. He has no partners. And I bear witness that Muhammad is His Servant and His Messenger.

O Allah! Extol Muhammad with Your Praises and mentioning him in the highest assemblies of the angels. O Allah! Grant Your Blessings and Peace to the family of Muhammad, his Companions and those who follow them in righteousness until the Day of Judgment.

Verily, the most excellent of speech is the Book of Allah (al-Qur'aan), and the best of guidance is the Guidance of Muhammad (Blessings of Allah and Peace be upon him). The worst of affairs are newly invented matters (in religion), and all newly invented matters (in religion) are blameworthy innovations. Every blameworthy innovation is misguidance, and all misguidance leads to the Hell-Fire.

### ***To Proceed:***

The question of "Tasweer" (Image-making)—whether of statues, carvings, paintings, drawings or photographs—and the correct Islamic Ruling regarding it, has long been a subject of controversy among Muslims. And much has already been written by the scholars of the earlier and later generations.

This subject has been discussed in brief and in detail, in the books of Hadith, Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence) and even Aqeedah (Tenets of Faith). Unfortunately, until now not much has been written in the English language on this subject. It is for this reason that we have here attempted—with the help of Allah—to present to the English speaking Muslim a somewhat comprehensive view of this so controversial issue.

### ***My Contribution:***

My work was simply the collection, arrangement and translation of the material for this book. After that there was nothing left for me to contribute except the occasional comments found in the footnotes.

These footnotes consist of the following:

- a) Explanations of technical expressions and principles which might not always be known to the reader. I have therefore tried to explain these expressions and sometimes give an example where possible.
- b) Mention of the verse of al-Qur'aan and hadith which supports something mentioned by one of the scholars -- in the case where he did not mention the evidence for what he has said.
- c) Mention of the source books and references for the ahaadith used throughout the book. All references are to the original Arabic texts, except where an English translation of the book was available.
  - d) Mention of the grade (authenticity) of the ahaadith mentioned, except if the hadith is from al-Bukhaaree or Muslim, since it is expected that the ahaadith of these two books are accepted by all as being authentic.
  - e) Titles for the twenty-one ahaadith of the first section, in addition to subtitles for the *sharh* (explanations) of these ahaadith. This will, *in sha Allah*, help the reader to find the places where particular issues are discussed.

### ***The Contents:***

This work is composed of four (4) main sections, with each section being sub-divided into smaller parts. The First Section is composed of twenty-one (21) of the most important ahaadith related to the issue of "tasweer" (Image-making) as explained by some of the most renowned scholars of Hadith of the Muslim Ummah.

Because these ahaadith were primarily collected from the "Saheehain" (al-Bukhaaree and Muslim), we have almost totally relied upon "Fath al-Baaree" (Explanation of Saheeh al-Bukhaaree) by al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalaanee, along with al-Imaam an-Nawawee's "Sharh Saheeh Muslim,"

considered by most of the people of knowledge to be the best available explanations of the “Saheehain.”

This section of the book was intended to provide the “student of knowledge”—who wants the details of the issue—with access to the most comprehensive discussions of all matters connected to the issue of “tasweer.”

The Second Section of this work is composed of three commentaries by prominent contemporary Muslim scholars, each of whom has discussed some aspects of the issue in a different way.

Shaykh ‘Abdul-’Azeez Ibn Baaz summarizes the issue, mentions the evidences, and then argues and clarifies some of the points which are dubious. Shaykh Muhammad Jameel Zainoo discusses the harmful effects of images, the question of the differences between pictures and statues, and then mentions some instances when images are tolerated. Shaykh Muhammad Naasruddeen al-Albaanee deals exclusively with the question of modern photography and shows the weakness of the arguments of those who have declared it lawful.

The Third Section is composed of excerpts from two of the many books written in clarification of some of the mistakes of Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradaawee in his book “The Lawful and Prohibited in Islaam.” Both Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan and Shaykh al-Albaanee have clearly outlined and convincingly refuted the mistakes of Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradaawee.

This section was needed due to the wide circulation of Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradaawee’s book, and because it is heavily relied upon by English speaking Muslims around the world. For this reason, we felt it a necessity to present the other side of the issue.

The Fourth Section consists of contemporary Legal Rulings (Fataawaa) covering a wide range of the questions which Muslims, who are sincerely concerned about their religion, are asking in reference to the making, possession and trade in images and items which contain them. These legal rulings are usually short and to the point, but for the most part are supported by the related evidences from the Qur’aan and Authentic Sunnah.

## The Terminology:

1. Throughout this work we have included transliteration of technical and other important words and expressions. Our intention in doing so was (a) To increase the readers' familiarity with important Arabic and Islamic expressions, and (b) To facilitate the checking and verification of the translation of critical arguments and evidences—particularly for the reader who may question, doubt or want further clarification in instances where the translation may be lacking or insufficient.

2. We have chosen to use the English word “Image” instead of “Picture” for the Arabic word “Surah.” This is because the word “picture” is limited in meaning to that which is drawn or painted, etc. on paper, cloth etc. on a plane or flat surface. On the other hand, the word “image” includes this meaning plus statues, carvings and three dimensional solid figures.

Therefore, the English word “image” is closer in meaning to the Arabic word “surah.” Additionally, both “image” and “surah” convey the meaning of an *idea* or *concept*.<sup>1</sup>

3. Most people—even those whose language is Arabic—as a general rule consider the words “surah” and “timthaal” as having two distinct and different meanings; surah: picture, and timthaal: statue. In fact, the general meaning of both words is the same and are only distinguished by these two different meanings on occasion—and that will only be understood from the context of the sentence.<sup>2</sup>

4. Due to the above, throughout this work we have translated “timthaal” and its plural “tamaatheel” as “statue” only when this meaning is clearly understood from the context of the statement. Otherwise, it has been

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<sup>1</sup>See: al-Mu'jam al-Waseet, pg. 528, where the meaning of “sawwara” is given as: (1) To make a solid (three dimensional) image or statue of something, (2) To draw something on paper, on the wall, etc., with a pen or brush or camera, (3) To describe something in a way that reveals all aspects of it.

<sup>2</sup>Mukhtaar as-Sihaah: [the meaning of] at-Timthaal is “surah,” and its plural is at-Tamaatheel. al-Qaamoos al-Muheet: [the meaning of] at-Timthaal is “surah.” al-Mu'jam al-Waseet: [the meaning of] at-Timthaal is (1) that which is carved from stone or made from brass, etc...(2) image in a cloth, etc. It is said: Images (tamaatheel) are in his clothing: images (suwar) of animate beings.

translated as “**image**” in its all-inclusive sense of both statues as well as that drawn on paper, cloth or on a plane surface.

The word “**surah**” has been translated as “**image**” also, except where the context indicated the more limited meaning of “**picture**” [that which is painted, drawn or sketched on a plane surface, including photographs].

5. In light of the above, the following words are used as indicated:

- a) **Image:** picture, reflection, likeness, portrait, statue, figure, idea or concept.<sup>3</sup>
- b) **Picture:** drawing, painting, sketch or photograph.<sup>4</sup>
- c) **Statue:** figure of a person, an animal, etc. carved or caste in word, stone, bronze, clay, etc.; sculpture, effigy, statuette.<sup>5</sup>
- d) **Photograph:** an image; especially a positive print, recorded by camera and reproduced on a photosensitive surface. Photo, film, snapshot.<sup>6</sup>

Therefore, “**Image**” in its all-inclusive meaning has been used throughout, except where the context clearly indicates a limited meaning such as “**photograph**” or “**statue**.” In the case where the intended meaning clearly does not include statues, the word “**picture**” is used instead of “**image**.”

6. Since there were no photographs in the time of the earlier scholars, they categorized “**prohibited images**” into two basic divisions:

- a) **Solid Images** such as statues or sculptured images, and figures which have body and therefore cast a shadow, and

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<sup>3</sup>See: *Rogets College Thesaurus*

<sup>4</sup>See: *Rogets College Thesaurus; American Heritage Dictionary; Oxford Advance Learners Dictionary.*

<sup>5</sup>See: *Rogets College Thesaurus; American Heritage Dictionary; Oxford Advance Learners Dictionary.*

<sup>6</sup>*Rogets College Thesaurus; American Heritage Dictionary; Oxford Advance Learners Dictionary.*

b) Images on a *plane or flat surface* such as drawings, paintings, sketches. Both divisions—solid images and those on a plane surface—are prohibited if they are images of that which possess a “soul,”<sup>7</sup> i.e., animate beings [human, animal, fish or birds].

The terms that have been used for each division or type are many. The following are the most commonly used:

a) **For Solid Images:** *Mujassamah* or *Mujassadah* or *Lahu Jurm* -- all of these refer to that which has “body,” i.e., three dimensional images. Another term commonly used is *Lahu Zhill* meaning that which “casts a shadow.” It casts a shadow due to it being a solid three dimensional image.

b) **For Images On A Plane Surface:** *Ghair Mujassamah* or *Ghair Mujassadah* or *Laisa lahu Zhill* is commonly used, meaning that which is “without body” and that which does “not cast a shadow.”

The term *feehi rooh* is used to indicate that which has a “soul” or “animate being.” And sometimes the same thing is referred to by the expression *Lahu Nafs*.

### The Issue of “Tasweer” (Image-Making) In Brief:<sup>8</sup>

The following are the types of “tasweer” and their rulings:

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<sup>7</sup>After mentioning the hadith of Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) from Abu Talha (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (blessings of Allah and peace be upon him) said: Then angels do not enter houses which have in them a dog or an image. al-Bukhaaree added: He meant those images of creatures that have souls. al-Bukhaaree 5/225, no. 338. This is also indicated by the words of Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father): If you must do it (i.e., make images), then make images of trees and lifeless things,” and in the narration of al-Bukhaaree: that which does not have a soul.” Muslim 3/1161, no. 5272, al-Bukhaaree 3/235, no. 428.

<sup>8</sup>Most of the following summary has been taken, almost verbatim, from al-Fawaa'id al-Muntaqaah min Sharh Kitaab at-Tawheed by Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Saalih al-Uthaimen, pgs. 74 - 75.

1. That which *casts a shadow*, i.e., that which has body, like the shape of a human or animal. This is prohibited by consensus (Ijmaa) of the Muslim scholars.

2. That which *does not cast a shadow*, like that which consists of lines and colors. An example of this is one who draws a picture by hand. This is forbidden due to the generality of the textual evidences.

When the Prophet (Blessings of Allah and Peace be upon him) wanted to enter his house and found there a cushion containing pictures, his (Blessings of Allah and Peace be upon him) face changed [turned colors]. ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) said: What sin have I committed O Messenger of Allah (Blessings of Allah and Peace be upon him)? He said: The makers of these images will be punished (severely) on the Day of Resurrection, and it will be said to them: “Make alive what you have created.”<sup>9</sup>

As for the hadith: “...except designs or inscriptions in a cloth”<sup>10</sup> —it should be understood to refer to images of that which is permissible [inanimate things like mountains, rivers and trees, etc.]. [Refer to the explanation of this hadith for a fuller explanation of this matter.]

3. That which is made by use of the “instamatic” camera [which does not require development of the film], which is a point of difference. One opinion is that it is forbidden when it is being used for *unlawful objectives*. The reason for this is that **the means** to a thing falls under the same ruling as **the objectives**. Otherwise, if it is being used for a permissible objective, then it is permissible.<sup>11</sup> For example, the personal ID card and passport are permissible [due to necessity, and being compelled by today’s society to use them].

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<sup>9</sup>See: Hadith #5. Narrated by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.

<sup>10</sup>See: Hadith #7. Narrated by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.

<sup>11</sup>See: Muhammad Jameel Zainoo’s *Treatise*, where he mentions some instances when images are tolerated, Pgs. 80-81



Otherwise, images kept solely for remembrance or reminiscence—whether it is for the satisfaction and enjoyment of looking at them or the affection and longing [to be with the one pictured]—in every case, it is forbidden. This is because the possession or retention of images is not permissible.

4. Images of that which does not have a soul (rooh). It is divided into two categories:

a) Those things which are commonly made by human beings. This is permissible by agreement of the scholars. Examples of this are: images of cars, boats, planes, machinery, etc.

b) Those things which are not made by human beings, but are from the creation of Allah. This second category is further divided into two (2) divisions:

**The First:** Living (organic) creatures (*Naam*) like trees. About this there is difference of opinion. And the opinion of the *Jumhoor* (Majority of the Scholars) is that it is permissible, while those who declared it unlawful cite as evidence the hadith:

“...then let him create a grain of barley.”<sup>12</sup>

The *Jumhoor* (Majority) answered them by citing the hadith: “...he would be compelled to breathe soul (rooh) in it (the image he made) on the Day of Resurrection, but he will never be able to do so.”<sup>13</sup> They said this proves that the prohibition is specifically related to images of those things which have souls (arwaah, pl. of Rooh).

Another proof for the *Jumhoor* is the words of Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father): “...If you must do it (i.e., make these images), then make (images of) trees and lifeless things.”<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>See: Hadith #16. Narrated by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.

<sup>13</sup>See: Hadith #15. Narrated by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.

<sup>14</sup>See: Hadith #14. Narrated by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.

**The Second:** Lifeless (inorganic) matter like minerals. These are permissible.

### **Avoidance Of Doubtful Matters—The Safeguard of One’s Religion and Honor<sup>15</sup>**

If one hears the words of the Messenger of Allah (Blessings of Allah and Peace be upon him), and the explanations of the foremost scholars of the past and present—it is unlikely that any open-minded sincere believer will remain doubtful as to the correct position of Islaam concerning the *making* and *possession* of images in general.

However, there may remain certain issues—like the question of modern photography—about which some Muslims may still be unsure about its legal ruling, simply because it did not exist in the era of the Prophet (Blessings of Allah and Peace be upon him). For this reason, we mention the words of the Prophet (Blessings of Allah and Peace be upon him):

Verily, that which is lawful is clear and that which is unlawful is clear. And between the two of them are **doubtful matters** [neither clearly lawful or unlawful] about which not many people know. So, **whoever avoids these doubtful matters has protected his religion and his honor**. And whoever falls into these doubtful matters, falls into that which is **HARAAM** (forbidden). ...<sup>16</sup>

It is also authentically reported that the Prophet (Blessings of Allah and Peace be upon him) said:

**“Leave that which makes you doubt, for that which does not make you doubt”.**<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> See: Appendix A for a more detailed discussion of this matter.

<sup>16</sup> al-Bukhaaree 1/44, no. 49; Muslim 3/840, no. 3882.

<sup>17</sup> at-Tirmidhee, no. 2518, and it is a good and authentic hadith (Hasan Saheeh).

See Saheeh Sunan at-Tirmidhee  
2/309, no. 2045.

O You Who Believe! Avoid The Doubtful Matters and Protect Your Religion as well as Your Honor!!!

Finally, know that the dangers of “tasweer” (image-making) are many. The principal ones are two (2):

a) Images are a means of **exaltation, glorification, and deification** of other than Allah, and it was the original cause of “shirk” among the people of Nooh (peace be upon him).

b) Image-making is a form of Imitation of Allah in His Act of Creation, which is a serious violation of the relationship of reverence and respect that must exist between the Creator and His creatures. And Allah is the Only True Creator!

وما كان لمؤمن ولا مؤمنة إذا قضى الله ورسوله أمرا

أن يكون لهم الخيرة من أمرهم ومن يعص الله ورسوله فقد ضلّ ضلّالاً مبيناً

*It is not for a believer, man or woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decreed a matter that they should have any option in their decision. And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger, he has indeed strayed in a plain error.<sup>18</sup>*

يا أيها الذين آمنوا أطيعوا الله وأطيعوا الرسول وأولي الأمر منكم فإن تنازعتم في شئ فردوه إلى الله والرسول إن كنتم تؤمنون بالله واليوم الآخر ذلك خير وأحسن تأويلاً

ñ O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger (Muhammad), and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority. (And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to

<sup>18</sup> al-Qur'aan 33:36.

*Allah and His Messenger, if you believe in Allah and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination.*<sup>19</sup>

فلا وربك لا يؤمنون حتى يحكموك فيما شجر بينهم ثم لا يجدوا في أنفسهم  
حرجا مما قضيت ويسلموا تسليما

*But no, by your Lord, they can have no faith, until they make you (O Muhammad) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission.*<sup>20</sup>

فليحذر الذين يخالفون عن أمره أن تصيبهم فتنة أو يصيبهم عذاب أليم

*...And let those who oppose the Messenger's commandment (i.e. his Sunnah -- legal ways, orders, acts of worship, statements, etc.) beware, lest some fitnah, (disbelief, trials, afflictions, earthquake, killing, overpowered by a tyrant, etc.) befall them or a painful torment be inflicted on them.*<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> *al-Qur'aan* 4:59.

<sup>20</sup> *al-Qur'aan* 4:65.

<sup>21</sup> *al-Qur'aan* 24:63.

## THE AHAADITH CONCERNING *TASWEER* (IMAGE-MAKING) AS EXPLAINED IN THE MOST RELIABLE BOOKS OF HADITH

### The Introduction of Imaam an-Nawawee

The following is from Imaam an-Nawawee, in his explanation (*sharh*) of Saheeh Muslim,<sup>22</sup> in the chapter containing the hadith concerning image making (*tasweer*):

Chapter: The Prohibition of **making** Images of Living Beings Human or Animal] And the Prohibition of **possession** of that Which Has an Image in it Which is Not Degraded by Its Being in the Carpet and what is Similar to it; And the fact that The **angels** (peace be upon them) **do not enter** a House Which Has in it an Image or a Dog.

[Imaam an-Nawawee goes on to say:] Our companions [of the Shaafi'ee madh-hab] and other scholars as well have said that **image making** (*tasweer*) of animate beings (human and animal) is sternly prohibited and it is a major sin. This is because the one who engages in it is threatened with the stern warning mentioned in the ahaadith (which follow). It is the same whether one makes the image in that which will be disrespected and degraded or otherwise—in every case, its making is prohibited. This is because in the making of images is an act of imitation of the creation of Allah, the Most High. Also, there is no difference whether it is in a cloth, carpet, coin (dirham, deenaar, fals), container, wall or other than that.

As for making images of trees or the riding saddle of a camel, or other things which do not contain images of living beings—this is not forbidden. This is the ruling concerning the actual **making** of the images.

As for the **possession/keeping** of that which has in it images of animate beings [human or animal]—if it is hanging up on a wall, or in clothing that is worn, or a turban and whatever is similar to that, or those things which are not considered to be degraded or dishonored—then it is forbidden.

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<sup>22</sup>Sharh an-Nawawee Vol. 14, pg. 81 - 94.

However, if it is in a carpet which is trampled upon and treated with disdain, or in a cushion, pillow, or that which is similar—or those things which are degraded and disrespected—it is not forbidden. Yet, there remains the question of whether or not it prevents the entry of the angels of mercy to that house. There is difference of opinion in this matter, which we will mention later, in sha' Allah!

Finally, there is no difference in any part of this matter [the prohibition] between that which cast a shadow [three dimensional objects] and that which does not cast a shadow [two dimensional pictures, drawings, etc.].

This is a summary of our madh-hab (position) in this issue. What is similar to this in meaning is the opinion of the Majority of Scholars (al-Jumhoor) from amongst the companions (sahaabah), the students of the companions (taabi'een) and those after them. It is also the madh-hab (opinion) of ath-Thawree, Maalik, Abu Haneefah, and others besides them.

Some of the salaf (righteous predecessors) said that what is prohibited is only that which cast a shadow [three dimensional objects, like statues], and there is no harm in the images (suwar) which do not cast a shadow [two dimensional images on a plane surface, such as paintings and drawings]. But, this is a false (baatil) madh-hab. Verily, the curtain which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) spoke against the images in it—no one doubts that it was blameworthy—and its images (surah) did not cast a shadow [i.e., it was not three dimensional]. This, in addition to the rest of the hadith which are general and inclusive of every type of image [two and three dimensional].

Az-Zuhree said: The prohibition of images (surah) is general (not confined or restricted to a certain type or class). So also is the prohibition of the use of that which has images in it, and entering the house which has images in it—there being no difference whether it is (raqman fi thawb) designs/markings in a cloth or other than that. Also, it is the same whether it is in a wall, a cloth or a carpet, and whether it is in a state of degradation and dishonor or otherwise. This is based on the apparent meaning of the ahaadith, particularly the hadith of the cushion [hadith #5] which has been mentioned by Imaam Muslim [and al-Bukhaaree]. [an-Nawawee says:] And this is a strong opinion!

Others said: What is permissible (of these images) is the designs or markings in a cloth (raqman fi thawb), it being the same if it is in a state of

degradation or not. There is also no difference whether it is hanging up on a wall or not. They disliked that which cast a shadow, or that which is made into the walls and the like of it, there being no difference whether it is designs or markings (raqman) or other than that.

They took as an evidence (for their opinion), the saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in some of the ahaadith of this chapter: "...except designs or markings in a cloth." [See Hadith #7 below] This is the opinion of al-Qaasim ibn Muhammad.

They agreed by consensus about the prohibition of that which cast a shadow [three dimensional objects], and the obligation of disfiguring or changing it. Al-Qaadee said: except that which has been narrated about small girls playing with dolls and the concession for it. Still, Imaam Maalik disliked that a man should buy dolls for his daughter. Some of the scholars claimed that the permissibility for the small girls to play with dolls is abrogated by these ahaadith.<sup>23</sup> And Allah Knows Best!

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<sup>23</sup>Refer to article of Shaykh Abdul-Azeez ibn Baaz for full discussion of the issue of little girls playing with dolls, Pgs. 72-74.

# SECTION ONE

## AHAADITH CONCERNING TASWEER [PICTURES, DRAWINGS, PAINTING, PHOTOGRAPHS AND STATUES]

### *HADITH #1: Image-Makers Will Be Punished on the Day of Judgment*

Narrated 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him and his father):

عن ابن عمر رضي الله عنهما أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: "إن الذين يصنعون هذه الصورة يعذبون يوم القيامة، يقال لهم: أحيو ما خلقتم." (متفق عليه)

Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: 'Those who make these images (suwar) will be punished on the Day of Resurrection, and it will be said to them, *Make alive what you have created.*' {Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim}<sup>24</sup>

The lesson we learn from this hadith is the stern and unquestionable prohibition of making images of that which has a soul. We are informed that the one who makes these images will be punished on the day of Judgment and required to put a soul into (make alive) that which he has made an image of. This he will absolutely not be able to do.<sup>25</sup>

On this point, **Al-Haafidh ibn Hajar** says: It is a command to do that which one is unable to do. From it we get a description of how the punishment of the image-maker will be. He will be ordered to breathe the

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<sup>24</sup> al-Bukhaaree 7/541, no. 835; Muslim 3/1160, no. 5268. *The wording is from al-Bukhaaree.*

<sup>25</sup> Nuzhatul-l-Muttaqeen, Sharh Riyadh as-Saaliheen, 2/1150, no. 1680.



soul into the image (surah) which he has made, and he will not be able to do so. As a result, his punishment will continue (unceasingly)<sup>26</sup>. This point will be further discussed in the explanation of Hadith #15.

It should also be mentioned that there must be consideration in this matter if the making of a picture is necessitated by urgency or emergency, such as x-rays for identification or diagnosis of a disease or sickness. In this case the condition is that the picture itself be not the immediate goal or objective. This is based on the rule in 'Usool al-fiqh': "necessity makes permissible that which is prohibited." The extent of the necessity should be measured by the existing circumstances. Whatever goes beyond that, to the point of being done out of pride, and enjoyment of these images, is forbidden.<sup>27</sup>

### ***HADITH #2: The Command to Remove Curtains Containing Images***

'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) reported:

عن عائشة قالت: قدم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من سفر، وقد سترت على بابي درنوكا فيه الخيل ذوات الأجنحة، فأمرني فترعته.

Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) came back from a journey and I had screened my door with a curtain having (images) of winged horses on it. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) commanded me (to remove it). So, I pulled it down. [This is the wording narrated by Muslim.]

[Al-Bukhaaree's narration is:]

... I had hung a thick curtain having images (tamaatheel). He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) commanded me to remove it, so I pulled it down.]<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Fath al-Baaree 10/398.

<sup>27</sup>Nuzhatu-l-Muttaqeen, 2/1150, no. 1680.

<sup>28</sup>al-Bukhaaree 7/542, no. 839; Muslim 3/1158, no. 5256.

**Al-Haafidh, commenting on the narration of al-Bukhaaree, says:** “It has the word *tamaatheel* which is the plural of *timthaal*, and refers to something whose *image* is made; and it is more general than to be limited to *shaakhis* (that which has body like a statue) or *naqsh* (engraved), *dahn* (painting) or *nasaj* (weaved) in a cloth. In the narration of Bukair ibn al-Ashajj, from Abdur-Rahmaan ibn al-Qaasim, reported by Muslim [3/1159, no. 5265], [it contains the words]: “... she hung up a curtain which had in it *tasaaweer* (images).”<sup>29</sup>

One of the benefits of this hadith is in its wording: “... curtain having images of winged horses.” Shaykh al-Albaanee, in his comments concerning another hadith of ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her), shows how one narration sometimes makes clear that which is unclear in another narration.<sup>30</sup>

One narration from ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her)[Hadith #4] contains the words: “...I had placed a curtain of mine containing IMAGES over (the door of) a chamber of mine...” The other narration from ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) [Hadith #2 above] contains the words: “...I had screened my door with a curtain having (images) of WINGED HORSES on it.”

**Shaykh al-Albaanee, in his comments** concerning the above narration [Hadith #2], says: “... Clarification of the **type of images** which were on the curtain is found in the narration of Hishaam ibn ‘Urwah, from his father (‘Urwah ibn as-Zubair), from ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her), who said: ‘I had screened my door with a curtain having (images) of winged horses on it. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) commanded me (to remove it). So, I pulled it down.’ In one narration (it contains the words): ‘she said: then he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) tore it up.’” [Ahmad 6/208, 6/281].

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<sup>29</sup> Fath al-Baaree 10/401, no. 5955.

<sup>30</sup> Even before Shaykh al-Albaanee, Imaam an-Nawawee [Hadith #17] and al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar [Hadith #4] made similar comparisons between these narrations.

These narrations indicate the fact that the prohibition (of images) is not specifically limited to those images which are considered holy or exalted. Surely, winged horses are not of those things which are considered sacred. Didn't you see that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) approved of 'Aa'isha's (may Allah be pleased with her) playing with the figurines of those horses (mentioned). This hadith will come. [See Hadith #21]<sup>31</sup>

### ***HADITH #3: Pulling Down and Tearing up Curtains Containing Images***

عن عائشة زوج النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أنها نصبت سترا فيه تصاوير. فدخل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فزعه. قالت: فقطعته وسادتين. فقال رجل في المجلس حينئذ، يقال له ربيعة بن عطاء، مولى بني زهرة: أفما سمعت أبا محمد يذكر أن عائشة قالت: فكان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يرتفق عليهما؟ قال ابن القاسم: لا قال: لكنني قد سمعته. يريد القاسم بن محمد

'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her), the wife of Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) reported she had hung a curtain which had images (tasaaweer) in it. Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) entered (the room) and pulled it down. 'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) said: "I then tore it up and prepared two cushions from it." A man who was present at the time when this hadith was being narrated and whose name was Rabee'ah ibn 'Ataa, the mawlaa of the tribe of Zahrah [and he along with Abdur-Rahmaan ibn Al-Qaasim ibn Muhammad was one of the students of al-Qaasim ibn Muhammad, whose kunya is Abu Muhammad], asked: "Didn't you hear Abu Muhammad [al-Qaasim, the narrator from 'Aa'isha] making mention of 'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) having stated that Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to recline on them (the two cushions)?" Abdur-Rahmaan ibn al-Qaasim said: "No, but I heard al-Qaasim ibn Muhammad saying so."<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup>Ghaayah al-Maraam, pg. 78, no. 119.

<sup>32</sup>Muslim 3/1159, no. 5265, footnote 2518.

**Abdul-Hamid Siddiqi, in his commentary** to the English translation of Saheeh Muslim, says: "One may ask the question if the cloth having pictures on it is forbidden to be used as a curtain, why is it not forbidden to be used as a cushion? The answer is that when the cloth having pictures upon it is **torn** into pieces and is sewn in **another shape**, the pictures **lose their form** altogether and thus they no longer remain pictures. Moreover, hanging-pictures are more conspicuous, while those on cushions, etc., become insignificant."<sup>33</sup>

This is similar to what al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar said concerning the reconciliation (jam') between the following hadith [#4] containing the words: "he tore it (the curtain containing images) apart ... so we turned the curtains into one or two **cushions**," and the next hadith [#5] containing the words: "... she bought a **cushion** having images on it. When Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw it, he stopped at the door and did not enter ... He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) added: Angels do not enter a house in which there are images."

**Al-Haafidh says:** "Another possible explanation for reconciliation (jam') between the two hadith, is that when the curtain was **cut up**, the cutting could have been, for example, in the middle of the image, thereby **changing it from its original form**. For this reason, he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) began to use it to lean on."

#### ***HADITH #4: The Most Severely Punished People on the Day of Resurrection Will Be Those Who Try to Imitate Allah's Creation***

عن عائشة رضي الله عنها قالت: قدم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من سفر وقد سترت بقمرام لي على سهوة لي فيه تماثيل، فلما رآه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم هتكه وقال: "أشد الناس عذابا يوم القيامة الذين يضاهون بخلق الله" قالت: فجعلناه وسادة، أو وسادتين.

Narrated 'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her):

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<sup>33</sup>Muslim 3/1159, footnote 2518. [English Translation].

Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) returned from a journey when I had placed a curtain (qiraam) of mine having images (tamaatheel) over (the door of) a chamber of mine. When Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw it, he tore it apart and said: 'The people who will receive the severest punishment on the Day of Resurrection will be those who try to make the like of Allah's creation.' ['alladheena yudaahoonā bi-khalq Allah']. So we turned the curtains into one or two cushions/pillows.<sup>34</sup>

In another narration, he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

... those who make these images [alladheena yusawwiroona hadhihi as-suwar].<sup>35</sup>

In the narration of Muslim, it contains the words:

... he tore it apart and the color of his face underwent a change.<sup>36</sup>

In the narration of az-Zuhree, from al-Qaasim as reported by Muslim, it contains the words:

Those who try to imitate (make similar to) the creation of Allah [alladheena yushabbihoonā bi-khalq Allah].<sup>37</sup>

The lesson we learn from this hadith is the prohibition of possession of or making use of images (of that which has a soul). This prohibition is even more severe if the image is in a state of glorification or exaltation like that which is hanging up or placed in a picture frame ... Moreover, special warning should be made against the acquisition of these pictures and

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<sup>34</sup> al-Bukhaaree 7/542, no. 838.

<sup>35</sup> al-Bukhaaree 8/83, no. 130.

<sup>36</sup> Muslim 3/1159, no. 5261.

<sup>37</sup> Muslim 3/1158, no. 5258.

placing pictures of the deceased over his grave. This is one of the innovations which must be spoken out against.<sup>38</sup>

**Here al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar** discusses the words “a curtain of mine having images.” In the narration of Abu Usaamah in the Saheeh of Muslim, it contains the additional words “... curtain having (images) of winged horses on it.” (Hadith #2).<sup>39</sup> This hadith has been used as an evidence for the permissibility of possession of images (suwar), if they are those which have no shadow (two dimensional pictures), with the condition that they be of those which are walked over, trampled upon, and used in a degrading manner, like cushions and pillows.

**An-Nawawee said:** This is the saying of the majority of the scholars from among the sahaabah (companions) and the taabi'een (students of the companions). It is also the opinion of Ath-Thawree, Maalik, Abu Haneefah and Ash-Shaafi'ee. There is no difference (in this prohibition) between that which has a shadow and that which has no shadow. For, if it was hanging on a wall, worn as clothing or a turban, or what is similar to that—of those things which are not considered to be in a state of degradation or dishonor—it is haraam (prohibited).

**Here Ibn Hajar says:** There are some exceptions or objections to what An-Nawawee has mentioned (above). The following are some of those objections:

1. Ibn al-'Arabee—one of the Maalikee scholars—has transmitted the opinion that images (surah) which have a shadow [like statues] are haraam by consensus (Ijmaa') equally so whether it is in a state of dishonor or not. This consensus (Ijmaa') does not cover dolls which are played with by girls.

Al-Qurtubee has related, in his explanation (sharh) of Saheeh Muslim entitled *al-Mufhim*, two sayings in reference to the images (suwar) which are not meant to be permanent, like that made from clay. The most correct of the two sayings (azhuru-humaa) is that it is prohibited.

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<sup>38</sup> Nuzhatu-l-Muttaqeen, 2/1151, no. 1680.

<sup>39</sup> See similar statement of Imaam an-Nawawee, about the narration mentioning “winged horses,” under discussion of Hadith # 17

Here Ibn Hajar asked the question: Does al-Qurtubee consider that which is made from sweets [like chocolates or cakes] to be under the same ruling as that which is made from clay or girls' dolls? This is a point to be considered.

Ibn al-'Arabee considers correct (the opinion) that the image (surah) which has no shadow, if it remains intact—not being torn or effaced—is forbidden. This, being so equally, if it is of that which is degraded or not. However, if its head is cut off, or its parts are separated, it is allowed.

This position has been attributed to az-Zuhree, and an-Nawawee has supported it.<sup>40</sup> It is also attested to by the hadith concerning the cushion which 'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) bought containing images (see Hadith #5).

2. Imaam al-Haramain (al-Juwainee) mentions another position: that which is allowed of the images which have no shadow, is that which is on a curtain or pillow. As for that which is on the wall or ceiling, it is not allowed. The reasoning for this is that its being on the wall or ceiling gives it high status, and thereby removes it from the state of degradation. This is unlike the clothing which is near to being in a state of degradation or dishonor.

What also supports this opinion is the expression found in the book *Mukhtasar al-Muzanee* [where he mentions that which is prohibited as being]: 'an image (surah) of that which contains a soul, if it is erected or standing upright.'

Ar-Raafi'ee has transmitted that the majority of the scholars (al-Jumhoor) hold that if the head of the image (surah) is cut off—then the prohibition is removed<sup>41</sup>.

3. The Hanbalee madh-hab allows the image (surah) that is in cloth—even if it is hanging up, based on the hadith of Abu Talha (may Allah be pleased

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<sup>40</sup> See page 2 above for statement of az-Zuhree and an-Nawawee.

<sup>41</sup> This is based on the hadith of Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) reported by al-Ismaa'eelee in his "Mu'jam."

with him) (see Hadith #7 below). However, if the cloth is used to cover the wall, then it is prohibited according to them.

**Imaam an-Nawawee said:** Some of the earlier scholars held that what is prohibited is that part of the cloth which is used to cover the wall. He also said: Some of the earlier scholars held that what is prohibited is that which has a shadow [like statues]. As for that which has no shadow (two dimensional pictures), there is no harm in possessing it; this being so unconditionally. Imaam an-Nawawee says: This is a false (baatil) opinion. For, verily the curtain which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) spoke against was without any doubt a curtain containing pictures (surah) which did not have a shadow. And in spite of that he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ordered that it be torn down.

**Here Ibn Hajar comments** on an-Nawawee's above statement saying: Ibn Abi Shaibah has transmitted this opinion [that the only images prohibited are those which have a shadow] as the saying of al-Qaasim ibn Muhammad, and its chain of narrators is authentic. Its text, as narrated by Ibn 'Awn, is as follows: He said: "I entered the presence of al-Qaasim while he was at his home in the highlands of Makkah. I saw in his house a curtained canopy/alcove for the bride (hajalah) containing images (tasaaweer) of beavers and birds (anqaa)."

In light of this, there is some question about an-Nawawee's outright classification of this opinion as being false (baatil). For, it is possible that al-Qaasim held this opinion based on the general meaning of the Prophet's saying (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): [all images are prohibited] "... except markings/designs in a cloth." Verily, this expression is more general than to be limited to that which is hung up or that which is placed on the ground. It is as though he (al-Qaasim) understood that the Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) rejection and criticism of 'Aa'isha's (may Allah be pleased with her) hanging the above mentioned curtain was due to the combination of its having pictures on it, along with its being used to cover the wall.

This is supported by what came in some of its narrations found in the Saheeh of Muslim. He narrates by way of Sa'eed ibn Yasaar, from Zaid Ibn Khaalid al-Juhaneer who said: "I entered the presence of 'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her)." Then he mentioned that which is similar to what is narrated in the above Hadith #4, except that he said: "then he pulled



it (the curtain) until he tore it apart and said: Verily, Allah has not ordered us to cloth stone and clay. He said: So, we made from it two pillows.”

This indicates that he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) disliked the covering of walls with a cloth which has pictures in it. The cloth which is in a state of degradation is not equal to this one, even if it contains pictures; likewise, the cloth which is not used to cover walls (is not equal to the one which covers a wall). Al-Qaasim Ibn Muhammad was one of the fuqahaa' (scholars of fiqh) of al-Madeenah. He was one of the best people of his time and he is the one who narrated the hadith of the cushion [Hadith#5]. So, if not for the fact that he understood there to be permission in cases such as the (hajalah) curtained canopy/alcove for the bride, he would not have made permissible its use.

In spite of this, combining the ahaadith narrated in this matter shows that this opinion (of al-Qaasim) is the unacceptable one (marjooh); and that the permission is for that which is degraded or dishonored, not that which is erected.

Ibn Abi Shaibah has reported by way of Ayyoob, from Ikrimah, who said: They used to permit the images (tasaaweer) in carpets and pillows which are trampled upon as a form of degradation and dishonor. Also, by way of 'Aasim, from Ikrimah, who said: They used to hate the images (tamaatheel) which are erected, while they saw no harm in that which is trampled underneath the feet. Additionally, by way of Ibn Sireen, Saalim ibn Umar, Ikrimah ibn Khaalid and Sa'eed ibn Jubair (each one having its own chain of narration) that they said: There is no harm in images (surah) if they are trampled upon. From 'Urwah, that he used to lean on arm pillows (maraafiq) which had in them images (tamaatheel) of birds and men.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Fath al-Baaree 10/401-402.

***HADITH #5: Dislike of Entering a House Where There Are Images, Even if Those Images Were in That Which is Sat Upon (Dishonored) Like a Cushion***

عن عائشة أنها اشترت نمرقة فيها تصاوير. فلما رآها رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قام على الباب فلم يدخل. فعرفت أو فعرفت، في وجهه الكراهية، فقالت: يا رسول الله! أتوب إلى الله وإلى رسوله. فماذا أذنبت؟ فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "ما بال هذه النمرقة؟" فقالت: اشتريتها لك تقعد عليها وتوسدها. فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "إن أصحاب هذه الصور يعذبون يوم القيامة، يقال لهم: أحيو ما خلقتهم وإن الملائكة لا تدخل بيتا فيه الصورة".

Narrated 'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her), the wife of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) who said:

I bought a cushion (numruqah) having images (tasaaweer) on it. When Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw it, he stopped at the door and did not enter. She noticed the signs of strong disapproval on his face. She said: O Allah's Messenger! I turn to Allah and His Messenger in repentance. What sin have I committed? He said: What is this cushion for? I said: I bought it for you to sit on and recline on. Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: 'The makers of these images (suwar) will be punished (severely) on the Day of Resurrection and it will be said to them, *Make alive what you have created.*' He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) added: 'Angels do not enter a house in which there are images (suwar).'<sup>43</sup>

The first benefit that we get here is from the chapter heading which Imaam al-Bukhaaree wrote for this hadith: *Chapter: Whoever dislikes sitting on images (suwar)*. Ibn Hajar explains the meaning of the chapter heading as follows: *Chapter: Whoever dislikes sitting on images (suwar), even if they were of those which are walked over and tramped upon.*<sup>44</sup>

<sup>43</sup> al-Bukhaaree 7/545, no. 844; Muslim 3/1159, no. 5266.

<sup>44</sup> Fath al-Baaree 10/403.

**Shaykh al-Albaabee** says: “This hadith also indicates the same thing as the previous hadith indicates [here referring to Hadith #15], pertaining to the prohibition of ‘ghair al-mujassamah,’ i.e., images which have no body [two dimensional images]. It also contains another benefit: that images are a cause/reason which prevents the entry of angels to the house, **even if the images are ‘mumtahanah’** (in a degraded or disrespected position or condition).”<sup>45</sup>

Another benefit is derived from the words: “I turn to Allah and His Messenger in repentance. What sin have I committed?” **Here Ibn Hajar** says: We understand from this the permissibility of making repentance (tawbah) from all of one's sins—as a whole—even if the one making repentance doesn't recall the specific sin which he/she is being called to account for.<sup>46</sup>

Another lesson we learn from this hadith is that one should openly show his displeasure when faced with that which is displeasing to Allah—even if the one who has done this act is beloved to you. This was the way of our beloved Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Furthermore, Allah has informed us in His Book, al-Qur'aan:

*Indeed in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in (the meeting with) Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much. [al-Qur'aan 33:21]*

Here al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar comments on the saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): “The makers of these pictures (suwar) will be punished (severely) on the Day of Resurrection ...;” and his saying: “Angels do not enter a house in which there are pictures (suwar).” Ibn Hajar says: The second sentence [angels do not enter ...] is the one which corresponds with his (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) being prevented from entering (the house). The only reason why he preceded it with the first sentence [the makers of these pictures ...] is to give attention to the warning against the **possession** of images (suwar). This, because the threat (wa'eed)—if it is applicable to the one who

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<sup>45</sup>Ghaayah al-Maraam, pg. 80, no. 121.

<sup>46</sup>Fath al-Baaree 10/403.

**makes** (the images), then it is also applicable to the one who **uses** them. Why? Because these images are not made for any reason except that they be used. Therefore, the maker is the cause (for their existence), while the person who uses them is the one who actually engages directly in the thing warned against [glorification, exaltation, and worship of these images]. For this reason, the one who possesses and uses the images has more reason to be subject to the threat (wa'eed) (than the one who makes them).

It is also understood from this hadith that there is no difference in the prohibition of images (tasweer)—whether it is an image (surah) that cast a shadow [three dimensional, solid figures] or that which has no shadow [two dimensional images on a plane surface]. Also, there is no difference between whether it is a painting (mad-hoonah), engraving (manqooshah), carving (manqoorah), or something woven (mansoojah). This, in contradiction to those who make an exception for that which is woven, claiming that it is not an image (tasweer).

**Here al-Haafidh discusses** the apparent contradiction between the two hadith of 'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her)—the hadith now under discussion (#5) and the one before it (#4). He says: there appears to be a contradiction between this hadith of 'Aa'isha and the one before it. This, because the one before it (#4) indicates that he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used the curtain which had images (surah) on it after the curtain was cut up and pillows made from it. While this hadith (#5) indicates that he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not use it (the cushion) at all.

**Ibn Hajar says:** the author (Imaam al-Bukhaaree) has hinted at the possible reconciliation (al-jam') between the two hadith—in that the permissibility of **possessing** images (suwar) which are trampled upon, does not necessarily mandate the permissibility of sitting on the image (surah). So, it is possible that he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used the part of the pillow which had no image (surah) on it. It is also possible that he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) differentiated between sitting (on that which contains images) and leaning (on it), though this possibility is a little farfetched.

Another possible explanation for reconciliation (jam') between the two hadith, is that: when the curtain was cut up, the cutting could have been, for example, in the middle of the image (surah), thereby changing it from its

original form. For this reason, he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) began to use it to lean on.

[**Shaykh al-Albaanee said:** This reconciliation (jam') is absolutely necessary because of the additional last point (the cutting could have been, for example, in the middle of the image, thereby **changing it from its original form**). It is clear about the prohibition of using the pillow which has images on it, **even if it is in a degraded position**; unless it is not possible to change it except by destroying the cloth or item (containing the images). In that case, it (use of the pillow, or thing which is in a state of degradation or dishonor, containing images) would be excused, for the purpose of preserving the wealth/property.]<sup>47</sup>

This explanation is supported by the hadith [the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not leave anything in his house which contained crosses, except that he obliterated it.] which is in the preceding chapter (of al-Bukhaaree) entitled "Naqd as-suwah" [Removal/Effacing Images] [7/541, Hadith no. 836]. It is also supported by the hadith of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) which has been reported in the books of Sunan (see Hadith #18).

Ad-Daawoodee takes another path in explaining the reconciliation (jam') (between the two hadith). He claimed that the hadith under discussion (Hadith #5) abrogates every hadith which indicates the permissibility (of making images). He uses as a proof (the claim) that this hadith is **khobar** (a point of information), and **al-khobar** (text which indicates a point of information) can not be abrogated. Hence, it must itself be the one that abrogates.

Ibn Hajar argues this point saying: Abrogation is not established by possibility (ihtimaal—that which is not definite).<sup>48</sup> Additionally, the reconciliation (jam') between the two hadith is possible. So, there is no

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<sup>47</sup> 'Aadaab az-Zifaaf, *Arabic Edition*, pg. 163.

<sup>48</sup> *This is according to the saying of the scholars: "Idha tatarraqa al-ihmaal, saqata al-istidlaal"—Where there is a possibility of the evidence in question indicating mutually contradictory rulings (neither of them being confirmed by an independent evidence) in this case it cannot be used as a proof (for either ruling). See: al-Qawaa'id al-Fiqhiyyah, pg. 377 - 378 for discussion of this rule.*

need to consider the possibility of abrogation. [This is the applicable rule in 'Usool al-Fiqh'.]<sup>49</sup>

As for his using as a proof the claim that this hadith is *khabar*, and that al-Khabar cannot be abrogated, it has been refuted by Ibn at-Teen, who said: If *al-khabar* (text which indicates a point of information) is accompanied by a command (*al-'amr*), then it is permissible for it to be abrogated.<sup>50</sup>

Here al-Haafidh comments on the chapter heading of Imaam al-Bukhaaree: "Whoever does not enter a house which has an image (surah) in it." Ar-Raafi'ee said: In the issue of entering the house which has in it images (surah), there are two views: The majority said: It is disliked; Abu Muhammad (Ibn Hazm) said: It is prohibited. However, if the image (surah) is in the walkway of the house—not inside the house—as in the case of its being outside the bathroom or in the lobby or vestibule, entering is not prohibited. Ibn Hazm said: the reason for this is that the image (surah) in the walkway is (considered) degraded, while that which is in the sitting room is (considered) honored.<sup>51</sup>

An example which further clarifies the seriousness of the matter of **possession** of images in one's house is the hadith reported by Ibn Maajah in his 'Sunan': On the authority of Alee (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: I prepared some food, and then invited the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) came, saw some images (tasaaweer) in the house, and (as a result) he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) returned (left us).<sup>52</sup>

In the narration of an-Nasaa'ee:

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<sup>49</sup> *The first recourse is to reconcile the apparent contradictory evidences—if possible. If not, then to consider abrogation.*

<sup>50</sup> Fath al-Baaree 10/403-404.

<sup>51</sup> Fath al-Baaree 10/407.

<sup>52</sup> Sunan Ibn Maajah 2/1114; *al-Albaanee declared it authentic in Saheeh Ibn Maajah 2/238, no. 2708/3359.*

... I prepared some food and invited the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He came and entered. Then, he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw a curtain containing images (tasaaweer) and (as a result) he went back out. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: ‘Verily, the angels do not enter a house which has in it images.’<sup>53</sup>

In another narration of Ibn Maajah, it contains the words:

...Faatimah (may Allah be pleased with her) said to Alee (may Allah be pleased with him): ‘Go after him and ask him, What has caused you to leave O Messenger of Allah?’ He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: ‘It is not fitting for me to enter a house which is decorated (musawwaqaan).’<sup>54</sup>

Imaam al-Bukhaaree also mentioned some examples of how the companions (may Allah be pleased with them all) followed the example of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in this matter. Al-Bukhaaree mentions the hadith of the cushion (‘numruqah’)[#5 above] under a chapter entitled: *Chapter: Should A Person Return (Leave) If He Sees Something ‘Munkar’ (Disapproved Of From The Standpoint Of Religion) At The Place Where He Is Invited?*

[Al-Bukhaaree then mentions the following incidents:]

Ibn Mas’ood (may Allah be pleased with him) saw an image (surah) in a house and (as a result of it) he went away.

Ibn Umar invited Abu Ayyoob (may Allah be pleased with them all), and the latter (Abu Ayyoob) saw in the house a curtain on the wall. Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) said:

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<sup>53</sup>Sunan an-Nasaa’ee 8/602 - 603, no. 5366; *al-Albaanee declared it to be authentic in Saheeh Sunan an-Nasaa’ee 3/1083, no. 4944.*

<sup>54</sup>Saheeh Sunan Ibn Maajah 2/238, no. 2709/3360. *Al-Albaanee declared it to a good (hasan) hadith. [See also: Mishkaat al-Masaabeeh, 2nd Edition of Al-Albaanee’s Checking, 2/962 no. 3221] A similar narration is reported by al-Bayhaqee in as-Sunan al-Kubraa 7/267 [Ibn Turkamaanee].*

The women have done this against our will. Abu Ayyoob (may Allah be pleased with him) said: If I was afraid that some people might do such a deed, I never thought that you would do so. **By Allah, I will not eat anything of your food.** And so Abu Ayyoob returned (left the house).<sup>55</sup>

**Al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar** says: as for the words “IBN MAS’OOD saw an image in a house and went away...,” in the remaining narrations the wording is “**Abu Mas’ood...**” The first (‘Ibn Mas’ood) is a corruption (of the original text) in my opinion. This, because I did not find any tradition (similar to this) except from Abu Mas’ood ‘Uqbah ibn ‘Amr (may Allah be pleased with him). It was reported by al-Bayhaqee,<sup>56</sup> by way of ‘Adee ibn Thaabit, from Khaalid ibn Sa’d, from Abu Mas’ood (may Allah be pleased with him), that a man prepared some food and invited him (Abu Mas’ood). He (Abu Mas’ood) said: Is there any image in the house? The man said: Yes. Thereafter, he (Abu Mas’ood) refused to enter unless and until the image was broken. [He did not enter.]<sup>57</sup>

[al-Haafidh says:] It’s chain of narrators is authentic (saheeh). [Al-Albaanee also declared it authentic in Aadaab az-Zifaaf, pg. 165.]

It is also possible that this incident may also have occurred with Abdullah ibn Mas’ood (may Allah be pleased with him), but I have not come across it! [End of quote of al-Haafidh ibn Hajar.]<sup>58</sup>

Al-Bayhaqee reported the following incident with an authentic chain of narrators<sup>59</sup> in as-Sunan al-Kubraa, from Aslam the Mawla of Umar, that when Umar ibn al-Khattaab (may Allah be pleased with him) arrived in

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<sup>55</sup> al-Bukhaaree 7/78, Chapter 77.

<sup>56</sup> as-Sunan al-Kubraa 7/268, Kitaab: as-Sadaaq [Ibn Turkamaanee].

<sup>57</sup> These words in brackets are not found in the narration as reported in Fath al-Baaree.

<sup>58</sup> Fath al-Baaree 9/158.

<sup>59</sup> Al-Albaanee declared it to be authentic in Aadaab az-Zifaaf, pg. 164.



Syria, a Christian man—who was one of the most important people of Syria—prepared food for him. The man then said to Umar: I would like for you and your companions to come to me [accept my invitation] and honor me [by your presence]. Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said to him: **“Verily, we (the Muslims) do not enter your churches due to the presence of images (suwar/tamaatheel) which are in the churches.”**<sup>60</sup>

**Shaykh al-Albaanee commenting on this report says:** Know that this statement of Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) is a clear proof of the error of what is being done by some of the (Muslim) religious leaders who attend the churches which are filled with pictures and statues (suwar and tamaatheel)—in response to the wishes of some of those who are the responsible authorities or others besides them.

If only the matter stopped here without going any further. Unfortunately [it does not stop here], but they listen to the words of *kufr* (disbelief) and *dalaalah* (misguidance) from some of the speakers in these churches—and the speaker might even be a Muslim. Then, they remain silent and do not say a word. They do not even make known the Islamic Ruling in this matter, while they know.

[An example of what is said at these gatherings:] The saying of some of them: “There is no difference between a Muslim and a Christian!”; “The religion is for Allah and the nation is for all!” Also, the ruling by others that someone who is not a Muslim is a *martyr*, while they know that even the Muslim himself can not be declared/ruled a *martyr*, except after fulfilling the conditions which are well known to them. There are, as well, other things [they are falling into on these occasions] which are in contradiction (to Islaam). Innaa li-llaahi wa Innaa ilayhi Raaji’oon!<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup>as-Sunan al-Kubraa 7/268.

<sup>61</sup>*Innaa li-llaahi wa Innaa ilayhi Raaji’oon: Verily, we belong to Allah and to Him we shall return. [This is used here as an expression of the sad state of the affairs of the Muslims]. [Aadaab az-Zifaaf, pg. 165].*

**HADITH #6: Angels Do Not Enter a House Where There Are Images**

عن أبي هريرة قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "لا تدخل الملائكة بيتا فيه تماثيل أو تصاوير".

Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as saying:

Angels do not enter a house [or any other place] where there are statues (tamaatheel) or pictures (tasaaweer).<sup>62</sup>

The lesson we learn from this hadith is that whoever is pleased to have images in his house himself prohibits the entry of the angels. The angels do not enter because of their rejection and disapproval of the act of the image-makers in violation of the laws of Allah, the Most High. The result of this is that the absence of the angels is an open invitation to the devils. According to some scholars, the angels which are prohibited from entry are only the angels of mercy, and not all angels, since the angels which write the deeds of human beings (al-Hafazah) do not separate from the human simply because of the presence of images.<sup>63</sup>

**The Opinions of the Scholars Concerning the words: "Angels do not enter a house ..."**

**Al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar says:** Its apparent meaning is that it is general [applicable to all the angels].

[It has also been said: the angels who record the deeds (al-hafazah) are not included in this statement, since they don't leave the person under any circumstances. This opinion has been authoritatively asserted by Ibn Waddaah, Al-Khattaabee and others.]

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<sup>62</sup>Muslim 3/1162, no. 5276.

<sup>63</sup>Nuzhatu-l-Muttaqeen, 2/1153-1154, no. 1686, & 1688.

**Al-Qurtubee says:** This (the aforementioned opinion) is what has been said by some of our scholars, but its ruling appears to be general, [applicable to all the angels] while that which points to the recording angels (al-hafazah) being a special exception, i.e., that they are not prevented from entering, has no supporting textual evidence.

**Ibn Hajar then says:** What supports his saying is that it is permissible for Allah to cause the angels to know [and continue writing] the deeds of the person and to hear his speech while they are (outside) of the house which he is in, for example.

The opposite opinion of those who say this hadith is applicable to the angels in general is the opinion that it is limited to, and specifically applicable to, the angels of revelation. This is the saying of those who claim that this hadith is one of the special traits or exclusive characteristics (khasaa'is) of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). But this is an isolated opinion. This opinion limits the prohibition to the era of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), since the revelation was discontinued after his death. It then follows that with the discontinuance of the revelation is the discontinuance of the descending of the angels of revelation.

Yet another opinion is that what is meant here are the angels who descend with mercy.

Ibn Hajar also mentions here that the meaning of "house" in this hadith is: the place where a person lives whether a building, tent or other than that.

### ***Which Images Prevent the Entry of Angels?***

**Here al-Haafidh ibn Hajar mentions** the saying of al-Khattaabee: The image (surah) because of which the angels will not enter a house containing it, is the one which is forbidden to possess, i.e., the image of that which has a soul, and its head has not been cut off, nor has it been used in a degrading or humiliating manner. [This is based on the conclusion which is discussed in the explanation of Hadith #4 above. It will also be further discussed in the explanation of Hadith #18 below, in shaa' Allah.]

**Ibn Hibbaan holds a peculiar opinion in this matter,** as he claims that this judgment is especially (limited) to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He says: it is similar to the other hadith: "The angels

do not accompany a caravan which has with it a bell.” He says: It should be understood to be applicable only to a caravan of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). This is so because it is not possible that one who sets out on a journey intending to visit the House of Allah to perform the hajj or umrah would not be accompanied by the angels, while they are the wafd (delegation) of Allah.

**Ibn Hajar then responds to him by saying:** This is a very remote explanation which no one else besides him (Ibn Hibbaan) has expressed. What removes his confusion in this matter is that: the fact of their being the wafd (delegation) of Allah would not prevent Him from calling them to account for any sin or wrongdoing which they might commit. Therefore, it is possible to hold back the blessings of the angels after having joined them (in their journey), if they then do anything which has been prohibited and carry with them the bell. Thus, it is the same for anyone who possesses an image or a dog. And Allah knows best!<sup>64</sup>

#### ***What About the Images Made For the Prophet Sulaiman?***

**Here al-Haafidh ibn Hajar mentions** another point: One might find ambiguous and difficult to understand the fact that the angels do not enter a place where there are images (tasaaweer), in light of the saying of Allah (subhaanahu wa ta’alaa) where He mentions Sulaimaan (peace be upon him):

*They worked for him what he desired, (making) high rooms, images (tamaatheel), basins as large as reservoirs, and (cooking) cauldrons fixed (in their places).... [al-Qur’aan 34:13]<sup>65</sup>*

**Mujaahid said:** They were images made from copper. Narrated by at-Tabaree. Qataadah said: They were (images) made from wood and from glass. Narrated by Abdur-Razzaaq.

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<sup>64</sup>Fath al-Baaree 10/394-395.

<sup>65</sup>See: at-Tabaree 10/354-355; Ibn Katheer 3/507; Fath al-Qadeer 4/446. *Ash-Shawkaanee mentioned: It is said: “They were images (tamaatheel) of things other than living beings (human or animal).”*

The response (to this matter) is that it (image-making) was permissible in the law (sharee'ah) of that time, and that they were making them in the shapes of the prophets and righteous men of their time, in their positions of worship, so that they (the people) would perform their acts of worship similar to them (the prophets and righteous men). Abu 'Aaliyah said: This was not something prohibited in their law (sharee'ah). Afterwards, our law (sharee'ah) came with this prohibition.

It is also possible to be said: The images (tamaatheel) were in the form of engravings (nuqoosh) of that which has no soul. Here Ibn Hajar mentions an important rule: If an expression has the possibility of conveying more than one meaning, in that case it is not necessary to apply to it the meaning which makes the expression dubious, vague and problematic (al-ma'naa al-mushkil). [Therefore, if it is understood that the meaning intended here is that of images (tamaatheel) which have no soul, the matter then becomes clear.]

It has been authentically reported in the two books of Saheeh (al-Bukhaaree and Muslim) from the hadith of 'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her)—the story of the church which was in the land of Ethiopia, and the images (tasaaweer) that were in the church—that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Those people are such that if a pious man amongst them died, they build a place of worship over his grave and make images (suwar) in it. Those people will be Allah's worst creatures on the Day of Resurrection.”<sup>66</sup>

From this, one senses that if image making was permissible in their law (sharee'ah) the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) would not have said that whoever does it will be 'Allah's worst creatures. This shows that the making of images (suwar) of living beings is an innovation which was invented by the image-worshippers. And Allah knows best!<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> al-Bukhaaree 5/136, no.213.

<sup>67</sup> Fath al-Baaree 10/395-396.

**HADITH #7& #8: Angels Do Not Enter Where There Are Images, and The Exception in This For "Raqman Fi Thawb" (Designs/Inscriptions in Cloth)**

أخبرنا ابن وهب أخبرني عمرو بن الحارث أن بكير بن الأشج حدثه، أن بسر بن سعيد حدثه أن زيد بن خالد الجهني حدثه، ومع بسر عبيد الله الخولاني، أن أبا طلحة حدثه أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: "لا تدخل الملائكة بيتا فيه صورة".

قال بسر: فمرض زيد بن خالد فععدناه فإذا نحن في بيته بستر فيه تصاوير، فقلت لعبيد الله الخولاني: ألم يحدثنا في التصاوير؟ قال: إنه قال: إلا رقما في ثوب. ألم تسمعه؟ قلت: لا، قال: بلى قد ذكر ذلك.

Narrated Abu Talha (may Allah be pleased with him):

Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:  
'Angels do not enter a house where there are images (surah).'

Busr [ibn Sa'eed, who narrated this hadith from Zaid ibn Khaalid, who narrated it from Abu Talha] added:

Then Zaid fell ill and we paid him a visit. Behold! There was hanging at his door, a curtain with a picture (surah) on it. I said to 'Ubaidullah al-Khawlaanee, the foster-son of Maimoona (may Allah be pleased with her), the wife of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): 'Didn't Zaid tell us about pictures (suwar) the day before yesterday?' Ubaidullah said, 'Didn't you hear him saying *except a design in a cloth* (illa raqman fi thawb)?'

In the narration of Muslim, it says:

...did he not narrate to us the Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) command pertaining to images? Thereupon he said: 'He in fact did that. But he also said *except designs on a cloth*. Did you not hear this?' I said No. He said: 'He had in fact made a mention of this.'<sup>68</sup>

<sup>68</sup> al-Bukhaaree 7/543, no. 841; Muslim 3/1158, no. 5253.

عن عبيد الله بن عبد الله: أنه دخل على أبي طلحة الأنصاري يعود، فوجد عنده سهل بن حنيف، فأمر أبو طلحة إنسانا يتع غمط تحته، فقال له سهل: لم تتع، قال: لأن فيه تصاوير، وقد قال فيها رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ما قد علمت، قال: ألم يقل: "إلا ما كان رقما في ثوب". قال: بلى ولكنه أطيب لنفسي.

On the authority of ‘Ubaidu’llah ibn ‘Abdullah, that he entered upon Abu Talha al-Ansaaree (may Allah be pleased with him) to visit him, and he found Sahl ibn Hunaif (may Allah be pleased with him) with him. Abu Talha (may Allah be pleased with him) ordered someone to remove a pillow which was under him. Sahl (may Allah be pleased with him) asked him: Why are you removing this? He said: It is because it has in it images (tasaaweer) and you already know what the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has said about that. He (Sahl) said: Didn’t he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) say: ‘illa raqman fi thawb—except designs/inscriptions in a cloth’? He (Abu Talha) answered: Yes, he did say so. But, (removing it) is more pleasing to my soul.<sup>69</sup>

***Why the Angels Do Not Enter Houses Containing Images.  
Taking Images In One’s House Is Imitation of the Disbelievers and An  
Evil Act of Disobedience.***

**Al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar** quotes the saying of Al-Qurtubee from his book *al-Mufhim*, the explanation of Saheeh Muslim, in reference to the saying: “Angels do not enter a house where there are pictures (surah)”:

Verily, the angels do not enter the house where there are images (surah) because those who have taken these images have imitated the disbelievers who have taken these images (suwah) into their homes and glorified them. The angels hate this and as a result they

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<sup>69</sup>Musnad Imaam Ahmad 3/486; *an-Nasaa’ee*, Kitaab az-Zihaa (48), *baab Tasweer* (111); *al-Albaanee’s Saheeh Sunan an-Nasaa’ee* 3/1082, no. 4942; *at-Tirmidhee* 4/202, no. 1750 (*Arabic Edition of Kamaal Yoosuf al-Hoot*); *at-Tirmidhee* said it is a good and authentic hadith. *al-Albaanee* said: “It’s chain of narrators is authentic according to the conditions of *al-Bukhaaree* and *Muslim*. See: ‘Ghaayah al-Maraam, pg. 83, no. 1341.

do not enter such a house, forsaking it and avoiding it for this reason.<sup>70</sup>

**Imaam an-Nawawee says:** The scholars have said that the reason for the angels not entering a house which has in it an image (surah), is its being an evil disobedience, and because it is an attempt to imitate the creation of Allah, the Most High, and some times it is an image (surah) which is worshipped instead of Allah, the Most High.... Also, because it is something prohibited to possess. Therefore, its possessor is punished by his being denied the entry of the angels to his house, and their (the angels') prayers in it, their seeking forgiveness for him, asking for blessings for him and (asking for blessings) in his house, and their repulsing the harms of the shaytaan (devil).

#### ***Which Angels Do Not Enter Houses Where There Are Images?***

As for those angels which do not enter a house which has in it a dog or an image (surah)—they are the angels who go around spreading mercy and blessings and seeking of forgiveness.

As for *al-hafazah* (angels who record the deeds of the human beings)—they enter every house, and do not separate from the human being in any condition. This is because they are ordered to keep count of the deeds of the human beings, as well as recording them.

#### ***Which Images Prevent the Entry of Angels?***

**Al-Khattaabee said:** Verily, the angels do not enter a house which has in it a dog or an image (surah), only if it is of those dogs and images (suwar) whose possession is forbidden. As for that which is not forbidden, like the hunting dog, or the one used for guarding the crops and grazing the livestock; and the images (surah) which are disdained—being in the carpets and pillows and other things, the **entry of the angels** is not prevented by reason of these.

**Al-Qaadee** has indicated something similar to what al-Khattaabee has said. But, the most clear and correct (opinion) is that the prohibition is general (not confined and restricted) including every dog and every image (surah),

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<sup>70</sup>Fath al-Baaree 10/405-406.



and that the angels do not enter as a result of all of them, because of the generality and absoluteness of the (relevant) ahaadith. Also, because the puppy which was in the house of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), under the bed, was something for which he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had an obvious excuse for since he did not know it was there. In spite of this, Jibreel (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was prevented from entering the house; and he gave as the reason for his not entering, the presence of the puppy. So, if the (legitimate) excuse for the presence of the image (surah) and the dog does not prevent the angels (from entering)—then it would not have prevented Jibreel. And Allah Knows Best!<sup>71</sup>

***The Meaning of “...illa Raqman Fi Thawb” (...except designs or inscriptions in a cloth)***

Here al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar mentions the explanations of Imaam an-Nawawee and Ibn al-'Arabee in reference to the permission given for images, in the saying: “... except a design or inscriptions in a cloth.” An-Nawawee said: the reconciliation (jam') between the hadith [which prohibit images, and this one which allows it] is that the meaning of the exception here of “a design in a cloth” is for the cloth that has an image (surah) of that which has no soul, like trees and the like.

[Imaam an-Nawawee's complete statement on this matter, as found in his *Explanation (sharh) of Saheeh Muslim*, 14/85-86 is as follows:

The saying: “... except a design in a cloth”. This is used as an evidence by those whose opinion is the absolute permissibility of *raqman* (designs/inscriptions) as has been previously mentioned. Our response to this, and the response of the Majority of the scholars (al-Jumhoor), is that it should be understood to be designs in the form of trees or other than living creatures [other than human or animal]. And we have previously explained that this is permissible with us.]

There is also the likelihood that this hadith (giving permission) came before the prohibition. The indication of this is in the hadith of Abu Hurairah

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<sup>71</sup>Sharh Saheeh Muslim, *an-Nawawee*, 14/84

(may Allah be pleased with him) which is reported in the Books of Sunan (see Hadith #18 below).

**Ibn al-'Arabee said:** In short, the issue of **possession** of images (suwar) is as follows:

- A. If it is an image having body [three dimensional, like statues] then it is forbidden by consensus (Ijmaa').
- B. If it is designs or inscriptions (raqman), there are four sayings about it:
  - 1) Absolute permissibility, based on apparent meaning of the saying, in the hadith under discussion, "except a design in a cloth."
  - 2) Absolute prohibition, even of designs in a cloth.
  - 3) If the image (surah) remains intact, its form unchanged, it is forbidden. However, if the head is cut off, or the parts are separated, it is permissible. Ibn al-'Arabee said: This is the most correct saying.
  - 4) If it is of those things which are degraded or dishonored, it is permissible. However, if it is hung up, it is not permissible.<sup>72</sup>

### **HADITH #9: The Image-Makers Are Cursed**

عن أبي جحيفة عن أبيه أنه اشترى غلاما حجاما فقال: إن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم نهى عن ثمن الدم وثن الكلب، وكسب البغي، ولعن أكل الربا وموكله والواشمة والمستوشمة والمصور.

Narrated Abu Juhaifah (may Allah be pleased with him) that he had bought a slave whose profession was cupping. He said:

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) forbade taking the price of blood, the price of a dog and the earnings of a prostitute. He also cursed the one who took or gave (riba) interest,

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<sup>72</sup>Fath al-Baaree 10/405. For further discussion of this issue, see: Fatwaa no. 3 of Shaykh al-Uthaimen Pg. 126, and essay of Shaykh Bin Baaz, Pgs 62-64.

the lady<sup>73</sup> who tattooed others or got herself tattooed, and the image-maker (musawwir).<sup>74</sup>

Al-Imaam al-Bukhaaree mentions this hadith in his *Saheeh* under the chapter heading: *One Who Cursed The Image-Maker*. Al-Haafidh ibn Hajar mentioned in the explanation of the hadith which follows it [no. 846], that the word "al-la'n" linguistically means: being far removed from the mercy of Allah, the Most High.<sup>75</sup> Al-Raazi says in *Mukhtaar as-Sihaah* that *al-la' n* means being driven away and far removed from all good.<sup>76</sup>

The fact of this "curse" being pronounced on the makers of these images is a proof that it is a major sin (kabeerah), as many of the people of knowledge have stated that of the signs indicating that an act is considered to be a major sin is that the curse of Allah or the curse of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is pronounced on the doer of any act. Other indications that any act is considered to be a major sin is if a prescribed punishment (Hadd) has been mentioned in the Qur'aan or authentic Sunnah; as well as those acts for which one is threatened to be punished in the next life.<sup>77</sup>

**Al-Imaam At-Tabaree**, in his tafseer of surah al-Ahzaab, verse 57 states: "Verily those who annoy Allah and His Messenger—Allah has cursed them in this world, and in the hereafter, and has prepared for them a humiliating torment..." here mentions the saying of Ikrimah: "those who annoy Allah and His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) are the

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<sup>73</sup> *In the era of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) the practice of tattooing was mostly confined to ladies, but this is not the case today. Therefore, the man who engages in this practice is also included in the meaning of this hadith. And Allah Knows Best!*

<sup>74</sup> al-Bukhaaree 7/546, no. 845.

<sup>75</sup> Fath al-Baaree 10/407, with Hadith no. 5962, 5963

<sup>76</sup> as-Sihaah, pg. 599.

<sup>77</sup> See: Ihkaam al-Ahkaam, Ibn Daqeeq al-Eid, 2/272, no. 377 [Tahqeeq Ahmad Shaakir].

IMAGE-MAKERS (ashaabut-tasweer).” At-Tabaree says: that is because they desire to form, shape or originate a creation like Allah's creation.<sup>78</sup>

### ***HADITH #10: The Order to Efface All Images***

حدثنا يحيى بن يحيى وأبو بكر بن أبي شيبة وزهير بن حرب قال يحيى أخبرنا وقال الآخرون حدثنا وكيع عن سفيان عن حبيب بن أبي ثابت عن أبي وائل عن أبي الهياج الأسدي قال قال لي علي بن أبي طالب ألا أبعثك على ما بعثني عليه رسول الله صلى اللهم عليه وسلم أن لا تدع تمثالا إلا طمسته ولا قبراً مشرفاً إلا سويته وحدثني أبو بكر بن خلد الباهلي حدثنا يحيى وهو القطان حدثنا سفيان حدثني حبيب بهذا الإسناد وقال ولا صورة إلا طمستها

Abu'l-Hayyaaj al-Asadee said:

Alee ibn Abu Taalib (may Allah be pleased with him) said to me: Shall I not send you on the same mission as Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) sent me? Do not leave an image (TIMTHAAL) without obliterating/effacing it, nor a grave which is raised above the ground without leveling it to the ground.

**Imaam Muslim said:** This hadith has also been reported to me by Abu Bakr ibn Khallaad al-Baahilee, from Yahya ibn al-Qattaan, from Sufyaan, from Habeeb [ibn Abu Thaabit] by this chain of narrators [i.e., Abu Waa'il, from Abu'l- Hayyaaj al-Asadee] that Alee (may Allah be pleased with him) said: “(do not leave) an image (SURAH) without obliterating/effacing it.”<sup>79</sup>

The lesson we learn from this hadith is that the act of making images, as well as the images themselves, are one of the evils (al-munkaraat) which is obligatory on the rulers to prohibit and to order its destruction and removal from the society. We also learn from this hadith the prohibition of building

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<sup>78</sup>Jaami' al-Bayaan Fi Ta'weel al-Qur'aan, 10/330; see also: Tafseer Ibn Katheer 3/496.

<sup>79</sup>Muslim 2/459, no. 2115.

(structures) on top of graves, and raising the graves high above the ground. This is also of those things which the rulers are required to prohibit.<sup>80</sup>

*The famous scholar of Hadith, Imaam Majd ad-Din Abu as-Sa'aadaat al-Jazaree, who is known as Ibn al-Atheer, mentions this hadith without an isnaad (chain of narrators) in his book of explanations of strange words. His narration—if its isnaad could be traced back and found to be authentic—makes very clear that the command of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to destroy, obliterate, and remove images includes both two dimensional pictures as well as three dimensional statues. Al-Haafidh ibn Hajar also mentions this narration in Fath al-Baaree, without commenting on its chain of narrators. Al-Fath 10/397.*

In the above narration of Imaam Muslim, the narrator used two words *timthaal* (commonly understood to mean statue), and *surah* (commonly understood to mean picture)—here both of them are being used to mean the same thing—the all-inclusive meaning of “images”: both statues and pictures.

This point is made clear in the narration mentioned by Ibn Atheer: The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said: " ... anyone of you who goes to Al-Madeenah, don't leave there any idol/statue (wathan) without breaking it up, nor any picture (surah) without effacing or obliterating it."<sup>81</sup> This narration is also reported by Imaam Ahmad.<sup>82</sup>

*Shaykh al-Albaanee says: "...This isnaad (chain of narrators) is weak. The narrator Abu al-Muwarrah or Abu Muhammad is majhool (unknown; i.e., not certified as a reliable narrator), as stated by al-Haafidh, in ta'jeel al-manfa'ah in a transmission from al-Husainee. I say: There is also*

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<sup>80</sup>Nuzhatu-l-Muttaqeen, 2/1155, no. 1689.

<sup>81</sup>al-Nihaayah Fi Ghareeb al-Hadith, 3/132 (under the word "talakha").

<sup>82</sup>Musnad Imaam Ahmad, 1/87, no. 97 (658).

**idtiraab** in it (the *isnaad*)—as he narrates it one time **mursal** (broken chain) between the *taabi'ee* and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and another time he narrates it **mawsool** (with a complete chain of narrators) mentioning 'Alee (may Allah be pleased with him) in the chain. Both ways (*mursal* and *mawsool*) have been reported by Ahmad from (this narrator)." [Ghaayah al-Maraam pg. 92, no. 144].

[Note: The above narration of Imaam Muslim supports and confirms the meaning of the narration of Imaam Ahmad, mentioned by Ibn Atheer and al-Haafidh, except that its wording does not include: "... don't leave any idol/statue (wathan) without breaking it up.... "]

### **HADITH #11: Removal of Images Which Remind One of the Pleasures of Worldly Life**

حدثني زهير بن حرب حدثنا إسماعيل بن إبراهيم عن داود عن عذرة عن حميد بن عبد الرحمن عن سعد بن هشام عن عائشة قالت كان لنا ستر فيه تمثال طائر وكان الداخِل إذا دخل استقبله فقال لي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم حولي هذا فيني كلما دخلت فرأيتك ذكرت الدينا قالت وكانت لنا قطيفة كنا نقول علمها حرير فكنا نلبسها وحدثني محمد بن المثنى حدثنا ابن أبي عدي وعبد الأعلى بهذا الإسناد قال ابن المثنى وزاد فيه يريد عبد الأعلى فلم يأمرنا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بقطعه.

'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) reported:

We had a curtain which had on it an image (timthaal) of a bird. Whenever anyone entered the room he would find it in front of him (facing him). Thereupon, Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said to me: Change this, for whenever I enter the room I see them and it brings to my mind (the pleasures of) worldly life. She said: We had a sheet which had silk badges upon it, and we used to wear it.

**Imaam Muslim said:** Muhammad ibn al-Muthanna narrated to us this hadith, from ibn Abu 'Adee and 'Abdul-A'laa with the same chain of narrators as the above hadith. Ibn al-Muthanna said: 'Abdul-A'laa

narrated the additional words: "Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not command us to cut up the curtain."<sup>83</sup>

**Imaam an-Nawawee says:** This should be understood to have occurred before the prohibition of **possession** of that which has images (surah) in it. For this reason, the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had been entering (the room) and seeing the curtain, and he did not speak against it before this final occasion.<sup>84</sup>

**Shaykh al-Albaanee**, in refuting those who try to use this hadith as a proof that images (on a curtain) are only undesirable, makes this same point, saying:

As for the curtain (sitr) which had in it the images [of birds], it is true that he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) approved of it. But, when was that—before the prohibition (of images) or after it? If it was **before** (the prohibition), then it is not correct to use it as an evidence that images are merely undesirable (al-kiraahah), as is the position of the author (Yusuf al-Qaradaawee). This, because it happened before the prohibition.

[On the other hand], if it happened **after** the prohibition, then it is correct to use it as an evidence of the undesirability (kiraahah) (of images). However, [the fact of it being before or after the prohibition] is something not at all possible to establish. In that case, it is necessary to make reconciliation (al-jam'). And this can only be done using the rule<sup>85</sup> of precedence of the (evidence) which prohibits (al-haazhir) over the one which permits (al-mubeeh), in the case of contradiction (ta'aarud) between them and the absence of knowledge of the dates [of which came first and which came last, in order to determine which would abrogate the other].

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<sup>83</sup> Muslim 3/1158, no. 5255.

<sup>84</sup> Sharh Saheeh Muslim 10/87.

<sup>85</sup> This rule: "Taqdeem al-haazhir 'alaa al-mubeeh 'inda ta-ta'aarud wa al-jahl bi-t-taareekh," has been worded by the scholars in many different ways, all amounting to the same thing. See: al-Qawaa'id al-Fiqhiyyah, pgs. 272 - 276. Also: Appendix A: On Avoiding The Doubtful Matters.

This is precisely what an-Nawawee has done.<sup>86</sup>

### ***HADITH #12: Removal of Images Which Distract One During Prayers***

حدثنا عمران بن ميسرة حدثنا عبدالوارث حدثنا عبدالعزيز بن صهيب عن أنس رضي اللهم عنهم قال كان قوام لعائشة سترت به جانب بيتها فقال لها النبي صلى اللهم عليه وسلم أميطي عني فإنه لا تزال تصاويره تعرض لي في صلاتي

Narrated Anas (may Allah be pleased with him):

'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) had a curtain (having images on it) and she screened the side of her house with it. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said to her, 'Remove it from my sight, for its images are still coming to my mind (and distracting me) in my prayers.'<sup>87</sup>

Imaam al-Bukhaaree titled the chapter heading for this hadith: *Karaahiyyah as-salaah fi at-tasaaweer*. Al-Haafidh explains its meaning as being *the disliking/hatred of prayer wearing clothing with images in them*.<sup>88</sup> He also explained the meaning of *qiraam* as being: a curtain with designs and inscriptions in it. It has also been said that it is a cloth made from colored wool, used as a bedding for the camel litter or a covering for it.<sup>89</sup>

**Here al-Haafidh mentions** the hadith of 'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) in the Saheeh of Muslim which mentions that she had a cloth with pictures (tasaaweer) on it connected to a chamber, and that the Prophet

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<sup>86</sup>Ghaayah al-Maraam pgs. 87 - 88, no. 136.

<sup>87</sup>al-Bukhaaree 7/544, no. 842.

<sup>88</sup>Fath al-Baaree 10/405, no. 5959.

<sup>89</sup>Fath al-Baaree 10/400, no. 5954.



(peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to pray in its direction. So, he said: Remove it from me.

**Al-Haafidh then explains** the manner in which the chapter heading has been extracted from this hadith. He says: If the pictures (suwar) distracted the praying person while they are in front of him, then in the same way they would distract him and divert his attention while he is wearing them. In fact, the state of wearing (clothing with) pictures is more distracting.

It is also possible that the [preposition] "fi" (in) can have the meaning here of the [preposition] "ilaa" (towards). [The meaning would then be: "the disliking/hatred of praying towards pictures."] In this case, the agreement between the hadith and its chapter heading would have been achieved; and it is fitting (and in line with) the intended meaning, since there is some difference of opinion in this issue. It has been reported that in the Hanafee school of law that it is not disliked to pray in the direction of an image (surah) if the image is small or its head is removed.

There is some dubiousness and unclarity in this matter if one attempts to reconcile between this hadith [of Anas (may Allah be pleased with him)] and the hadith of 'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) which mentions the cushion having images on it [Hadith #5 above]. This, because the hadith of 'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) indicates that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), from the very beginning, did not enter the house which had in it the curtain with images on it until it was removed.

On the other hand, this hadith (of Anas—may Allah be pleased with him) indicates that he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) consented to (the presence of the images), and prayed while the curtain was hanging up until the time when he ordered it to be removed because of what has been mentioned about his seeing the images while he is in the state of prayer. He didn't at all address the fact of it being an image (surah).

It is possible to reconcile (make jam') between these ahaadith by the following: The images (tasaaweer) in the first case (hadith #5) were of that which has a soul. While the images (tasaaweer) in this hadith (#12) were of other than living beings [human or animal]. This has already been

established in the discussion of the hadith of Zaid ibn Khaalid [Hadith #7 above; see the explanation of Imaam an-Nawawee].<sup>90</sup>

### **HADITH #13: *The Most Severely Punished Will Be The Image-Makers***

وحدثنا نصر بن علي الجهضمي حدثنا عبد العزيز بن عبد الصمد حدثنا منصور عن مسلم بن صبيح قال كنت مع مسروق في بيت فيه تماثيل مريم فقال مسروق هذا تماثيل كسرى فقلت لا هذا تماثيل مريم فقال مسروق أما إن سمعت عبد الله بن مسعود يقول قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أشد الناس عذابا يوم القيامة المصورون

Muslim ibn Subaih reported:

I was with Masrooq in a house which had images (tamaatheel) of Maryam (Mary). Thereupon Masrooq said: These are images (tamaatheel) of Kisraa [the title used for the Persian kings]. I said: No, these are images (tamaatheel) of Maryam. Masrooq then said: I heard Abdullah ibn Mas'ood (may Allah be pleased with him) saying that Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: The most severely punished people on the Day of Resurrection would be the image-makers (al-musawwiroon)...<sup>91</sup>

**Al-Haafidh ibn Hajar comments:** It is as though Masrooq thought that the images (tasweer) were from a Magian, as they used to make images of their kings—even on their utensils. Then it became apparent that the images were from a Christian, because they make images of Maryam, the Christ (peace be upon him) and others and worship these images.

**Al-Haafidh then comments on the saying:** “The most severely punished people....” He says: Perhaps there may be some question about the fact

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<sup>90</sup>Fath al-Baaree 10/405, no. 5959.

<sup>91</sup>al-Bukhaaree 7/540, no. 834; Muslim 3/1161, no. 5272. [The wording is from Muslim, who narrated along with it another hadith from Sa'eed ibn Abu'l-Hasan, from Ibn Abbaas, which follows this hadith].

that the image-makers will be the most severely punished of all people, in light of the saying of Allah, the Most High,

*... and on the Day when the Hour will be established (it will be said to the angels): Cause Pharaoh's people to enter the severest torment! [al-Qur'aan 40:46].*

This hadith necessitates the image-maker being more severely tormented than the people of Pharaoh.

**At-Tabaree responds saying:** The intended meaning here is the one who knowingly makes images that are worshipped instead of Allah, and he does such with that intention. Therefore, he becomes a disbeliever by doing such an act. In that case it isn't strange that he would enter with the people of Pharaoh. On the other hand, whoever does not intend such would only be considered a sinner as a result of image-making.

**Others responded by saying:** The narration (of this hadith) which states: "one of the most severely punished people on the Day of Judgment will be the image-makers" is an authentic narration. Therefore, the narration under discussion (which does not mention the word *of*) should be understood in light of that one. Hence, if the one who makes images is **one of those** who would be most severely punished, it follows that he will share this with others.

Also, the verse mentioned above does not necessitate the people of Pharaoh being exclusively the most severely punished. They would be in the severest punishment, while it is possible that others might also be in the severest punishment (with them).

At-Tahaawee supports this (opinion) with what he narrates with a different chain of narrators on the authority of Ibn Mas'ood (may Allah be pleased with him)—who narrated from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him):

Verily, the most severely punished people on the Day of Judgment will be a man who killed a prophet or a man who was killed by a prophet, an Imaam (leader) of misguidance, and one of those **who makes images** (mumaththil min al-mumaththileen).

Ahmad narrated it like this also.<sup>92</sup> Al-Albaanee has authenticated this hadith.<sup>93</sup>

Some of the extra wording found in the above narration has also come in the narration of Ibn Abi Umar [from Sufyaan, reported by al-Ismaa'eelee], but it only mentions the image-maker and the one who is killed by a prophet.

At-Tabaree has also reported a hadith of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), on the authority of Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her):

The most severely punished person on the Day of Judgment will be a man who ridiculed another man, resulting in that man ridiculing the whole of his tribe.

**At-Tahaawee said:** Each one of these is sharing with the other in the severity of the punishment.

**Abu al-Waleed ibn Rushd** in his book *Mukhtasar Mushkil at-Tahaawee* said what may be summarized as: The threat which comes in this type of expression [“the most severely punished”]—if mentioned in reference to a disbeliever doesn't present any problem for reconciliation (al-jam'), because he will share in that punishment with the people of Pharaoh. It merely indicates the seriousness of the kufr (disbelief) mentioned [in each case where this expression is employed]. However, when it is mentioned in reference to a disobedient/sinner, it would be understood to mean that he will be more severely punished than the disobedient/sinners (who have committed a different class of sin). In this case it indicates the extreme seriousness of the type of disobedience mentioned.

**Al-Qurtubee responds** (in the book *al-Mufhim*) saying: about those who have been described with the word 'ashaddu' ('most severely')—it is not meant to include everyone of them (who does this action). It is meant to include some of them: those who actually share in that action [in the

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<sup>92</sup> al-Musnad 1/407, no. 3867; an-Nihaayah 4/295 [see: “mathala”].

<sup>93</sup> as-Silsilah as-Saheehah 1/507, no. 281.

particular manner] for which this threatened punishment is meant. Pharaoh will be the most severely punished of those who claimed divinity. Those who follow his example in the misguidance of his KUFR (disbelief) will be more severely punished than those who follow his example in the misguidance of his *fisq* (evil doing). [This, while all of them are of the people of Pharaoh]. So also those who make images (suwar) of that which has a soul, for the purpose of it being worshipped, will be more severely punished than those who make these images for a purpose other than to be worshipped.

**Ibn Hajar mentions another point** of dubiousness between the apparent meaning of the hadith with consideration of Iblees and with consideration of Aadam's (peace be upon him) son who started the tradition of killing. [Would each of them also share in the *severest punishment*?] The answer in reference to Iblees is clear. The meaning of "people" (in the expression, *most severely punished people*) is whoever comes from the lineage of Aadam (peace be upon him) [and that excludes Iblees]. As for the question of the son of Aadam (who is responsible for starting the tradition of murder), the answer is that he is certainly entitled to share the weight for everyone who murdered unjustly. There is nothing stopping the one who started the tradition of unlawful sexual intercourse (zinaa), for example, from sharing with him the same severe punishment. Surely, he will share the weight of the sins of everyone who committed unlawful sexual intercourse after him, since he was the first to start this tradition. Perhaps, the number of those who commit zinaa are more than those who commit murder.<sup>94</sup>

At this point, **Al-Haafidh ibn Hajar quotes** part of the introductory comments of Imaam an-Nawawee in his explanation of *Saheeh Muslim*, the chapter entitled: *The Prohibition Of Making Images Of Living Beings*. An-Nawawee said: The scholars said: making images of living beings is prohibited in the strongest manner, and as well is one of the major sins. This is because it falls under and is subject to this extremely severe threat. There is no difference in this matter whether it is done for that which is debased and dishonored or otherwise—the **making** of these images, in every condition, is forbidden. There is also no difference whether it is in a cloth, a carpet, coins (dirham, dinaar, or fals), utensil, wall or other than

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<sup>94</sup>Fath al-Baaree 10/396-397, no. 5950.

that. On the other hand, images (tasweer) of things other than living beings are not forbidden.

**Al-Haafidh then says:** The hadith of 'Alee (may Allah be pleased with him) which is reported by Ahmad, supports the position that the prohibition of making images is general, including that which cast a shadow [three dimensional objects like statues] as well as that which has no shadow [two dimensional pictures]. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said: "...anyone of you who goes to al-Madeenah, don't leave there any idol/statue (wathan) without breaking it up, nor any picture (surah) without effacing/obliterating it." In one of its narrations "...and whoever goes back to making any of these (images), then he has disbelieved in what has been revealed to Muhammad."<sup>95</sup>

**Al-Khattaabee said:** The punishment of the image maker is so severe because the images (suwar) were taken as something to be worshipped besides Allah, and because looking at them causes temptation, and because some souls are inclined to them. He also said: The intended meaning of images (suwar) here are those images (tamaatheel) which have a soul.

[This is like the narration of al-Bukhaaree, of the hadith of Ibn Abbaas, from Abu Talha (may Allah be pleased with them all), that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Angels do not enter a house which has in it either a dog or an **image** (surah)"—He then added: "He meant the **images** (surah at-tamaatheel) (of creatures) which have souls."]<sup>96</sup>

**Al-Haafidh ibn Hajar goes on to mention that** Abu 'Alee al-Faarizee in the book *at-Tadhkirah* uses this hadith [#13] as a proof of the kufr (disbelief) of the deviant sect who tried to compare Allah's characteristics to the characteristics of his creatures (*al-mushabbaha*). He understood the hadith to be referring to this sect, and that the meaning of *musawwiroon* is those who believe that Allah has a shape and form (surah). This opinion is criticized and shown to be wrong by the hadith: "The people who will

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<sup>95</sup> Musnad Ahmad 1/87, no. 658. *This is similar to the narration of Muslim [Hadith #10].*

<sup>96</sup> al-Bukhaaree 5/225-226, no. 338. *al-Albaanee mentioned it in Ghaayah al-Maraam pg. 77, no. 118.*

receive the severest punishment on the Day of Resurrection will be those who try to make the like of Allah's creation" (Hadith #4). Also, the Hadith: "The makers of these pictures (suwar) will be punished (severely) on the Day of Resurrection ..." (Hadith #5). [In these two hadith it is clearly mentioned that the images were in a curtain and a cushion respectively, showing that the intended meaning of *musawwiroon* is image-makers, and not those who compare the characteristics of Allah to the characteristics of human beings.]

**Al-Haafidh mentions a final opinion in this matter:** Some of them (the people of knowledge) said that this severe threat of punishment is specifically confined to those who made images with the intention to compete with Allah in the act of creation. As a result of this intention, he became classified as a disbeliever (see Hadith #4). As for anyone besides these, it is still forbidden for him to make these images, and he is sinful in doing so, but his sin is less than the one who tries to compete with Allah in making something like Allah's creation.

Al-Haafidh himself here adds: And what is even more severe than the one who tries to compete with Allah in the act of creation, is the one who makes images of that which is to be worshipped instead of Allah.

Al-Qurtubee's mention that the people of Jaahiliyyah (days of ignorance) used to make idols of everything is true. Some of them even made his idol from pressed dates (*ajwah*), then when he became hungry, he ate it.<sup>97</sup>

### **HADITH #14: Every Image-Maker Will Be In The Hell-Fire**

قال مسلم قرأت على نصر بن علي الجهضمي عن عبد الأعلى بن عبد الأعلى حدثنا يحيى بن أبي إسحق عن سعيد بن أبي الحسن قال جاء رجل إلى ابن عباس فقال إني رجل أصور هذه الصور فأفتني فيها فقال له ادن مني فدنا منه ثم قال ادن مني فدنا حتى وضع يده على رأسه قال أنبتك بما سمعت من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول كل

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<sup>97</sup> Fath al-Baaree 10/396-398.

مصور في النار يجعل له بكل صورة صورها نفسا فتعذبه في جهنم و قال إن كنت لا بد فاعلا  
فاصنع الشجر وما لا نفس له فأقر به نصر بن علي.

Imaam Muslim said: I read this hadith to Nasr ibn 'Alee al-Jahdamee (the Shaykh of Imaam Muslim) who heard the hadith from Abdul-A'laa ibn Abdul-A'laa, from Yahya ibn Abu Ishaq, from Sa'eed ibn Abu'l-Hasan, who said:

A man came to Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) and said: I am a person who makes these images (suwar); give me a religious verdict (fatwa) about them. He (Ibn Abbaas) said to him: come near me. The man then came near to him. Then he (Ibn Abbaas) said (again): come near me. So, he came nearer to him, until he placed his hand on the man's head and said: I am going to inform you of what I heard from Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). I heard him say: 'Every image-maker (musawwir) will be in the fire of Hell. A soul will be made for him for every image which he has made, and it will punish him in the Hell-fire.' Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) said: If you must do it (i.e., make these images), then make (images of) trees and lifeless things ('ash-shajarah wa maa laa NAFS lahu'). Thereupon, Nasr ibn 'Alee al-Jahdamee (the Shaykh of Imaam Muslim) confirmed this hadith.<sup>98</sup>

In al-Bukhaaree's narration:

...What a pity! If you insist on making images, I advise you to make images of trees, everything that does not have a soul ('fa-layka bi'sh-shajarah, kulli shay'in laisa feehi *rooh*).<sup>99</sup>

[The words of Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father): "if you insist on making images, I advise you to make images of trees, everything that does not have a soul," show clearly that the rule for classification of what is permissible of images does not take into

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<sup>98</sup> Muslim 3/1161, no. 5272.

<sup>99</sup> al-Bukhaaree 3/235, no. 428



consideration the **means** (wasaa'il) used to make the image. It only takes into consideration the **objective** (maqsad)—the thing whose image is to be made. Is it a tree or that which has no soul (lifeless, inanimate thing), or is it of that which has a soul (rooh)?]

The lesson we learn from this hadith is that image-making (tasweer) is one of the major sins (kaba'ir) which will be the cause of severe punishment on the Day of Judgment for the one who engages in it. The punishment will be in accordance to the extent to which he engaged in the making of images.... We also learn from this hadith the permissibility of making images—whether pictures or statues—of trees, mountains, rivers, etc., as long as it is of those things which have no soul.<sup>100</sup>

**Shaykh al-Albaanee commenting** on this hadith says: “This is a general text ('nass 'aamm) which includes every image-maker, even the one who makes posters by hand and the one who makes images by use of the camera. This, because all of them are referred to by the name “*musawwir*” (image-maker) linguistically (in classical Arabic Language) as well as in the common usage ('urf) of the people.”<sup>101</sup>

**Al-Haafidh ibn Hajar comments** on the words of Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father): “If you must do it (i.e., make these images) then make (images of) trees and lifeless things.” He says: It is used as an evidence of the permissibility of making images (tasweer) of whatever does not have a soul, such as trees, suns or moons.

**Ash-Shaykh Abu Muhammad al-Juwaynee has mentioned** an opinion that it is prohibited [to make images even of these things which have no soul, such as trees, suns or moons]. This is because some of the disbelievers worshipped these things.

**Ibn Hajar said:** The punishment mentioned above of whoever makes images of that which has a soul doesn't necessarily mandate the permissibility of making images (tasweer) of that which has no soul.

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<sup>100</sup>Nuzhat-l-Muttaqeen, 2/1152, no. 1682. See also the treatise of Shaykh Bin Baaz Pg. 58 and Shaykh M.J. Zainoo Pg. 76, in the following chapters.

<sup>101</sup>Ghaayah al-Maaraam, pg. 100, no. 165.

Verily, the generality of the saying: "... those who imitate the creation of Allah ...," (#4) and the saying: "Who is more unjust than one who tries to create the likeness of My creation ..." (#16) include that which has a soul as well as that which has no soul. So, if this prohibition is understood (in its general meaning) to be specifically restricted to that which has a soul—from the perspective that these things [which have a soul] are not of the things which human beings are in the habit of making, while the planting of trees, for example, is of that which the human is in the habit of doing—it is not so [i.e., not restricted] in the case of making images (tasweer) of the sun and the moon. This prohibition is further confirmed in connection to that which is worshipped instead of Allah, since it is like the image (surah) of the idols which are the original reason for the prohibition of image-making (tasweer).

**Mujaahid, the student of Ibn Abbaas** (may Allah be pleased with him and his father), has limited the permission for image making (tasweer) of trees to those **which do not bear fruit**. As for trees which bear fruit, he has put them in the category with that which has a soul [prohibited]. 'Iyaad said: No one besides Mujaahid has held this opinion.

**At-Tahaawee has refuted Mujaahid by saying:** since the image (surah) has been made permissible after its head<sup>102</sup> is cut off—i.e., the image of that which has a soul and could not live if the head is cut off—this is an indication of the permissibility [of tasweer] of that which originally has no soul.

**Al-Haafidh here says:** His (At-Tahaawee's) view of the permissibility of making images (tasweer) of that which has a soul, including all of its body parts except the head, is clearly questionable. I think that Mujaahid must have heard the hadith of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) [Hadith #19 below]. In it [are the words]: "... then let him create a small ant (dharrah), and let him create a grain of barley." Verily, in the mention of "dharrah" (small ant) is a hint towards that which has a soul, and in the mention of "a grain of barley" is a hint towards that which is grown, of

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<sup>102</sup>*This is based on the hadith of Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father), narrated by al-Ismaa'eelee: "The image is actually the head. So, if the head is cut off, there is no image." As-Silsilah As-Saheehah 4/554, no. 1921. al-Albaanee has declared it to be authentic.*

those things which are eaten. As for that which has no soul and that which does not bear fruit—there is no hint of it.

This very strict position is contrasted by what Abu Muhammad al-Juwaynee has related to the effect that weaving of the image (surah) in cloth is not prohibited. This is so because it might possibly be worn. Al-Mutawallee has generalized this permission to include images (tasweer) on the ground and the like of it.

**An-Nawawee** considered the correct opinion to be the prohibition of everything mentioned above. He said: The girls' dolls are an exception to the prohibition of making images (tasweer) of, and possession of, that which cast a shadow (three dimensional figures), because of the concession that has come in its case.<sup>103</sup>

**We quote here two comments from the commentary of Abdul-Hamid Siddiqi's *English translation of Saheeh Muslim*:** A well-known scholar of our times 'Allama Muhammad Munir (of Damascus) has clearly stated that the photos of the modern age fall under the category of pictures. He says: "The words of the Noble Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that every maker of the photo would be tormented on the Day of Resurrection, include every artist whether he makes pictures with the help of his hand (with pencil or with the help of color paint) or with the help of camera" (marginal notes on the book *Ihkaam al-Ahkaam*, Sharh 'Umdat al-Ahkaam, Vol. II, p. 37).<sup>104</sup>

**Abdul-Hamid Siddiqi then comments** on the words of Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father): These words of Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) implied a sanction for the painting of lifeless things, for example, trees, flowers, landscape, mountains and rivers, etc. But the style in which the eminent Companion of the Noble Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) expressed this sanction clearly indicates that it is not something very much desirable. It should not, however, lead one to conclude that Islam is opposed to art...Islam is not opposed to art...It is, however, wrong to

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<sup>103</sup>Fath al-Baaree 10/409, no. 5963.

<sup>104</sup>Saheeh Muslim 3/1161, note 2520 [*English Translation*].

conceive that the expressions of art should necessarily be the same as the so-called *lovers of art* have suggested. These expressions differ with the fundamental attitude that the people adopt in regard to the unseen realities of the universe and to the ideals of beauty. The painting of pictures and the carving of statues are not, therefore, the only channels of artistic expressions. There are a hundred and one other ways of giving captivating forms to one's sense of beauty and to one's perception of unseen reality. Islam has no doubt prohibited the painting of living things and the carving of human statues, but Muslim artists have expressed their artistic genius in so many other forms, for example, literature, calligraphy, architecture, arabesque, pottery. Here he quotes Professor Rom Landau saying: The essence, almost the symbol, of that tradition was the arabesque: the rather involved arrangement of geometrical forms stylized plan-elements and lettering that has become the hall-mark of Islamic art, and on which so much of Islam's artistic genius has been expended. [I have summarized his comments].<sup>105</sup>

### ***HADITH #15: The Image-Maker Will Be Compelled To Breathe Soul (life) In The Images He Made***

وحدثنا أبو بكر بن أبي شيبة حدثنا علي بن مسهر عن سعيد بن أبي عروبة عن النضر بن أنس بن مالك قال كنت جالسا عند ابن عباس فجعل يفتي ولا يقول قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم حتى سأله رجل فقال إني رجل أصور هذه الصور فقال له ابن عباس ادنه فدنا الرجل فقال ابسن عباس سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول من صور صورة في الدنيا كلف أن ينفخ فيها الروح يوم القيامة وليس بنافخ.

Narrated an-Nadr ibn Anas ibn Maalik, who said:

I was sitting with Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) when he was giving religious verdicts (fataawaa), but he was not saying that it was Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) who had said that. However, when a man said to him: I am the maker of these images (suwar), Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) said to him: come near.

<sup>105</sup> Saheeh Muslim 3/1161, note 2521 [English Translation].

The man came near. Then Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) said: I heard Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saying: 'Whoever makes an image (surah) in this world would be compelled to breathe soul (rooh) in it on the Day of Resurrection, but he will never be able to do so.'<sup>106</sup>

We learn from this hadith that the image-maker will be required to give life to that which he has made, to show that he is unable, as well as a means of reproach and blame. Then, when he is unable to do that which he is ordered to do—i.e., give life to his images—he will be punished. The warning contained in this hadith serves as a means of deterrence to those who would make images, and describes the condition the image-makers will find themselves in on the day they will stand before the Lord of all the worlds.<sup>107</sup>

**Here al-Haafidh comments on the saying:** "whoever makes an image (surah) in this world...." In this way, it has been mentioned in the absolute sense [not specifying any particular type of image]. Its apparent meaning is that it is general, including an image (surah) of that which has no soul. However, that which Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) understood from the remainder of the hadith, is that it is specifically limited to the image (surah) of that which has a soul. This is based on the saying: "...he will be compelled to breathe soul (rooh) into it...." Therefore, he (Ibn Abbaas) made an exception for that which has no soul, like trees.

As for the saying: "... he will be compelled to breathe soul (rooh) into it on the day of Resurrection, but he will not be able to do so," al-Haafidh comments: in the narration of Sa'eed ibn Abee al-Hasan, the wording is: "Verily, Allah will punish him until he breathes into it a soul, and he will never be able to do so." Here the use of the word 'until', is equivalent to its use in the saying of Allah, the Most High,:

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<sup>106</sup> al-Bukhaaree 7/547, no. 846; Muslim 3/1162, no. 5273. [The exact wording is from Muslim].

<sup>107</sup> Nuzhatu-l-Muttaqeen, 2/1152, no. 1683, 1684.

لا تفتح لهم أبواب السماء ولا يدخلون الجنة حتى يبلغ الجمل في سم الخياط وكذلك

نجزي المجرمين

*...and they will not enter paradise UNTIL the camel goes through the eye of the needle (which is impossible)... [al-Qur'aan 7:40]*

It is also like their saying: I will not do such and such a thing, **until** the crow becomes white-haired.

**Al-Karmaanee said:** Its apparent meaning is that it expresses the idea of being required to do something that one is unable to do. But, that's not so. In fact, the intention is to express the length of time of his punishment, manifestation of his inability to fulfill the task he has taken upon himself, exaggeration in rebuking him, and making clear the ugliness of his action.

**Al-Haafidh comments** on the meaning of the words "... he would not be able to do so," saying: It will not be possible to do that, and as a result he will be punished continuously. It has been previously mentioned in the explanation of the hadith of Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) (Hadith #1 above) that it will be said to the image-makers (musawwireen): "make alive what you have created," and that this is a command to do that which one is unable to do.

Perhaps this threat (of continuous punishment) might be regarded as dubious or doubtful in regards to a Muslim, since the threat (of the punishment) of the murderer who kills intentionally will be discontinued—according to the Ahl as-Sunnah wa'l-Jamaa'ah.<sup>108</sup> This, even though text came indicating his eternal punishment, if we understand the eternity here to mean a very long period of time. The threat (of punishment of the image-maker) is even more severe (than that of the intentional murderer)

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<sup>108</sup> *Ahl as-Sunnah wa'l-Jamaa'ah: Those Muslims who hold firmly to the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him),— in their beliefs, actions and methodology — and stick together as one group—without being divided into sects—following the example of the "first group" (the companions - sahaabah).*

because it is **coupled** with that which is not possible—that is, the breathing of a soul (or giving of life). Therefore, it is not correct to interpret this threat to mean that he (the image maker) will be punished for a long period of time and then be freed from that punishment.

The reply to these doubts is that it is a must that the hadith be interpreted in such a way that its intended meaning is a stern warning by way of a threat of the punishment of the disbelievers, so that it will be more effective in preventing or deterring (such action). And its apparent meaning is not what is intended. All of this is in regards to the sinner who commits such an act. As for the one who makes images, considering it to be lawful, there is no doubt or unclarity in his case.<sup>109</sup>

This hadith has also been used as an evidence that the actions of the servants (creatures) are created by Allah, the Most High, because of the affixing of the threat to whoever tried to imitate the Creator. This points to the fact that, in reality, anything other than Allah is not a creator.

Some (scholars) replied by saying that the threat only applied to the creation of *al-jawhar* (essential nature, substance as opposed to form). This is refuted by (the saying of those who say) that the threat is applicable with consideration of the outward shape and form, and that is not the essential nature.

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<sup>109</sup> *If someone declares lawful what Allah has made unlawful or vice versa—this is a form of “kufr” disbelief. On the authority of ‘Adee ibn Haatim (may Allah be pleased with him): “They (the Jews and Christians) took their Rabbis and their Monks to be their lords besides Allah, (by obeying them in things which they made lawful or unlawful according to their own desires without being ordered by Allah...Praise and Glory be to Him (far above is He) from having the partners they associate (with Him)[al-Qur’aan 9:31]. Once while Allah’s Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was reciting this verse, ‘Adee ibn Haatim said: “O Allah’s Messenger! They do not worship them (i.e., the Rabbis and Monks).” Allah’s Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “They certainly do. [They (i.e., the Rabbis and Monks) made lawful things as unlawful, and unlawful things as lawful, and they (i.e., Jews and Christians) followed them; and by doing so, they really worshipped them]”. Ahmad, at-Tirmidhee, and Ibn Jareer.*

As for the exception made for that which has no soul, it is understood to be permissible from the context of the hadith [the words "...he would be compelled to breathe soul into it ..."], as I have previously established.

In the saying "...he will be required on the day of Resurrection..." there is a refutation of those who say that the Next Life will not be a place of *takleef* (being charged with responsibility). The reply (to them) is that the intended meaning of the negation of the Next Life being a place of *takleef*, is that it is not a place where one will be charged with doing any deeds for which he will be rewarded or punished. As for the likeness of this *takleef* [being charged with breathing life into that which they made images of], there is nothing to prevent it since it is itself a form of punishment. It is equivalent to the hadith: "Whoever kills himself with a piece of iron, his piece of iron will be in his hand, and he will be stabbing himself with it on the Day of Resurrection."

It might also be said that the *takleef* (being charged with responsibility) to do any deed in this world is something good—according to the terminology of the philosophers (ahl ilm al-Kalaam)—as opposed to this *takleef* (being required to breathe life into the images on the Day of Resurrection) which is a punishment.

This hadith has also been used as an evidence of the permissibility of requiring (of someone) that which he does not have the ability to fulfill. The reply is that which has preceded [see the comments of al-Karmaanee above]. Another reply is that the breathing of soul into inanimate things has been mentioned as a miracle of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Therefore, it is possible, even if its occurrence is something extraordinary. The truth of the matter is that this expression ("he would be compelled to breathe soul in them on the Day of Resurrection, but he would not be able to do so") is an expression of *ta'jeez* (inability) not *takleef* (being charged with responsibility), as mentioned before. And Allah Knows Best!<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>110</sup>Fath al-Baaree 10/408, no. 5963.



***HADITH #16: The Most Evil Wrongdoer Is One Who Tries To Create Like Allah's Creation***

حدثنا أبو بكر بن أبي شيبة ومحمد بن عبد الله بن نمير وأبو كريب وألفاظهم متقاربة قالوا حدثنا ابن فضيل عن عمارة عن أبي زرعة قال دخلت مع أبي هريرة في دار مروان فرأى فيها تصاوير فقال سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول قال الله عز وجل ومن أظلم ممن ذهب يخلق خلقا كخلقى فليخلقوا ذرة أو ليخلقوا حبة أو ليخلقوا شعيرة وحدثني زهير بن حرب حدثنا جرير عن عمارة عن أبي زرعة قال دخلت أنا وأبو هريرة دارا تبنى بالمدينة لسعيد أو لمروان قال فرأى مصورا يصور في الدار فقال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بمثله ولم يذكر أو ليخلقوا شعيرة.

Abu Zur'ah reported:

I visited the house of Marwaan in the company of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) and he saw images (tasaaweer) there, whereupon he said: I heard Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saying: 'Allah, the Glorious and Exalted, said: Who is more a wrongdoer than one who tries to create creation like My creation. Let him create a small ant (dharrah) or a grain of wheat or that of barley.'

**Imaam Muslim said:** This hadith has also been narrated to me by Zuhair ibn Harb, from Jareer, from 'Umaarah, from Abu Zur'ah who said:

I and Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) entered a house being built in al-Madeenah for Sa'eed or Marwaan. (Abu Zur'ah) said: he (Abu Hurairah) saw an image-maker (musawwir) making images in the (wall of) the house. He then said: Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said the like of what is quoted above, except that he did not mention the words 'Let him create a grain of barley.'<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>111</sup>Muslim 3/1162, no. 5275.

حدثنا موسى حدثنا عبدالواحد حدثنا عمارة حدثنا أبو زرعة قال دخلت مع أبي هريرة دارا بالمدينة فرأى أعلاها مصورا يصور قال سمعت رسول الله صلى اللهم عليه وسلم يقول ومن أظلم ممن ذهب يخلق كخلقي فليخلقوا حبة وليخلقوا ذرة ثم دعا بتور من ماء فغسل يديه حتى بلغ إبطه فقلت يا أبا هريرة أشيء سمعته من رسول الله صلى اللهم عليه وسلم قال منتهى الحلية.

In al-Bukhaaree's narration of the same hadith, from Abu Zur'ah, he said:

I entered a house in al-Madeenah with Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him), and he saw a image-maker (musawwir) making images at the top of the house. He then said: I heard Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saying that Allah, the Most High, said: 'Who would be more unjust than one who tries to create the like of My creation? Let him create a grain, let him create an ant (or gnat or an atom: dharrah) ...'<sup>112</sup>

The expression "who would be more unjust" or "who is more a wrongdoer than one who tries to create the like of My creation?" is a type of Arabic idiom used to express the absence of the equal to something. In other words, its meaning is that there is no one more unjust than the one who does this act. From this we learn the shameful, disgusting and repulsive nature of the act of image making. We also learn from this hadith the inability of the human being to bring into existence anything comparable to Allah's most perfect creation, whether it be animal life or otherwise, no matter how small or insignificant it may be. We also see in this hadith a miracle of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in that no one has ever stepped forward to meet this challenge, in spite of their advanced knowledge of science and technology.<sup>113</sup>

**Al-Haafidh ibn Hajar** here comments on the words "one who tries to create the like of My creation": the likeness/comparison here is only in

<sup>112</sup> al-Bukhaaree 7/541, no. 837.

<sup>113</sup> Nuzhatu-l-Muttaqeen, 2/1153, no. 1685.

*form* or its *image* (surah), not that he thinks he can make the like of Allah's creation, being like it in every way.

**Ibn Battaal said:** Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) understood that image-making (tasweer) includes that which has a shadow (three dimensional) as well as that which has no shadow (two dimensional). For this reason, he renounced what was engraved in the walls.

**Ibn Hajar said:** It is the obvious, apparent meaning understood from the general meaning of the expression [he who tries to create the like of My creation]. It could also be understood to refer only to that which has a shadow (three dimensional), in light of His saying: "like My creation." This, because His creation which He has originated (brought into existence from nothing), is not simply an empty form (surah) in the wall. Rather, it is a complete and perfect creation. However, the remainder of the hadith necessitates that it be understood to be a general warning against image-making (tasweer) of any and everything. This is understood from his saying: "then let him create a grain, let him create an ant/or an atom (dharrah)..." [the challenge here is to create even something which has no soul].

This might be responded to by saying: The intended meaning here is creation of a *real* grain, not simply its form/image (tasweer). Al-Haafidh says: The intended meaning of *dharrah* is *ant*.<sup>114</sup>

Finally, the aim or intention behind this challenge is, on the one hand, to manifest their absolute inability by demanding them to create a living being [human or animal, as in the Hadith (#15) of Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father): "... would be compelled to breathe soul (rooh) in them..."], and that's the most difficult. Then, the next time, showing their inability by demanding them to create an inanimate (lifeless) thing [like a grain of wheat or barley, as in this Hadith #16], and that's the easier (of the two). Yet, they still have not the ability to do it.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> "Dharrah": *The smallest of ants, of which the weight of one hundred (100) of them is equal to the weight of one grain of barley.* [al-Qaamoos al-Muheet, pg. 506; Mukhtaar as-Sihaah, pg. 221; al-Waseet, pg. 310].

<sup>115</sup> Fath al-Baaree 10/399, no. 5953.

## **HADITH #17: Cutting To Pieces That Which Contains Images**

حدثنا وهب بن بقية أخبرنا خالد عن سهيل يعني ابن أبي صالح عن سعيد بن يسار الأنصاري عن زيد بن خالد الجهني عن أبي طلحة الأنصاري قال سمعت النبي صلى اللهم عليه وسلم يقول لا تدخل الملائكة بيتا فيه كلب ولا تمثال وقال انطلق بنا إلى أم المؤمنين عائشة نسألها عن ذلك فانطلقنا فقلنا يا أم المؤمنين إن أبا طلحة حدثنا عن رسول الله صلى اللهم عليه وسلم بكذا وكذا فهل سمعت النبي صلى اللهم عليه وسلم يذكر ذلك قالت لا ولكن سأحدثكم بما رأيته فعل خرج رسول الله صلى اللهم عليه وسلم في بعض مغازيه وكنت أتحنن قفوله فأخذت نمطا كان لنا فسترته على العرض فلما جاء استقبلته فقلت السلام عليك يا رسول الله ورحمة الله وبركاته الحمد لله الذي أعزك وأكرمك فنظر إلى البيت فرأى النمط فلم يرد علي شيئا ورأيت الكراهية في وجهه فأتى النمط حتى هتكته ثم قال إن الله لم يأمرنا فيما رزقنا أن نكسو الحجارة واللبن قالت فقطعته وجعلته وسادتين وحشوتهما ليفا فلم ينكر ذلك علي.

Abu Talha al-Ansaaree (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

I heard the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) say: 'The angels do not enter a house which has in it a dog or a image (timthaal).' The narrator said: Go with me to 'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her), Mother of the Faithful, so that we may ask her about it. So we went and asked her: O Mother of the Faithful, Abu Talha has narrated to us from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) 'such and such' (hadith). Have you heard the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) mentioning that? She replied: No, but I will narrate to you what I saw him do. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) went on a military expedition and I was waiting for him to return. I then took a carpet which we had and hung it up as a screen on a stick over the door. When he came I received him and said: 'Peace be upon you O Messenger of Allah, and the mercy of Allah and His blessings. Praise be to Allah who gave you dominance and respect.' He then looked at the house and saw the carpet, and he did not respond to me at all. I saw the (signs of) disapproval in his face. He then came to the carpet and tore it down. He then said: 'Allah has not commanded us to clothe stones and clay out of the sustenance He has given us.' She said: I then cut it to pieces and made two pillows out of it and stuffed them with

palm fiber, and he did not disapprove of me doing that. [In the narration of Imaam Muslim, it does not include the words: "... when he came I received him and said: 'Peace be upon you O Messenger of Allah ... and he did not respond to me at all.'" ]<sup>116</sup>

**Imaam an-Nawawee says:** The meaning of the words: "he tore it down" is: He cut it up and destroyed the image (surah) which was in it. The narration's (of this incident) mentioned after this one [according to the arrangement/ordering of the ahaadith in *Saheeh Muslim*] state clearly that this carpet (namat) had in it images of "winged horses" [Muslim 3/1158, no. 5256]; and that it had in it an image (surah) [Muslim 3/1158, no. 5258].

The words "he tore it down" is used as an evidence for the changing of evil by force (by the hand); destroying the forbidden images; being angry upon witnessing evil; and for the permissibility of using pillows. And Allah Knows Best!

**An-Nawawee goes on to say:** As for his (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saying, when he pulled the carpet and tore it down: "Allah has not commanded us to clothe stones and clay . . .," they used it as an evidence that it is prohibited to cover walls, and to decorate the (walls of) houses with cloth [such as curtains or drapes]; and that it is a prohibition of the lesser degree "kiraahah tanzeeh" (that which is disliked and detestable) but not absolutely prohibited ("tahreem"). This is the correct opinion.

**Shaykh Abu al-Fath Nasr al-Maqdisee** of our companions (Shaafi'ee madh-hab) said that covering the walls is forbidden (haraam). But, there isn't anything in this hadith indicating *tahreem* (prohibition), because the reality of the expression "Allah, the Most High, didn't command us to do that (cover the walls)" is that it indicates that it is not *waajib* (obligatory), nor mandoob (encouraged or commendable). But, it does not indicate *tahreem* (prohibition). And Allah Knows Best!<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Muslim 3/1158, no. 5254; Abu Daawood 3/1155, no. 4141. [The wording here is from Abu Daawood. It has been declared authentic by Shaykh al-Albaanee in Saheeh Sunan Abu Daawood, 2/782, no. 3499/4153.]

<sup>117</sup> Sharh an-Nawawee of Saheeh Muslim 14/86, 87. Kitaab: al-libaas, Baab: Tahreem Tasweer Surah al-Hayawaan..

### **HADITH #18: Command To Cut The Head of Images**

حدثنا أبو صالح محبوب بن موسى حدثنا أبو إسحق الفزاري عن يونس بن أبي إسحق عن مجاهد قال حدثنا أبو هريرة قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أتاني جبريل عليه السلام فقال لي أتيتك البارحة فلم يمنعني أن أكون دخلت إلا أنه كان على الباب تماثيل وكان في البيت قرام ستر فيه تماثيل وكان في البيت كلب فمر برأس التمثال الذي في البيت يقطع فيصير كهيئة الشجرة ومر بالستر فليقطع فليجعل منه وسادتين منبوذتين توطآن ومر بالكلب فليخرج ففعل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وإذا الكلب لحسن أو حسين كان تحت نضد لهم فأمر به فأخرج قال أمو داومد والنضد شيء توضع عليه الثياب شبه السرير.

Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as saying:

Jibreel came to me and said: I came to you last night and was prevented from entering simply by the fact that there were statues (tamaatheel) at the door, and there was in the house a curtain with pictures (tamaatheel) on it, and there was a dog in the house. So, order that the head of the statue (timthaal) which is in the house be cut off so that it may become like the form of a tree; order that the curtain be cut up and made into two cushions spread out on which people walk; and order that the dog be put out. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) then did so. The dog belonged to al-Hasan or al-Husain (may Allah be pleased with them all) and was under their couch (nadam). So, he ordered it to be turned out, and it was done.<sup>118</sup>

In the narration of Imaam at-Tirmidhee, this hadith has the following wording:

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<sup>118</sup>Sunan Abu Daawood 3/1549, no. 4146. [Declared authentic (saheeh) by Shaykh al-Albaanee in his Saheeh Sunan Abu Daawood 2/783, no. 3504/4158].

" فلم يمضي أن أكون دخلت عليك البيت الذي كنت فيه إلا أنه كان في باب البيت تمثال الرجل وكان في البيت قرام ستر فيه تماثيل وكان في البيت كلب فمر برأس التمثال الذي بالباب فليقطع فليصير كهيئة الشجرة ومر بالستر فليقطع ويجعل منه وسادتين متبذتين يوطآن ومر بالكلب فيخرج ففعل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وكان ذلك الكلب جروا للحسن أو الحسين "

...nothing prevented me from entering the house which you were in except that there was in the doorway of the house a statue of men (timthaal ar-Rijaal) ... and that dog was a puppy belonging to al-Hasan or al-Husain (may Allah be pleased with them and their father)... .<sup>119</sup>

In the narration of Imaams an-Nasaa'ee and Ibn Hibbaan:

Jibreel (peace be upon him) asked permission to enter upon the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). So, he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said 'Enter.' He (Jibreel) said: 'How can I enter while there is a curtain (sitr) containing images (tasaaweer) in your house? If you insist on doing it [having the images], then cut off its head, or cut it up to make pillows/cushions, or make it into a carpet.'<sup>120</sup>

**Shaykh al-Albaanee, commenting** on the words: "... so, order that the head of the statue which is in the house be cut off so that it may become like the form of a tree ...," says: "This is clear (as a proof) that the cutting off of the head of the image (surah), i.e., the statue (at-timthaal al-mujassam) makes it as though it is not an image (anymore)."

<sup>119</sup>Sunan at-Tirmidhee, 5/106, no. 2806 [Arabic Edition of Shaykh Ahmad Shaakir]; Tuhfah al-Ahwadhee, 8/90, no. 2958. [At-Tirmidhee declared this hadith "hasan saheeh," and Shaykh al-Albaanee agreed with him in his book Saheeh Sunan at-Tirmidhee 2/366, no. 2970/2250].

<sup>120</sup>an-Nasaa'ee 8/607, no. 5380. Ibn Hibbaan also narrated it in his Saheeh. Al-Albaanee, in Ghaayah al-Maraam, pg. 91, no. 141, says: It is authentic...and this wording is not the (exact) wording of an-Nasaa'ee, for it varies slightly from his wording. [The narration of an-Nasaa'ee does not include the words: "cut it up to make pillows or cushions"].

He then goes on to say: “This is pertaining to the image which has body (statues) as we have said. But, as for the image printed on paper or embroidered on cloth, it is not sufficient to draw a line on the neck to make it appear as though it is cut off from the body. Nay. It is necessary to remove/efface the head. In this way the distinguishing features of an image are changed, and it becomes—in the words of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)—“like the form of a tree.”

Remember this! And do not be fooled by what is found in some fiqh (law) books, and those who have taken it as a fundamental (principle) from the later day scholars. Refer to *Aadaab az-Zifaaf* pgs 103-104, [third printing of the Arabic Edition] for more details.”<sup>121</sup>

**Al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar mentions** this narration of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him), in his commentary on the narration of an abbreviated version of the same incident as reported by *Al-Bukhaaree* (7/545, no. 843, Eng.) on the authority of Abdullah ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him and his father). After also mentioning the narrations of 'Aa'isha and Maimoonah (may Allah be pleased with them both), he quotes the above narration of Abu Daawood in full, and then adds: In the narration of An-Nasaa'ee (its wording is): "...Either cut their heads off or make from it a carpet that will be walked upon.”

**Al-Haafidh then comments:** In this hadith is a convincing proof (tarjeeh) for the opinion of those who hold that the image (surah) which the angels refrain from entering a place because of its presence in it—is that image which remains intact, in its original form, in a raised position, not being degraded. As for the image which is degraded; or the image which is not degraded, but its form has been changed: either by its being cut in half, or by its head being cut off—in this case, there is no reason for the angels to refrain from entering.

### ***Meaning of “Raqman Fi Thawb”***

**Al-Qurtubee said:** The apparent (meaning) of the hadith of Zaid ibn Khaalid, from Abu Talha (Hadith #7 above) is that angels do not refrain from entering a house which has in it images (surah) if the images are

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<sup>121</sup> as-Silsilah as-Saheehah 4/554, no. 1921.



**“raqman fi ath-thawb”** (designs/figures on a cloth). While, the apparent (meaning) of the hadith of 'Aa'isha (Hadith #5 above) is prevention (of their entry). The reconciliation (jam') between the two hadith is by understanding the hadith of 'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) to imply hatred or dislike (al-Kiraahah) [for entering the place where there are images]; while, understanding the hadith of Abu Talha<sup>122</sup> (may Allah be pleased with him) to imply general permissibility (mutlaq al-jawaaz), which does not negate the possibility of it being disliked.

**Here Ibn Hajar says:** This is a good reconciliation (al-jam'), but the reconciliation which is indicated by the hadith of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) is better.<sup>123</sup> And Allah, the Most High, Knows Best!<sup>124</sup>

***HADITH #19: A Neck From the Fire Will Be Entrusted to The Image-Maker, The Oppressor, and Those Who Call on Another God Besides Allah***

حدثنا عبد الله بن معاوية الجمحي حدثنا عبد العزيز بن مسلم عن الأعمش عن أبي صالح عن أبي هريرة قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم تخرج عنق من النار يوم القيامة لها عينان تبصران وأذنان تسمعان ولسان ينطق يقول إني وكلت بثلاثة بكل جبار عنيد وبكل من دعا مع الله إلهاً آخر وبالمصورين.

Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

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<sup>122</sup>The hadith of Abu Talha [#7] has been discussed in detail in the Essay of Shaykh Bin Baaz (Pgs. 62-64), and the Fatwa of Shaykh al-Uthaimin (Pg. 126).

<sup>123</sup>That the image which does not prevent the angels from entering is that image which is degraded or one whose head is cut off. It also shows that the original permission for POSSESSION of images was later abrogated by this command from Jibreel. [See Shaykh Bin Baaz Essay, Pg. 63].

<sup>124</sup>Fath al-Baaree 10/405-406, no. 5960.

A neck will come out from the Fire on the Day of Resurrection. It will have two eyes which see, two ears which hear, and a tongue which speaks. It will say: I have been entrusted with three: every rebellious oppressor, everyone who calls on another god along with Allah, and the IMAGE-MAKERS (al-musawwireen).<sup>125</sup>

**Al-Mubaarikfooree, in his explanation of the Sunan of at-Tirmidhee, says** (in reference to the meaning of *a neck will come out of the Fire*): “the meaning is that a part of the fire in the shape of a long neck will come out.”<sup>126</sup>

The seriousness of the nature of the evil practice of image making becomes very clear when one reflects on the fact that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has mentioned the **image-makers** along side the “rebellious oppressor” and the “one who calls on another god along with Allah.”

### **HADITH #20: Little Girls Playing With Dolls**

حدثنا محمد أحرنا أبو معاوية حدثنا هشام عن أبيه عن عائشة رضي اللهم عنها قالت كنت ألعب بالبنات عند النبي صلى اللهم عليه وسلم وكان لي صواحب يلعبن معي فكان رسول الله صلى اللهم عليه وسلم إذا دخل يتقمعن منه فيسربهن إلي فيلعبن معي

On the authority of ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her), who said:

I used to play with dolls in the presence of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). And I had girl-friends (playmates) who played along with me. They would hide (feeling shy) from him (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) whenever he entered.

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<sup>125</sup>Sunan at-Tirmidhee, 4/604, no. 2574 [Arabic Edition of Shaykh Ahmad Shaakir] At-Tirmidhee declared this hadith “hasan ghareeb saheeh,” and Shaykh al-Albaanee, in his book Saheeh Sunan at-Tirmidhee 2/320, no. 2083/2713, says Saheeh (authentic).

<sup>126</sup>Tuhfah al-Ahwadhee, 7/295, no. 2700.

But, he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) would send for them to join me and they would play with me.<sup>127</sup>

The last sentence of this hadith has been translated, in the book of Yusuf al-Qaradaawee *The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam*, as: "...he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was in fact very happy to see them with me." This mistaken translation is based on the mistake in the original Arabic text of the book.

**Shaykh al-Albaanee, commenting** on this mistake in the Arabic text of the book, says: The hadith is authentic, but with the words: "...fa-yusarribuhunna ilayya, fa-yal'abna ma'ee." This is the wording as it came in al-Bukhaaree, Ahmad, and also Muslim, except that the words: "...fa-yal'abna ma'ee" are not in Muslim.

As for the wording, in the book (of Yusuf al-Qaradaawee): "...yasurru limaji'ihinna" ("he was in fact very happy to see them with me")—it is a corruption/distortion (of the Arabic text), originally: "yusarribuhunna" ("he would send them or call them to me"). This is an old distortion which is also present in the second edition of the book [Arabic Printing, pg. 76].<sup>128</sup>

**Al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar said in *Fath al-Baaree*:**<sup>129</sup> This Hadith has been used as a proof for the permissibility of possessing (suwar—of) dolls and toys for the purpose of the little girls playing with them. This has been especially exempted from the general prohibition of possession of images (suwar).

**Al-Qaadee 'Iyaad has stated** this position with definiteness, and transmitted it as the position of the Majority (Jumhoor) of the Scholars; and that they declared permissible the selling of toys/dolls (al-lu'ab) for little girls, to train them from childhood for the household responsibilities and child-rearing.

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<sup>127</sup> al-Bukhaaree 8/95, no. 151; Muslim 4/1299, no. 5981.

<sup>128</sup> Ghaayah al-Maraam, pg. 82, no. 128.

<sup>129</sup> Fath al-Baaree 10/543 - 544, no. 6130, Kitaab: al-Adab (78), Baab: al-Inbisaat ilaa an-Naas (81).

**He (al-Qaadee ‘Iyaad) then says:** Some of the scholars hold that this permission is abrogated (mansookh). Ibn Battaal was inclined to this opinion. It was also narrated from Ibn Abi Zaid, from Maalik that he disliked (kariha) that a man would buy for his daughter images (suwar) [dolls]. From this ad-Daawodee considered stronger the opinion that this permission is abrogated.

Ibn Hibban entitled the chapter: “The Allowance (Ibaahah) Of Young Women<sup>130</sup> To Play With Toys (al-lu’ab) [dolls].”

An-Nasaa’ee entitled the chapter: “A Man’s Allowing His Wife To Play With Dolls (al-banaat).” He didn’t restrict it to childhood, and this (on his part) is questionable.

**Al-Bayhaquee<sup>131</sup>—after narrating this Hadith and its sources (takhreej)—said:** “The prohibition of possessing images (suwar) is firmly established. Therefore, the permission given to ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) in this matter should be understood to have been before the prohibition [and therefore abrogated].” Ibn al-Jawzee has firmly stood on this position.

**[Here al-Haafidh quotes from al-Mundharee:]** al-Mundharee said: If the toys (dolls) were like that which has body [like statues], then it would have to had been **before the prohibition**. Otherwise, it is possible to call that which does not have **body a lu’ab** (toy) [toys other than dolls].

**Al-Haleemee** has stated this position with certainty and confidence. He said: If they (the toys) were like the idols [three dimensional, like statues], then it would not have been permissible. Otherwise [if it was not three dimensional], then it was permissible.

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<sup>130</sup> *Perhaps the meaning here of “young women” is young girls who married at an early age, as was the case with ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her), whose marriage to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was contracted at the age of six and consummated at the age of nine. [al-Bukhaaree 7/65, no. 88].*

<sup>131</sup> *As-Sunan al-Kubraa 10/220, Kitaab: ash-Shahaadaat, Baab: Ma Jaa Fi al-Lu’ab bi-Banaat. [Edition of Ibn Turkamaanee].*

It has (also) been said: The (words of the) hadith “Kuntu al’ab bi-l-banaat” mean “al-lu’ab ma’a-l-banaat”—i.e., its meaning is: “playing with young girls” instead of “playing with dolls.” *Al-banaat* [which could mean *girls* or *dolls*] here having the meaning of *al-Jawaaree* (young girls); and the preposition “*baa*” [meaning: to play *using* the dolls] here having the meaning of the preposition “*ma’a*” [meaning to play *along with* the girls]. This has been quoted by Ibn Teen as being the statement of ad-Daawoodee, then he (Ibn Teen) refuted it.

**I (al-Haafidh) say:** He is further refuted by what is reported by Ibn Uyainah in *al-Jaami*, in the narration of Sa’eed Ibn Abdur-Rahmaan al-Makhzoomee from him, from Hishaam ibn ‘Urwah, concerning this very hadith: “The young girls (‘jawaaree’) used to come and play with them (i.e., the dolls) along with me.”

Also, the narration of Jareer, from Hishaam (containing the words of Aa’isha): “I used to play with *al-banaat* [which could mean girls or dolls] and they were *al-lu’ab* (toys/dolls).” It is reported by Abu ‘Awaanah and others.

**Al-Haafidh goes on to say:**<sup>132</sup> Abu Daawood and An-Nasaa’ee have narrated with another chain (wajh aakhar) from ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) that she said:

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) returned from the battle of Tabook or Khaibar....” Here he mentioned the Hadith about his (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) tearing down the curtain which she (may Allah be pleased with her) attached to her door. She (may Allah be pleased with her) said: “Then the side of the curtain which was over the dolls of ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) was uncovered. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: What is this, O ‘Aa’isha? She said: My dolls. She then said: then he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw amongst them a winged horse which was tied up. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: What is this? I said: A horse. He said: A horse with two wings? I said: Didn’t you hear that Sulaiman (Solomon, peace be

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<sup>132</sup>Fath al-Baaree 10/544, Kitaab (78), Baab (81), related to Hadith no. 6130.

upon him) had horses with wings? Then he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) laughed.<sup>133</sup>

This is clearly showing that the intended meaning of “al-lu’ab” is not humans (young girls). [It is clearly referring to dolls].

**Al-Khattaabee said:** From this hadith it is understood that playing with dolls (al-banaat) is not like the amusement from other images (suwar) concerning which the threat (wa’eed) of punishment is mentioned. The only reason why permission in this was given to ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) is because she had not, at that time, reached the age of puberty.

**[al-Haafidh says:]** I say: To say with certainty, [that she was not yet at the age of puberty] is questionable, though it might possibly be so. This, because ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) was a fourteen year old girl at the time of the battle of Khaibar, either exactly fourteen years old, or having just passed her fourteenth year [and entering into the fifteenth year], or approaching it (the fourteenth year).

As for her age at the time of the Battle of Tabook, she had by then definitely reached the age of puberty. Therefore, the strongest view is that of those who said: “It was in Khaibar” [i.e., when she was not yet at the age of puberty], and made reconciliation (jam’) [between the apparent contradictory rulings, of permissibility of dolls, in particular, and the prohibition of images, in general] with what al-Khattaabee said. [al-Khattaabee said that images are prohibited, except in the case of dolls for young girls.] This, because to reconcile (make jam’) is better than to assume the ahaadith to be in contradiction (at-ta’arud). [End of quotation from al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar.]<sup>134</sup>

This hadith is also reported by Abu Daawood (4931) and Ibn Maajah (1982) abridged, and al-Humaidee in his Musnad (260) with its full text.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> *Hadith #21 below.*

<sup>134</sup> *Fath al-Baaree 10/544.*

<sup>135</sup> *Ghaayah al-Maraam, pg. 82, no. 128.*

The text in Abu Daawood is as follows: “Narrated ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her):

I used to play with dolls (banaat). So, whenever the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) came to me and the young girls (friends) were with me, when he came in, they went out, and when he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) went out, they re-entered.<sup>136</sup>

Shaykh Muhammad Shams al-Haqq al-’Adheem Aabaadee, in his *sharh (explanation) of Sunan Abu Daawood*, says: “Chapter: Playing With Dolls (al-banaat).” *Al-banaat* is the plural of *bint* (girl), but the intended meaning here is *the dolls which children play with*.

He goes on to say: The words “When he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) came in, they went out,” meaning the young girls would go out because of shyness and awe (of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

It has been said that the meaning of (the words of) this hadith is: playing with *banaat*, i.e., *young girls* [instead of: playing with dolls]; and the Arabic particle “*baa*” here having the meaning of the particle “*ma’a*” (with).<sup>137</sup>

### **HADITH #21: Possession of Dolls By Little Girls**

حدثنا محمد بن عوف حدثنا سعيد بن أبي مریم أخبرنا يحيى بن أيوب قال حدثني عمارة بن غزوة أن محمد بن إبراهيم حدثه عن أبي سلمة بن عبد الرحمن عن عائشة رضي الله عنها قالت قدم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من غزوة تبوك أو خيبر وفي سهوفا ستر فهبت ريح فكشفت ناحية الستر عن بنات لعائشة لعب فقال ما هذا يا عائشة قالت

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<sup>136</sup>‘Awn al-Mabood Sharh Sunan Abu Daawood, 13/278, no. 4910. Shaykh al-*Albaanee* declared it to be authentic (saheeh) [Saheeh Sunan Abu Daawood, 3/931, no. 4122/4931].

<sup>137</sup>‘Awn al-Mabood’ 13/278, no. 4910.

بناي ورأى بينهما فرسا له جناحان من رقا ع فقال ما هذا الذي أرى وسطهن قالت فرس قال وما هذا الذي عليه قالت جناحان قال فرس له جناحان قالت أما سمعت أن لسليمان خيلا لها أجنحة قالت فضحك حتى رأيت نواجذه.

On the authority of ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) that she said:

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) returned from the battle of Tabook or Khaibar<sup>138</sup>. There was a curtain covering her ‘sahwah’ (chamber or small room in front of the house). The wind blew a side of the curtain and uncovered ‘Aa’isha’s dolls. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: What is this, O ‘Aa’isha? She said: My dolls. Then he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw amongst them a horse with two wings made from scraps of cloth. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: What is this which I see amongst them (amongst the dolls)? She said: A horse. He asked: What is upon it? She said: Two wings. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) asked (in astonishment): A horse with two wings? She said: Didn’t you hear that Sulaiman (Solomon, peace be upon him) had horses with wings? She said: Then he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) laughed until I saw his molar teeth.<sup>139</sup>

**Shaykh Muhammad Shams al-Haqq al-’Adheem Aabaadee**, in his *Sharh (explanation) of Sunan Abu Daawood*, says: This hadith and the one before it [Hadith #20] is used as an evidence of the permissibility of possession of dolls and toys for the purpose of little girls playing with them. This (permission) is a special exception from the general prohibition of possession of images (suwar). This position has been stated with

<sup>138</sup>The narrator of the hadith was in doubt about whether he as told “Tabook or Khaibar.”

<sup>139</sup>Abu Daawood 3/1373, no. 4914 [English Edition]; an-Nasaa’ee as-Sunan al-Kubraa, “Ishrat an-Nisaa’i” 1/75; al-Albaanee says the chain of narrators of an-Nasaa’ee is authentic (saheeh) [Aadaab az-Zifaaf, pg. 275, Arabic Edition 1409 A.H.]. As for the chain of narrators of Abu Daawood, al-Albaanee has also declared it to be authentic (saheeh) [Saheeh Sunan Abu Daawood 3/932, no. 4123/4932]. al-Albaanee also declared it to be authentic (saheeh) in Ghaayah al-Maraam, pg. 82, no. 129.



certainty by al-Qaadee 'Iyaad, and he has quoted it as the opinion of the *Jumhoor* (Majority of Scholars). He also said that the *Jumhoor* has allowed the sale of toys (dolls) for little girls, in order to train and prepare them from childhood for their household affairs and the raising of their children. He also said: Some of (the scholars) <sup>140</sup> held the opinion that this (permission) has been abrogated ....<sup>141</sup>

**Al-Bayhaqee,**<sup>142</sup> after narrating this hadith, says: Abu Daawood narrated it in the Sunan from Muhammad ibn 'Awf, from Sa'eed ibn Abi Maryam, and he said: "In this hadith (are the words): '...he (peace and blessings be upon him) returned from the Battle of Tabook or Khaibar.'" "

The prohibition of both two dimensional images (*tasaaweer*) and three dimensional images (*tamaatheel*) has been authentically reported from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), by way of many different chains of narrators.

Therefore, it is probable that the correct narration of Abu Salamah from Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) is: "...his (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) return from the Battle of **Khaibar**"; and that took place before the prohibition of *as-suwar* and *at-tamaatheel* (two dimensional and three dimensional images). Then, the prohibition of images came afterwards.

Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) was one of those who narrated the prohibition of Images from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He had become a Muslim in the time of Khaibar. Therefore, it would have been after Khaibar that he heard (the hadith prohibiting images).

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<sup>140</sup> See commentary of Hadith #20, pgs. 51-52 for mention of some of those who held this permission abrogated, like al-Bayhaqee, Ibn al-Jawzee and others.

<sup>141</sup> 'Awn al-Ma'bood, Sharh Sunan Abu Daawood, 13/279, no. 4911.

<sup>142</sup> As-Sunan al-Kubra ma'a al-Jawhar an-Naqee, 10/219-220, Kitaab: ash-Shahaadaat, Baab: Ma Jaa' Fi al-la'ab bi-l-banaat.

It is also mentioned in the hadith of Jaabir (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) commanded Umar Ibn al-Khattaab (may Allah be pleased with him), in the time of the Conquest of Makkah, while he was at “al-Bat-haa,” to go to the Ka’bah and to erase/remove (yamhoo) every image (surah) found in it. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not enter (the Ka’bah) until every image in it was removed.<sup>143</sup> Ash-Shaykh [Imaam al-Bayhaqee] said:

The time of the Conquest (of Makkah) was **after** Khaibar.<sup>144</sup>

Also of note is the fact that she (‘Aa’isha) was a young girl at the time when she was sent to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as his wife [nine years old]; and her toys (dolls) were with her.

It is authentically reported from az-Zuhree, from ‘Urwah, from ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) married her while she was at the age of seven [in some narrations, six]; she was sent to live with him (as his wife) when she was at the age of nine, and her toys/dolls (lu’ub) were with her; and he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) died while she was at the age of eighteen.

**Al-Bayhaqee mentions** another narration, from Abdur-Razzaaq, from Ma’mar from az-Zuhree, which as also narrated by Muslim in his Saheeh from Abd ibn Humaid, from Abdur-Razzaaq, and then says: There is nothing in any of the narrations indicating that she (‘Aa’isha) had attained the “maturity of a woman” though she was a “child in age,” at the time of her being sent as a wife (to the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

Therefore, it is possible that her occupation with her toys/dolls—and the Prophet’s (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) approval of her doing that—was up until she reached the age of puberty. And Allah Knows Best!

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<sup>143</sup> Abu Daawood 3/1156, no. 4144, and it is authentic. [Hadith no. 5, Shaykh Bin Baaz Essay, Pgs 59-60].

<sup>144</sup> This shows that the permission given to ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) was **BEFORE** the prohibition, and therefore abrogated. The applicable rule being: the later legislation is the “naasikh” (the one which abrogates), while the earlier legislation is the ‘mansookh’ (the one while is abrogated).

This is the way it was understood by Abu 'Ubaid, who said: We don't see there being any reason for that (permission to play with her dolls), except due to the fact that these toys are a source of amusement (lahw) for the children. So, if they were owned by adults, it would definitely have been detestable (makrooh).

**Al-Haleemee mentioned** that if it (the toy/doll) were made from wood, stone, brass (sufr) or metal (copper), in the shape of a human, complete with limbs like the idols (wathn), it would be obligatory to break it up. It would absolutely not be permitted for them (the young girls) to possess it.

On the other hand, if one of them (the young girls) takes a rag or piece of cloth and twists and turns it into the shape of a child and calls it a baby girl or a mother and plays with it—she is not prohibited from this.

He also mentioned some of the benefits from this, like cheerfulness of her heart, good rearing and training her to care for children.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> as-Sunan al-Kubraa, *al-Bayhaqee* [Edition of Ibn Turkumaanee] 10/ 219 - 220.

# SECTION TWO

## THREE CONTEMPORARY COMMENTARIES

### *A. The Beneficial Response Concerning The Islamic Ruling Of Image-Making (Shaykh 'Abdul-'Azeez ibn 'Abdullah ibn Baaz)*

Praise belongs to Allah Alone. And May Prayers and Peace be upon him (Muhammad) after whom there is no other prophet.

#### *To proceed:*

Certainly, many ahaadith<sup>146</sup> have come to us from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in the books of Hadith: as-Sihaah,<sup>147</sup> al-Masaaneed<sup>148</sup> and as-Sunan<sup>149</sup> pointing to the prohibition of image-making

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<sup>146</sup> ahaadith, plural of hadith: All that has been attributed to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), of his sayings, actions, and approvals; in addition to descriptions of his physical person and his character, as well as narrations about his life before and after his being missioned as a prophet..

<sup>147</sup> as-Sihaah, plural of as-Saheeh: A collection of hadith in which the collector made a condition that he would only include those hadith which he considered to be authentic. Examples of this type of collection are Saheeh al-Bukhaaree, Saheeh Muslim, as well as the Saheehs of Ibn Khuzaimah and Ibn Hibban.

<sup>148</sup> al-Masaaneed, plural of al-Musnad: A collection of hadith whose ahaadith are arranged according to the Sahaabah (companions of the Prophet), such that the ahaadith of each sahaabee are listed in a separate chapter under his name. Examples of this type of collection are the Musnad of Imam Ahmad, as well as those of Abu Daawood at-Tayaalisee and al-Bazaar.

<sup>149</sup> as-Sunan, plural of as-Sunnah: A collection of hadith dealing with the rules and laws (al-ahkaam). Its arrangement is according to the chapters of Fiqh, such as: purification, prayer, fasting, marriage and divorce, buying and selling, punishments, etc.

(tasweer) of everything which has a soul—without consideration as to whether it is human or otherwise. These ahaadith also call for the tearing apart of curtains which contain images (suwar), the command to efface these images (suwar); also the fact that the image makers (musawwiroon) are cursed, and make clear that they will be the most severely punished people on the Day of Resurrection.

Here I will mention for you some of the authentic ahaadith which have been narrated concerning this subject. I will also mention the sayings of some of the scholars concerning these ahaadith. I will also make clear the correct position in this issue, Allah Willing!

[Here the Shaykh mentions a number of ahaadith, most of which we have already mentioned in Chapter One of this book. Therefore, we will not repeat them all here.]

1. Al-Bukhaaree has reported, on the authority of Abu Juhaifah (may Allah be pleased with him), that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) forbade taking money from the sale of blood and dogs, as well as the earnings of a prostitute. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) also pronounced the **curse** of Allah upon the one who takes ribaa (interest), the one who gives it, the one who tattoos others, the one who gets tattooed and the **image-maker** (al-musawwir).<sup>150</sup>

2. At-Tirmidhee has reported in his book “al-Jaami” [the Sunan of at-Tirmidhee], on the authority of Jaabir (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) prohibited the **possession** of images (surah) in the house; he also prohibited the **making** of them.<sup>151</sup>

3. Muslim has reported, on the authority of Zaid ibn Khaalid, from Abu Talha (may Allah be pleased with him)—attributing it to the Prophet

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<sup>150</sup> al-Bukhaaree 7/546, no. 845.

<sup>151</sup> Sunan at-Tirmidhee 4/202, no. 1749 [Ahmad Shakir's Edition]; 2/149, no. 1430 [al-Albaanee's Saheeh Sunan at-Tirmidhee].

(peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that he said: The angels do not enter a house which has in it a dog or images (tamaatheel).<sup>152</sup>

4. Al-Bukhaaree has narrated in his book “As-Saheeh,” on the authority of Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both), from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that Jibreel (alayhi As-Salaam) said: Verily, we (angels) do not enter a house which has in it a dog or an image (surah). Muslim has reported (a hadith) similar to it, on the authority of ‘Aa’isha and Maimoonah (may Allah be pleased with them both).<sup>153</sup>

5. Abu Daawood has reported, with a good (jayyid) chain of narrators, on the authority of Jaabir (may Allah be pleased with him), that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) commanded Umar ibn al-Khattaab (may Allah be pleased with him) during the time of the conquest of Makkah, while he was at “al-Bat-haa,” to go to the Ka’bah and to remove (yamhoo) every image (surah) found in it. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not enter (the Ka’bah) until every image (surah) in it was removed.<sup>154</sup>

6. Abu Daawood at-Tayaalisee reported in his *Musnad*, on the authority of ‘Usaamah (may Allah be pleased with him), that he said: I entered upon the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) while he was in the Ka’bah and he had seen (in it) images (suwar). He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) asked for a pale of water, so I brought it to him. Then he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) began removing (erasing) the images and saying: “May the curse of Allah be

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<sup>152</sup> Muslim 3/1158, no. 5254.

<sup>153</sup> al-Bukhaaree 7/545, no. 843 [Its wording is: “...an image or a dog”]; Muslim 3/1157, no. 5246 [From ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her)] and no. 5248 [From Maimoonah (may Allah be pleased with her)].

<sup>154</sup> Abu Daawood 3/1156, no. 4144; al-Albaanee’s Saheeh Sunan Abu Daawood 2/783, no. 4156/3502; al-Bayhaqee 7/268. A similar hadith is reported by al-Bukhaaree 4/366, no. 571, on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father).

upon a people who make images of that which they are not able to create.” Al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar said: It’s chain of narrators is good (jayyid).<sup>155</sup>

7. ‘Umar ibn Shabbah [ibn Abu ‘Ubaidah, who died in the year 262 Hijrah] has reported, by the chain of narrators: ‘Abdur-Rahmaan ibn Mihraan, from ‘Umair, the mawlaa of Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with them both), from ‘Usaamah (may Allah be pleased with him), that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) entered the Ka’bah, then commanded me (to bring water). I then brought to him some water in a bucket. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) began to wet his thawb and beat the images (suwar) with it [to remove them], saying: “May Allah curse a people who make images of that which they did not —nor can they—create.”<sup>156</sup>

8. Al-Bukhaaree has reported, in his book *As-Saheeh*, on the authority of ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her), that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) never left in his house anything which has crucifixes (tasaaleeb) in it, without removing or effacing it. Al-Kashmayhannee reported it with the wording “images” (tasaaweer) [in place of crucifixes—tasaaleeb]. Al-Bukhaaree (raheemahu’llah) has entitled the heading for this hadith: “Chapter: Removal/Effacing of Images (suwar).” Then he narrated this hadith.<sup>157</sup>

9. In the Musnad [of Imam Ahmad] and the Sunan of an-Nasaa’ee, on the authority of ‘Ubaidu’llah ibn ‘Abdullah, that he entered upon Abu Talha al-’Ansaaree (may Allah be pleased with him) to visit him, and he found Sahl ibn Hunaif (may Allah be pleased with him) with him. Abu Talha (may Allah be pleased with him) ordered someone to remove a pillow which was under him. Sahl (may Allah be pleased with him) asked him: Why are you removing this? He said: It is because it has in it images (tasaaweer) and you already know what the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has said about that. He (Sahl) said:

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<sup>155</sup> Musnad Abu Daawood *at-Tayaalisee*, pg. 87, no. 623. *Al-Albaanee* said this hadith is authentic (Thaabit). See: *as-Saheehah* 2/731, no. 996.

<sup>156</sup> *Taareekh al-Madeenah By Umar Ibn Shabbah*.

<sup>157</sup> al-Bukhaaree 7/541, no. 836. See: *Fath al-Baaree* 10/398 - 399 for discussion of this hadith.

Didn't he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) say: "illa raqman fi thawb—except designs/inscriptions in a cloth?" He (Abu Talha) answered: Yes, he did say so. But, (removing it) is more pleasing to my soul. Its chain of narrators is good (jayyid). Also, at-Tirmidhee reported it with this wording, and said that it is a good and authentic hadith (hasan saheeh).<sup>158</sup>

He then goes on to say: There are still many ahaadith on this topic which we have not mentioned. In these ahaadith and those which are similar in meaning, there is a clear indication of the prohibition of image-making (tasweer) of everything which has a soul, and that it is one of the major sins (kabaa'ir adh-dhunoob) which carries with it the threat (wa'eed) of punishment in the Hell-Fire.

These ahaadith are general, including all types of image-making (tasweer), there being no difference whether the image (surah) has a shadow (three dimensional) or not; nor a difference whether the image (tasweer) is in a wall, on a curtain or shirt, drawn on a mirror, on paper or other than that.

This is so because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) didn't differentiate between that which cast a shadow (three dimensional objects) and that which does not; nor between that which is in a curtain or otherwise. On the contrary, he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) declared the curse (of Allah) upon the image-maker (al-musawwir);<sup>159</sup> informed us that the image-makers will be the most severely punished people on the day of Resurrection,<sup>160</sup> and that every image-maker will be in the Hell-Fire.<sup>161</sup> He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) declared this ruling to be general and all-inclusive, and did not make any exception.

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<sup>158</sup> Musnad Imaam Ahmad 3/486; *an-Nasaa'ee*, Kitaab az-Zinaa (48), Baab Tasweer (111) [*al-Albaanee's Saheeh Sunan an-Nasaa'ee* 3/1082, no. 4942]; at-Tirmidhee 4/202, no. 1750 [*Arabic Edition of Kamaal Yoosuf al-Hoot*]. *al-Albaanee* said: "Its chain of narrators is authentic according to the conditions of *al-Bukhaaree* and *Muslim*." See: *Ghaayah al-Maraam* pg. 83, no. 134.

<sup>159</sup> Hadith #9

<sup>160</sup> Hadith #13

<sup>161</sup> Hadith #14



The fact of this prohibition being general [including that which cast a shadow and that which does not] is supported by the hadith: When he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw the images (tawaaweer) in the curtain which was in the house of 'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her), he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) tore it up, and the color of his face changed (from anger), and then he said: "Surely, the most severely punished people on the Day of Resurrection will be those who try to imitate the creation of Allah."<sup>162</sup>

In one narration, when he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw the curtain, he said: "Verily, those who make these images (suwar) will be punished on the Day of Resurrection, and it will be said to them: Give life to what you have created."<sup>163</sup> These words, and those similar to them, are clear about the fact that the image-maker (al-musawwir) who makes images (suwar) in curtains and similar things, is included in the generality of the threat (wa'eed) [of punishment on the Day of Judgment].

As for his (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) statement "except designs/inscriptions in a cloth," in the hadith of Abu Talha and Sahl ibn Hunaif (may Allah be pleased with them both)<sup>164</sup>, this is an exception, i.e., these designs or inscriptions (raqman fi thawb) are not included under the ruling of the images (suwar) which prevent the **entry of the angels**. But it is not an exception from the ruling concerning the prohibition of the **making of images** (tasweer).

This is very clear from the actual wording of the hadith: "Verily, angels do not enter a house which has in it images (surah)"—illa raqman fi thawb ["except designs/inscriptions in a cloth"]<sup>165</sup>.

Here the intended meaning (of this exception) is if the designs (ar-raqm) are in a cloth or something similar, which is laid out on the floor and in a degraded position. This is like the pillow which is in a degraded/lowly

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<sup>162</sup> Hadith #4

<sup>163</sup> Hadith #1

<sup>164</sup> Hadith #8 and Hadith #7

<sup>165</sup> Hadith #7

position [sat upon or leaned upon] as has been pointed out in the hadith of ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) previously mentioned which mentions her cutting up the curtain and making one or two pillows from it.<sup>166</sup>

Also, the hadith of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) and in it the saying of Jibreel to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): “So, order that the head of the image (timthaal) which is in the house be cut off, so that it may become like the form of a tree; and order that the curtain be cut up and made into two pillows laid out, on which people walk ... The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) then did so....”<sup>167</sup>

It is not permissible to understand this exception as referring to the image in a cloth which is hanging up, nor that which is fixed to a door or wall or what is similar to that. This, because the ahaadith of ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) [Hadith #2, #3 and #4, Chapter One] are clear in their prohibition of that which is similar to this curtain [which is hanging up], and the necessity of its removal or its being torn up—the text of which has been previously mentioned.

Also, the hadith of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) [Hadith #18] is clear about the fact that curtains like this one (hanging up) prevent the entry of the angels unless it is laid out on the floor, or the head of the image (timthaal) in the curtain is cut off, so that it will be in the form or shape of a tree.

Know that his (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ahaadith do not contradict one another. On the contrary, they confirm the truthfulness of each other. So, whenever it is possible to show agreement or reconciliation between various ahaadith, in a manner which is suitable, without stretching their meanings, it becomes obligatory to do so.

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<sup>166</sup>Hadith #4

<sup>167</sup>Hadith #18

Making reconciliation (al-Jam')<sup>168</sup> between the ahaadith takes precedence over the other two methods of resolving apparent contradiction between proofs—the two other methods being At-Tarjeeh<sup>169</sup> and An-Naskh.<sup>170</sup> This is what has been agreed upon in the science of 'Usool al-Fiqh'<sup>171</sup> and the science of Mustalah al-Hadith.<sup>172</sup> [In the case of apparent contradictions between various evidences, the order which should be observed, is to first try to make reconciliation (jam'); if this is not possible, then abrogation (naskh) if the dates of the evidences are known; if not, then determination of the strongest evidence (tarjeeh).] Here it was possible to make reconciliation (al-Jam') between the ahaadith in the manner that we have mentioned. And for this, the Praise is due to Allah!

**Al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar** in his book *Fath al-Baaree* has given preference to reconciliation (al-Jam') between the various ahaadith in the manner that I have just mentioned. Then he mentioned that al-Khattaabee said: "the image (surah) which the angels refrain from entering a place because of its presence—is that image whose possession is forbidden, i.e., those images (suwar) which are of things which have a soul, and its head has not been cut off nor has it been placed in a degrading or disrespectful position."

**Al-Khattaabee (may Allah, the Most High, have mercy on him) has also said:** "The punishment for the image-maker (al-musawwir) is so

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<sup>168</sup> *al-Jam'*: The attempt to reconcile between two or more evidences, in an effort to clarify what might appear to be a contradiction.

<sup>169</sup> *at-Tarjeeh*: Determining which of two or more evidences is the strongest or more closely related to the issue in question, in the case where the variant evidences would lead to a different ruling.

<sup>170</sup> *an-Naskh*: Determining which of two or more evidences, in the same issue, is the latest or last to be legislated, and making the last of them to abrogate the earlier.

<sup>171</sup> *Usool al-Fiqh*: the science which deals with those fundamental principles and rules, which are the guidelines followed by the scholars to make legal (Fiqh) judgments in the specific matters of the life of a Muslim. The rules related to al-jam', an-Naskh, and at-Tarjeeh are studied in *Usool al-Fiqh*.

<sup>172</sup> *Mustalah al-Hadith*: the rules and principles related to determining whether or not a hadith is authentic; classification of the ahaadith into types, according to whether the chains of narration are complete or broken, etc.

severe because the images (suwar) were taken as something to be worshipped besides Allah; and because looking at them causes temptation (and arousal of sensual desires); and because some souls are inclined to them.”

**[Here Shaykh Bin Baaz quotes the statement of Imam an-Nawawee, beginning with the words: Imam an-Nawawee, in his *explanation (sharh) of Saheeh Muslim*, says:] Chapter: “The Prohibition Of Making Images Of Living Beings [Human Or Animal] And The Prohibition Of Possession Of That Which Has An Image In It Which Is Not Degraded By Its Being In A Carpet Or The Like Of It; And The Fact That The Angels (Peace Be Upon Them) Do Not Enter A House Which Has In It An Image Or A Dog.”**

Shaykh Bin Baaz quotes the statement of Imam an-Nawawee up to his words: “there is no difference in any part of this matter (of prohibition) between that which cast a shadow (three dimensional objects) and that which does not cast a shadow (two dimensional pictures, drawings, etc.)”

He then quotes the opinion that what is prohibited is only that which cast a shadow (such as statues) and shows that this opinion is incorrect, since the curtain which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) spoke against had images in it—no one doubts that it was blameworthy—and its images (surah) were not of the type which cast a shadow [i.e., not three dimensional].

[The full text of Imam an-Nawawee’s statement has already been quoted above (chapter one) in its entirety, thereby eliminating the need to repeat it here.]

**Al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar—after his mentioning a summary of these words of an-Nawawee—says:** I say: The hadith of ‘Alee (may Allah be pleased with him) which is reported by Ahmad,<sup>173</sup> supports the position that

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<sup>173</sup> *Musnad Imaam Ahmad*, 1/87, no. 97 (658). *Shaykh al-Albaanee* says: “...This *isnaad* (chain of narrators) is weak. The narrator - Abu al-Muwarrah or Abu Muhammad is ‘majhool’ (unknown; i.e., not certified as a reliable narrator), as stated by al-Haafidh, in ‘*ta’jeel al-manfa’ah*’ in a transmission from al-Husainee. I say: There is also ‘*idtiraaab*’ in it (the *isnaad*)—as he narrates it one time ‘*mursal*’ (broken chain, between the *taabi’ee* and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and another time he narrates it ‘*mawsool*’ (with a complete chain of narrators) mentioning ‘Alee (may Allah be pleased with him) in the chain.

the prohibition of making images is general, including that which cast a shadow [three dimensional objects like statues] as well as that which has no shadow [two dimensional images].

In it the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said: "...Anyone of you who goes to al-Madeenah, don't leave there any idol/statue (wathan) without breaking it up, nor any picture (surah) without effacing or obliterating it."

In one of its narrations, he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "...and whoever goes back to making any of these images, then he has disbelieved in what has been revealed to Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)."

**Shaykh Bin Baaz goes on to say:** Whoever gives thought to the preceding ahaadith, it will become clear to him that they point to or indicate the general, all-inclusive nature of the prohibition; as well as the absence of any distinction between that which cast a shadow and that which does not, as has already been made clear.

**If someone was to say:** It has preceded in the hadith of Zaid ibn Khaalid, from Abu Talha that Bisr ibn Sa'eed (the narrator from Zaid) had said: "... then Zaid became ill, so we visited him, and suddenly to our surprise, we found on his door a curtain having an image (surah) on it..."<sup>174</sup> On the surface, this might suggest that Zaid held the opinion of the permissibility of hanging up curtains which have images (suwar) in them.

**The answer to this is as follows:** The aforementioned ahaadith of 'Aa'isha<sup>175</sup> (may Allah be pleased with her), as well as other ahaadith of similar meaning indicate: the prohibition of hanging up curtains which

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*Both ways (mursal and mawsool) have been reported by Ahmad from (this narrator)." [Ghaayah al-Maraam pg. 92, no. 144]. Note: There is another narration of this hadith which is authentic (saheeh) reported by Imaam Muslim. Its wording does not include: "...don't leave any idol/statue (wathan) without breaking it up...". See: Hadith #10, Chapter One.*

<sup>174</sup> Hadith #7

<sup>175</sup> Ahaadith #2, #3 and #4

have images (suwar) in them; the obligation to tear them up; that these images prevent the entry of angels.

Hence, if any ahaadith are authentically narrated from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) it is not permissible for anyone to oppose them or contradict them, with the sayings or action of anyone, no matter who that person may be [scholar or otherwise]. In fact, it is obligatory for the believers to follow the authentic hadith, hold tightly to that which it indicates, and reject whatever opposes it, as Allah, the Most High, said:

وما آتاكم الرسول فخذوه وما نهاكم عنه فانتهوا

*So, whatsoever the Messenger (Muhammad) gives you, take it. And whatsoever he forbids you, abstain (from it). [al-Qur'aan 59:7]*

Allah, the Most High, also said:

قل أطيعوا الله وأطيعوا الرسول فإن تولوا فإنما عليه ما حمل وعليكم ما حملتم وإن  
تطيعوه تهتدوا وما على الرسول إلا البلاغ المبين

*Say: Obey Allah and obey the Messenger. But if you turn away (in rejection) he is only responsible for the duty placed on him (i.e., to convey Allah's message) and you for that placed on you. If you obey him, you shall be on the right guidance. The Messenger's duty is only to convey (the message) in a clear way. [al-Qur'aan 24:54]*

Allah (subhaanahu)<sup>176</sup> has, in this verse, guaranteed the Guidance for whoever obeys the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

Allah, the Most High, also said:

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<sup>176</sup> *Subnaanahu: He is far removed from any imperfection and free of what they have described Him with, such as having a "son", that He is "three," or that He is "poor," etc. All of these things have been ascribed to Him falsely.*

فليحذر الذين يخالفون عن أمره أن تصيبهم فتنة أو يصيبهم عذاب أليم

*And let those who oppose his (Muhammad's) commandments beware lest some fitnah (disbelief, trials, afflictions) befall them, or a painful torment be inflicted on them. [al-Qur'aan 24:63]*

Perhaps Zaid (may Allah be pleased with him) wasn't aware of the image (surah) which was in that curtain. Or, maybe he knew about it, but considered it permissible because the ahaadith, which indicate the prohibition of hanging up curtains which have images in them, didn't reach him. Hence, he based his opinion on the apparent/surface meaning of the statement of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): "illa raqman fi thawb"—except designs/inscriptions in a cloth. Therefore, he would be excused (from blame) due to his not having knowledge of these ahaadith.

As for the one who knows about the authentic ahaadith, which point to the prohibition of putting up curtains containing images (suwar), there is no excuse for him opposing or contradicting these ahaadith.

Whenever someone contradicts clear authentic ahaadith in order to follow his whims/desires, or in consequence of his blind following of some man—this necessarily brings upon him the anger and hatred of his Lord. It would be feared for such a person (that he will be afflicted with) the sickness of deviation (zaigh) of the heart, and falling into temptation (fitnah), as Allah (subhaanahu) has warned of this in His statement:

فليحذر الذين يخالفون عن أمره أن تصيبهم فتنة أو يصيبهم عذاب أليم

*And let those who oppose his (Muhammad's) commandments beware lest some fitnah (disbelief, trials, afflictions) befall them, or a painful torment be inflicted on them. [al-Qur'aan 24:63].*

Also, the saying of Allah, the Most High:

فلما نراغوا أنراغ الله قلوبهم والله لا يهدي القوم الفاسقين

*So, when they turned away (from the path of Allah), Allah turned their hearts away (from the right path). [al-Qur'aan 61:5]*

Also, the saying of Allah, the Most High:

فَأَعْتَبَهُمْ نَفَاقًا فِي قُلُوبِهِم

*...So He punished them by putting hypocrisy into their hearts....  
[al-Qur'aan 9:77]*

It has preceded, in the hadith of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him)<sup>177</sup> that which indicates that an image (surah) is permissible to be kept in the house if and when its head is cut off. This is so because it would then be in the form or shape of a tree. This, then, shows that making images (tasweer) of trees and the like of them—of those things which have no soul—is permissible. The clear mention of this has preceded in the narration of the two Shaykhs (al-Bukhaaree and Muslim) on the authority of Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father).<sup>178</sup>

This hadith is also a proof that the cutting off of other than the head, from the image—such as cutting off the lower half, or what's similar to that—is not sufficient, and doesn't make it permissible to be used (kept in the house). Nor does it remove that which prevents the entry of angels. This, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) commanded that the images (suwar) be torn up and obliterated/effaced; and informed us that these images actually prevent the angels from entering, with the exception of those images which are in a degraded condition or if its head has been cut off.

Whoever claims any “*musawwigh*” (excusing-factor) which makes permissible the keeping of images (surah) in one's house—other than these two matters—then he is obligated to produce the evidence (for such) from the Book of Allah or the Sunnah of His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

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<sup>177</sup> Hadith #18

<sup>178</sup> Hadith #14



This is because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) informed us that if the head of the image (surah) is cut off, the remainder will be like the form of a tree. And this shows that the factor (which makes allowable its retention in one's house) is its being transformed from the shape or form of those things which have a soul, to a form similar to inanimate things (i.e., that which has no soul).

If the lower part of the image has been cut off, and the head remains—it would not have attained this stature (of being like something inanimate), due to the face remaining—and in the face is (the) beauty and uniqueness of creation and form not found in the rest of the body. Therefore, it is not permissible with whoever has understood the intended meaning from Allah and His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), to make comparison (qiyaas) between it (the head) and anything else besides it [i.e., it is not possible to compare the cutting off of any other part of the body to the cutting off of the head, and then saying that the image is now permissible to be kept, as when the head is cut off].<sup>179</sup>

From this it becomes clear to the seeker of Truth that making images of the head and that which follows it, from the body of any living thing [human, animal, bird or fish, etc.] is subject to the same ruling—i.e., it is prohibited, and it prevents the entry of angels.

This is because the preceding authentic ahaadith include it (the head with what follows it of the body). It is not the right of anyone to make exceptions from this all inclusive (general) ruling, except in that which the Law Maker has made an exception.

There is no difference in this matter between the image which has body (al-mujassadah) and that which does not; nor between that which is woven (al-manqooshah) in a curtain or on paper and what is similar to them; there is also no difference between the images (suwar) of humans or other than them, of that which possess a soul; nor between the images of kings and

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<sup>179</sup> *al-Ismaa'eelee reported in his Mu'jam, on the authority of Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with them both) that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "The image (surah) is actually the head (ra's). Therefore, if the head is cut off, then there is no image (surah)," Shaykh al-Albaanee has declared it to be authentic (saheeh) in Saheeh al-Jaami' as-Sagheer, 2/718 no. 3864. See also, as-Silsilah as-Saheehah 4/554 no. 1921. This hadith is also reported by al-Bayhaqee in Sunan al-Kubraa, 7/270 [Edition of Ibn Turkamaanee].*

scholars or others. On the contrary, the degree of the prohibition, of the images of the kings, scholars and those like them of the people who are exalted (in the view of men) is even more severe.

This is because the fitnah (trial and temptation) caused by them is greater. And putting up/posting their images (suwar) in sitting places and its likeness, and exalting them, is one of the greatest means leading to shirk (associating something with Allah in worship) and the worship of the so-called ‘lords’ whose images are made, instead of worshipping Allah. This is what happened to the people of Nooh (alayhi as-Salaam). And this has previously been hinted at in the words of al-Khattaabee [this chapter, pg. 64].

In the Days of Ignorance (al-Jaahiliyyah, before the establishment of al-Islam amongst the Arabs) images (suwar) were many in number, and were exalted and worshipped instead of Allah, until Allah raised his Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) broke the idols (asnaam) and effaced the images (suwar), and Allah removed through him “ash-shirk” (the offering of any form of worship to other than Allah) and the means leading to it.

Therefore, everyone who **makes an image** (surah) and posts it up, or **exalts** it, has become similar to the disbelievers in their actions, and opened for the people the door to “shirk” and the means leading to it.

Additionally, whoever **orders** the making of images (tasweer) or is **pleased with it**, then the ruling for him is the same as the ruling for the **one who actually does it** —in terms of him also having done something prohibited and being equally entitled to the threat (wa’eed) of punishment.

The reason for this is that the prohibition of **ordering** disobedience or **being pleased** with it, has been established in the Qur’aan, Sunnah and saying of the scholars, just as the **actual doing of it** has been prohibited.

Allah, the Most High, said:

وقد نزل عليكم في الكتاب أن إذا سمعتم آيات الله يكفر بها ويستهنأ بها فلا  
تعدوا معهم حتى يخوضوا في حديث غيره إنكم إذا مثلهم إن الله جامع المنافقين  
والكافرين في جهنم جميعاً

*And it has already been revealed to you in the Book (this Qur'aan) that when you hear the Verses of Allah being denied and mocked at, then sit not with them, until they engage in a talk other than that; (but if you stayed with them) certainly in that case YOU WOULD BE LIKE THEM. Surely, Allah will collect the hypocrites and disbelievers all together in Hell. [al-Qur'aan 4:140]*

This verse indicates that whoever is in the presence of evil (munkar) and does not turn away from those who are doing it, then he is like them.

Therefore, if the one who **remains silent** about evil—while he has the ability to reject it or speak against it or to separate from it—is like the **doer of evil**, then the one who **commands the evil** or is **pleased with it**, would be even more sinful and in a much more evil condition than he who **remains silent**. He (the one who commands the evil) is also more deserving to be considered like the one who **actually does it**.

The evidence containing this meaning are many, and can be found, by whoever seeks them in their respective places [i.e., in the books dealing with this subject].

Based on what we have mentioned in this “jawaab” (answer) from ahaadith and the sayings of the scholars, it should be clear to one who desires the Truth, that the widespread engaging of the people in image-making (tasweer) of that which possess souls—in books, magazines, newspapers and letters [and post cards]—is an obvious mistake and open disobedience (sin).

It is obligatory on everyone who would advise himself to be warned from it; and as well he should warn his brothers from it, after sincere repentance from that which has passed.

It should also be clear to him from the evidences previously mentioned, that it is not permissible for these images (tasaaweer), which we have referred to here, to remain intact. On the contrary, it is incumbent to cut off their heads, or to efface and obliterate them, unless it is in a carpet or something similar of those things which are walked upon and degraded. In that case, there is no harm in leaving them intact. The evidence for this has preceded in the ahaadith of ‘Aa’isha<sup>180</sup> (may Allah be pleased with her) and Abu Hurairah<sup>181</sup> (may Allah be pleased with him).

As for the toys which have body (three dimensional) in the shape of that which has a soul—the scholars have differed about the permissibility or non-permissibility of their possession by little girls.

It has been affirmed in the two books of Saheeh (al-Bukhaaree and Muslim), from ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) who said: “I used to play with dolls in the presence of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). And I had girl-friends (playmates) who played along with me. They would hide (feeling shy) from him (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) whenever he entered. But, he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) would call them to join and play with me.”<sup>182</sup>

**Al-Haafidh ibn Hajar said in *Fath al-Baaree*:**<sup>183</sup> This hadith has been used as a proof for the permissibility of possessing (suwar of) dolls and toys, for the purpose of the little girls playing with them. This has been especially exempted from the general prohibition of possession of images (suwar).

Al-Qaadee ‘Iyaad has stated this position with certainty/confidence, and transmitted it as the position of the Majority (Jumhoor) of the Scholars; and that they declared permissible the selling of toys/dolls (al-lu’ab) for little

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<sup>180</sup> Hadith #3 and #4.

<sup>181</sup> Hadith #18

<sup>182</sup> Hadith #20

<sup>183</sup> Fath al-Baaree 10/544, no. 6130, Baab: al-Inbisaat ilaa an-Naas, Kitaab: al-Adab.

girls, to train them from childhood for the household responsibilities and child-rearing.

**He (al-Qaadee ‘Iyaad) then says:** Some of the scholars hold that this permission is abrogated (mansookh). **Ibn Battaal** was inclined to this opinion. It was also narrated from Ibn Abi Zaid, from **Maalik** that he disliked (kariha) that a man would buy for his daughter images (suwar) [dolls]. From this **Ad-Daawoodee** considered stronger the opinion that this permission is abrogated.

Ibn Hibban entitled the chapter: “The Allowance (Ibaahah) Of Young Women<sup>184</sup> To Play With Toys (Al-Lu’ab) [Dolls].”

An-Nasaa’ee entitled the chapter: “A Man’s Allowing His Wife To Play With Dolls (Al-Banaat).” He didn’t restrict it to childhood, and this (on his part) is questionable.

**Al-Bayhaqee—after narrating this hadith and its sources (takhreej)—said:** “The prohibition of possessing images (suwar) is firmly established. Therefore, the permission given to ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) in this matter should be understood to have been before the prohibition [and therefore abrogated].<sup>185</sup> **Ibn Al-Jawzee** has firmly stood on this position.

**Al-Haafidh goes on to say:** Abu Daawood and An-Nasaa’ee have narrated with another chain (wajh aakhar) from ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) that she said: “The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) returned from the battle of Tabook or Khaibar ....” Here he mentioned the hadith about his (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) tearing down the curtain which she (may Allah be pleased with her) attached to her door. She (may Allah be pleased with her) said: “Then the side of the curtain which was over the

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<sup>184</sup> Perhaps the meaning here of “young women” is young girls who married at an early age, as was the case with ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her), whose marriage to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was contracted at the age of six and consummated at the age of nine.

<sup>185</sup> as-Sunan al-Kubraa 10/220, Kitaab ash-Shahaadaat, *Baab: Ma Jaa Fi al-la’ab bi-l-banaat [Edition of Ibn Turkamaanee].*

dolls of ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) was uncovered [by the wind]. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: What is this, O ‘Aa’isha? She said: My dolls. She then said: then he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw amongst them a winged horse which was tied up. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: What is this? I said: A horse. He said: A horse with two wings? I said: Didn’t you hear that Sulaiman (peace be upon him) had horses with wings? Then he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) laughed.”<sup>186</sup>

**Al-Khattaabee said:** From this hadith it is understood that playing with dolls (al-banaat) is not like the amusement from other images (suwar) concerning which the threat (wa’eed) of punishment is mentioned. The only reason why permission in this was given to ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) is because she had not, at that time, reached the age of puberty.

**[al-Haafidh says] I say:** To say with certainty, (that she was not yet at the age of puberty) is questionable, though it might possibly be so. This, because ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) was a fourteen year old girl at the time of the battle of Khaibar, either exactly fourteen years old, or having just passed her fourteenth year [and entering into the fifteenth] or approaching it [her fourteenth year].

As for her age at the time of the Battle of Tabook, she had by then definitely reached the age of puberty. Therefore, the strongest view is that of those who said: “It was in Khaibar” [i.e., when she was not yet at the age of puberty], and made reconciliation (jam’) [between the apparent contradictory rulings, of permissibility of dolls, in particular, and the prohibition of images, in general] with what al-Khattaabee said. [al-Khattaabee said that images are prohibited, except in the case of dolls for young girls.] This, because to reconcile (make jam’) is better than to assume the ahaadith to be in contradiction (at-ta’arud). Here Shaykh Bin Baaz concludes his quotation from al-Haafidh, saying: The above is the essence or sum and substance of the words of al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar.

**He then goes on to say:** If you have understood what al-Haafidh (raheemahu’llah ta’aala) has mentioned, then the safest position (al-ahwat) is to leave off possession of the dolls (al-lu’ab al-musawwarah) (three

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<sup>186</sup> Hadith #21, Chapter One.

dimensional). This, because its lawfulness is doubtful due to the possibility that the approval of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) for 'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) to possess the three dimensional dolls (al-lu'ab al-musawwarah), was before the order came to obliterate and efface images (suwar). In which case, the permission would be considered abrogated (mansookh) by the ahaadith containing the command to efface and remove all images (suwar), except those whose head is cut off, or those which are dishonored or degraded, as it has been stated/opinionated by al-Bayhaqee and Ibn al-Jawzee, and inclined towards by Ibn Battaal.

There is also the possibility that this permission could be a special exemption from the general prohibition, as the Majority (Jumhoor) of the Scholars have held, for the benefit of training (the girls to be mothers). Also, because **playing** with dolls is a form or manner of degradation (to the image) and showing that it is not something honored.

Nonetheless, with the **possibilities** mentioned, along with the **doubt** about its permissibility, the safer position is to leave it alone and let the training of girls be with toys other than those which have body (three dimensional) in order to be completely free from the difference of opinion and doubt about the ruling concerning the dolls which have body (as-suwar al-mujassadah).

In this way, you would in fact be practicing the saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): "Leave that which makes you doubt for that which does not make you doubt." At-Tirmidhee,<sup>187</sup> An-Nasaa'ee.<sup>188</sup> At-Tirmidhee said it is a good and authentic hadith (hasan saheeh).

Also, his (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saying, in the hadith of an-Nu'maan ibn Basheer (may Allah be pleased with him), which has been narrated in the two Saheeh Books (al-Bukhaaree and Muslim): "that which is lawful is clear, and that which is unlawful is clear. And between them are certain unclear matters which not many people know. Thus he

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<sup>187</sup> Sunan at-Tirmidhee no. 2518; Saheeh Sunan at-Tirmidhee 2/309, no. 2045.

[Forty Hadith of an-Nawawee, no. 11].

<sup>188</sup> Sunan an-Nasaa'ee 8/732, no. 5726; Saheeh al-Jaami' 1/637, no. 3377.

who avoids the doubtful matters clears himself in regard to his religion and his honor. But he who falls into the doubtful matters, falls into that which is unlawful. This is like the shepherd who grazes his flock near a sanctuary, all but grazing therein. Truly every king has a sanctuary and truly Allah's sanctuary is His prohibitions ...."<sup>189</sup>

And Allah Knows Best! And May the Blessings and Peace of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad and his family.

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<sup>189</sup> al-Bukhaaree 1/44, no. 49, 3/151, no. 267; Muslim 3/840, no. 3882.



***B. The Islamic Ruling Concerning Pictures And Statues (By Shaykh Muhammad Jameel Zainoo, Teacher, Daar al-Hadith al-Khairiyyah, Makkah al-Mukarramah)***

Islam came to call all people to the worship of Allah Alone, and to leave the worshipping of anything other than Allah, such as saints and righteous men which are personified (or given visual expression) in idols, statues and images.

This call is ancient, since the time when Allah first sent Messengers to guide the people. Allah, the Most High, says:

ولقد بعثنا في كل أمة رسولا أن اعبدوا الله واجتنبوا الطاغوت

*And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a messenger (proclaiming): worship Allah (alone), and avoid (or keep away from) taaghoot<sup>190</sup> (all false deities etc., i.e., do not worship taaghoots instead of Allah)... [al-Qur'aan 16:36]*

The mention of these statues is found in the chapter of the Qur'aan entitled Nooh (Noah, peace be upon him), and the strongest evidence that these were representations of righteous men is what was mentioned by Al-Bukhaaree, on the authority of Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) about the saying of Allah:

وقالوا لا تذرنا آلهتنا ولا تذرنا ودا ولا سواعا ولا يعوق ويعوق ونسرا وقد أضلوا

كثيرا

*And they have said: You shall not leave your gods, nor shall you leave WADD, nor SUWAAA', nor YAGHOOTH, nor YA'OOQ, nor NASR (names of the idols), and indeed they have led many astray.... [al-Qur'aan 71:23,24]*

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<sup>190</sup> Taaghoot: everything which is worshipped besides Allah, while the one being worshipped is pleased with the fact of his being worshipped.

**He [Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father)] said:** The names (of the idols) formerly belonged to some pious men of the people of Nooh (Noah, peace be upon him), and when they died Shaytaan inspired their people to erect idols at the places where they used to sit, and to call those idols by their names. The people did so, but the idols were not worshipped until those people (who initiated them) had died and the origin of the idols had become obscure, whereupon people began worshipping them.” [Al-Bukhaaree 6/414, no. 442] In the narration of Abu Dharr (may Allah be pleased with him) the wording is: “the knowledge of the images, in particular, became obscure.” [Fath al-Baaree 6/73]

This story informs us that the reason for the worship of other than Allah was the statues which personified the leaders. Many people think that these statues and especially pictures have become lawful because of the absence of those who worship these statues in our times.<sup>191</sup> This assumption is rejected for a number of reasons:

1. The worship of pictures and statues is still taking place in our time. The pictures of ‘Isaa (peace be upon him) and his mother Maryam are being worshipped besides Allah in the churches, and even the cross is bowed to!! There are also artistic posters of ‘Isaa (peace be upon him) and Maryam being sold at the highest prices and hung in homes to be worshipped and exalted.
2. Statues of the leaders in the materialistically advanced and spiritually backward countries have hats removed for them and backs are bent (bowing) to them when passed by. Examples of this are the statues of George Washington in America, Napoleon in France, Lenin and Stalin in Russia, as well as other statues which have been placed in the streets for those who pass by to bow to.

The idea of erecting statues has moved on to some of the Arab countries. They have imitated the disbelievers and set up statues in their streets, and statues are still being erected in many of the Arab and Islamic states.

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<sup>191</sup>For further discussion of this argument, see the chapter : Refutation of Yusuf al-Qaradaawee by Saalih al-Fawzaan, Pgs 102-105.

It is incumbent that the money being used to build statues be used instead for building masjids, schools, hospitals, and for charitable organizations. This will be more advantageous and its benefit increased and, at the same time, there is no harm in putting these institutions or charity funds in the names of the leaders.

3. After the passing of time, these statues in the Arab and Islamic states will have heads bowed to them [i.e., the people will bow their heads to them] and be glorified and worshipped, just as it happened in Europe, Turkey and other countries. The people of Nooh (peace be upon him) preceded them all in this. They erected statues of their leaders, then glorified and worshipped them.

4. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ordered Alee ibn Abu Taalib (may Allah be pleased with him), saying: "... do not leave an image (timthaal) without obliterating it, nor a high grave without leveling it (near to the ground)." This hadith has been reported by Habeeb with the same chain of transmitters, and he said: "... (do not leave) an image (surah) without obliterating it." [*Muslim* 2/459, no. 2115; *Musnad Ahmad* 1/87 no. 97 (658).]

### **The Harms And Detriments Of Pictures And Statues**

Islam has not prohibited anything except that it is harmful to the religion, character, wealth or other things [such as the intellect or the body]. Therefore, the real Muslim is the one who submits to the command of Allah and His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) even if he does not know the reason or cause (for Allah's command).<sup>192</sup>

The harms of pictures and statues are many, the most important of which are:

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<sup>192</sup> *Imam az-Zuhree, who died in the year 124 A.H., was a scholar of Fiqh, Haafiz (of Hadith), a taabi'ee (student of the sahaabah) and one of the greatest Imams of the people of al-Madeenah. He said: "It is for Allah to make the explanation (bayaan), upon the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) the delivery of the message (balaagh), and upon us to simply submit willingly (tasleem)."*

1. In the **Religion and Beliefs** (Aqeedah): We have already seen that pictures and statues have corrupted the beliefs of many people. The Christians worshipped the image of ‘Isaa (peace be upon him), Maryam and the crucifix. Europe and Russia worshipped the statues of their leaders and bowed their heads to them out of respect and glorification. Even some of the Arab and Islamic states have joined them and erected statues of their leaders.

Also, some of the sufi groups put images/photographs of their religious leaders in front of them while in prayer seeking from them al-Khushoo’ (a state of devotion, submission and humility). They envision their leaders while performing dhikr (remembrance) of Allah instead of being sufficed with the fact that Allah is observing and viewing them. They also hang up images of their leaders for glorification of them or to seek blessings from them (by the act of hanging up the images).

Images of the singers and entertainers who are loved by their followers, are also hung up as an act of glorification and deification by their fans. This is what caused one of the Arab broadcasters to address the soldiers in the 1967 War against the Jews, saying: O soldiers, march forth, for verily with you are the entertainers “so and so” and “such and such,” and he was mentioning them by their names. This was in place of saying to them: march forward, for Allah is with you—by granting you His help, aid, and support.

The result of the war was utter defeat, because Allah left them on their own, and the entertainers—male and female—didn’t benefit them at all. On the contrary, they were the reason for the defeat. If only the Arabs would take a lesson from this defeat and return to Allah so that He may grant them victory.

2. As for the harms of pictures and statues in corrupting the **character and morals** of the youth—males and females—say what you will, there is no end to it. You see the streets and houses filled with images of the entertainers—male and female—immorally and indecently dressed, causing the youth to passionately love them, thus resulting in acts of indecency and immorality, openly and secretly. They don’t even reflect on the religion,

the colonized lands (Palestine), al-Quds (Jerusalem and Masjid al-Aqsa), nor honor, nor jihaad<sup>193</sup>.

Images have now become very widespread, especially the images of immoral women—to the extent that they are on shoe boxes, in magazines, newspapers, books and television, and particularly the police and sex television programs.

There are also cartoon caricatures which express the alteration of Allah's natural creation. Allah did not create a long nose, big ears or protruding eyes—as they draw them. On the contrary, Allah has created the human being in the best of forms.<sup>194</sup>

3. As for the harmful effects of pictures and statues on the **wealth**—it is obvious and not in need of proofs. Thousands and millions are spent on these statues for the pleasure of Shaytaan. Many people buy statues of horses, camels, elephants or humans and put them in their houses. Some hang up images of their families or their dead father. The amount of wealth they spend on these things, if spent on the poor as a charity on behalf of the one who died, would benefit the deceased.

What's more repulsive than that is for a man to be photographed with his wife on their wedding night, then he hangs it up in his house for everyone to see her. It is as though his wife is not for him alone, but for everyone.

### **Are Pictures (Unlawful) Like Statues?**

Some people claim that the prohibition (of images) is limited to the statues which were widespread in the days of Jaahiliyyah<sup>195</sup>, and that this prohibition does not include pictures. This is a very strange position to

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<sup>193</sup> *al-Jihaad: expending of wealth and person in fighting for the sake of Allah, against the disbelievers with the objective of making the religion of Allah foremost in the earth.*

<sup>194</sup> "Verily We have created man in the best stature (mold)." *al-Qur'aan at-Teen* 95:4

<sup>195</sup> *Jaahiliyyah: the days of ignorance, before the coming of Islam to the Arabs. They were ignorant of the divine way of life, as revealed in the Qur'aan.*

take. It is as though they have not read the clear texts which prohibit pictures.

Consider the following text:

1. Narrated from 'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her): that she purchased a cushion with images on it. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) came and stood at the door but did not enter. I said to him: I repent to Allah for what I have done. He said: what is this cushion (for)? I said: It is for you to sit on and recline on. He said: The **makers** of these images will be punished on the day of Resurrection, and it will be said to them: "make alive (put a soul into) what you have created." Moreover, the **angels do not enter** a house where there are images.<sup>196</sup>

2. The saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): "The most severely punished people on the day of Resurrection would be those who try to imitate Allah in the act of creation [i.e., artists and image-makers who try to make resemblances of Allah's creation]."<sup>197</sup>

3. Narrated by Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father): "When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw images (suwar) in the Ka'bah, he did not enter it until he ordered them to be erased and it was done."<sup>198</sup>

4. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) prohibited the POSSESSION of images (suwar) in ones home, and he prohibited the MAKING of images.<sup>199</sup>

### The Pictures And Statues Which Are Tolerated

1. The picture and statue of a tree, the stars and sun and moon, the mountains, a stone, sea, river and beautiful sights/scenes or sacred places

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<sup>196</sup> al-Bukhaaree 7/543, no. 84; see also Hadith #5, Chapter One.

<sup>197</sup> Hadith #4.

<sup>198</sup> al-Bukhaaree 4/366, no. 571.

<sup>199</sup> at-Tirmidhee *Ahmad Shakir's Edition*: 4/202, no. 1749; *al-Albaanee's Edition*: 2/149, no. 1430. And it is an authentic (saheeh) hadith.

such as images of the Ka'bah, al-Madeenah and Masjid al-Aqsa, and the rest of the masjids, with the condition that (these images) are free of humans or animals.

The evidence for this is the statement of Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father): "...if you must do it, then make pictures of trees and things which have no soul."<sup>200</sup>

2. The image which is in one's identification card, passport, driver's license, and other things which fall under the category of necessity. These are tolerated out of necessity.

3. Photographs of criminals like murderers, thieves and others, in order to facilitate their capture and just punishment. Also, those things which are needed for science, such as medical science, according to some scholars.

4. Girls are allowed dolls which are made at home from cloth, in the shape of a little baby—which she clothes, bathes and puts to sleep. This is for the purpose of teaching and training her how to raise children when she becomes a mother.<sup>201</sup>

The evidence for this is the statement of 'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her): "I used to play with dolls in the presence of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and my friends also used to play with me...."<sup>202</sup>

It is not permissible to buy the foreign dolls (from the disbelievers) for children, especially those which are naked and indecently dressed. From this the girls will learn [indecently], imitate them and corrupt the society. Additionally, purchasing these dolls means spending money with the foreign [disbeliever] and Jewish countries.

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<sup>200</sup> Hadith #14

<sup>201</sup> For a full discussion of this matter, refer to Al-Jawaab al-Mufeed Fi Hukm at-Tasweer', pgs 72-74.

<sup>202</sup> Hadith #20

5. Images are also tolerated if the head is cut off, because the essence of the picture is the head.<sup>203</sup> If the head is cut off the soul does not remain, and it then becomes like the lifeless (inanimate) things. Just as Jibreel (the angel) said to the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): "...order that the head of the image (which is in the house) be cut off, so that it may become like the form of a tree; and order that the curtain<sup>204</sup> be cut up and made into two cushions spread out on which people may walk..."<sup>205</sup> [*Abu Daawood* 3/1157, no. 4146; declared authentic(saheeh) by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *Saheeh Sunan Abu Daawood*, 2/783, no. 3504/4158; see Hadith #18 of chapter one.]

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<sup>203</sup> *On the authority of Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) who said the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "The image (surah) is actually the head (ra's). Therefore, if the head is cut off, then there is no image (surah)." Declared authentic by Shaykh al-Albaanee in Saheeh al-Jaami' as-Sagheer, 2/718, no. 3864; as-Silsilah as-Saheehah 4/554, no. 1921.*

<sup>204</sup> *The curtain was cut because of the images on it.*

<sup>205</sup> *Hadith #18*



### ***C. The Islamic Ruling Concerning Photography, Conversation With Shaykh Naasiruddeen Al-Albaanee***

... This issue is related to a previous research of ours. Many of the scholars of (the people of) Sunnah today hold the view that the image made by a camera is not the same as the image made by hand.

As for me, I am of those people who say that this differentiation between the picture made by hand and the picture made by camera is a contemporary literalist (dhaahiree) view—i.e., inflexible thinking which has become a trial for those who differentiate between the picture made by hand and that made by camera.

But, what shall we do? Shall we say that these people are astray and have gone outside of the Qur'aan and Sunnah because they have differentiated between the picture made by hand and that which is made by camera, while that which is made by camera is still a picture made by hand. So, let them leave the camera to make a picture by itself. You will not be able to take a picture of anything except by using your hand.

It is a necessity for the photographer to direct the camera towards that which he wants to photograph. In the end, it is necessary for him to press or squeeze the button to snap the shot. Therefore, this is also a picture made by hand.

I have already said to some of those who have deviated from the correct position in the issue—as we see it—I said: You differentiate between this picture and that one, and say this one is forbidden (haraam) because it is made by hand—by pencil or pen or paint—and this is lawful (halaal) because it was made by camera, and they are exactly the same.

There are those who are called *artists*, as they claim to be. One of them may begin to produce a statue/idol (sanam) and may take days or perhaps months. Now it is possible, by just the push of a button and there will be a number of these statues reproduced. They will come out one after another, complete perfect statues.

I said to him: What is your view of this? Is this permissible? He said: It is not permissible. I said: But, this was not made by hand. It was made by a machine or instrument. So, he was stumped, unable to respond.

What is the intention of all this? We are still not able to say that these people are astray. But, we only say: perhaps he made ijtihaad (he struggled to find the truth) and missed the mark; that is as long as he remains with us, following the Qur'aan and Sunnah. As for those who may state clearly that they are not seeking the judgment from the Qur'aan and Sunnah, but are instead following the position of their Imam or Shaykh or something like that—then, these have clearly went out from the Qur'aan and Sunnah.<sup>206</sup>

How did the camera reach this state (in its development), so that just by pressing a button a picture comes out in one minute? How did it reach this level? By dreams! or by work? It reached this level by (the work of) the **hand**. So, this is why I said: contemporary literalist (dhahiree).

I didn't want to get into details in this issue because that which we mentioned was only in passing, since the original question wasn't about this matter. But, if you want to go into detail, then I would say: This is like the saying of some of the literalist (who say): 'the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) prohibited anyone to urinate in stagnant water. It is prohibited to urinate in it directly. But, if someone urinated in a vessel, then poured the urine from that vessel into the water—this is permissible.'

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<sup>206</sup> *Those who refuse to follow the Qur'aan and Sunnah are only following the ways of the disbelievers and pagans of the past whom Allah spoke about in the Qur'aan. Allah, the Most High, said: "[Say (O Muhammad) to these idolaters (pagan Arabs) of your folk:] Follow what has been sent down unto you from your Lord [the Qur'aan and the Prophet Muhammad's "Sunnah"], and follow not any 'AWLIYAA' [protectors and helpers, etc. who order you to associate partners in worship with Allah], besides Him (Allah). Little do you remember!]" [al-A'raaf: verse 3].*

*Allah, the Most High, also said: "When it is said to them: Follow what Allah has sent down they say: Nay! We shall follow what we found our FATHERS following. (Would they do that!) Even though their fathers did not understand anything nor were they guided?" [al-Baqarah: verse 170].*

Why? Because it is not considered, linguistically from the literal expression of the hadith, that he urinated in stagnant water. He urinated in an empty vessel. Therefore, it is not considered [by the literalist] that he urinated in stagnant water. So, if he urinated in an empty vessel, then poured this urine from the vessel which was empty and then became filled with urine—if he pours this urine in stagnant water, then the literalist say this is permissible.

I am amazed by the intellect of a man, a respected scholar, who knows the principles, the fundamentals and the branches (of fiqh) saying something like this. What is the difference between one who urinated directly (in the water) and one who urinated indirectly (in the vessel)? What is the difference between the one who urinates in a pond whose water is called *maa' as-samaa'* from the rain. They say this is not permissible, because it is stagnant water....

What is the difference between this and if we connect to this river, this pure water, a tube or a pipe-line. Then the urine goes through the pipe-line until it reaches the water. What is the difference between the two? This is just stagnant thinking. This is a form of the same thing; except this is contemporary, and that is from a time that has passed.

Just as we used to think that the *Mu'tazilah*<sup>207</sup> were gone, that their affair and their deviation was all gone; suddenly we see them coming out today, but with other names.

We used to think that the *Khawaarij*<sup>208</sup> were also finished. Then suddenly here they are again, but in the name of the Qur'aan and Sunnah. And so it is!

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<sup>207</sup> *al-Mu'tazilah: a deviant sect who held--among other false beliefs--that a Muslim is in a state between Islam and disbelief (baina manzilatain) if he commits a major sin, such as drinking alcohol, dealing in interest (riba), fornication and adultery, or making images (pictures or statues), etc. As for his position in the hereafter, they believe that he will remain eternally in the Hell-Fire, which is essentially the same as the belief of the Khawaarij.*

<sup>208</sup> *al-Khawaarij: another deviant sect who declare a Muslim to be a disbeliever (kaafir), and say that he will be punished in the Hell-Fire eternally for the commission of a major sin.*

In the issue of the camera, it is necessary that we should not be unmindful. First of all, it was created and designed by the hand; and not by one hand, but by so many hands. And how many people have worked to improve it until it reached its present stage.

You should have seen the camera in the early days, when it was necessary to develop the picture by soaking it in different solutions, and work with it until the image became visible. Now, nothing remains except to squeeze the button and the picture comes out showing the person as he is exactly.

But, why did we look at the **means**<sup>209</sup> (camera) and not look at the **goal** (picture)? The picture (for example) made by hand, of a naked woman, and the one made by a camera, of a naked woman—what is the difference between the harm of this one and that one?

There is no difference at all! So, what inflexible intellect and stagnant thinking it is to say that this picture is forbidden because it was made by pencil or pen or paint, but as for this one, it was made by camera, (so it's not forbidden). As long as the effect is the same, i.e., the corruption and harm from these two pictures is the same.

[Here someone asked, what is the difference between the still photograph and the motion pictures on television. Is there any difference between the two?]

### **Shaykh al-Albaanee responds:**

We don't see any difference between the two. The important thing is that we believe that Allah has not made anything forbidden except because of what is in it of harm. This harm could be apparent and obvious to some of the people, and it could be hidden from some of the people. By this we mean that it is incumbent for the Muslims to submit to the Islamic judgment, whether the wisdom of it is apparent to him or hidden from him.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>209</sup>The rule which applies to this case, in *Usool al-Fiqh*, is that "the **means** falls under the same ruling as the **goal**." So, if the **goal** is something forbidden (*haraam*), then the **MEANS** to it also becomes forbidden (*haraam*).

<sup>210</sup> See: *Saying of Imam Az-Zuhree* note 171.

Pictures have been forbidden! So (one might ask) why have pictures been forbidden? The reason has been clearly mentioned in some of the hadith. It is because of *mudaahaat li-khalqi-llah* (the attempt by some people to imitate the creation of Allah, to make something like Allah's creation). And this is what you have just previously hinted at.

Some of the scholars have mentioned another reason (for the prohibition of images), and that is that it was the cause of misguidance and corruption of some of the previous nations. So, we are able to say: Verily, the prohibition of images has two causes or reasons.

The first is because of the *mudaahaat li-khalqi-llah*. The second is because of what is called *sadd adh-dharee'ah* (closing the ways or means to something harmful), since this picture might one day be the cause of some people deviating from at-Tawheed (the worship of Allah Alone).

Allah has mentioned this in the Qur'aan in the history of Nooh (Noah, peace be upon him) and his people who said to him, when he invited them to the worship of Allah Alone:

وقالوا لا تذرنا آلهتنا ولا تذرنا ودا ولا سواعا ولا يغوث ويعوق ونسرا وقد أضلوا

كثيرا

*And they have said: you shall not leave your gods, nor shall you leave WADD, nor SUWAAA', nor YAGHOOTH, nor YA'OOQ, nor NASR (names of the idols), and indeed they have led many astray .... [Nooh 71:23, 24]*

See the saying of Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father), as narrated in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree<sup>211</sup> and the tafseer of Ibn Jareer<sup>212</sup> and others besides them, that these five were righteous servants of

<sup>211</sup> al-Bukhaaree 6/414, 415 no. 442.

<sup>212</sup> Ibn Jareer: *Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn Jareer at-Tabaree; Imaam of the scholars of Tafseer. He died in the year 310 A.H. His book of tafseer is entitled Jaami' al-Bayaan Fi Ta'weel al-Qur'aan. See: 12/254, no. 35027.*

Allah. Then, the accursed Shaytaan came to their people and made (their actions) fair-seeming to them.

The first thing he made fair-seeming to them was their deviation from the path that they were on previously, to not bury these five men in the cemetery where they used to bury their dead. Instead, they should bury them among their homes. Shaytaan made this evil act seem good to them to lead them off the straight path. He never comes with anything until he makes it appear good in the minds of the people whom he wants to lead astray....

As they say today when justifying the erection of statues in the Main Square: [This is] so that the people would be reminded, when they pass by these statues, of their heroes whose persons the statues represented. The people would wish to be like them. In this way Shaytaan suggested to them to put their graves amongst their houses, so that they would be reminded of them and their righteous deeds, and make them the focus of their attention.

Then a generation passed, and the second generation came, so he suggested to them that these graves, if rain and floods came, might carry away the graves—so take them to a place of honor and make statues of them. In this way Shaytaan takes the people little by little and leads them to evil in such a way that they don't notice it. The same way that it is said in some countries there are people who walk with fire under their feet and they don't feel anything.<sup>213</sup>

So, what is the difference [between the two pictures, one made by the hand and the other made by the camera] from the perspective of *al-mudaahaat li* (the attempt to imitate Allah's creation)—which is the first cause of the prohibition of images that is mentioned in the text of the hadith<sup>214</sup>—and from the perspective that images are prohibited because of what is called *sadd adh-dharee'ah* (closing the ways and means to evil or harm)?

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<sup>213</sup> *Just as these people walk on fire and don't feel any pain or the heat of the fire, so also it is that Shaytaan (la'natu-llah alayhi - Allah's curse be upon him) causes the people to fall into sin, shirk and innovation, and they don't even realize it.*

<sup>214</sup> al-Bukhaaree 6/414, no. 442.

The picture which is harmful—whether its harm is to someone’s character (from immoral pictures) as was just mentioned; or the picture from which we fear someone may be exalted in the way that only Allah should be exalted—there is no difference between whether it was made by hand or by camera.

But, some people feel that in the camera there is no “mudaahaatan li.” But, I say the “mudaahaatan” (imitation) is more so. That is because, if you brought an expert artist, and put someone in front of him, and he draws everything that his sight can see—however strong his sight might be, there might still be a strand of hair that he doesn’t see with his eye. So that will escape him, and not appear in his picture.

As for the photograph, nothing at all escapes it. It captures the person in the same way that Allah formed him, exactly as Allah created him. So, how can it be said, about this camera which is made and operated by **hand**, that there is no mudaahaatan li . No, the camera is much more so!

The proof is that you find some pictures of some of the rulers and kings—Hussain here—for example, and other than him; it is possible that the cloth which the picture is painted on is twelve (12) feet, very high [ while he is a small man].

So, if you looked at the picture, the photograph, you will find a big difference between this picture made by a camera and that which is made by paint on cloth. Which of them is more detailed and exact? That which is made by camera, or that which is made by paint and brush? Subhaan Allah!<sup>215</sup> Here the “mudaahaatan” (imitation) is more.

Therefore, the camera and the making of pictures by it is more dangerous than making pictures by hand. Especially since the camera can produce a number of pictures in a matter of moments, while the artist may spend day and night to produce one picture.

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<sup>215</sup> *Subhaan Allah: Here it is used to express wonder at the thinking of those who differentiate between hand-made pictures and those made by camera. It is a term normally used as a means of expressing the greatness, glory and perfection of Allah, in contrast to the imperfection of the human being. It means: Allah is free of any defect or imperfection attributed to Him!*

[Someone here asked: If someone looks in the mirror and his image is reflected in the mirror, and he looks at that image—is this considered “mudaahaatan li” (an attempt to imitate Allah’s creation)?]

**Shaykh al-Albaanee responds:**

No, and may Allah bless you.<sup>216</sup> But, we will say that if that image was **captured** and given **permanent form** (like on film), then it would have become a picture. As for this image in the mirror, I know that the scholars of the Muslims used to look at themselves in the mirror and arrange their hair.<sup>217</sup> So, this is a case of incorrect comparison (qiyaas ma’a-l-faariq—comparing something with that which is not similar to it). This image (in the mirror) is not **permanent**.

[Here someone began to compare the image in the mirror to television and video.]

**Shaykh al-Albaanee responds:**

...You were saying what is the difference between the reflection in the mirror and television or video. We say the difference is very much. We say to you now: stand in the mirror; come now and give me the image which you saw in the mirror. You are not able to do so. But, if it was given permanent form, it would become like a video and be forbidden. The harm comes from it having **permanent form**, not from that which has no permanence.

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<sup>216</sup> “Baaraka-llahu feek.”

<sup>217</sup> *The supplication which is often mentioned in books of supplication, to be said when looking in the mirror: “Allahumma kamaa hassanta khalqee fa-hassin khuluqee--O Allah! Just as You have made my physical form good, so also make my character good” — It’s wording has been authentically reported in the Musnad of Ahmad 6/68 and 165; but the narrations which mention that it was to be said specifically when looking in the mirror are not authentic. Therefore, it should not be said that this supplication is legislated when one is looking in the mirror. Instead, it may be said at any time. [Irwaa’ al-Ghaleel 1/113 -116, no. 74.]*



# SECTION THREE

## CLARIFICATION OF MISTAKES

### *A. Refutation Of Shaykh Yusuf Al-Qaradaawee Regarding The Issue Of Image-Making (By Shaykh Saalih ibn Fawzaan al-Fawzaan)*<sup>218</sup>

Shaykh Saalih begins by saying: The author (Yusuf al-Qaradaawee)<sup>219</sup> presented his research on the subject of image-making (tasweer) from page 106-120, and has made many mistakes which must be uncovered and clarified. The mistakes are as follows:

#### **MISTAKE #1:**

His division of image-making (tasweer) into the **forbidden**, which includes “at-tamaatheel” (statues or that which is three dimensional); the **undesirable/hated** thing which does not reach the level of being outright forbidden (makrooh kiraahah tanzeeh), which consists of that which is engraved (al-manqoosh) and that which is drawn (al-marsoom) on paper, posters and walls; and the **permissible** (mubaah), which includes photography (at-tasweer al-footooghraafee).

This division is false/baseless, and refuted by the authentic evidences which are reported concerning the prohibition of **the act** of image-making as well as the general/unrestricted prohibition of **the use** of images; this being

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<sup>218</sup>*The following quotations are taken from the book of Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan entitled: AL I'LAAM BI-NAQD KITAAB AL-HALAL WA 'L-HARAAM, from the chapter regarding the mistakes of Yusuf al-Qaradaawee in the issue of image-making, pgs. 42 - 53.*

<sup>219</sup>*Whenever Shaykh Saalih says: “the author” he is referring to Yusuf al-Qaradaawee.*

without consideration as to whether they are statues or not, nor consideration as to whether they are engravings or photography.

Therefore, whoever claims such a division or classification [of the different types of images] as the author (al-Qaradaawee) has done, must bring forth the evidence for such claim.

**Here we shall relate some of the sayings of the leading scholars (al-A'immah) concerning this matter:**

**Al-'Allaamah Ibn Al-Qayyim**, in his book *A'laam al-Muwaqqi'een* [4/403], when he mentioned the major sins, said: "one of them is image-making of any living being, without there being any difference as to whether it cast a shadow (three dimensional object) or not."

**An-Nawawee**, in the *explanation of Saheeh Muslim* [14/81], after having mentioned the prohibition of images, said: There is no difference in any part of this matter (regarding the prohibition) between that which cast a shadow and that which does not cast a shadow [two dimensional pictures, drawings, etc.].

This is a summary of our position (madh-hab) in this issue. And what is similar to this in meaning is the opinion of the Majority of Scholars (al-Jumhoor) from amongst the sahaabah (companions), the taabi'een (students of the sahaabah), and those after them. It is also the position (madh-hab) of ath-Thawree, Maalik, Abu Haneefah, and others besides them.

Some of the Salaf (righteous predecessors) said that what is prohibited is only that which cast a shadow [three dimensional objects, like statues], and there is no harm in the images (suwar) which do not cast a shadow [two dimensional images on a plane surface, such as paintings and drawings].

This is a false/baseless (baatil)<sup>220</sup> position. Verily, the curtain which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) spoke against the

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<sup>220</sup>Shaykh Saalih notes here: *The statement of al-Qaradaawee, that al-Haafidh (in Fath al-Baaree) criticized this statement of an-Nawawee by saying: This opinion [of al-Qaasim ibn Muhammad] which an-Nawawee has called baseless (baatil) "is reported from al-Qaasim ibn Muhammad with an authentic chain of narrators; and that he (al-Qaasim) was one of the scholars of Fiqh of al-Madeenah, and one*

images in it—and no one doubts that it was blameworthy—its images did not cast a shadow [i.e., it was not three dimensional]. This, in addition to the rest of the ahaadith which are general and inclusive of every type of image [two and three dimensional].

**Al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar**, in *Fath al-Baaree*, after having mentioned a summary of the above statement of an-Nawawee, said: I say: The hadith of Alee (may Allah be pleased with him) which is reported by Ahmad, supports the position that the prohibition of making images is general, including that which cast a shadow, as well as that which has no shadow.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said: "...anyone of you who goes to al-Madeenah, don't leave there any idol/statue (wathan) without breaking it up, nor any image/picture (surah) without effacing/obliterating it." In one of its narrations, it says: "...and whoever goes back to making any of these (images), then he has disbelieved in what has been revealed to Muhammad."<sup>221</sup>

**Al-Haafidh also said**, in *Fath al-Baaree* [10/403], while discussing the hadith of 'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her): "...the makers of these images will be punished (severely) on the Day of Resurrection..."<sup>222</sup>. It is also understood from this hadith that there is no difference in the prohibition of images—whether it is an image that cast a shadow [three dimensional, solid figures] or that which has no shadow [two dimensional images on a plane surface]. Also, there is no difference between whether it is a painting (mad-hoonah), engraving (manqooshah), carving (manqoorah), or something woven (mansoojah)....

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*of the best people of his time--this saying of al-Qadaawee is rejected for two reasons: (1) al-Haafidh has supported this statement of an-Nawawee, as we have transmitted it from him on this very page which is in front of you [see statement of al-Haafidh ibn Hajar on the following page]; (2) And even if this opinion of al-Qaasim ibn Muhammad is authentically reported from him--while it is in contradiction to the HADITH of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)--know that everything which conflicts with the HADITH is rejected (and returned) to the one who said it, no matter who he may be.*

<sup>221</sup>Fath al-Baaree 10/396 - 398; [see: commentary of Hadith #10, Chapter One].

<sup>222</sup>See: Hadith #5, Chapter One

**Ash-Shawkaanee**, in *Nail al-Awtaar* [2/108]—while discussing the hadith of Ibn ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him and his father): “...those who make these images will be punished on the Day of Resurrection...”,<sup>223</sup> and the hadith of Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father): “...Every image-maker (musawwir) will be in the Hell-fire ...”<sup>224</sup>—he said: “these two hadith indicate that image-making (at-tasweer) is one of the most severe of those things which have been forbidden.

This, because of the threat of punishment in the Fire, for the one who engages in it; and because EVERY image-maker is of the people of the Hell-Fire; and because of the narration’s in other ahaadith of the curse upon the image-makers.<sup>225</sup> And that (curse) would not be upon someone except as a result of the commission of a forbidden act which is of the worse type....”

**Ash-Shawkaanee goes on to say:** The apparent meaning of his (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saying: “every image-maker,” and his (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saying: “...Because of every image that he has made...,” is that there is no difference between that image which is imprinted in cloth and that image which has an independent body [three dimensional]. This is supported by the generality (ta’meem) of the prohibition in the preceding hadith of ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her)<sup>226</sup>.

**Ash-Shawkaanee goes on to mention other ahaadith similar in meaning, and then comments:** “These ahaadith are conclusive and definitive in showing that there is no distinction between those images which are printed (matboo’) [two dimensional] and those which have independent (mustaqil) form [three dimensional]. This is so because the noun *surah* (image) is truly applicable to all types [three dimensional as well as two dimensional images], since it’s meaning—as found in the books specializing in Arabic language—is *ash-shakl*, i.e., that which has shape

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<sup>223</sup> See: *Hadith #1, Chapter One*

<sup>224</sup> See: *Hadith #14, Chapter One*

<sup>225</sup> See: *Hadith #9, Chapter One*.

<sup>226</sup> See: *Hadith #4 and #5, Chapter One*.

or form; and this definition is also applicable to those images, which are printed on cloth, having shape or form.”

**Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan here summarizes:** Therefore, it can be concluded that the ahaadith and sayings of the scholars which we have mentioned here, prove the falsity of the claim of the author: that there is no authentic texts, which are free from what might contradict it, indicating the unlawfulness of images printed/engraved in cloth or carpets or on walls; or that which is drawn on posters.

At the same time, these evidences also show the falsehood of the claim of the permissibility (ibaahah) of photography. This is because photography falls even more so into the category of *al-mudaahaat* (imitation of the creation of Allah) than does the images which are engraved (al-manqooshah) or drawn (al-marsoomah). For this reason, the prohibition of photography is even more justified.

**Shaykh Saalih here comments:**<sup>227</sup> What is truly amazing about him (al-Qaradaawee) is that he limits the prohibition to ‘at-tamaatheel’ (three dimensional objects), while using as his evidence those ahaadith which indicate the general, all-inclusive (mutlaq) prohibition of images—including statues or other than statues, drawings or photography.

**Shaykh Mustafaa Al-Hamaamee**, in the book *An-Nahdah al-Islaahiyyah* [pgs. 264-265] says: I want to declare with total confidence and certainty that image-making (at-tasweer) using the camera is exactly like image-making done by hand. Hence, it is unlawful for a believer to use it (the camera) for image-making, just as it is unlawful for him to allow anyone to use the camera to take his picture. This is so because by allowing this, he has actually helped in the commission of a terribly unlawful act (muharram ghaleez).

There is absolutely no truth to the opinion of one of the contemporary scholars who declared the permissibility (ibaahah) of image-making by means of the camera. His proof is that what is considered *image-making* is only that which is done by hand; and that the **hand** plays no role in the image-making done by means of the camera. Therefore, it is not forbidden.

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<sup>227</sup> *This comment was not originally in the text of the book; it was a footnote, which has been transferred to the main text.*

This [thinking or line of argument] <sup>228</sup> is, in my view, comparable to the one who lets loose a wild lion which then kills some people; or the one who opens an electrical power line, which results in the death of everyone who passes by it; or the one who places poison in some food, which results in the death of everyone who ate from that food. Then, if someone accuses him of murder, he says: I did not kill anyone. It was the **poison** and the **electric current** and the **lion** which actually did the killing.

He then follows this argument with another, saying: killing is not actually considered to be killing unless it is done by means of the **hand**, and I have not stretched forth my hands against those murdered people. So, how can their killing be attributed to me?<sup>229</sup>

The reply to such an argument is that **kill**ing is the act of causing the soul to leave the body—by any of the ‘means of killing’ (wasaa’il al-qatl); and of the ‘means of killing’ is **poison**, **electricity**, and a **wild lion**. Therefore, the sin of the killing is upon the one who opened the way to these **means**, even if he did not actually stretch forth his ‘hand’ (to participate directly in the act).

In the same way, what is actually meant by image-making is “Eijaad” (producing or bringing into existence) the image. And the harm of it is totally in the image (itself).

Our leader, the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not become angry<sup>230</sup> except because of the **presence** of images; nor did he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) inform us that

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<sup>228</sup> See: “Discussion With Shaykh al-Albaanee”, Pgs. 82-84

<sup>229</sup> *This is like the saying of the people: Images are not considered to be forbidden unless they are made by means of the “hand.” What would they say about those graphic and mechanical drawing toys like “sketch and draw,” which only require the turning of knobs to make images? Is this considered to be an image and hence forbidden? So also, the camera only requires the adjustment of certain light settings and distance settings, while some cameras only require the pressing of a button. Can we say the “hand” has no role to play in these images, and they are therefore permissible?*

<sup>230</sup> See: Hadith #5

angels do not enter houses which have images in them except by reason of the **presence** of images. Nor did he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) distinguish between one image and another.

On the contrary, he made the **reason** for the prohibition, **the image** itself if it resembles *hayawaan* (any living creature); for it (*hayawaan*) is that which possess life. So, it will be said to the one who makes something resembling the living creature: “Give **life** to it, meaning: breathe into it the soul (*rooh*). As for trees and other types of inanimate things and plants—this will not be said regarding them.

Additionally, I [Shaykh Mustafaa al-Hamaamee] say: That which the camera photographs does not appear, nor is it considered to be an “image” by simply turning the camera towards the object to be photographed—such that it could be said that the human being plays no role in the process.

On the contrary, the photographer—after turning the camera towards the object to be photographed—has many other things to do to bring about the appearance of the picture.

If not for these procedures (being followed through with), the picture would not appear, nor would it be considered an **image**. Moreover, there are special conditions that must be met at the time of directing the camera, which if not fulfilled, it would not be possible for there to be a picture.

So, how is someone not to be considered an “image-maker” in the case of one who uses the camera to make his images? How is the problem of image-making eliminated or considered non-relevant for him?...

**Shaykh Mustafaa al-Hamaamee goes on to say:** I could go so far as to say the punishment of the image-maker who uses the camera will be more than the one who makes images with his hand, multiplied many times over.

In fact, that which the camera photographs in one moment might take the image-maker who uses his hand years to produce, and the punishment is according to the amount of images produced. The reason for this, as you know, is that the production of one image is one major sin. So, if he joins to that the making of a second image, it will be a second sin. In this way, the more the images that are produced or increased (in number), the more the image-maker’s sins are increased. As you know, the punishment will be

according to the sins; the more they are increased, the more severe the punishment and longer its duration.

You also know that the image-makers who use the camera produce tens of thousands of images in one instance of directing the camera. An example of this is those who are always presented the opportunity to take pictures at the mass gatherings, like the “Eid” holiday gatherings and the gatherings of those who accompany the funeral processions of famous and well known people. This is especially so if they are experts. They and those image-makers like them—only Allah knows what punishment they deserve, due to the great amount of images they are making.”

**Here Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan comments:** So, it is as you see [the prohibition of photography], from the clarity of the refutation against the author and those who are like him, of those who declare photography permissible.

On page 116 [English Ed.] (al-Qaradaawee) has said, regarding this matter, words which would make you laugh and cry at the same time. He says: “As for the photograph (as-surah ash-shamsiyyah) which is made with the camera—it is a new thing, which was non-existent in the era of the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the era of the early Muslims (salaf). Therefore, can the texts about image-making and image-makers be applied to it? ... ” (to the end of his argument).<sup>231</sup>

We say to him: Do you see (believe) that the texts (ahaadith in this issue) are limited only to the era of the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)? This is a description of the *Sharee’ah* (Islamic Law) of being *qusoora* limited [incomplete, imperfect]. Such description [of the Sharee’ah as being limited] is sufficient, in and of itself, as a clear sin (for the one who says this).

The texts of the “Sharee’ah” regarding image-making—and all other matters—are general (‘aammah) and all-inclusive (shaamilah) of whatever is now present and any new circumstances that may come about until the Day of Resurrection.

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<sup>231</sup>*This paragraph and those following it were not originally in the text of the book; they were included as footnotes of Shaykh Saalih, and have been transferred here to the main text.*



In spite of the large number of ahaadith reported regarding the prohibition of images of every type, al-Qaradaawee maintains on page 113: “Nothing clouds the clarity of this *madh-hab*—the opinion of those who claim the permissibility of images other than statues—except the hadith of ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her), reported by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim “...that she bought a cushion having images on it. When Allah’s Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw it, he stopped at the door and did not enter....”<sup>232</sup>

Al-Qaradaawee then begins his attempt to refute this hadith—and it is as though he became blind of the remaining ahaadith and as though he is totally unaware of them. This is nothing but deception, which is not hidden from those who would search for the truth of the matter.

Next he contradicts himself and narrates, on pages 116 and 118, ahaadith with the same meaning as this hadith of ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her), without any hint from him that he is aware that these ahaadith are a refutation against him.

This, because the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) made the ruling against image-making without consideration of the *means*, whether it be by hand or by camera; without differentiation between that which cast a shadow or that which does not.

Just as he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) based the ruling for shortening prayers (qasr as-Salaah) and breaking fast (al-fitr) on **traveling** (as-saft) without consideration of the *means* of traveling, whether it was on a riding animal, automobile, airplane, or on foot.

This is because the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has been given “jawaam al-kalim” (comprehensive speech—such that he can express something of great meaning in only a few simple words). So, his (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) expressions encompass his (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) era as well as whatever may happen until the Day of Resurrection.

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<sup>232</sup>See: *Hadith #5*

**Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Ibraaheem** (raheemahu'llah), the (former) Muftee <sup>233</sup> of Saudi Arabia, in a treatise of his, said: "One of the worst of all evils (al-munkaraat) is image-making (tasweer) of that which possess a soul, as well as possession and use of these images. There is no difference (in this) between that which has body (al-mujassadah) and that which is on paper produced by the camera (al-aalah)."

**Shaykh Saalih here comments:** What one understands from the collection of the ahaadith (on this subject) is the severity of the threat to the image-makers of punishment in the Hell-Fire; that there is a curse upon them, and a description of them as being the worse of the wrongdoers (adh-dhaalimoon).

It is also understood from these ahaadith that every type of image-making is forbidden, without consideration of its form. This is because the "wordings/expressions" of the ahaadith are general (siyagh al-umoom), like: "**every** image-maker will be in the Fire"; **whoever** makes an image in this world will be required to breath into it the soul ... "; and his (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saying: "Verily, **THOSE WHO** make these images will be (severely) punished on the Day of Resurrection."

He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has used the word "kullu" (**every**), "man" (**whoever**), and "alladheena" (**those who**)—and every one of these are words or expressions indicating "generality" (siyagh al-umoom).

So, how can the one who declares permissible any one of the types of image-making, and divides it (tasweer) into the forbidden, the detestable/undesirable, and the permissible—where will he go (i.e., how can he escape from the clear evidences)? Wa'llahu-l-Musta'an!<sup>234</sup>

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<sup>233</sup> *Muftee: Islamic legal authority whose has the final say in legal matters in his country.*

<sup>234</sup> *Allahu-l-Musta'an: "Allah is the One Who we turn to for help." This is a term used to express the severity of the circumstances someone is witnessing or being subjected to, in acknowledgment of the fact that there is no one to ask help from other than Allah. Here the Shaykh uses this expression to show how far away from the truth are those who try to overlook the clear wording of these ahaadith. In such a case, only Allah can help to guide them and open their hearts to the correct understanding.*

## **MISTAKE #2:**

The author's seeking to prove the absence of any prohibition of images other than 'tamatheel' (statues), by using the "exception" (al-istithnaa') mentioned in the hadith of Zaid ibn Khaalid (may Allah be pleased with him) and Abu Talha (may Allah be pleased with him): "illa raqman fi thawb—except designs/inscriptions in a cloth."<sup>235</sup>

**Imam An-Nawawee** (raheemahu'llah) has responded to this argument in his explanation (sharh) of Saheeh Muslim [14/85], where he said: "this is used as an evidence by those whose opinion is the absolute permissibility of "raqman" (designs/inscriptions) as has been previously mentioned.

Our response to this, and the response of the Majority of the Scholars (al-Jumhoor) is that it should be understood to be designs in the form of trees or other than living creatures (other than human or animal). And we have previously explained that this is permissible with us."

**Al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar** said: "There is also the likelihood that this hadith (giving permission for "raqman") came before the prohibition. The indication of this is in the hadith of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) which is reported in the Books of Sunan."<sup>236</sup>

**Shaykh 'Abdul-Azeez Ibn Baaz**, in his treatise entitled *Al-Jawaab al-Mufeed Fi Hukm at-Tasweer*, says: "As for his (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) statement "except designs/inscriptions in a cloth," in the hadith of Abu Talha and Sahl ibn Hunaif (may Allah be pleased with them both)—this is an exception, i.e., these designs or inscriptions (raqman fi thawb) are not included under the ruling of the images (suwar) which prevent the entry of angels. But it is not an exception from the ruling concerning the prohibition of the making of images (tasweer).

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<sup>235</sup> See: Hadith #7

<sup>236</sup> See: Hadith #18; Abu Daawood 3/1549 no. 4146. This hadith shows that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had allowed images in his house—which prevented the angel Jibreel from entering. Then he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was ordered by Jibreel to cut off the heads or cut them up to be made into cushions which people walk on. After this incident images were no longer permissible.

This is very clear from the actual wording of the hadith [“Verily, angels do not enter a house which has in it images (surah)”—illa raqman fi thawb “except designs/inscriptions in a cloth”].

Here the intended meaning (of this exception) is if the designs (ar-raqm) are in a cloth or something similar, which is laid out on the floor and in a degraded position. This is like the pillow which is in a degraded/lowly position [sat upon or leaned upon] as has been pointed out in the hadith of ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) previously mentioned <sup>237</sup> which mentions her cutting up the curtain and making one or two pillows from it.

Also, the hadith of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him)<sup>238</sup> and the saying of Jibreel to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): “So, order that the head of the image (timthaal/statue)<sup>239</sup> which is in the house be cut off, so that it may become like the form of a tree; and order that the curtain be cut up and made into two pillows laid out, on which people walk... The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) then did so....”

It is not permissible to understand this “exception” as referring to the image in a cloth which is hanging up, nor that which is fixed to a door or wall or what is similar to that. This, because the ahaadith of ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her)<sup>240</sup>—the text of which has been previously mentioned—are clear in their prohibition of that which is similar to this curtain [which is hanging up], and the necessity of its being torn up.

Also, the hadith of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) is clear about the fact that curtains like this one (hanging up) prevent the entry of the angels unless it is laid out on the floor, or the head of the image

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<sup>237</sup> See: *Hadith #4*

<sup>238</sup> See: *Hadith #18*

<sup>239</sup> See: *Statement of Shaykh Al-Albaanee, Silsilah As-Saheehah 4/554, no. 1921 to the effect that this image was in fact a statue (surah mujassamah).*

<sup>240</sup> See: *ahaadith #2,3 & 4*

(timthaal) in the curtain is cut off, so that it will be in the form or shape of a tree.

Know that his (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ahaadith do not contradict one another. On the contrary, they confirm the truthfulness of each other. So, whenever it is possible to show agreement or reconciliation between various ahaadith, in a manner which is suitable, without stretching their meanings, it becomes obligatory to do so.

Making reconciliation (al-Jam)<sup>241</sup> between the ahaadith takes precedence over the two other methods of resolving apparent contradiction between proofs—the two other methods being At-Tarjeeh and An-Naskh<sup>242</sup>. This is what has been agreed upon in the science of ‘Usool al-Fiqh and the science of Mustalah al-Hadith<sup>243</sup>. [In the case of apparent contradictions between various evidences, the order which should be observed, is to first try to make reconciliation (jam’); if this is not possible, then abrogation (naskh) if the dates of the evidence are known; if not, then determination of the strongest evidence (tarjeeh)]. Here it was possible to make reconciliation (al-Jam’) between the ahaadith in the manner that we have mentioned. And for this, the Praise is due to Allah!”

### **MISTAKE #3:**

The author’s opinion that the cause of prohibition—“al-mudaahaat” (imitation of Allah’s creation)—which was specified in some ahaadith, is not applicable to photographs.

Just listen to his explanation of “al-mudaahaat” (imitation of Allah’s creation), where he says on page 119 [English Ed.]: “...what is near in severity to that [images which are made to be worshipped] are images which are not worshipped, but the intention behind its production is “mudaahaat khalq Allah” i.e., “claiming that he is creating (yakhluqu) and

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<sup>241</sup> *al-Jam’*: See: *Essay of Shaykh Bin Baaz*, footnote 147.

<sup>242</sup> *at-Tarjeeh and an-Naskh*: See: *above reference*, footnotes 148, 149.

<sup>243</sup> *Usool al-Fiqh and Mustalah al-Hadith*: See: *above reference*, footnotes 150, 151.

bringing something into existence (originating) (yubdi'u) just as Allah, Glorified and Most High, creates. Therefore, he would by this intention, go out of the religion of Tawheed.”

This explanation (of “al-mudaahaat”) is purely from himself because in actuality the **act of image-making** is itself “mudaahaat” (imitation of Allah’s creation)—no matter if the image-maker intended “imitation” (mudaahaat) or not.<sup>244</sup>

There is no doubt that this is an untrue statement and a clear mistake. Certainly, the “imitation” (al-mudaahaat) in photographs is realized more than it is in images other than those produced by the camera.

Photographs are usually taken due to their accurate reproduction of the person being photographed, to avoid any possibility of mistaken identity between one person and another. This, because his likeness and shape is exactly reflected in the photograph. And this is precisely the meaning of “al-mudaahaat” (imitation).

Also, “as-surah” (image) in the Arabic language is “ash-shakl” (shape or form)—as has already preceded in the statement of Ash-Shawkaanee.<sup>245</sup>

Therefore, the “imitation” (al-mudaahaat) was actualized (truly achieved) in the photograph—no denying it.

We ask the author (al-Qaradaawee): What is it that excludes the photograph (surah footoograafiyah) from the “generality” (‘umoom) of those texts which prohibit images (suwar)?—Since the photograph is called **surah** (image), no doubt about it; and the process of making it is called **tasweer** (image-making); and the person who takes the picture is called **musawwir** (image-maker)!

#### **MISTAKE #4:**

The author’s seeking to use as an evidence of the absence of any prohibition of images other than **tamaatheel** (statues or three dimensional

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<sup>244</sup> *This paragraph and the one before it were not originally included in the main text of the book; they were included as a footnote, and have here been transferred to the main text.*

<sup>245</sup> *For statement of ash-Shawkaanee, see Pg. 92.*

objects), the hadith of ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her)<sup>246</sup> where she said: “We had a curtain which had on it images (timthaal) of birds. Whenever anyone entered (the room) he would find it in front of him (facing him). Thereupon, Allah’s Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said to me: Change this, for whenever I enter the room I see them and it brings to my mind (the pleasures of) worldly life....”

**The author (al-Qaradaawee) says<sup>247</sup>:** “He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not order her to cut it up; he only ordered her to change it from its place facing the one who enters the house... .”

He goes on to say: “From this it becomes clear that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) approved of the presence in his house, of a curtain (sitr) with an image (timthaal) on it, and another curtain (qiraam) containing images (tasaaweer).”

The response to this argument is with what an-Nawawee (raheemahu’llah) said, in his explanation of Saheeh Muslim [14/87]: “This should be understood to have occurred before the prohibition of possessing that which has images (surah) in it. For this reason, the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had been entering (the room), seeing the curtain, and he did not speak against it before this final occasion.”

What Imam an-Nawawee said is supported by the fact that Imam Muslim reported the hadith of ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her), which contains the general (al-inclusive) prohibition of images, at the head of the chapter. Then he narrated what came after it to indicate or point to the fact that the first hadith is the one which is in force (i.e., to be practiced).

This is the methodology of Imam Muslim in his “Saheeh” (authentic book of hadith)—to place at the beginning of the chapter that hadith which is to

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<sup>246</sup> See: *Hadith #11*

<sup>247</sup> Pg. 112 of the *English Translation*.

be implemented. Then, he mentions after it that which has a defect ('illah) or that which should be abandoned (not practiced).<sup>248</sup>

This methodology of Imam Muslim (raheemahu'llah) is known through meticulous examination of his *Saheeh* and careful comparison of the chapters.<sup>249</sup>

#### **MISTAKE #5:**

The author's claim that the severity of the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in the matter of images was only in the early days (of Islam) because they had only recently left *shirk* (worshipping other than Allah). Then, when the faith of "Tawheed" (worship of Allah Alone) was established, license was given making permissible all images which don't have body (laa jisma lahaa) [three dimensional objects like statues].

We request the Honorable Shaykh, the author (al-Qaradaawee) to bring one evidence supporting this claim which he has made. Where will he find an evidence, since the evidences are all supporting one another in refutation of his claim and showing the falsehood of it—indicating the prohibition of image-making and the general prohibition of (possession of) images, for all times, and for all types of image-making.

**Ibn Daqeeq Al-Eid**<sup>250</sup>, in his explanation (sharh) of "al-Umdah" [3/256]<sup>251</sup>, with the marginal notes of As-San'aanee,<sup>252</sup> in response to this

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<sup>248</sup> *In such a case, the hadith is not accepted as a legal proof in the religion; either due a defect in the hadith causing it to be considered weak, or the hadith is authentic, but abrogated by a later ruling--in which case it is no longer considered a legal proof.*

<sup>249</sup> *This final paragraph was originally included as a footnote of Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan.*

<sup>250</sup> *He is Muhammad ibn Alee, a very renowned scholar of hadith who died in the year 702 A.H., and his book is entitled Ihkaam al-Ahkaam*

<sup>251</sup> *"Umdah al-Ahkaam" is a famous collection of ahaadith--almost exclusively from al-Bukhaaree and Muslim--dealing with "Ahkaam" (the rules and laws of Islam), arranged in the order of the books of Fiqh. Its author is Abdul-Ghaneel al-Maqdisee, the author of many other important books, who died in the year 600 A.H.*



claim, said: "He is as far (from the truth) as one can be, who claims that [images other than statues] are understood to be (only) undesirable (al-kiraahah); and that the severity [of the prohibition of all images] was in that time [early days of Islam] because the people were only recently getting away from the worship of idols; while this era, where Islam has spread and its rules and principles have been well established, is not equal to that time in its need for this severity—those who say this or words to this effect (are far from the truth).

This opinion—in our view—is absolutely false/baseless (baatil). This, because information has been reported in the ahaadith concerning the fact of the punishment of the image-makers in the next life; and that it will be said to them: "Give life to that which you have created (khalaaqum)."<sup>253</sup>

This *'illah* (reason for the ruling prohibiting images mentioned in this hadith) contradicts what has been said by the one making this claim.<sup>254</sup>

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has clearly stated this *'illah* in his saying: "... those who try to imitate the creation of Allah (alladheena yushabbihoona bi-khalq Allah)."<sup>255</sup>

This *'illah* is General ('aammah) [for all ages], **independent** (mustaqillah) [of consideration of the condition of the people, whether they are near to shirk or whether Islam is established in the society], and **fitting**

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<sup>252</sup> Muhammad Ismaa'eel as-San'aanee was a great scholar of Hadith from al-Yemen. One of his most important works is the explanation (sharh) of "Buloogh al-Maraam," another collection of ahaadith of "Ahkaam," its explanation (sharh) is entitled Subul As-Salaam. As-San'aanee died in the year 1182 A.H.

<sup>253</sup> See: Hadith #1, chapter one

<sup>254</sup> They tried to imitate Allah's creation with their image-making. So, they are challenged then to put life into their images, as Allah has put life into that which He has created. The use of the words "...what you have created" in the above hadith—though they have not created anything—shows that their action of "image-making" is in fact an attempt to imitate the creation of Allah, without even considering whether it was intentional or unintentional.

<sup>255</sup> See: Saheeh Muslim 3/1158 no. 5258; Hadith #4, chapter one, the narration of az-Zuhree.

(munaasibah) [the ruling that is based on it]. It is not particular to one era or time period to the exclusion of another.

We have no right to make changes or alterations to the religious texts—each of which further supports, strengthens and brings clarity to the other—in order to suggest an imaginative interpretation which we think might possibly be the intended meaning of these texts. This, while the very words which express the *'illah* (cause or reason for the ruling prohibiting images) necessitates that the real *'illah* is other than what we are “claiming”—the real *'illah* being “tashabbuh” (imitation) of the creation of Allah.

**Al-Ameer As-San'aanee**<sup>256</sup>, who wrote the marginal notes to the *sharh* of Ibn Daqeeq al-Eid, said: “I say, he (Ibn Daqeeq al-Eid) has certainly spoken the truth!”

So after the curse (of Allah) and the news of the image-maker being the most severely punished of the people—is there anyone who would make excuse for the one who makes this claim? Ibn Daqeeq al-Eid has surely hit the mark when he said: “Verily, this is an absolutely false/baseless (baatil) opinion.”

**Shaykh Ahmad Shaakir**,<sup>257</sup> in his comments to the Musnad of Imaam Ahmad [12/150], also responding to this (false claim) says: “...and in our time, we were hearing about important people who are considered to be people of knowledge (scholars)—of those who we didn't have the chance to meet, to hear from them that they hold the opinion of the permissibility of all types of image-making (tasweer), including the accursed “tamaatheel” (three dimensional objects) ... .”

He goes on to say: One of their proofs was that they re-explained—by other than the apparent and intended meaning—the religious texts, by connecting it [the ruling prohibiting images] to an *'illah* (cause or reason)

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<sup>256</sup> *Al-Ameer As-San'aanee: He is Muhammad Ismaa'eel. See: footnote no. 230 above.*

<sup>257</sup> *Shaykh Ahmad Muhammad Shaakir was one of the foremost scholars of Hadith of our time. He has many important books to his credit, including the checking of hadith for the Tafseer at-Tabaree, which he was, unfortunately for us, unable to complete before his death in the year 1377 A.H.*

which the Law Maker neither mentioned, nor made it the basis of the prohibition.

What they said—according to what has reached me—is that the prohibition was only in the beginning (early days of Islam) due to the people having only recently left the worship of idols. As for now, after a very long time has passed, the reason for the prohibition has gone, and there is no fear that the people will return to the worship of idols.<sup>258</sup>

But, these people have forgotten that which is in front of them, of the open display of real idol-worship through the acts of worship taking place at the graves and seeking refuge in them at times of calamities and disasters; and that idol-worship has returned to the depths of the hearts, without those who are doing it ever being aware of it.<sup>259</sup> What's more than that, they have forgotten the texts of ahaadith which are very clear about this prohibition as well as the '*illah* (reason) for the prohibition.

We used to be amazed at them having this barren, fruitless thinking and twisted *ijtihaad* (manner of striving to reach a legal ruling). We had thought that they came up with an idea [in this issue] that no one before them had come up with—even if it was clearly falsehood. Then, we later discovered that they were—in their falsehood—only imitating someone else; and in their *ijtihaad* (striving to reach a legal ruling) and their *istinbaat* (extracting rulings), only thieves.

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<sup>258</sup> *Let us not forget the fact that the people who are being referred to "in the beginning (early days of Islam)" are the SAHAABAH (companions of the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him); and those of the later time are people like us. So, if the reason for the prohibition of images was fear of falling into "shirk" (worship of other than Allah), who has more right to be feared for?*

<sup>259</sup> *In Pakistan, Egypt, Sudan and other Muslim lands we still find today that the people offer sacrifices to the dead, make vows to them, perform tawaaf (circumambulation) of the graves, asking them for their needs, etc. You can see this everyday at the Mosque of Badawee—an international center for grave-worshippers—in the city of Tanta, Egypt.*

We found al-Imaam al-Haafidh al-Hujjah Ibn Daqeeq al-Eid, who died in the year 702 A.H.<sup>260</sup>, narrating the likeness of this argument, and refuting it with a perfect refutation and the most powerful proofs.

**Here Ahmad Shaakir** quotes the saying of Ibn Daqeeq al-Eid, which we have just quoted. Then adds: “This is what was said by Ibn Daqeeq al-Eid more than 670 YEARS AGO, refuting a people who played with these religious texts in his time or before his time. Now, here comes these *Muftees* (legal experts) who lead astray, and their ignorant blind followers, bringing back these false ideas from the roots, and playing with the texts of the ahaadith just as those of the past played with it.”

It is clear, from what has preceded, that image-making of all types—statues (tamaatheel) or otherwise; that which is engraved or produced by “hand” or the photograph made by the camera—all of it is forbidden/unlawful (haraam). And everyone who attempts to make any of it permissible—his attempts are futile and his proofs are baseless. Wa Allahu'l-Musta'aaan! Allah is the One we turn to for help!

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<sup>260</sup> A.H.: After the Hijrah. The Islamic calendar who basis was the historical event of the “Hijrah” (migration) of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) from Makkah to al-Madeenah, setting the stage for the establishment of Islam in the Arabian Peninsular, and then throughout the earth. Today, even in the Muslim World, this calendar is not used, except on certain occasions like Ramadaan and Hajj. Perhaps, the significance of this calendar is not understood by the Muslims today. Therefore, they have preferred to use the pagan Gregorian calendar, based on the birth of “our lord.” The meaning of AD is “anno domini” (in the year of our lord) i.e., the year their “god” (Jesus) was born 2,000 years ago. Even if we write AC, i.e., After Christ, instead of AD--the fact remains that we have abandoned, in our daily lives, the use of the Islamic Calendar as our standard reference.

***B. Clarification Of Some Of The Mistakes Of Shaykh Yusuf Al-Qaradaawee Regarding The Issue Of Image-Making (By Shaykh Muhammad Naasiruddeen al-Albaanee)<sup>261</sup>***

**POINT #1:**

Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as saying:

Angels do not enter a house [or any other place] where there are statues (tamaatheel) or pictures (tasaaweer). [Hadith #6, Chapter One].

**Shaykh al-Albaanee comments:** These ahaadith and those of similar meaning which are to follow in the book include 'as-surah al-mujassamah' (three dimensional, solid images, like statues) as well as 'ghair al-mujassamah' (two dimensional images, on a plane surface).

Yet, the author<sup>262</sup> (Yusuf al-Qaradaawee) has taken it to apply only to 'al-mujassamah' (solid images). And this, coming from him, is strange, since he knows well—I believe—that the occasion concerning which these ahaadith (words) were spoken, and the reason prompting this matter to be addressed, was in reference to *ghair al-mujassamah* (two dimensional, non-solid images).

This is indicated clearly by the angel Jibreel's (peace be upon him) being prevented from entering the house while it had in it the curtain containing images (surah). [This is in reference to Hadith #18, Chapter One, containing the words: "...Jibreel (peace be upon him) asked permission to enter upon the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). So, he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: Enter. He (Jibreel) said:

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<sup>261</sup>The following comments of Shaykh al-Albaanee are excerpts taken from his book *Ghaayah al-Maraam Fi Takhreej Ahaadith al-Halaal wa'l-Haraam, the chapter on Image-Making*, pgs. 76 - 100.

<sup>262</sup>Reference to the "author" in this chapter always refers to Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradaawee.

## **HOW CAN I ENTER WHILE THERE IS A CURTAIN (SITR) CONTAINING IMAGES (TASAWEER) IN YOUR HOUSE?...”]**

The other ahaadith also indicate this, such as the hadith of ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) which follows this one.

### **POINT #2:**

Narrated ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her):

Allah’s Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) returned from a journey when I had placed a curtain of mine containing images over (the door of) a chamber of mine. When Allah’s Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw it, he tore it apart and said: “The people who will receive the severest punishment on the Day of Resurrection will be those who try to make *the like of Allah’s creation...*

In the other narration:

...those who make *these images* [Hadith #4, Chapter One].<sup>263</sup>

After mentioning the above hadith of ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her), and pointing to the various narration’s as they were reported by al-Bukhaaree, Muslim, and others—Shaykh al-Albaanee comments: It is known from the circumstances prompting the speech of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) on this occasion [*curtain of mine having images*] that the IMAGES which were mentioned were *ghair al-mujassamah* (not solid images) [they were pictures on a curtain]. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) pointed to this, in his words “...*these images*.”<sup>264</sup>

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<sup>263</sup> Ghaayah al-Maraam pg. 77, no. 118.

<sup>264</sup> See also the hadith of the “cushion with images on it,” where he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “The makers of THESE IMAGES [in the cushion] will be punished on the Day of Judgment...” Hadith #5.

For this reason, the author's interpreting it to refer to *as-suwar al-mujassamah* (three dimensional, solid images) is very far from the truth. Wa'llahu'l-Musta'aan! (Allah is the One we turn to for help)!<sup>265</sup>

### **POINT #3:**

Narrated an-Nadr ibn Anas ibn Maalik, ... that Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) said:

I heard Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saying: "Whoever makes **an image** in this world would be compelled to breathe soul (rooh) in it on the Day of Resurrection, but he will never be able to do so." [Hadith #15, Chapter One]

**Shaykh al-Albaanee comments:** This hadith also points out the fact of (the prohibition) being inclusive of 'ghair al-mujassam' (i.e., other than three dimensional solid images). This is because (the hadith) is 'MUTLAQ' (absolute/generally inclusive of all images, without conditions or restrictions). Also, because the narrator of the hadith—Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father)—did not make it clear that there is any difference [regarding the prohibition of three dimensional images which have body, and two dimensional images which do not].<sup>266</sup>

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<sup>265</sup> Ghaayah al-Maraam, pg. 78, no. 119.

<sup>266</sup> Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) did not make it clear to the questioner that images without body (two dimensional) are permissible; nor that there is a distinction between the image which has body (solid images) and the one which has no body. And if there was any difference between the two types of images, it was obligatory for him to make a distinction between the two, in order that it be clear to the questioner.

The applicable rule in "Usool al-Fiqh" is: "laa yajooz ta'kheer al-bayaan 'an waqt al-haajah"--"It is not permissible [for the scholar] to delay clarification of an issue being asked about, beyond the time of need [i.e., beyond the time of his being asked by the one in need of the clarification].

Also, the rule: "yoojad daa'in, and laa yoojad maani'un"--"There was a good reason [for Ibn Abbaas, may Allah be pleased with him and his father, to clarify the issue], and there was nothing preventing him from doing so." Therefore, it was obligatory for him to be lenient on the questioner. But, when he didn't make any distinction between the two types of images, for example, by saying that two

So, if (the prohibition) was exclusively limited to *al-mujassamah*, i.e., the images which have body (like statues)—he (Ibn Abbaas) would not have been so strict on the questioner [in prohibiting all images which have a soul, without consideration as to whether it is three dimensional or two dimensional]. Instead, he would have also ruled the permissibility of *ghair al-mujassamah*, i.e., images which don't have a body, even of those which have souls, as is clear.

Additionally, the understanding of a companion (sahaabee) is a *hujjah* (legal proof), especially if he is the narrator of the hadith in question. This position is also supported by the rules of "Usool al-Fiqh," as is the case here.<sup>267</sup>

It is also supported by the other texts, as has preceded. For this reason, Imaam an-Nawawee has decisively declared the incorrectness of the opinion of those who make permissible the images which don't cast a shadow (two dimensional), i.e., those which don't have body.<sup>268</sup>

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*dimensional images are lawful—this shows that the prohibition is ABSOLUTE, including both solid images as well as those which are on a plane surface.*

<sup>267</sup> Perhaps Shaykh al-Albaanee is referring here to the rule pertaining to "al-Mutlaq wa'l-Muqayyad" (that which is Absolute/Unrestricted and that which is Restricted)—when a general term or expression is used, without any specifying conditions, it can be applied to any members of that class, until certain members are specified by a text which restricts the original text to particular members of that class.

Here the relevant words are: "...whoever makes AN IMAGE in this world..." This expression is "Mutlaq" (Absolute) being applicable to anything which falls under the definition of **IMAGE**—two dimensional or three dimensional, since there isn't anything restricting its application to a particular type of image..

There is general agreement among the scholars that the words: "...he would be compelled to breathe soul (rooh) in it..." [Hadith #15] excludes from this prohibition images of that which does not have a soul (inanimate things/ images of other than humans and animals). Refer to the commentary of Hadiith #14, for the opinions of Abu Muhammad al-Juwainee and Mujaahid, the student of Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father).

<sup>268</sup> Ghaayah al-Maraam pg. 79, no. 120.



**POINT #4:**

From Abu Zur'ah who said:

I and Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) entered a house being built in al-Madeenah for Sa'eed or Marwaan. (Abu Zur'ah) said: he (Abu Hurairah) saw an image-maker (musawwir) making images in the (wall of ) the house. He then said: Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: Allah, the Glorious and Exalted, said: 'Who is more a wrongdoer than one who tries to create creation like My creation. Let him create a small ant (dharrah) or a grain of wheat.' [Hadith #16, Chapter One. This is the wording in Saheeh Muslim.]

**Shaykh al-Albaanee comments:** In this hadith is an evidence, as in the previous ahaadith, of the prohibition of image-making of *ghair al-mujassamah* (that which has no body)—by way of DALAALATI'L-UMOOM, the expression which is **general** in its application to everything which could possibly come under its meaning, all at one time. [The **general expression** is the words *one who tries to create CREATION LIKE MY CREATION*]. And that is what the narrator of this hadith—Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him)—understood.

**Ibn Battaal said:** "Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) understood that image-making (tasweer) is inclusive of that which cast a shadow (three dimensional objects) as well as that which does not cast a shadow (two dimensional images). For this reason, he (Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him) renounced what was inscribed/engraved in the walls (of the house)."<sup>269</sup>

**POINT #5:**

Narrated Abu Talha (may Allah be pleased with him):

Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: 'Angels do not enter a house where there are images (surah).'

Busr [Ibn Sa'eed, who narrated this hadith from Zaid ibn Khaalid, who narrated it from Abu Talha] added:

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<sup>269</sup> Ghaayah al-Maraam pg. 80, no. 122.

Then Zaid fell ill and we paid him a visit. Behold! There was hanging at his door, a curtain with an image (surah) on it. I said to ‘Ubaidullah al-Khawlaanee, the foster-son of Maimoonah (may Allah be pleased with her), the wife of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): ‘Didn’t Zaid tell us about images (suwar) the day before yesterday?’ Ubaidullah said, ‘Didn’t you hear him saying: *except a design in a cloth (illa raqman fi thawb)?*’ [Hadith #7, Chapter One]

Narrated ‘Ubaidullah ibn ‘Abdullah:

He entered upon Abu Talha al-’Ansaaree (may Allah be pleased with him) to visit him, and he found Sahl ibn Hunaif (may Allah be pleased with him). Abu Talha (may Allah be pleased with him) ordered someone to remove a pillow which was under him. Sahl (may Allah be pleased with him) asked him: Why are you removing this? He said: It is because it has in it images (tasaaweer) and you already know what the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has said about that. He (Sahl) said: Didn’t he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) say: ‘illa raqman fi thawb—except designs/inscriptions in a cloth?’ He (Abu Talha) answered: Yes, he did say so. But, (removing it) is more pleasing to my soul. [Hadith #8, Chapter One]

**Shaykh al-Albaanee comments:** The author (al-Qaradaawee) has quoted this hadith and the one before it,<sup>270</sup> regarding the matter of clarification of “the ruling concerning images (suwar) which are drawn on flat surfaces such as paper, cloth, curtains... .” He (al-Qaradaawee) then concludes, asking the rhetorical question [the answer already being fixed in the mind of the questioner]: “Don’t these two ahaadith prove that the figures (suwar) which are prohibited are those which are solid, that is to say **statues**?”<sup>271</sup>

**Shaykh al-Albaanee answers:** I say, in clarification of the reality,: Absolutely not! In no way do these two ahaadith prove the above. And in order to explain this, a reminder is necessary of the fact that we have **two**

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<sup>270</sup>Pages 110 and 111 of English Translation of his book The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam.

<sup>271</sup>Same reference, pg. 111.

issues in front of us: *At-Tasweer* (the act of **making images**), and *Iqtinaa' as-suwar* (the act of **possession of images**).

The ahaadith which are related to this topic are divided into two divisions: those connected to the first issue [the act of **making images**], and the other connected to the second issue [the act of **possession of images**]. I have seen that many of those who have written on the topic of 'tasweer' have had the two divisions [ahaadith related to **making images**, and ahaadith related to **possessing images**] mixed together, and therefore treated the two divisions as one.

1) As for those ahaadith related to the first issue [act of **making images**]—they are all in agreement about the fact of the prohibition of *tasweer* (making images) of both types, *al-mujassam* (solid images) as well as *ghair al-mujassam* (that which is on a plane surface).

2) Some of these ahaadith prove the prohibition by *dalaalah al-umoom* (i.e., it points to the general prohibition of everything included in the meaning of "surah/image." An example of this is the previous hadith [Hadith #15] which contains the words: "whoever makes an IMAGE (surah) in this world would be compelled to breathe soul (rooh) in it on the Day of Resurrection, but he will never be able to do so."

3) Also, from these ahaadith are those which prove the prohibition of images by *dalaalah al-khusoos* [i.e., it points to the prohibition of a special/particular type of image, which is specifically pointed out in the text of the hadith]. An example of this is the hadith [#4, Chapter One] which contains the words: "...the people who will receive the severest punishment on the Day of Resurrection will be those who make **these images** (alladheena yusawwiroona HADHIHI AS-SUWAR)". The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was pointing to the images of the "winged horses" [Hadith #2, Chapter One] which were on the curtain which he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) tore up.<sup>272</sup>

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<sup>272</sup> *al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar points out—in Fath al-Baaree 10/401—that the above two ahaadith [#4 "curtain of mine having images" and #2 "curtain having (images) of winged horses"] are two narrations of the same incident. Al-Haafidh says: The words: "a curtain of mine HAVING IMAGES" [#4]—In the narration of Abu Usaamah in the Saheeh of Muslim, it also contains the words: "...curtain having (images) of WINGED HORSES on it" [#2].*

4) As for those ahaadith which are related to the second issue [**possession of images**] such as these two ahaadith [#7 and #8]—neither of them indicate the permissibility of **making** images, which would be in contradiction to the indication of the ahaadith of the first division.

5) Verily, they only indicate the permissibility of **possession** (of images). As for the permissibility of **making** images—this is something which the two ahaadith under discussion do not address at all. So, how could it be permissible to use them as a proof for that [the permissibility of **making** images]? While at the same time, they would be in contradiction to the ahaadith of the first division [i.e., those ahaadith which actually address the issue of the act of **making** images, and point to its prohibition].

6) The truth of the matter is that the hadith of ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) which has preceded [#4] addresses both issues: the prohibition of *tasweer* (the act of making images), and the permissibility of **possession of those images which are degraded**—there being some difference of opinion on this the second point, and this can be reviewed in *Fath al-Baaree* and other books for its details.<sup>273</sup>

7) This, while the two ahaadith mentioned above have in common with the hadith of ‘Aa’isha [#4] the fact of their addressing the second issue (**possession of images**), while both being silent concerning the first (the act of **making** images).

8) This is what is understood by everyone who studies the ‘dalaalah’ (indications/point addressed) by the ahaadith connected to this topic—if he is not influenced by anything except the desire to attain the truth.

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*An-Nawawee also pointed this out, in his explanation of this incident as narrated in the hadith of Abu Talha from ‘Aa’isha [#17] where he explains the words: “he tore it (the curtain) down”—Its meaning is: He cut it up and destroyed the image (surah) which was in it. The narrations (of this incident) mentioned after this one state clearly that this carpet (namat) had in it images of “WINGED HORSES,” and that it had in it an image (surah).*

<sup>273</sup>See: *Introduction (of an-Nawawee) to Chapter One, and explanation of Hadith #4, Chapter One, for opinions of Ibn al-‘Arabee, az-Zuhree and an-Nawawee, in this matter.*

9) Imaam an-Nawawee has summarized the speech/sayings [of the scholars] concerning this topic, in a complete and most excellent summarization, in his *sharh* (explanation) of *Saheeh Muslim*,<sup>274</sup> saying: "...IMAGE-MAKING (tasweer) of animate (living) beings [human and animal] is sternly prohibited and it is a major sin. This is because the one who engages in it is threatened with the stern warning mentioned in the ahaadith. It is the same whether one makes the image in that which will be **disrespected and degraded** or otherwise—in every case, its **making** is prohibited...

As for the **possession/keeping** of that which has in it images of animate beings [human or animal]—if it is hanging up on a wall, or in clothing that is worn, or a turban...or those things which are not considered to be degraded or dishonored—then, it is *forbidden*.

However, if it is in a carpet which is trampled upon and treated with disdain...or those things which are degraded and disrespected—it is not forbidden. Yet, there remains the question of whether or not it prevents the entry of the angels of mercy to that house... .

Finally, there is no difference in any part of this matter [concerning the prohibition] between that which cast a shadow [three dimensional, solid objects] and that which does not [two dimensional pictures, drawings, etc.]...<sup>275</sup>

#### **POINT #6**

Hadith Abu Talha (may Allah be pleased with him), containing the narration of 'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her):

The Messenger of Allah went on a military expedition and I was waiting for him to return. I then took a carpet which we had and hung it up as a screen on a stick over the door. When he came I received him and said: 'Peace be upon you O Messenger of Allah, and the mercy of Allah and His blessings. Praise be to Allah Who

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<sup>274</sup>For the complete statement of Imaam an-Nawawee, see: *Introduction to Chapter One*.

<sup>275</sup>Ghaayah al-Maraam, pgs. 83 - 85, nos. 133, 134.

gave you dominance and respect.’ He then looked at the house and saw the carpet, and he did not respond to me at all. I saw the (signs of) disapproval in his face. He then came to the carpet and tore it down. He then said: ‘ALLAH HAS NOT COMMANDED US TO CLOTHE STONES AND CLAY out of the sustenance He has given us.’ She said: I then cut it to pieces and made two pillows out of it and stuffed them with palm fiber, and he did not disapprove of me doing that.” [Hadith # 17, Chapter One]

**Shaykh al-Albaanee comments:** The hadith of ‘Aa’isha which the author (al-Qaradaawee) has mentioned points to **two matters**.

**The First:** the prohibition of hanging-up images. This is indicated by his (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) tearing up the carpet. It is well-known that the tearing up of something is the destruction of wealth, and it is not permissible except in that (wealth) which is unlawful—as a warning and to instill fear (of engaging in that matter).

**The Second:** That the covering of walls with curtains is something detestable, even if the curtains are free of images. This is based on the saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): “Verily, Allah has not commanded us to clothe stones and clay ....” This is what immediately comes to mind from the hadith, with the least bit of reflection. This, also, is what the scholars of the past understood, as I have explained in ‘Aadaab az-Zifaaf.<sup>276</sup>

As for the author (al-Qaradaawee, Hafizahu’llah, may Allah protect and preserve him), with him the **two matters** have become mixed together, resulting in his viewing them as a single matter. He has understood the above mentioned saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) [*Verily, Allah has not commanded us to clothe stones and clay*] to refer to **curtains which contain images**.

Then, based on that, he has sought to use it as a proof that the hanging up of images is detestable (to a degree not reaching prohibition). He did not consider the *dalaalah* (indication) of the tearing up (of the carpet) which I have just pointed to. Nor has he looked at the *dalaalah* (indication) of the saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): ‘Verily,

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<sup>276</sup> Aadaab az-Zifaaf, pgs. 119 - 125, Arabic Edition.

Allah has not commanded us...’, which is *mutlaq* (absolute and unrestricted in its meaning) [i.e., covering of walls, in general, has been prohibited here, and this prohibition has not been limited or confined to the covering of walls with curtains containing images]. The meaning of this is that he (al-Qaradaawee) does not see any harm in the covering of walls with that which is free of images.

Then, he goes on from there to attribute to some of the Imaams [an-Nawawee] that which he has not said. More than that, he has attributed to Imam an-Nawawee that which is in contradiction to his [an-Nawawee] saying. After the hadith, he (al-Qaradaawee) said: “Nothing can be inferred from this hadith except that to decorate walls and such things with curtains on which there are pictures is mildly disapproved... .”<sup>277</sup>

[Here Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradaawee quotes an-Nawawee in an attempt to legitimize his opinion.]

**An-Nawawee said:** There is nothing in the hadith implying prohibition. In fact, the crucial words are, ‘Allah has not commanded us to do that.’ This implies that such a thing is not obligatory or meritorious; in no way does it imply prohibition.<sup>278</sup>

**Shaykh al-Albaanee says:** Verily, an-Nawawee has said this only in reference to the **second matter**, i.e., in reference to **covering (decorating) walls with curtains**—not in reference to the **images**. Certainly, his opinion about images is clearly that they are prohibited. I have already quoted his saying concerning this. [See POINT #5, No. (9), of this chapter.]

He (an-Nawawee) further affirmed [his position in the matter of the prohibition of images] in his explanation of this hadith, differentiating between the two matters (hanging of images, and covering of walls with curtains and the like), stating clearly the prohibition of the first, and detestability of the second.

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<sup>277</sup>*The above quotation is taken from the English translation of Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradaawee’s book, pg. 112.*

<sup>278</sup>*This is also quoted from the English translation, pg. 112.*

**Imaam an-Nawawee**<sup>279</sup> said: “the words: ‘he tore it down’—its meaning is: He cut it up and destroyed the image (surah) which was in it... . It is used as an evidence for the changing of evil by force (by the hand); and destroying the **forbidden images** (as-suwar al-muharramah), and being angry upon witnessing evil...”

[**Imaam an-Nawawee goes on to say:**] “As for his (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saying—when he pulled the carpet and tore it down—: ‘Verily, Allah has not commanded us to clothe stones and clay...’—they used it as an evidence that it is **prohibited to cover walls, and to decorate the (walls of) houses with cloth** [such as curtains or drapes]; and that it is a prohibition of the lesser degree *kiraahah tanzeeh* (that which is disliked and detestable) but not absolutely prohibited (tahreem). *This is the correct opinion.*”

**An-Nawawee goes on:** “Shaykh Abu al-Fath Nasr al-Maqdisee of our companions (Shaafi’ee madh-hab) said: ‘it [the covering of walls] is forbidden (haraam)’. But, [says an-Nawawee] there isn’t anything in this hadith indicating ‘tahreem’ (prohibition) [of covering walls], because the reality of the expression: ‘Allah, the Most High, didn’t command us to do that [cover the walls],’ is that it indicates that it is not *waajib* (obligatory), nor *mandoob* (meritorious). But, it does not indicate *tahreem* (prohibition). And Allah Knows Best!<sup>280</sup>

#### **POINT #7:**

‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) reported:

We had a curtain which had on it an image (timthaal) of a bird. Whenever anyone entered (the room) he would find it in front of him (facing him). Thereupon, Allah’s Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said to me: ‘change this, for whenever I enter the room I see them and it brings to my mind (the pleasures of) worldly life ... Allah’s Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not command us to tear up the curtain. [Hadith #11, Chapter One].

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<sup>279</sup> Sharh an-Nawawee, 14/85-86. For full translation of an-Nawawee’s statement, see commentary on Hadith #17, Chapter One.

<sup>280</sup> Ghaayah al-Maraam pgs. 86 - 87, no. 135.



Immediately following this hadith, the author (al-Qaradaawee) says: "The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not tell 'Aa'isha to tear up the curtain ... It is quite clear from the preceding ahaadith that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not disapprove of having a curtain (sitr) with a picture of a bird and a drape (qiraam) with figures (tasaaweer) in his house ...."<sup>281</sup>

**Shaykh al-Albaanee comments:** As for the curtain/drape (qiraam) [which had in it *tasaaweer* (images)]—he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not approve of it. On the contrary, he ripped it and tore it up, as preceded in the hadith before this one [#17] and others besides it.

As for the curtain (sitr) which had in it the images [of birds], it is true that he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) approved of it. But, when was that—before the prohibition (of images) or after it? If it was **Before** (the prohibition), then it is not correct to use it as an evidence that images are merely undesirable (al-kiraahah), as is the position of the author (al-Qaradaawee). This, because it happened before the prohibition.

[On the other hand] If it happened **After** the prohibition, then it is correct to use it as an evidence of the undesirability (kiraahah) (of images). However, the fact of it being before or after the prohibition is something not at all possible to establish. In that case, it is necessary to make reconciliation (al-jam'). And this can only be done using the rule<sup>282</sup> of "precedence" of the (evidence) which prohibits (al-haazhir) over the one which permits (al-mubeeh), in the case of contradiction (ta'aarud) between them and the absence of knowledge of the dates [of which came first and which came last, in order to determine which would abrogate the other].

This is precisely what an-Nawawee has done<sup>283</sup> when he said: This should be understood to have occurred **before** the prohibition of possession of that

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<sup>281</sup>The Lawful and Prohibited in Islam, pg. 112, English Translation.

<sup>282</sup>This rule: "Ta'qdeem al-haazhir 'alaa al-mubeeh 'inda at-ta'aarud wa al-jahl bi-t-taareekh," has been worded by the scholars in many different ways, all amounting to the same thing. See: al-Qawaa'id al-Fiqhiyyah, pgs. 210, 215, 227, 272, 297.

<sup>283</sup>Sharh Saheeh Muslim 10/87.

which has an image in it. For this reason, the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to enter and see (the curtain) and not criticize it before this final occasion.<sup>284</sup>

**The author (al-Qaradaawee)** following his previous statement, goes on to say: “On the basis of this and other similar ahaadith, **scholars of earlier times** have commented that what is prohibited are figures which cast shadows (meaning those which are solid like statues) and not those which do not cast shadows (meaning on a plane surface, like drawings and paintings).<sup>285</sup>

**Shaykh al-Albaanee comments:** This [scholars of earlier times] is none other than al-Qaasim ibn Muhammad, and an-Nawawee has already termed/classified this opinion as being baseless/false, as has been quoted previously. The author (al-Qaradaawee) has quoted it here from an-Nawawee to critique it with his saying<sup>286</sup>: ‘an-Nawawee mentions this opinion in his Sharh Muslim but rejects it, saying that it represents a wrong position. In Fath al-Baaree, al-Haafidh has traced this opinion on sound authority back to al-Qaasim ibn Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr, who was a jurist of Madinah and the best of his time.’

**Shaykh al-Albaanee continues:** This criticism coming from al-Haafidh is, in fact, only superficial criticism if his words are considered as a whole. In summary, he only criticized an-Nawawee for terming the opinion (of al-Qaasim) as being *false/baseless* (baatil). While, if he (an-Nawawee) had said: It is a *weak* or *rejected* opinion, al-Haafidh would not have criticized him, in sha Allah ta’aalaa. The proof of this is that al-Haafidh himself ends his critique saying: ‘But, the reconciliation (al-Jam’) between the ahaadith reported in this (issue), indicate that it (the opinion of al-Qaasim) is the **rejected** (marjooh) opinion; and that what has been permitted of images is

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<sup>284</sup> Ghaayah al-Maraam pgs. 87-88, no. 136.

<sup>285</sup> The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam, pg. 112, English Translation.

<sup>286</sup> The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam, footnote at bottom of pg. 112, English Translation.

that which has been degraded/debased (yumtahan), and not that which has been erected or posted up (mansoob).<sup>287</sup>

**POINT #8:**

Narrated Anas (may Allah be pleased with him):

'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) had a curtain (having images on it) and she screened the side of her house with it. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said to her, 'Remove it from my sight, for its images are still coming to my mind (and distracting me) in my prayers.' [Hadith #12, Chapter One].

**Shaykh al-Albaanee comments:** There is nothing in this hadith suggesting that these images (tasaaweer) were of that which has a soul. Therefore, the author's using it as an evidence that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) approved of the presence in his house of a curtain having images is incorrect; this, except after confirmation that they were (images) possessing souls. And far from it (being so confirmed)!

Even if that had been confirmed, the answer to that is that this occurred before the prohibition—as has already been made clear in (discussion of) the previous hadith.<sup>288</sup>

**POINT #9:**

Abu Zur'ah reported:

I visited the house of Marwaan in the company of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) and he saw images (tasaaweer) there, whereupon he said: I heard Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saying: "Allah, the Glorious and Exalted, said: 'Who is more a wrongdoer than one who tries to create creation like My creation. Let him create a small ant (dharrah) or a grain of wheat or that of barley.'"

**Imaam Muslim said:** This hadith has also been narrated to me by Zuhair ibn Harb, from Jareer, from 'Umaarah, from Abu Zur'ah who said: I and

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<sup>287</sup> Ghaayah al-Maraam pg. 88, no. 136.

<sup>288</sup> Ghaayah al-Maraam pg. 88 - 89, no. 137.

Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) entered a house being built in al-Madeenah for Sa'eed or Marwaan. (Abu Zur'ah) said: he (Abu Hurairah) saw an image-maker (musawwir) making images in (the wall of) the house. He then said: Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said the like of what is quoted above, except that he did not mention the words *Let him create a grain of barley*. [Hadith #16, Chapter One]

**Shaykh al-Albaanee comments:** The author has repeated the mention of this hadith here, in order to support his position that the prohibition of images is limited/confined to that which has body (solid, three dimensional objects).

**He (al-Qaradaawee) says:**<sup>289</sup> As is evident, Allah's creation does not consist of two dimensional drawings on a plane surface, for He fashions three dimensional corporeal beings[i.e., beings which have body]. As He, the Most High, says:

هو الذي يصوركم في الأرحام كيف يشاء لا إله إلا هو العزيز الحكيم

*It is He Who fashions you in the wombs as He pleases ...[al-Qur'aan 3:6]*

**Shaykh al-Albaanee comments:** This logic—if it were correct—would lead also to ruling the permissibility of making images which have body (solid, three dimensional objects). This is made clear by the fact that the creation of Allah, the Blessed and Most High, as is also evident, is not a lifeless creation, without soul. Nay! It is living, animate; it has a heart which pulsates, bones and joints and organs, and other things besides these that are well known.

The sculptor [who makes solid images] only forms/shapes the **outward appearance** of (Allah's) creation, except that it is from all directions (three dimensional). In the same way, the one who makes images on a

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<sup>289</sup>The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam pg. 113, English Translation.

plane surface, also only makes an image of the **outward appearance** of the creation, except that (his is from) one direction (on a plane surface, without body or mass).

This is the difference between the image-making of that which has body and that which does not. So, if this difference—and it is only a difference in **outer appearance**, as you can see—mandates, in the opinion of the author, the ruling of permissibility of (images) which do not have body, then it requires necessarily, the ruling of the permissibility also of (images) which have body.

This, because (the solid image which has body) only **imitates** the creation of Allah in **outward appearance** (*adh-dhaahir*), as we have made clear. So, “that which necessarily leads to something false, is itself false.”<sup>290</sup>

**Shaykh al-Albaanee goes on to say:** If it were said: verily, the images which have body were prohibited due to this ‘*al-mudaahaat adh-dhaahirah*’ (imitation of the outward appearance), and for this reason it will be said to those who make these images: “Give life to what you have created.” We would then say: then it is one of our proofs of the prohibition of images which have no body also, due to the realization (occurrence) in it of *al-mudaahaat adh-dhaahirah* (imitation of the outward appearance) also.

The most we can say about the first (three dimensional images) is that *al-mudaahaat* (imitation) in it is more complete. But, this does not necessarily require ruling the permissibility of the other (two dimensional images on a plane surface).

Just as the **difference** between the full-length statue (*at-tamaatheel al-kaamilah*) and the busts/sculptor of half the body (*at-tamaatheel an-nisfiyyah an-naaqisah*) does not necessitate any differentiation between

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<sup>290</sup>*This rule: “ma lazima minhu baatil, fa-huwa baatil,” is referring here to the fact that three dimensional, solid images, which have body, are prohibited by consensus of the scholars. So, if this logic leads to the conclusion (ruling) of the permissibility of even three dimensional solid objects—which is definitely false and baseless—then, THE LOGIC which leads to such CONCLUSION is itself FALSE AND BASELESS.*

them regarding the ruling of prohibition (of both), as has been established by the author (al-Qaradaawee).<sup>291</sup>

Therefore, we wanted that he (also) make no differentiation between those images which have body and those which do not. Instead, make the prohibition to be general, including both of them, following the example of the majority, the companions (of the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the scholars who came after them, as we have previously quoted from an-Nawawee; especially since this (prohibition of both types) is what was understood by Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him), the narrator of the hadith, as was previously mentioned [in this chapter].<sup>292</sup>

#### **POINT #10:**

Narrated 'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her), the wife of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), who said:

She bought a cushion (numruqah) having images (tasaaweer) on it. When Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw it, he stopped at the door and did not enter. She noticed the signs of strong disapproval on his face. She said: O Allah's Messenger! I turn to Allah and His Messenger in repentance. What sin have I committed? He said: What is this cushion for? I said: I bought it for you to sit on and recline on. Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "The makers of **these images** (suwar) will be punished (severely) on the Day of Resurrection and it will be said to them, *Make alive what you have created.*" He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) added: Angels do not enter a house in which there are images (suwar). [Hadith #5,]

**Shaykh al-Albaanee comments:** The author (al-Qaradaawee) has mentioned this hadith which opposes his position of the permissibility of images which have no body (ghair al-mujassamah). In reality, it shows the falsity of his opinion, as has already been made clear. But, he has mentioned it here to say: 'it is objectionable on several counts'. Then he

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<sup>291</sup>The Lawful and Prohibited in Islam, pg. 119, point 3, English Translation, where he says: "...This applies equally to full length statues and the busts."

<sup>292</sup>Ghaayah al-Maraam pg. 89, no. 138.

mentions four points,<sup>293</sup> all of them very weak. The weakness of all these (arguments) becomes clear from the previous comments, except the last of them (point four). For this reason, it is necessary to quote it and make clear its weakness.

**Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradaawee says:** “ There is also the hadith concerning the drape in ‘Aa’isha’s house [#12] which distracted the Prophet’s (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) attention from his prayers, whereupon he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) instructed her to remove it.

**Al-Haafidh says**<sup>294</sup>: There is a problem in reconciling this hadith [#12] and the hadith of the cushion [#5], both of which are ascribed to ‘Aa’isha ... This hadith [#12] indicated that he had allowed the drape to remain in

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<sup>293</sup>*Four points: as for the 5th and 6th points mentioned by the author—he has mentioned with them the explanations of the scholars (al-Qurtubee and al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar) concerning these points. [See pgs. 113, 114 The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam].*

<sup>294</sup>This quotation was taken from the English translation, pg. 114 point no. 4. The exact quote of al-Haafidh, in its complete form is as follows: “There is some dubiousness and unclarity in this matter if one attempts to reconcile between this hadith [of Anas (may Allah be pleased with him)] and the hadith of ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) which mentions the cushion having images on it [Hadith #5]. This, because the hadith of ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) indicates that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), from the very beginning, did not enter the house which had in it the curtain with images on it, until it was removed.

On the other hand, this hadith (of Anas, may Allah be pleased with him) indicates that he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) consented to (the presence of the images), and prayed while the curtain was hanging up, until the time when he ordered it to be removed because of what has been mentioned about his seeing the images while he is in the state of prayer. He didn’t at all address the fact of it being an image (surah).

*It is possible to reconcile (make jam’) between these ahaadith (by the following): The images (tasaaweer) in the first case (hadith #5) were of that which has a soul. While the images (tasaaweer) in this hadith (#12) were of other than living beings [human or animal]. This has already been established in the discussion of the hadith of Zaid ibn Khaalid [Hadith #7; see the explanation of Imaam an-Nawawee].”*

the house as long as it had not distracted his attention from the prayer; he did not have any particular objection to the pictures on it.' al-Haafidh then tries to reconcile the two ahaadith by saying that the cushion [#5] had a picture of a living creature, while the drape [#12] had pictures of inanimate objects. However, his attempt at reconciliation fails with respect to the hadith [#11] concerning the curtain with the picture of the bird on it.

**Shaykh al-Albaanee comments:** The hadith of the curtain [with the image of a bird] is what has preceded [#11], and it is not the hadith of the drape/curtain [which distracted him in his prayers #12] which is after it. This is indicated by the text of the two ahaadith.

In the first of them [#11 the curtain with the image of a bird], (we find): "...whenever anyone entered (the room) he would find it (the curtain) *in front of him* (facing him)." In the other [#12], (we find): "...she screened **the side of her house** with it (the curtain/drape)." This one also contains the words: "...its images are still coming to my mind (and distracting me) in my prayers."

This is like a *nass*<sup>295</sup> (unambiguous, clear text) showing that (this curtain/drape) was not in the position such that when anyone entered he would find it in front of him. This proves that (these two ahaadith) are two different stories (incidents). Therefore, it is not correct to apply or understand one of them in light of the other.

In this way, the reconciliation (jam') of al-Haafidh becomes free of any objection. As well, the hadith of 'Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) [#5] becomes free of any contradiction, and its indication of the prohibition of **possession of *ghair al-mujassamah*** (images which have no body) is also established. Wa'llahu al-Muwaffiq (Allah is the One Who Grants Success)!

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<sup>295</sup> *Nass: words that can only be understood in one way, having only one possible meaning. There is no chance of these words being understood to mean something else.*



# SECTION FOUR

## ISLAMIC LEGAL RULINGS (FATAAWAA)

*A. Islamic Legal Rulings, Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Saalih Al-Uthaimen (From the book, "Fataawaa Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Saalih al-Uthaimen")*

**The Legal Ruling Concerning Tasweer (Image Making) By Hand and By Camera; and the Acquisition/Possession of Images**

**Question:** Please explain the legal ruling concerning tasweer—that which is done by hand, and that which is done by camera; and what is the ruling of hanging images on the wall; and what is the ruling of acquisition/possession of images for no reason except memories?

**The ruling:** Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and may blessings and peace be on His Prophet Muhammad, his family and companions, all of them. Image-making (at-tasweer) by hand <sup>296</sup> is forbidden (haraam) and more than that, it is one of the major sins (al-kabaa'ir). This is so because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) cursed the image-makers (musawwiroon), and a curse will not be invoked except for a major sin.

This ruling applies whether he drew the picture to show the excellence of his ability (originality), or whether he drew it as an illustration for students, or for some other reason. In every case it is forbidden.

The exception to this is if someone drew the parts of the body, like the hand alone or the head alone, in which case there is no harm in it. <sup>297</sup>

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<sup>296</sup> Drawing, painting, sketching, statue-making, etc.

<sup>297</sup> See Essay of Shaykh Abdul-Azeez Bin Baaz.

As for taking pictures with an instamatic camera which doesn't require any work to be done by the hand—there is no harm in it because it is not considered to be *tasweer* (image making).<sup>298</sup> But, there still remains a consideration: What is the objective of this picture-taking? If the objective of this picture-taking is to possess the picture, even if it is for memories, then the picture-taking (even by camera) becomes unlawful (*haraam*). This is so, because **the means to a thing falls under the same ruling as its goal.**<sup>299</sup>

The possession or acquisition of pictures for memories is forbidden because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) informed us that: "Angels do not enter a house which has images in it." [See Chapter one, Hadith #5, 6, 7, 17.] This indicates the prohibition of the possession of images in houses.

As for the hanging of images on the wall, it is forbidden, not permissible, as the angels do not enter a house which has images in it.

As for that which the people have been tested with today, by the presence of images in things that are required as a necessity, my view is that whoever is able to resist it, then he should be opposed to possession of these images. If he is not able to avoid it, then it can be considered a matter of distress, difficulty and hardship from which the Muslims have been excused from blame.<sup>300</sup>

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<sup>298</sup>See "Discussion With Shaykh Muhammad Nasruddeen al-Albaanee;" and "Refutation of Yusuf al-Qaradaawee," by Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan, Point Three, for the position of those scholars who consider picture-taking with the camera forbidden.

<sup>299</sup>This is a rule in *Usool al-Fiqh*: "al-wasaa'il lahaa ahkaam al-maqaasid." Therefore, if possession of pictures (the object, aim or goal) is forbidden (*haraam*), then the means to it (photography) is also forbidden.

<sup>300</sup>"Allah has pardoned for me my people their mistakes and forgetfulness, and what they have done under duress (under compulsion)." It is a good (*hasan*) hadith, reported by Ibn Maajah 1/659. [See Forty Hadith of an-Nawawee, no. 39] Al-Albaanee declared it to be authentic [in consideration of the chains of narration all together]. See: *Irwaa' al-Ghaleel* 1/123, no. 82; *Saheeh Ibn Maajah* 1/347, no. 1662 [2043].

In other words, the presence of images in some magazines and newspapers which people possess because of the benefit, guidance, and instruction which they contain—as I see it, the likeness of this, as long as the intention is not to possess the images, then there is no harm in possessing these magazines, etc., especially if the images are closed-up (inside the magazine or newspaper) and are not displayed nor clearly seen.

The publication of the images of the mutilated and maimed war victims of Afghanistan serves a real purpose. It encourages the people to give aid to them. Nonetheless, I say that this might still be achieved without the publication of these images. Perhaps it is possible to put something over the face so that the head will not be seen because if the head is cut off, it does not remain an image<sup>301</sup>. This has been mentioned in the hadith: “Do not leave an image without obliterating/effacing it, nor a high grave without leveling it.”<sup>302</sup>

Here the apparent meaning of image (*surah*) is even *surah at-talween* (drawings, paintings and sketches on a plane surface) which don't cast a shadow. This, because he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not say: “except that you break it.” Also, the word *at-tams* (efface) is used for *mulawwan* (paintings, drawings, pictures and sketches, etc.) [not that which has body].

Also the hadith of ‘Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her) reported by al-Bukhaaree, where he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stopped in the doorway, and she knew from his face that he was discontented with something. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “The makers of these images will be punished.”<sup>303</sup>

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<sup>301</sup> *The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “The image is actually the head. Therefore, if the head is cut off, then there is no image.” Saheeh al-Jaami’ as-Sagheer 2/718, no. 3864.*

<sup>302</sup> *Reported by Muslim 2/459, no 2115. See Hadith #10, of Chapter One.*

<sup>303</sup> *Reported by al-Bukhaaree 7/545, no. 844; and Muslim 3/1159, no. 5266. See Hadith #5 of Chapter One.*

So, this is an evidence that it includes images (statues) which cast a shadow [because they have body and form] as well as those which do not cast a shadow. And this is the correct understanding.

### **Picture-Taking at Celebrations and Birthday Parties are not Permissible**

**Question:** One of my friends has the job of taking pictures at celebrations, which requires him to look at women who are not properly covering themselves (Islamically), and to mix with them. What is the Islamic ruling concerning photography especially at celebrations and what they call birthday celebrations.

**The ruling:** Picture-taking as mentioned here is not permissible because of the fitnah (temptation or enticement) involved.

### **The Meaning of: "...except designs/inscriptions in a cloth"**

**Question:** What is the meaning of the sentence: "except designs/inscriptions in a cloth"—which came in the hadith of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ?<sup>304</sup>

**The ruling:** Our view of the hadith "...except designs/ inscriptions in a cloth" is that it is one of the texts whose meaning is not entirely clear (an-Nusoos al-Mutashaabihah), and the correct principle (in it) is to refer it back to the text which is basic or fundamental, of established meaning (an-Nass al-Muhkam). This is based on the statement of Allah, the Most High:

هو الذي أنزل عليك الكتاب منه آيات محكمات هن أم الكتاب وأخر متشابهات  
فأما الذين في قلوبهم غرغ فيتبعون ما تشابه منه ابتغاء الفتنة وابتغاء تأويله وما يعلم تأويله

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<sup>304</sup> Reported by Al-Bukhaaree 7/543, no. 841. See Hadith #7 of Chapter One.  
"The angels do not enter a house where there are images...except designs/inscriptions in a cloth."

إنا الله والراسخون في العلم يقولون آمنا به كل من عند ربنا وما يذكر إلا أولوا

الأنساب

*It is He who has sent down to you (Muhammad) the Book (this Qur'aan). In it are verses that are entirely clear; they are the foundations of the Book; and others not entirely clear. So, as for those in whose hearts there is a deviation (from the truth), they follow that which is not entirely clear, seeking 'al-fitnah' (polytheism and trials, etc.) and seeking for its hidden meanings thereof. But no one knows its hidden meanings except Allah. And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say: We believe in it; the whole of it (clear and unclear verses) are from our Lord. And none receive admonition except men of understanding. [Aali 'Imraan 3:7]*

So, the *mutashaabah*—that text whose meaning is not entirely clear, which can be understood in more than one way—has to be referred back to the *muhkam*—the basic and fundamental text whose meaning is clear. In this way the obscurity and lack of clarity will not remain.

So, this hadith: “illa raqman fi thawb—except designs/inscriptions in a cloth” has the possibility of being general (in meaning), since “raqman” (designs/inscriptions) covers images of animals, images of trees, and other things besides that.

So, if it has the potential to mean (all of) this, then it has to be understood by referring it back to *an-Nusoos al-Muhkamah* (the basic texts whose meaning is clear) which will clarify that the intended meaning of “designs in a cloth” is other than images of animals or images of humans. In this way, all the texts (*mutashaabihah* and *muhkam*) will remain consistent, agreeable and in conformity with one another.<sup>305</sup>

## Hanging Images on the Wall

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<sup>305</sup> See: Fath al-Baaree 10/405; Sharh Saheeh Muslim, *Imam an-Nawawee*, 14/85; explanation of Hadith #7, Chapter One, for further discussion of this issue.

**Question:** What is the Legal Ruling Concerning Hanging Images (Suwar) on the Wall?

**The ruling:** Hanging images on the wall and in particular large images is forbidden (haraam), even if only part of the body and the head are in the picture.

The intention of exaltation and glorification in it is obvious, and the origin of shirk (association of something with Allah, as a god besides Him) is this very thing: “al-ghuloo” (exaggeration and exceeding the proper bounds).

This was reported from Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father), where he said that the idols (asnaam) which the people of Nooh (Noah, peace be upon him) were worshipping were names of righteous men [Wadd, Suwaaa’, Yaghooth, Ya’ooq, and Nasr] who the people made images of to serve as a reminder of the worship (the righteous deeds of those men). Then, as time went on, they (the later generations) began to worship the images.<sup>306</sup>

**The Legal Ruling Concerning Possession of Images (Suwar) out of Necessity.**

**Question:** Images (surah) have become an important means for visualization and elucidation in the present age, and particularly in the newspapers and television. In light of the above, what is the Islamic Legal Ruling for possession of images especially since images illustrate for example, the slaughter which the Muslims in Afghanistan are subjected to?

**The ruling:** The acquisition and possession of images—in general—is not permissible (laa yajooz) without consideration as to whether the MEANS of producing it is by hand or by camera. It is not permissible to be in someone’s possession except out of necessity.

This position is preferable over the saying of some contemporary scholars who say: If there is some benefit or good (maslahah) in keeping the image—though it is less than a necessity—there is no harm in keeping it. But, as much as one is able to stay far away from that, then it is better

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<sup>306</sup>See: *Qur’aan, chapter : Nooh 71:23; Conversation with al-Albaanee; Muhammad Jameel Zainoo; al-Bukhaaree 6/414, no. 442.*

because the possession of pictures in other than a state of degradation, humiliation and contempt is not permissible. This, because “the angels do not enter a house which has an image (surah) in it.”<sup>307</sup>

### **The Legal Ruling Concerning Production of Tamaatheel (Sculptured Images or Statues).**

**Question:** What is the Legal Ruling Concerning Production of Tamaatheel (Sculptured Images or Statues)? May Allah protect you and look over you!

**The ruling:** Production of sculptured images or statues (at-tamaatheel al-mujassamah), if they are images of beings which possess souls<sup>308</sup>, is forbidden (haraam) and not allowable (laa yajooz).

This is because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) uttered the curse of Allah upon the ‘musawwiroon’ (images makers).<sup>309</sup> It is also authentically reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: Allah, the Mighty the Glorious, has said: “Who is more a wrongdoer than one who tries to create creation like My creation ...”<sup>310</sup> and this is something forbidden (haraam).

As for the sculptured image which is not of something possessing a soul, then there is no harm in it, and the earnings from it are lawful (halaal) because it is of the permissible works. And Allah is the One Who Grants Success!

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<sup>307</sup> Reported by al-Bukhaaree 7/545, no. 844; and Muslim 3/1159, no. 5266. See: Hadith #5 of Chapter One.

<sup>308</sup> The intended meaning here of “beings which possess souls,” includes both human beings and animals, fish and birds, etc.--all of which have the ability of independent movement. It does not include plant life such as trees and flowers--according to the majority of scholars--though they also possess a form of life. See the fatwa of Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father), Hadith #14, and the opinion of Mujaahid in the explanation of this hadith.

<sup>309</sup> Reported by al-Bukhaaree 7/546, no. 845. Hadith #9 of Chapter One.

<sup>310</sup> Reported by al-Bukhaaree 7/541, no. 837; Muslim 3/1162, no. 5275. See Hadith #16 of Chapter One.

## What is the Legal Ruling Concerning the Drawing (Rasm) of that which Possess a Soul (Human or Animal)?

**Question:** What is the legal ruling concerning the drawing (rasm) of that which possess a soul (human or animal)? Is it included in the general meaning of the Hadith Qudsee<sup>311</sup>: “ ... Who is more a wrongdoer than one who tries to create creation like My creation. Let him create a small ant (dharrah) or a grain of wheat or that of barley.”?<sup>312</sup>

**The ruling:** Yes, it is included in the meaning of this hadith. But, the created things are of two kinds:

A. Khalqun Jismee wa Wasfee—that which has body/mass, and additionally it is described in detail—and this is in the case of *al-suwah al-mujassamah* [such as the statue of a man or animal, formed and shaped with the details of fingers, toes, eyes and ears, etc.].

B. Khalqun Wasfee laa Jismee—the description of something in detail (on paper or any plane surface) without it having body/mass—and this is in the case of ‘as-suwar al-marsoomah’ [such as a drawing, sketch or photograph of an animal or person].

Both of them are included in the hadith just mentioned because making the description of a thing (in a drawing) is like producing the body (sculptured from clay, for example) even though the body (sculptured thing) is worse because it combines the two: al-khalq al-jismee (that which has body and mass) and al-khalq al-wasfee (that which is drawn on a plane surface).

The evidence that this hadith is general, and that image-making (tasweer) by hand is forbidden—equally if it was a sculptured body (tajseem) or a drawing on paper (talween)—is the generality of the curse (la’nah) of the

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<sup>311</sup>Hadith Qudsee: That Which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) reported from Allah. The words and meaning are from Allah Himself, but it is not recited in prayers, nor written as a part of the “mushaf” (al-Qur’aan). The other opinion about the Hadith Qudsee is that the meaning is from Allah, while the words are from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)—which is the definition of Hadith Nabawee. And Allah Knows Best!

<sup>312</sup>Reported by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim. Hadith #16



Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) on the image-makers (al-musawwiroon).<sup>313</sup>

So, the generality of the curse (la'nah) of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) on the image-makers indicates that there is no difference between sculptured images (as-suwar al-mujassamah) and drawings or paintings which are the result of colors only (al-mulawwanah) [i.e., pencils, crayons or paintings, without mass or body].

This is the safest position, and it is more right that the believer should be far and distant from the doubtful matters.<sup>314</sup> But, if someone says: Isn't it safer to follow that which is indicated by the text, than to follow the strictest position? Then we say: Yes, this is correct. Verily, the safest position is to follow that which is indicated by the text, not the strictest position; except if we find a general expression (lafdh 'aamm) which could include this and that (both meanings).

In that case, the safest position is to understand it by its broadest application. And this is perfectly applicable to the hadith of image-making (tasweer).

Therefore, it is not permissible for anyone to draw an image (surah) of that which has a soul—human or otherwise. This is because it is included in the curse (la'nah) on the image-makers. And Allah is the One Who Grants Success!

### **Wearing Clothing Which Have Images**

**Question:** What is the Legal Ruling Concerning Wearing Clothing Which Has Images (Surah) on it?

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<sup>313</sup> Reported by al-Bukhaaree. Hadith #9

<sup>314</sup> "Leave that which makes you doubt for that which does not make you doubt." at-Tirmidhee 4/576, no. 2518 [The checking of Kamaal Yusoof al-Haut]. It is a good and authentic hadith (Hasan Saheeh). See: Saheeh Sunan at-Tirmidhee 2/309, no. 2045. Also, "...he who avoids the doubtful matters clears himself in regard to his religion and his honor, but he who falls into doubtful matters, falls into that which is unlawful (haraam). al-Bukhaaree 1/44, no. 49; 3/151, no. 267; Muslim 3/840, no. 3882.

**The ruling:** It is not permissible for anyone to wear clothing which has an image (surah) of an animal or a human being on it. It is also not permissible to wear a *ghutra* or *shimaagh* [a type of head gear worn by men in Saudi Arabia and some of the Gulf States] or what resembles that—if it has on it an image of a human being or an animal.

That is because it is authentically reported from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that he said: “Verily, the angels do not enter a house which has in it an image.”<sup>315</sup>

For this reason, we don’t see (the permissibility) of anyone possessing images (suwar) for reminiscence (to remember someone by them) as they say. And whoever has images for memories or reminiscence, it is obligatory (waajib) for him to destroy them—there being no difference whether he put them on the wall, in a photo album, or in some other place.

This is because the presence of images serves as a prevention, by the members of a household, of the entry of the angels into their house. This hadith which I am referring to is authentically reported from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). And Allah Knows Best!

### **Images (suwar) for Reminiscence (dhikraa)**

**Question:** What is ruling concerning the collection of images (suwar) for memories or reminiscence?

**The ruling:** Collecting images (suwar) for memories is forbidden, and it is not permissible for anyone to possess an image (surah) except if need or necessity calls for it—like the images (suwar) for the driver's license, residence permit (iqamah), personal ID card, and pass-port.

As for that (image) for which there is no real need, but it's only purpose is for reminiscence—its possession is forbidden, because the angels do not enter a house which has an image (surah) in it.<sup>316</sup>

Silsilah Kitaab ad-Da'wah, 5/191

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<sup>315</sup> Reported by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim. See Hadith #5

<sup>316</sup> Hadith #5, Chapter One.

***B. Islamic Legal Rulings, Shaykh ‘ Abdul-‘Azeez Ibn ‘Abdullah Ibn Baaz***

**Retention/Keeping of Magazines Which Have Images In Them**

***Question:*** I am a High School student, and my hobby of reading and perusal has lead me to subscribe to many Islamic magazines as well as cultural and military magazines. Some of these magazines, or most of them, contain images of people. I keep the magazines in my personal/private library, and the images are in it, and we know what has been said about the image-makers (al-musawwiroon),<sup>317</sup> and what has been said about the angels not entering the house which has in it a dog or a image,<sup>318</sup> in the Prophetic Hadith ... I hope for clarification of this issue in a way that will uncover that which is unclear, and be comprehensive not leaving any aspect untouched.

***Answer:*** There is nothing to prevent you from keeping beneficial books, newspapers and magazines, even if they contain some images. But, if they were women's images, then it is a must that they be blotted out. If they were images of men or any type of animal, then it is sufficient to blot out the head, based on the many authentic hadith narrated in this matter.

***Silsilah Kitaab ad-Da'wah, 2/265***

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<sup>317</sup>Hadith #9, #14, and #19, Chapter One.

<sup>318</sup>Hadith no. 4, Essay of Shaykh Bin Baaz.

## Carrying Images (on one's person) During Prayer

**Question:** What is the ruling concerning the prayer of a man who has in his pocket a wallet containing a number of cards which have his image on them, such as the driver's license, job identification, and the like of that...?

**Answer:** His prayer is correct (acceptable), and his carrying of the above mentioned images does not invalidate his prayer since he is compelled and in need of carrying them.

As for images which are for the purpose of memories and that which is like it—it is not permissible to carry them, nor to keep them in the house. In fact, it is obligatory to destroy them, based on the saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to Alee ibn Abu Taalib (may Allah be pleased with him): “Do not leave any image except that you have effaced or obliterated it, nor any raised grave except that you have leveled it (to the ground).” Narrated by Imam Muslim in his book of Saheeh (authentic hadith).<sup>319</sup>

Another reason is that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) prohibited images from being in the house. Narrated by at-Tirmidhee<sup>320</sup> and others. Also, because of what has been authentically reported from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in the hadith of Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) that he entered (her house) one day and saw a curtain with her containing images (tasaaweer). As a result, his face changed and he tore up (the curtain). Then he said: “The makers of these images (suwar) will be punished on the day of Judgment, and it will be said to them: give life to that which you have created.” Narrated by Muslim in his book of Saheeh (authentic hadith).<sup>321</sup>

The ahaadith concerning this matter are many.

Silsilah Kitaab ad-Da'wah, 2/110,111

## Video-Taping the Washing of the Dead as a Reminder (Tadhkeer)

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<sup>319</sup> Hadith #10, Chapter One.

<sup>320</sup> Hadith no. 2, Essay of Shaykh Bin Baaz.

<sup>321</sup> Hadith #5, Chapter One.

**Question:** What is the ruling concerning video taping of the washing of a dead body on a video tape, then selling it, arguing that it is for the purpose of reminding (others) of death?

**Answer:** If what is meant here is filming (tasweer) the dead body while it is being washed (prepared for burial)—this is not permissible. This is so because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) prohibited the making of images of whatever possess a soul (dhawaat al-arwaah), and he cursed the image makers (al-musawwiroon)<sup>322</sup> and said: “Verily, they will be the most severely punished people on the day of Judgment.”<sup>323</sup>

On the other hand, if what the questioner means here is (simply) clarification of the description of the washing (preparation for burial) of the dead body, as Allah (azza wa jalla) legislated it to be, on a tape to be distributed or sold—there is no harm in it; just as teaching the people the prayers and other things which they are in need of is tape-recorded (with the condition that it be) without taking images (tasweer). May Allah grant success to us all to attain beneficial knowledge and righteous deeds!

Silsilah Kitaab ad-Da'wah, 2/141

### **Taking Images for Reminiscence (Dhikraa)**

**Question:** When we go on a trip with some students and friends, we take images with the sole intention of reminiscence. What is the ruling of taking images in this case?

**Answer:** It's ruling is that it is forbidden (haraam) if that which is photographed possesses a soul. This is because of the saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): “The most severely punished people on the day of Judgment will be the image-makers (al-musawwiroon).<sup>324</sup>” Also, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) cursed the image-makers.<sup>325</sup>

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<sup>322</sup> Hadith #9, Chapter One.

<sup>323</sup> Hadith #13, Chapter One.

<sup>324</sup> Hadith #13, Chapter One.

<sup>325</sup> Hadith #9, Chapter One.

As for making images of those things which do not possess a soul, such as cars, airplanes, palm trees and the like of them—there is no harm in it. Allah is the One Who Grants Success!

Silsilah Kitaab ad-Da'wah, 2/260

### **The Ruling Concerning (the drawing of) Caricatures/Cartoons**

**Question:** What is the ruling concerning the drawings (caricatures) which are seen in some newspapers and magazines and which consist of drawings of people?

**Answer:** The above mentioned (type of) drawing is not permissible, and additionally it is one of the wide-spread evils which must be abandoned. This is because of the generality of the authentic ahaadith which indicate the prohibition of making images of anything which possesses a soul, there being no difference whether it is by camera,<sup>326</sup> by hand or otherwise.

Of those ahaadith, is what has been reported by al-Bukhaaree in his Saheeh (Authentic Book of Hadith), on the authority of Abu Juhafah (may Allah be pleased with him), that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) cursed those who take interest (riba) and those who receive it, and that he cursed the image-makers (al-musawwiroon).<sup>327</sup>

Also, that which is authentically reported in the two authentic Books (as-Saheehain, al-Bukhaaree and Muslim), from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that he said: "The most severely punished people on the day of Judgment will be the image-makers (al-musawwiroon)."<sup>328</sup>

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<sup>326</sup>See: "Discussion With Shaykh al-Albaanee"; *Quotations from Shaykh Mustafaa al-Hamaamee: "Corrections of Shaykh al-Qaradaawee,"* by Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan

<sup>327</sup>Hadith #9, Chapter One.

<sup>328</sup>Hadith #13, Chapter One.

Also, his saying: “Verily, the makers of these images will be punished on the day of Judgment, and it will be said to them: give life to that which you have created.”<sup>329</sup>

Besides these, there are so many other authentic ahaadith concerning this subject. And there are no exceptions in this matter except that which **necessity demands** its being photographed. This is based on the saying of Allah (the Mighty, the Majestic):

وقد فصل لكم ما حرم عليكم إلا ما اضطررتم إليه

...Certainly, He has explained to you in detail what is forbidden to you, **EXCEPT UNDER COMPULSION OF NECESSITY...** [al-An'aam 6:119]

I ask Allah to grant success to the Muslims in holding fast to the Law (sharee'ah) of their Lord, sticking to the Sunnah of their Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and being warned against what is in contradiction to that. Verily He (Allah) is the best one to ask (one's needs). Silsilah Kitaab ad-Da'wah, 2/260, 261

### **Having Statues In the Home For Decorations**

**Question:** What is the ruling concerning statues (tamaatheel) which are placed in the home solely for the purpose of decorations, not to be worshipped?

**Answer:** It is not permissible to hang images (tasaaweer)—not even the stuffed carcasses of dead animals—in houses, offices or meeting places. This is because of the general meaning of the authentic ahaadith of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) which indicate the prohibition of hanging images (suwar) and putting up statues (tamaatheel) in homes and other places. This is because it is a means/way leading to *shirk bi'llah* (offering worship to others besides Allah). Also, in it is an attempt to imitate Allah's creation, and acting like (imitating) the

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<sup>329</sup> Hadith #1, Chapter One.

enemies of Allah [in hanging these images and statues].<sup>330</sup> It also opens the door to the hanging of statues (at-tamaatheel al-musawwarah).

The perfect Islamic Law has come to close all ways which lead to shirk and disobedience (of Allah). And shirk befell the people of Noah (peace be upon him) as a result of the making of images (tasweer) of five of the righteous men of their time. Their images were put up in the places of meeting and congregation.

Allah (be He free from all imperfection) explained this matter in His Clear Book (al-Qur'aan) where He says:

وقالوا لا تذرنا آلهتنا ولا تذرنا ودا ولا سواعا ولا يغووث ويعوق ونسرا

*And they have said: You shall not leave your gods, nor shall you leave Wadd, nor Suwaa', nor Yaghooth, nor Ya'ooq nor Nasr. And indeed they [the idols which were named after the five righteous men] have led many astray... [Nooh 71:23, 24]*

Therefore, it is incumbent to be warned against imitating these (people) in their evil deeds which resulted in shirk. It has been authentically reported from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that he said to Alee (may Allah be pleased with him): "Don't leave any image except that you have effaced/obliterated it, nor any raised grave except that you have leveled it (to the ground)." Narrated by Muslim in his Saheeh.<sup>331</sup>

He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) also said: "The most severely punished people on the day of Judgment will be the image-makers

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<sup>330</sup> *Imitation of the disbelievers has been prohibited clearly in the words of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): "Whoever imitates a people, then he is one of them." al-Albaanee declared it to be authentic. [Saheeh Sunan Abu Daawood, 2/761, no. 3401/4031; Saheeh Jaami' as-Sagheer 2/1059, no. 6149; Irwaa' al-Ghaleel 5/109, no. 1269.]*

<sup>331</sup> *Hadith #10, Chapter One.*



(al-musawwiroon).<sup>332</sup> Its authenticity is agreed upon (by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim). And the ahaadith in this (matter) are many. Allah is the One Who Grants success!

Silsilah Kitaab ad-Da'wah, 1/18, 19

### **The Ruling concerning Hanging Images**

**Question:** What is the ruling concerning the hanging of images in homes and other places?

**Answer:** The ruling is that it is prohibited if these images (suwar) are of that which possess a soul—human beings or otherwise. This is based on the saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to Alee: “Don't leave any image except that you have effaced/obliterated it, nor any raised grave except that you have leveled it (to the ground).” Narrated by Muslim in his Saheeh.<sup>333</sup>

Also, because of what has been authentically reported from Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) that she hung a curtain having images over (the door of) a chamber of hers. When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw it, he tore it apart, and his face changed [showing displeasure], and he said: O Aa'isha: Verily, the makers of these images (suwar) will be punished on the day of Judgment, and it will be said to them: give life to what you have created. Narrated by Muslim and others.<sup>334</sup>

However, if the image (surah) is in a carpet, such that it is degraded and held in contempt, or a pillow which is leaned upon, in that case there is no harm.

This is because of what is authentically reported from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that he had an appointment to meet Jibreel. When Jibreel came, he was prevented from entering the house. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) asked him (why),

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<sup>332</sup> Hadith #13, Chapter One.

<sup>333</sup> Hadith #10, Chapter One.

<sup>334</sup> Hadith #4, Chapter One.

and he said: "Verily there is a statue (timthaal) in the house, and a curtain with images (tasaaweer) and a dog." So, he ordered that the head of the statue be cut off; and he ordered that the curtain be cut up and made into two cushions spread out on which people walk; and he ordered that the dog be put out. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) then did so and Jibreel (peace be upon him) then entered. Narrated by an-Nasaa'ee and others with a good (jayyid) chain of narrators.<sup>335</sup>

It is also mentioned in this hadith that the dog was a puppy belonging to al-Hasan and al-Husain, and that it was under a couch in the house.

It has also been authentically reported from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that he said: "The angels do not enter a house in which there is an image (surah) and a dog." Agreed upon by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.<sup>336</sup>

Finally, this story of Jibreel indicates that the image (surah) in a carpet, and things like carpets, do not prevent the entering of the angels. And the likeness of that is what has been authenticated in the Saheeh (al-Bukhaaree) on the authority of Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) that she made from the aforementioned curtain, a pillow for the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to lean on.<sup>337</sup>

Silsilah Kitaab ad-Da'wah, 1/19, 20

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<sup>335</sup> *Hadith #18, Chapter One.*

<sup>336</sup> *Essay of Shaykh Bin Baaz, hadith no. 4.*

<sup>337</sup> *Hadith #3, Chapter One.*

### ***C. Islamic Legal Rulings, Shaykh Saalih Ibn Fawzaan Al-Fawzaan***

#### **The Ruling Concerning Acquisition and Retention of Children's Toys which Have Body (Three- Dimensional).**

**Question:** The opinions and legal rulings concerning children's toys have become numerous. What is the (correct) ruling concerning dolls and three-dimensional animal (toys)? There are those who rule that their possession is permissible with the condition that they be degraded and not given importance or attention. Then there are those who rule that it is totally prohibited. What is the correct ruling? Also, what is the ruling concerning use of those pictured cards used for teaching children the letters of the alphabet, numbers, and the manners of performing ablution and prayer? May you inform me, and May Allah benefit you!

**Answer:** The acquisition of images of that which has a soul (dhawaat al-arwaah) is not permissible, except those images which are kept out of necessity—like the images for *hafeezat an-Nufoos*,<sup>338</sup> personal ID card, and driver's license. Other images besides this are not permissible to be retained for children's toys, nor for the purpose of teaching them. This is because of the generality of the prohibition of making images (tasweer) and the use of them.

There are so many children's toys which do not have images. And there are other means of teaching them besides (the use of) images (suwar). Whoever allows the acquisition of images (suwar) for children's toys—his opinion is rejected, because he has relied on the hadith which mentions the dolls of Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) when she was a small girl.<sup>339</sup>

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<sup>338</sup> "*Hafeezat an-Nufoos*": a type of ID card used by Saudi citizens which includes his name as well as the names of the members of his family.

<sup>339</sup> *Hadith #20 and #21, Chapter One.*

However, it is said that the hadith of Aa'isha is abrogated by the ahaadith which prohibit image-making (tasweer).<sup>340</sup> It has also been said that the images (suwar) mentioned in that hadith were not of the same form/type as the images (surah) now present. Instead, they were (made) from rags and scraps, and sticks/twigs known in their time. They did not imitate the shape or form of animals like the ones known to us today do. This is the correct opinion, and Allah knows best! The images (surah) known today are exact likenesses of the animals. In fact, some of them move just like the movement of these animals.

Silsilah Kitaab ad-Da'wah, 8/23, 24

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<sup>340</sup> See: *Sharh (explanation) of Hadith #20, for those who confirmed this opinion, or inclined towards it. [Imaam Maalik, al-Bayhaqee, Ibn al-Jawzee, al-Mundhiree, ad-Daawoodee, Ibn Baattaal and al-Haleemee. [Fath al-Baaree 10/544, no. 6130].*

## Making Images (tasweer) of That Which Has No Soul

**Question:** It is well known that making images of things which have souls (dhawaat al-arwaah) is not permissible. However, what is the position of Islam concerning those things which have no soul, such as trees and stones...?

**Answer:** There is no harm in making images (tasweer) of that which has no soul—such as trees, buildings, seas, rivers and other things—as has been defined and stipulated by many of the scholars.

This is because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Whoever makes an image (surah) will be required to breathe soul in it on the day of Judgment, but he would not be able to do so.”<sup>341</sup>

This shows that the prohibition against image-making (tasweer) is particularly in reference to those things which have a soul (dhawaat al-arwaah). Nonetheless, some scholars have held the opinion that image-making (tasweer) is absolutely prohibited—including that which has a soul as well as that which has no soul.

This is based on the saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): “...then create a grain...”<sup>342</sup> [The image-makers would be challenged to create a grain, though the grain of wheat or corn obviously doesn't have a soul.] The correct opinion is the first one. It is based on the saying of Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father): ‘...If you must do it (i.e., make these images), then make (images) of trees and that which has no soul.’<sup>343</sup>

Silsilah Kitaab ad-Da'wah, 8/37

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<sup>341</sup> Hadith #15, Chapter One.

<sup>342</sup> Hadith #16, Chapter One.

<sup>343</sup> Hadith #14, Chapter One.

#### ***D. Islamic Legal Rulings, The Committee Of Senior Scholars, Saudi Arabia***

**Question:** We have differed concerning the issue of photographs, which you did not mention in your (previous) letter. What is the legal ruling of tasweer (Image-making)? Is it considered to be under the ruling of images made by hand (at-tasweer al-yadawee) or is it outside of its ruling? Some people claimed that it is permissible since it is not a hand-made image; it is simply capturing an image of the outer form of the human being, without any effort [on the part of the photographer] besides pressing the button to produce a picture duplicating the (original) image.

**Answer:** The photograph is one of the types of the prohibited image-making. It, along with image-making by weaving, dying with colors and statues (as-suwar al-mujassamah), falls under one ruling. The difference in the means of the actual image-making or the instrument used does not necessitate any difference in their legal ruling (illegality). In the same manner, the difference in the amount of effort put forth in making an image—whether difficult or easy—is not a factor in determining the legal ruling. The only thing considered is the **image itself**,<sup>344</sup> and it is forbidden, even if the means and the effort put forth to produce it differs.

**Question:** One of my friends showed me your photograph [here referring to Shaykh Abdul-Azeez ibn Baaz] in the Kuwait Magazine *al-Mujtam'ah* and the Egyptian magazine *al-I'tisaam* accompanying your legal decisions related to the rules of the [fast] of the blessed month of Ramadan. Is the appearance of your picture in the magazine an indication of its permissibility, or was this something done without your knowledge?

**Answer:** The appearance of my picture in the two magazines *al-Mujtama'ah* and *al-I'tisaam* accompanying my legal rulings related to fasting in the month of Ramadan is not an evidence that I have ruled the permissibility of images, or that I am pleased with it [their putting my

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<sup>344</sup> *This is based on the rule in Usool al-Fiqh: The means to a thing falls under the ruling of the thing itself. Therefore, if the picture is forbidden, likewise the means to produce it are also forbidden.*

picture in the magazine]. I certainly did not know of their photographing me.

**Question:** If photography is not permissible, then what is the ruling concerning the buying of magazines and newspapers which are filled with images in addition to their containing important news, and other trivial information? Please clarify! Also, is it permissible to put these magazines in the place of prayers (*al-musalla*) if they are covered up with a cloth or the like of it; or must they be destroyed after reading them?

**Answer:** It is permissible to buy magazines and newspaper which contain important news and beneficial issues of scholarship and science, and which also contain images of creatures which possess souls, as well as to benefit from what it contains of useful knowledge and important news. The reason for this is that the intended purpose and objective [for buying these magazines] is the knowledge and news contained therein, while the images are just coming along with it [not being the objective]. Therefore, the legal ruling applies to the original objective, without consideration of that which comes along with it [not being originally intended]. Also, it is permissible to put these magazines in the place of prayer as long as the images are covered up in some way or another or the heads effaced, so that one may derive benefit from the writings contained therein.

**Question:** What is the ruling concerning looking at the moving pictures like that which is on television? Is it permissible to use [view] a television in the place of prayer? Please clarify the legal rulings concerning these matters, and may Allah reward you!

**Answer:** It is not permissible to put a television in the place of prayer (*al-Musalla*) due to it consisting of time-wasting matters of falsehood. Additionally, it is not permissible to view those things [found on the television] such as naked and sexually seductive pictures [of women]. A legal ruling has already been issued related to listening to and viewing what is found on television. And may the blessings of Allah and peace be upon our Prophet Muhammad and his companions!

**Question:** Is it permissible to collect images for memories, or not?

**Answer:** It is not permissible for any Muslim—male or female—to collect images of that which possess souls, that of humans or otherwise, for the sake of memories. On the contrary, it is mandatory to destroy them. This is

due to what has been authentically reported from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), that he said to Alee (may Allah be pleased with him): *Do not leave an image without obliterating/effacing it, nor a grave which is raised above the ground without leveling it to the ground.*<sup>345</sup>

It has also been authentically reported from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that he prohibited (the possession of) images in the house<sup>346</sup>. Additionally, when he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) entered the Ka'abah on the day of the Conquest (of Makkah) and saw the images on the walls of the Ka'abah, he requested water and a cloth, and then proceeded to wipe them away<sup>347</sup>. As for images of inanimate things like mountains, trees and the like of them—there is no harm in that.

**Question:** Is it permissible to keep small images or those which are taken of the upper portion of the body only, and some of them are of the whole body—keeping them preserved in a photo album, without intending to hang them on the walls of the house? Please explain!

**Answer:** It is not permissible to keep images, even if they are not hanging up on the walls or anywhere else, except in one's ID card, passport, money and similar things which are required by necessity. This is based on the saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to Alee (may Allah be pleased with him): *Do not leave an image without obliterating/effacing it...*<sup>348</sup>

**Question:** What is the legal ruling concerning hanging images in the houses or other places?

**Answer:** The legal ruling here is that it is unlawful, if the images are of that which possess souls, humans or otherwise. This is because of the saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to Alee (may Allah be pleased with him): *Do not leave an image without*

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<sup>345</sup> Hadith #10

<sup>346</sup> Essay of Shaykh Ibn Baaz, no. 2.

<sup>347</sup> Same as above, nos. 6 and 7.

<sup>348</sup> Hadith #10



*obliterating/effacing it, nor a grave which is raised above the ground without leveling it to the ground.* Reported by Muslim in his book as-Saheeh. Also, due to what is established from Aaisha (may Allah be pleased with her), when *she had placed a curtain of mine having images over (the door of) a chamber of mine. When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw it, he tore it apart and the color of his face underwent a change. He said: O Aaisha, those who make these images will be punished on the Day of Resurrection, and it will be said to them, "Make alive what you have created."* Reported by Muslim and others.

Nonetheless, if the image is in a carpet, in a dishonorable position, or in a pillow which is leaned upon—then, there is no harm in that. This is based on what has been established from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that he had an appointment with Jibreel. So, when Jibreel came (to meet him), he refrained from entering the house. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) asked him (about that), and he answered saying: There is a statue (timthaal) in the house, as well as a curtain containing images (tasaaweer) and a dog. So, order that the head of the statue be cut off, and the curtain be cut up and made into two cushions spread out on which people walk; and order that the dog be put out. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did so, and consequently Jibreel (peace be upon him) entered. Reported by an-Nasaa'ee and others with a good chain of narrators. The above hadith also stated that the dog was a puppy belonging to al-Hasan or al-Husain, and that it was under a couch in the house.

It is also authentically reported that Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: *We (angels) do not enter a house which has in it a dog or an image.* Reported by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim.<sup>349</sup> This story of Jibreel indicates that the image in a carpet, and what is similar to it, does not prevent the angels from entering. The likeness of this is found in the authentic hadith of Aaisha (may Allah be pleased with her) which mentions her taking the curtain [containing images] and making from it cushions which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to recline upon.<sup>350</sup>

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<sup>349</sup> *Essay of Shaykh Ibn Baaz, no. 4.*

<sup>350</sup> *Hadith # 3, Chapter One.*

**Question:** There are some watches which have images of animals on the inside. Is it permissible to perform prayers wearing such a watch? Also, is it permissible or not to pray wearing a watch which has a cross in it?

**Answer:** There is no harm in it if the images inside the watches are covered such that they are unseen.. As for the case in which the image is seen, on the surface of the watch, or inside the watch, but seen when the watch is opened—this is not permissible due to what is established from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) when he said to Alee: *Do not leave an image without obliterating/effacing it...* The same is applicable to the cross—it is not permissible to wear a watch containing it, except after scraping it off or effacing it with paint or something similar. This is based on the authentic reports of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that he never saw anything containing a cross except that he removed or effaced it.<sup>351</sup>

**Question:** One of the readers—Abdul-Azeez Saalim as-Say’aree from Riyaadh asked about the legal ruling concerning drawing (caricatures), and that which is seen in some newspapers and magazines consisting of drawings of people [particular personalities].

**Answer:** The above mentioned type of drawing is not lawful. Further, it is one of the widespread evils which must be abandoned, due to the generality of the authentic ahaadith which point to the prohibition of image-making of every thing which possess a soul, there being no difference whether it is done by a camera, by hand or otherwise.

Of the proofs of this, are the following:

What has been reported by al-Bukhaaree in his *Saheeh*, on the authority of Abu Juhafah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): *Cursed the one who took or gave interest (ribaa)...and he cursed the image-maker.*<sup>352</sup> Also, what has been authentically reported in the *Saheehain* (al-Bukhaaree and Muslim) from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that he said: *The*

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<sup>351</sup> *Essay of Shaykh Ibn Baaz, no. 8.*

<sup>352</sup> *Hadith #9 Chapter One.*

most severely punished people on the Day of Resurrection would be the image-makers...<sup>353</sup> Also, his (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saying: *those who make these images will be punished on the Day of Resurrection, and it will be said to them, "Make alive what you have created"...* There are also so many other established ahaadith concerning this matter.

وقد فصل لكم ما حرم عليكم إلا ما اضطررتم إليه

There are no exceptions to this [prohibition] besides whoever is forced out of necessity to have his picture taken. This is based on the saying of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic: *He has explained to you in detail what is forbidden to you except under your compulsion of necessity.*<sup>354</sup>

**Question:** Is it correct for a Muslim to sell images (*at-tamaatheel*), making it a (business) product for himself which he will make a livelihood from?

**Answer:** It is not lawful for a Muslim to sell images (*at-Tamaatheel*), or to do trade in them. This is due to what is established in the authentic ahaadith indicating the absolute prohibition of: Image-making of those things which possess souls and the setting up of images/statues, as well as their possession. There is no doubt that engaging in the trade (of images) is promotion of it and aiding in image-making and the setting-up of these images in homes, clubs and the like of them.

Hence, if this is unlawful, then the earning from producing and selling them is also unlawful, and not permissible for a Muslim to make a livelihood from it, by which he eats and clothes (himself), etc. It is incumbent upon him, if he finds himself in such circumstances, to free himself from it and repent to Allah, the Most High. It is expected that Allah will accept his repentance.

Allah, the Most High, said:

وإني لغفار لمن تاب وآمن وعمل صالحاً ثم اهتدى

<sup>353</sup> *Hadith #13 Chapter One.*

<sup>354</sup> *Al-Qur'an 6:119. Consider this important Islamic principle!*

*And verily, I am indeed Forgiving to him who repents, believes (in My Oneness, and associates none in worship with Me) and does righteous good deeds, and then remains constant in doing them, (till his death).*<sup>355</sup>

A legal ruling has already been issued by us concerning the absolute prohibition of [image-making] of those creatures which have souls, there being no difference whether it is an image which has a body (*al-mujassamah*) or that which has no body (*ghair mujassamah*), that which is carved, weaved, painted, or made by the modern camera *Kodak*. May Allah's blessings and peace be upon our Prophet Muhammad and his family and companions!

**Question:** It has reached us from some of the people that images are forbidden, and that the angels do not enter a house where there are images. Is this correct? And are the images in the forms of humans and animals—meaning those which have body (*al-mujassamah*)—what is intended as being prohibited images? Or does [this prohibition] include all types of images, such as the photo present on an ID card, and that which is found on money? And if this prohibition includes all of the above, then what is the solution to removing all of these things (images) from the home? Please explain. May Allah grant you the best of rewards!

**Answer:** Yes! Images of all living creatures—human or animal—are unlawful, there being no difference whether they have body (*al-mujassamah*) or are drawings and colors on paper and the like; no matter if they are woven into fabric or photographs. Verily, the angels do not enter a house which has images in it, based on the generality of the authentic ahaadith pointing to this.

Permission is given in that which is done out of necessity, like the pictures of criminals and suspects (in a crime) in order to identify them. Also excepted are pictures in passports and ID cards, and we hope that these, and the like of them, will not prevent the entry of angels into the house, due to the necessity of keeping (these images) and carrying them [when going out]. *Wa-llahu al-Musta'aan!*<sup>356</sup>

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<sup>355</sup> *Al-Qur'an 20:82.*

<sup>356</sup> *Allah is the One we turn to for help!*

Also excepted from this prohibition are images which are disrespected, like those in the carpet and or in cushions [leaned upon]. And of those ahaadith reported concerning this matter—the saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): *those who make these images will be punished on the Day of Resurrection, and it will be said to them, “Make alive what you have created.”* Reported by al-Bukhaaree.<sup>357</sup> It was also narrated from Abu Juhaifah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): *...cursed the one who took or gave interest (riba) ...and the image-maker...*<sup>358</sup>

**Question:** It has been reported [in hadith] that a curse (*la'an*) will be upon the image-maker (*al-musawwir*) spelled with ‘I’ *kasrah*. Does this also include the one of whom the image is made (*al-musawwar*) spelled with ‘A’ *fathah*? Is there any evidence reported specifically about them (those who allow images to be made of them)?

**Answer:** Just as the evidence has been reported about the curse upon the image-makers (*al-musawwir*), and the threat of their punishment with fire in the next life—likewise is the case of the one who puts himself forward for the image to be made of him; he is included in that also.

Allah, the Most High, says:

وقد نزل عليكم في الكتاب أن إذا سمعتم آيات الله يكفربها ويستهنأ بها فلا  
تعدوا معهم حتى يخوضوا في حديث غيرهم إنكم إذا مثلهم إن الله جامع المنافقين  
والكافرين في جهنم جميعا

*And it has already been revealed to you in the Book (this Qur'an) that when you hear the verses of Allah being denied and mocked at, then sit not with them, until they engage in a talk other than that; (but if you stayed with them), certainly in*

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<sup>357</sup> Hadith #1 Chapter One.

<sup>358</sup> Hadith #9 Chapter One.

that case you would be like them. Surely Allah will collect the hypocrites and disbelievers altogether in hell.<sup>359</sup>

Allah, the Most High, said—in the story of *Thamood*:

كذبت ثمود بطغواها إذ انبعث أشقاها فقال لهم رسول الله ناقة الله وسقياها

فكذبوه فعقروها فدمدم عليهم ربهم بذنبهم فسواها ولا يخاف عقباها

*Thamood (people) denied (their Prophet) through their transgression (by rejecting the true Faith of Islamic Monotheism, and by following polytheism, and by committing every kind of sin). When the most wicked man among them went forth (to kill the she-camel). But the Messenger of Allah (Saalih, peace be upon him) said to them: 'Be cautious! Fear the evil end. That is the she-camel of Allah! (Do not harm it) and bar it not from having its drink!' Then they denied him and they killed it. So, their Lord destroyed them because of their sin, and made them equal in destruction (i.e., all grades of people, rich and poor, strong and weak, etc.)! And He (Allah) feared not the consequences thereof.<sup>360</sup>*

Abdul-Waahid ibn Zaid said: I said to al-Hasan: O Abu Sa'eed, tell me about a man who did not witness the trial of Ibn Muhallab, except that his heart was pleased with what happened. [al-Hasan] said: O son of my brother, in this same way the she-camel of Allah was killed. He said: But, only one hand (one person) did it. He said: Was not all the people destroyed due to their being pleased and amused [with the killing of the she-camel]. Reported by al-Imaam Ahmad in (book) *az-Zuhd*. Therefore, these two verses indicate that the one who is pleased with an (evil) action is just like the one who actually does the action.

The one who is forced by necessity to have his picture taken is not included in this ruling. And may the blessing of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and companions.

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<sup>359</sup> *Al-Qur'an* 4:140.

<sup>360</sup> *Al-Qur'an* 91:11 - 15.

*E. Islamic Legal Rulings, Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Ibraaheem*<sup>361</sup>

**Making a Statue of a “Revered” Person; Drawing on Paper and Cloth, and Hanging them up in Houses; Putting the Forms (of Images) in Magazines and Newspapers.**

Praise be to Allah, and may the Prayers and Peace be upon the Seal of His Prophets.

**Question:** To the Honorable Shaykh, al-‘Allaama Muhammad ibn Ibraaheem, Muftee<sup>362</sup> of Saudi Arabia. [After the greeting] Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allah and His blessings. Please excuse me for not being in communication with you. My question is as follows:

[Concerning] the making of a statue from stone of a revered or venerated person. Making (an image) by use of a camera or by using a pencil, and making the image of a man on a white piece of paper. Is there any difference between the two [the statue and that which is on paper or cloth]? Is the hanging up of (these images) in the house, and putting them in magazines and newspapers forbidden or undesirable? What is the evidence for this from the Noble Qur’an or the hadith of the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)?

The questioner: Ahmad ‘Awad, Secretary for Private Papers at al-Murabba’

**Answer:** As for the matter of the making of a statue of a revered man, carved out of stone or any other material—this is the most severe type of the prohibited types of image making. In fact, this is going to the extreme (*al-ghuloo*) concerning this **revered man**, and a cause of the worship of this idol (sanam) [as a god] along with Allah, the Most High.

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<sup>361</sup> *The following legal rulings are taken from the Fataawah of Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ibraaheem.*

<sup>362</sup> *Muftee: Islamic legal authority whose has the final say in legal matters in his country.*

The first time *shirk* (polytheism, idolatry) appeared among human beings was when it appeared in the time of Nooh (peace be upon him). The cause for it was exaggeration (*al-ghuloo*) of different types, in reference to the venerated religious men and scholars... .

The most serious type (*of al-ghuloo*) was their making images of these [venerated men] and erecting them in their meeting places. Yet, the idea of worshipping these statues in no way ever came to their minds (hearts). On the contrary, their intention behind making these images was that it be a reminder of the religious people and scholars, as a motivation to practice the righteous deeds which the people saw these religious men practicing during their lifetime.

That generation passed away, and a new generation came who did not have the knowledge of the reality of these images [statues] and its purpose. They only knew that the images were religiously held in high esteem and veneration; that it was something loved by Allah, and that it was a way to get nearer to Allah.

Then, Shaytaan surreptitiously instilled in them the idea that their early ancestors made these images as a means to seek rain from the heavens, to ask their support against their enemies and to use them as a means of intercession with Allah. At that point, they began to worship those images which were in fact idols (*al-asnaam*).

Then, Allah sent His Messenger Nooh (peace be upon him) to command them to worship Allah Who is Alone and has no partners, and to forbid them from the worship of the idols: *Wadd, Suwaa', Yaghooth, Ya'ooq and Nasr*. And this is the meaning of what the scholars of *Tafseer* mentioned about the saying of Allah, the Most High:

وقالوا لا تذرنا آلهتكم ولا تذرنا ودا ولا سواعا ولا يعوث ويعوق ونسرا، وقد أضلوا

كثيرا ولا ترد الظالمين إلا ضلانا

*And they have said: You shall not leave your gods, nor shall you leave Wadd, nor Suwaa', nor Yaghooth, nor Ya'ooq nor Nasr. And*



*indeed they [the idols which were named after the five righteous men] have led many astray...<sup>363</sup>*

Therefore, due to the making of images, and especially images of those who are revered or venerated, being a means or way which leads to *shirk* in the acts of worship; and also due to what it entails of *al-Mudaahaat li khalqi 'llah* (the attempt to imitate Allah's creation)—We find in the well-known established *Sunnah*, reports from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) of stern and severe warning in this matter (of image making).

[We find such warnings like:] The image makers will be cursed; clear words to the effect that the image makers will be the most severely punished people on the Day of Resurrection; every image maker will be in the Hell-Fire, and a soul will be made for every image which he produced, and he will be punished by it in the Hell-Fire; whoever makes an image in the world, will be required to breathe into it the spirit, though he will never be able to do so; the makers of these images will be punished on the Day of Resurrection and it will be said to them: Give life to that which you have created.

Due to the fame of these narrations of Hadith, I have sufficed to mention them, without mention of their sources (in the books of hadith).<sup>364</sup> These ahaadith and others similar in meaning are the proof of the prohibition [of the making and possession of images] and that image making is one of the major sins (*al-kabaa'ir*).

As for the matter of drawings (*as-suwar al-mukhat-tata*) on white paper or on other than that, it comes under the same category [as what was discussed above] concerning the prohibition. This is due to the generality of the evidences [including all types of image making], as well as the fact that the actual cause or reason [of the prohibition] is also present [in this type of image making, on paper or cloth].

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<sup>363</sup> *Al-Qur'an 71:23, 24.*

<sup>364</sup> *The full text and references for these ahaadith can be found in the first section of this book.*

No doubt there are those who, to some extent have fallen into *following the unclear texts (al-mutashaabih) and abandoning the texts which are entirely clear (al-muhkam)*, and who are clinging to the hadith: “*except a design in a cloth (illa raqman fi thawb)?*” They do not consider as prohibited any images except the one which has body [like a statue] (*al-mujassamah*).

However, the followers of the Four Imaams<sup>365</sup> as well as the rest of the Early Generations of the Muslims (*as-Salaf*) hold the opinion that it is prohibited based on *al-muhkam* (the clear texts)—except those who deviated [and isolated themselves from the Majority]—and due to their giving precedence to *al-muhkam* over *al-mutashaabih*. They also understood *al-mutashaabih* (unclear text) in such a way that it would not be in contradiction to *al-muhkamaat* (fundamental text whose meaning is very clear). And may the prayers of Allah [His praise among the highest assemblies of the angels] and peace be upon our Prophet Muhammad and his family and companions—all of them.  
[August 7, 1973]

**Small Three Dimensional Images (as-suwar al-mujassamah as-sagheera) and the Dolls of Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her).**

**Question:** Praise be to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds; and may the prayers of Allah be upon the Most Honorable of the Messengers, our Prophet Muhammad, and his family and companions—all of them.

The newspaper *Jareedatu-l-Bilaad as-Sa’oodiyyah*, no. 1419, dated Tuesday April 9, 1973 published the following comments concerning the writings of Ahmad Ibraaheem al-Ghazaawee, under the title: “Girls Dolls”: “Surely girls’ dolls and children’s toys remains to be one of the great needs of childhood. It gives the child joy and happiness, and fills their souls with delight.”

The only thing [that has changed] is that these dolls have evolved and advanced with time, just as everything in the world has evolved. The factories have begun to manufacture them, and they have made them more attractive, colorful and of greater variety. Nonetheless, this doesn’t change the fact of their being children’s toys. Therefore, is there any difference in

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<sup>365</sup> *Imaams Abu Haneefah, Maalik, ash-Shaafi’ee and Ahmad (Allah’s mercy be upon them all).*

the ruling concerning these toys (dolls) and the ruling concerning the dolls of Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her)?

**Answer:** The newspaper has directed to me its request for a legal ruling in this matter. Seeking help from Allah, the Most High, I say:

Yes! The ruling concerning this modern [doll] differs from the ruling concerning the dolls of Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her). This difference is due to the fact that this modern "doll" has a real resemblance (*tamtheel*), imitation (*mudaahaat*) and likeness (*mushaabaha*) of the creation of Allah, the Most High.

Another reason is that these [modern dolls] are exactly [what is meant by] "images," in every sense of the word. They have an elegant appearance, precise craftsmanship, marvelous beauty which has no likeness, nor anything close to it, in the images which were prohibited by the Pure Islamic Law (*ash-Sharee'ah al-Mutahharah*).

It does not fall outside the classification of *images* (suwar), just because it is called a *doll*, or because it's body is small. *The reality of things is the only consideration, not their names.*

This is just as *shirk* (polytheism, idolatry) remains *shirk*, even though the one who is practicing it calls it *istish-faa'* (seeking intercession) and *tawassul* (seeking a means to get near to Allah); and just as *khamr* (alcohol) remains *khamr*, even though the one who uses it calls it *nabeedh* (a drink made from soaking raisins or dates in water over night).

So it is [with these dolls]. They are real "images" (suwar), even if they are called *children's toys* by those who manufacture and trade in them, and those who have fallen victim to [or become fascinated and charmed by] these images.

[It has been reported] in the hadith: *There will come a people in the end of time who will declare khamr (alcohol) lawful, and they will call it by [a name] other than its own name.*<sup>366</sup>

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<sup>366</sup> *Al-Tabaarani, Ahmad, Ibn Majah, and it has a Jayyid (Good) Chain of narrators. See, Silsilah Saheehah 1/136-139, No. 90.*

Whoever claims that the dolls of Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) were real images (suwar haqeeqiyah) of that which has a soul (living creatures), then it is upon him to produce the proof (for his claim). And he will never find a way to do that.

Verily, they were not engraved, carved or imprinted from natural minerals [such as that upon which coins are normally impressed] or anything like that. On the contrary, it appears that they were made from wool, cotton, scraps of cloth, reeds or tied-up bones, with a stick running across it (from one side to another), having a shape resembling the dolls presently<sup>367</sup> in the hands of the girls living in the Arab lands which are distant from city life and "civilization," (dolls) which have very little or no resemblance to the forbidden images.

This view is based on the hadith narrated in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree, to the effect that the companions used to have their children fast. Then, if they (the children) asked for food, they (the parents) gave them the toys [dolls] made from wool to entertain them or distract them with it.<sup>368</sup>

[This view is further supported by] the hadith of Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated in Sunan Abu Daawood along with its *sharh* (explanation) where it mentions the horse possessing four wings made of (*riqaa'*) scraps of cloth.<sup>369</sup>

[It is additionally supported by] What is known about the condition of the Arab as usually being coarse, using crude utensils, means of transportation, instruments, toys, etc. Therefore, what I have mentioned here is sufficient to convince anyone who is seeking the Truth, if Allah, the Most High, Wills.

Also, it must be known that *no amount of advancement in time can exempt a thing from its legal ruling or status, since the removal of a ruling, which has been established legally, simply due to hawaadith*

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<sup>367</sup> Note: This legal ruling was given more than 40 years ago, in the year 1373 AH.

<sup>368</sup> al-Bukhaaree 3/103, no. 181.

<sup>369</sup> See: Hadith #21

**[something new, an event, happening or incident], is not permissible under any circumstances.** This is because it would then be *abrogation by hawaadith*, and that would eventually lead to the total removal of the Islamic Law.

Perhaps some of the ignorant are here confused by the saying of Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her):

If the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had seen what the women are doing [in these days], he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) would have prevented them from attending the Masjids, just as the women of Banee Israa'eel were prevented.<sup>370</sup>

Praise be to Allah! There is no argument (proof) in these words for the changing of the established legal rulings due to *al-hawaadith* [new event, happening or incident]. Verily, Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) referred the matter [the right to legislate] back to the one who has the right to legislate [the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, who legislates by Allah's command].

She (may Allah be pleased with her) said: If he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had seen [what is happening today] he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) would have prevented [them from attending the Masjids].

However, she herself (may Allah be pleased with her) did not declare it prohibited [knowing that it was not her right], nor did she consider it the right of anyone else to prohibit it [other than the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him].

This is clear, Praise be to Allah! And Allah is the One Who Grants Success!

Muhammad ibn Ibraaheem Aal ash-Shaykh—Riyaadh,  
22<sup>nd</sup> Jumaada 'l-Uolaa 1373 AH [1954 CE]

**Photography (at-Tasweer ash-Shamsee) and the Invalidity of the Legal Ruling of Whoever Declared it Permissible**

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<sup>370</sup> al-Bukhaaree 1/458, no. 828.

**Question:** A question has been directed to me about what was written in the *fatwa* (Legal Ruling) of Abu al-Wafaa' Muhammad Darweesh, in the magazine *al-Hadyi an-Nabawee*, concerning the issue of photography. The ruling was that it is permissible, without any restriction.

[The *fatwa* ] was intended to reaffirm the permissibility (of photography), using as evidence that which was reported by Muslim<sup>371</sup>, on the authority of Busr ibn Sa'eed, when Busr said to 'Ubaidullah al-Khawlaanee, after having seen a curtain containing images in the house of Zaid:

*Didn't Zaid tell us about pictures (suwar) the day before yesterday? Ubaidullah said, Didn't you hear him saying: 'except a design in a cloth (illa raqman fi thawb)?*

وَصَوْرَكَ فَاحْسِنِ صَوْرَكَ

[It also relied upon, as evidence] the saying of Allah, the Most High:  
...and He (Allah) shaped you and made good your shapes...<sup>372</sup>

Confirming this [as an established fact], with his saying: He (Allah) only means by this, that He has made your **physical bodies** in a *good shape*. He (Abu al-Wafaa') then says: Therefore, [the expression] image making (*at-Tasweer*), in fact, is only applicable to *al-mujassamaat* (physical bodies, three dimensional or solid images).

**Answer:** I say in response to this: Image making of that which has a soul (*lahu rooh*) is not permissible, there being no difference [in this ruling] between that which cast a shadow (*lahu zhill*) [meaning solid, three dimensional images] and that which does not cast a shadow [meaning two dimensional images on a plane surface]; [this ruling is] equally applicable to images in cloth, walls, carpets, paper etc.

This is what is indicated by the authentic ahaadith, such as [the following]: The hadith of Masrooq, mentioned in al-Bukhaaree. He said:

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<sup>371</sup> See: Hadith #7 for full text of the hadith.

<sup>372</sup> al-Qur'an 64:3

I heard Abdullah ibn Mas'ood (may Allah be pleased with him) saying: Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "The most severely punished people on the Day of Resurrection would be the image-makers (al-musawwiroon)...<sup>373</sup>

The hadith of Abdullah ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him and his father), who said: Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

Those who make these images (suwar) will be punished on the Day of Resurrection, and it will be said to them, 'Make alive what you have created.'<sup>374</sup>

The hadith of Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) who said: I heard Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saying:

Whoever makes an image (surah) in this world would be compelled to breathe soul (rooh) in it on the Day of Resurrection, but he will never be able to do so.<sup>375</sup>

These authentic ahaadith, and others like them, indicate the absolute prohibition of image making in general (*bi-'umoomi-haa*) [i.e. its wording is general in its application to everything which could possibly come under its meaning, all at one time].

Even if there were no other ahaadith, concerning this issue, besides these (mentioned here)—these would have sufficed us as a clear proof of the absolute prohibition (of Image making). How would it be, then, when there are authentic ahaadith which clearly point to the prohibition of image making of that which does not cast a shadow [two dimensional images on a plane surface]?

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<sup>373</sup> Hadith #13

<sup>374</sup> Hadith #1

<sup>375</sup> Hadith #15

The hadith of Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) which is recorded in al-Bukhaaree:

That she bought a cushion (numruqah) having images (tasaaweer) on it. When Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw it, he stopped at the door and did not enter. She noticed the signs of strong disapproval on his face. She said: O Allah's Messenger! I turn to Allah and His Messenger in repentance. What sin have I committed? He said: What is this cushion for? I said: I bought it for you to sit on and recline on. Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "The makers of these images (suwar) will be punished (severely) on the Day of Resurrection and it will be said to them, 'Make alive what you have created.'" He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) added: 'Angels do not enter a house in which there are images (suwar).'<sup>376</sup>

The hadith of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him), in the books of *Sunan*, authenticated by at-Tirmidhee and Ibn Hibban. Its wording is:

Jibreel came to me and said: I came to you last night and was prevented from entering simply by the fact that there were statues (tamaatheel) at the door, and there was in the house a curtain with pictures (tamaatheel) on it, and there was a dog in the house. So, order that the head of the statue (timthaal) which is in the house be cut off so that it may become like the form of a tree; order that the curtain be cut up and made into two cushions spread out on which people walk; and order that the dog be put out. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) then did so.<sup>377</sup>

The hadith reported by Muslim from Sa'eed ibn Abi al-Hasan, who said:

A man came to Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) and said: I am a person who makes these images (suwar); give me a religious verdict (fatwa) about them. He (Ibn Abbaas)

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<sup>376</sup> Hadith #5

<sup>377</sup> Hadith #18



said to him: come near me. The man then came near to him. Then he (Ibn Abbaas) said (again): come near me. So, he came nearer to him, until he placed his hand on the man's head and said: I am going to inform you of what I heard from Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). I heard him say: 'Every image-maker (musawwir) will be in the fire of Hell. A soul will be made for him for every image which he has made, and it will punish him in the Hell-fire.' Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) said: If you must do it (i.e., make these images), then make (images of) trees and lifeless things ('ash-shajarah wa maa laa NAFS lahu').<sup>378</sup>

The hadith in the Sunan Abu Daawood, on the authority of Jaabir (may Allah be pleased with him):

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) commanded Umar ibn al-Khattaab (may Allah be pleased with him) during the time of the conquest of Makkah, while he was at "al-Bat-haa'," to go to the Ka'bah and to remove (yamhoo) every image (surah) found in it. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not enter (the Ka'bah) until every image (surah) in it was removed.<sup>379</sup>

The hadith which al-Bukhaaree narrated in the chapter which he titled: *The Obliteration of Images*. It is the hadith of 'Imraan ibn Hittaaan, which was narrated to him by Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her):

That the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) never used to leave anything in his house containing crosses, except that he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) obliterated it.<sup>380</sup>

From these and similar ahaadith, the followers of the Four Imaams, as well as the rest of the *Salaf* (Early Generations of the Muslims)—with the

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<sup>378</sup> *Hadith #14 Chapter One.*

<sup>379</sup> *Hadith no. 5, Essay of Shaykh Bin Baaz.*

<sup>380</sup> *Al-Bukhaaree 7/541, no. 836, chapter 90.*

exception of those who deviated – have ruled for the prohibition of image making.

They considered this prohibition to generally cover all [types of] images, including equally those which have body (*mujassad*) and those which are drawn on paper (*mukhat-tat*), and anything else such as the images which are made into the mirror itself [as part of the glass or the frame]. Also included [under this prohibition] are images which are hung up on walls and whatever is similar to that.

As for the clinging—of those who oppose this ruling—to the hadith: 'except a design in a cloth (*illa raqman fi thawb*)<sup>381</sup> – it is a deviation from what the *Salaf* (Companions of the Prophet, Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and Early Generations of the Muslims) and the Four Imaams stood upon.

It is giving precedence or preference to *al-mutashaabih* (the text whose meaning is not entirely clear) over *al-muhkam* (the text whose meaning is very clear), since it is possible that the intended meaning of the *exception* here for *designs in a cloth*, is in the case where the images are of that which does not have a soul. An example of this being trees and the like, as was mentioned by al-Imaam Abu Zakariyyah an-Nawawee and others.

In the case where the expression is *muh-tamat*<sup>382</sup> [having the possibility of conveying more than one meaning], it is not necessary to apply to it a meaning which makes the expression dubious, vague and problematic (*al-ma'naa al-mushkil*). On the contrary, it must be understood to convey the meaning which agrees with the clearly indicated *prohibition*, and which is in no way open to numerous interpretations.

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<sup>381</sup> *Hadith #7 Chapter One.*

<sup>382</sup> *Concerning this issue al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar states an important rule: If an expression has the possibility of conveying more than one meaning, in that case it is not necessary to apply to it the meaning which makes the expression dubious, vague and problematic (al-ma'naa al-mushkil). Fath al-Baaree 10/395-396 [Therefore, if it is understood that the meaning intended here is that of images (tamaatheel) which have no soul, the matter then becomes clear.]*

Even if, for the sake of argument, we accept *literally* the hadith: *except a design in a cloth (illa raqman fi thawb)*—it would not indicate the permissibility of any images *except in a cloth* [not more than that]. And the permissibility of images in a cloth, does not necessitate its permissibility in everything else. This is because the images which are in a cloth, are either disrespected and dishonored or subject to such.

For this reason, some of the scholars took the opinion that there is no harm in laying on the floor a carpet which contains images. They used as evidence the hadith in *as-Sunan*, which we have previously mentioned, wherein the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: *order that the curtain be cut up and made into two cushions spread out on which people walk.*

This is because the fact of the images being walked upon, and its being dishonored, nullifies and contradicts the original purpose for which the image makers produced these images, which is *ta'dheem* (exaltation of) and *al-ghuloo* (exaggeration and exceeding the proper bounds) concerning that which the image is made of. And this is what leads to *shirk* (association in the worship) of the one whom the image is made of (with Allah).

For this reason, along with another reason – *al-mudaahaat bi-khalqi 'llah* (the attempt to imitate Allah in the act of creation) – the severe threat and certain challenge is made concerning the image makers.

As for the matter of using the Noble Verse of al-Qur'an – the saying of Allah, the Most High: *...and He (Allah) shaped you and made good your shapes...*—in opposition to what the text of the sayings of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) have sometimes indicated in general statements [about all image making], and other times indicated with clear statements [specifically about two dimensional images on a plane surface]—this is considered to be one of the most atrocious, abominable and shameless type of mistake [one can fall into]. It is the clearest type of distortion of the intended meaning of words.

Verily, photography—even if it is not like *al-mujassad* (the three dimensional solid image) in every way—it is just like it in terms of the '*illah* (reason or cause) for the prohibition, which is: production of the image in order that it be looked at [and admired by others].

This is why there are so many photographs which are more amazing and of greater originality [than other means of image making] in imitating the thing of which the image is made. It is even said [about these photographs]: This picture of so-and-so is an *exact replica*.

It is well known that the joining of one thing to another [considering them to be under one classification or ruling] does not necessitate their being equal in every aspect.

This would be the case [the correctness of classifying two dimensional images with three dimensional images] even if there were no ahaadith which clearly indicate the equality of the two. So, how is it, when there are numerous ahaadith with clear indication in this matter [of the prohibition *equally* of three dimensional images like statues and sculptures, and two dimensional images, like photographs, drawings, paintings ect.]?

Some of those who declare photography permissible have claimed that it is just like the appearance of someone's face in the mirror or its likeness in polished or shiny objects. This is false! Surely, the appearance of a face in a mirror or something similar has no permanence. It (the face) is only seen on the condition that one remains in front of (the mirror). Whenever there is no one in front of the mirror—or the object similar to the mirror—then the image in the mirror no longer appears.

This is unlike the photograph which remains on the paper or whatever it is printed upon permanently. Hence, considering the photograph to be under the same classification as the image which is made by hand (*as-surah al-manqooshah bi-l-yad*) is clearer, more obvious and correct than classifying it (the photograph) with the appearance of an image in a mirror or similar thing.

Verily, the *photograph* and the appearance of an image in polished or shiny objects are different in two aspects:

1. Permanency and continuance.
2. Production of the image as a result of work and applying oneself to the task.

It is not applicable—linguistically, rationally, or based on Islamic Law – to say about someone in front of a mirror that he has *sawwara* (photographed, drawn, painted, etc.) that [image in the mirror]. While, the one who makes a photograph is considered a *musawwir* (image maker, photographer) linguistically, rationally and according to the Islamic Law.

Therefore, the one who considers the two [photograph and image in the mirror] equal, has classified as equal that which Allah has made a distinction between. While those who prohibit *tasweer* [or deny the equality of the two—photograph and image in a mirror] have recognized as being equal, that which Allah has declared to be equal [such as two dimensional and three dimensional images], and distinguished between that which Allah has made a distinction between [such as the photograph and the image in a mirror or shiny object which reflects an image].

Therefore, they were more entitled to attain the Truth, and further away from and more likely to shun and avoid opening the ways of disobedience and corruption and immorality.

Surely, those who declare the permissibility of these images have joined between: *contradicting the ahaadith of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and spitting out the poison of corruption and immorality among the servants (of Allah)*, through the pictures of beautiful women, naked and seductive, in numerous shapes and colors, and positions which every believer whose Imaan is true would shiver and tremble from. Likewise, every corrupt one and Shaytaan would enjoy serenity and tranquillity from such.

Allah is the One to Whom we turn to for help. He is the One that we rely upon. From the one who is in need of his Lord, Muhammad ibn Ibraaheem ibn Abdul-Lateef Aal ash-Shaykh. May the prayers of Allah (praise among the highest assemblies of the angels) and peace be upon our Prophet Muhammad and his companions.

[24<sup>th</sup> Dhu'l-Qi'dah 1373 AH; printed in the year 1385]

### **at-Tasweer ad-Daw'ee (Photography) and at-Tasweer bi-l-Asbaagh (Image Making by use of Colors, Dyes or Paints)**

Many people have been deceived by photography. The reason for this is that it is so wide spread that it has almost become a necessity and they did

not find any *munaass* (excuse or justification) so they made a distinction [between images made by the camera and those drawn or painted by hand, declaring the first lawful and the second unlawful] and this is a mistake [since there is no difference between the two].

The image maker (photographer) intends something, i.e., to be the cause of the production of an image [for others to see]. The objective is to produce the likeness of something, to bring it out in the open [to be seen], as though it is an exact replica of the face of so-and-so. As for the argument that it is (an image) which can not be grasped [i.e., it is not a solid figure], this is simply what has been propagated and promoted by the Europeans.

From this it is known that to differentiate [between two and three dimensional images] is an error. Whenever the image is looked at, the objective is achieved. Should its matter be taken lightly if it is seen [i.e., the image is produced] through photography? [Is it any less serious?]

In no way! Except that the *mujassad* (three dimensional solid image) lasts longer [than the one on paper or cloth]. Yet, both of them are prohibited for the length of their existence. In fact, the photograph is a worst temptation and trial than the *mujassad* since it (the photograph) comes out more complete, and more perfectly in the shape or form of the original than any other type of image. There is no problem [in understanding this matter] except due to the [confusion and doubt] which came from the Europeans.

This matter contains an element of *shah-wa* (greed, craving, lower desires). So, someone comes and makes the matter doubtful or dubious and thereby declares it permissible. This is the case with everything found in a country, when it becomes widespread and in common use.

As you know, one of the *ahaadith* concerning this issue is that which is found in the Sunan of Abu Daawood: that when the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw the images in the house (al-Ka'bah) he did not enter it until he commanded that the images be removed and it was done.<sup>383</sup>

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<sup>383</sup> See: *Shaykh Bin Baaz Essay, Hadith no. 5, and foot note 133 for exact text of this hadith and its references.*

Therefore, the image made by photography is the same as that made by colors, dyes or paints.

### **Image Making of Seas, Rivers, Trees and Things Which Are Disdained or Despised**

What follows was mentioned in explanatory remarks pertaining to the Book *at-Tawassul wa'l-Waseelah*: As for the matter of making images of seas, rivers, trees, etc., in the case where the *intention* behind it is to manifest the greatness of Allah and His originality in the universe—then, there is a great reward for these types of images, and there is no harm in making images of these things.

The Shaykh [commenting on this] said: Here there is something which is intended by the image makers, but it is not what has just been mentioned. [The objective of the image makers] is to display their skill and proficiency in drawing, not what has been mentioned above [i.e., manifestation of the greatness of Allah and originality in the universe].

This is because [the objective of the artist is that] the people see [his work]. In fact, what is more than that is the [reputation from the] people hearing about (his work of art). This is like the person who received [a letter from] his loved one. So, he pretends to be asleep in order to see her in his sleep (or in a dream).

As for images of that which has a soul—this is what the people are concerned with seeing. The origin or image making was for the purpose of veneration and exaltation [of other creatures falsely considered to be worthy of such]. Hence, whenever a venerated person is found, the matter becomes clear [i.e., its objective is obvious].

Therefore, the Islamic Law totally prohibited image making, *even* [the image of] *a fly*. So, if this is so, then it became known that [the prohibition] is *not restricted or confined* to those who are exalted or venerated.

### **At-Tasweer an-Nisfee (Image Making of Half the Body)**

As for making images of only half of the body: Some scholars have permitted it considering it as not being a human being. They say that

cutting it in half is sufficient to change the image, and that it is [after being cut in half] no longer considered to be an image.

However, it appears [to me] that it is still prohibited. The reason for this is that there is a difference between starting out to do something and intending to do that [from the beginning], and that which is cut [in half] after it is already in existence. In the second there is a contradiction of that.

As for one intending [from the onset] to make a partial image of something -it is as though he decided to make a half of the image *only* when he was *unable*, in theory or in actuality [to do what he wanted to do]. At that point he thought that it was permissible to make half (of the image); or perhaps he left out half so as not to fill up the whole page.

It is reported in hadith: *The prohibition of striking as-surah*. And the meaning here is the *wajh* (face), since it (the face) is the thing by which someone is known or identified.

*[Note: Perhaps the Shaykh is here referring to the hadith narrated by Muslim: If anyone of you fights, he must avoid (striking) the face. Verily, Allah created Aadam (peace be upon him) alaa surati-hi (in His image) [meaning: having life, sight, hearing, speech, knowledge, etc., except that these characteristics when in reference to Allah are divine and perfect, while in reference to human beings, they are limited and imperfect.] Clearer than this is the hadith narrated in al-Bukhaaree and Muslim, concerning the Resurrection: ...and Allah has prohibited the Fire from eating (burning) the traces of prostration from their suwar (images) [meaning: the traces of prostration from their faces]. Ibn Taymiyyah said: The scholars like Ibn Abbaas, Ikrimah, Ahmad and others have said: As-surah (the image) is actually the head. So, if the head is cut off, it is no longer considered an image.]<sup>384</sup>*

Therefore, if the head and face, or the shoulders and head, have an image made of them, the remainder [of the body] is covered with clothing and it is not known what it is. [It does not really matter if the rest of the body is left out, since it is not really the *objective* of the image making in the first

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<sup>384</sup> See: Hadith of Ibn Abbaas, reported by al-Ismaa'eelee, footnote 81.



place]. Some of them have left [making an image of the whole body] in order not to fill up the whole paper.

In another response [to this same issue] he said: To me there is no doubt that image making of half the body is forbidden, even if there are an insignificant few who hold the opinion that it is not forbidden. Perhaps it is not as severe as [the image of] the whole body in light of this opinion. Nonetheless, as far as I am concerned, there is no doubt about it [being prohibited], since the *face* is the main *objective* [behind making the image]. [1476 AH]

### **Permissibility of Partial Image Making In Case of Necessity**

From Muhammad ibn Ibraaheem, to the Respected Director of Sudoos Elementary School: Peace be upon you, and the mercy of Allah and His Blessings. To Proceed:

**Question:** Your letter has reached us wherein you have requested a legal ruling concerning image making. Also, asking whether there is any difference between the *as-surah al-mujassadah* (three dimensional solid image) and other images such as photographs; or between that which displays the complete image of a person, and the image showing only the face, chest and what is around them.

**Answer:** Praise be to Allah! It is well known that image making is of the deeds of *al-Jaahiliyyah* (ignorance of divine guidance) which are blameworthy and opposed by the Islamic Law.

The clear and authentic ahaadith *tawaatarat* (were narrated by large numbers of people, in every generation) pointing out its prohibition; the curse upon the one who engages in it and his threat of punishment in hell-fire, as in the hadith of Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) reporting the saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him):

Every image-maker (musawwir) will be in the fire of Hell. A soul will be made for him for every image which he has made, and it will punish him in the Hell-fire. Reported by Muslim<sup>385</sup>

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<sup>385</sup>See: Hadith #14 for complete text of this hadith and its references.

This text is general, including the image making of every creature which has a soul, whether human or otherwise. There is no difference whether the image is *mujassadah* (three dimensional solid figure) or *ghair mujassadah* (two dimensional image on a plane surface); it being the same if the image is made by use of the camera or by use of colors or engraving or otherwise, due to the generality of the ahaadith.

Whoever claims that photography does not fall under the general prohibition, and that the prohibition is specifically limited to *as-surah al-mujassamah* [three dimensional solid images] and that which cast a shadow, then his claim is baseless and false.

This is because the ahaadith in this matter are general, and they do not make any distinction between one image and another. The scholars—such as Imaam an-Nawawee, al-Haafidh ibn Hajar and others—have stated clearly that this prohibition is general [including photography and other images].

The hadith of Aa'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) containing the story of the curtain (*al-qiraam*)<sup>386</sup> is very clear. The manner in which the point is made in this hadith is because the image which was in the curtain was not *mujassadah* (a three dimensional solid image). On the contrary, it was imprinted or weaved into the cloth. Yet, the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) considered it to be *mudaahaat li-khalqi'llah* (an attempt to imitate the creation of Allah).

Nonetheless, if the image is originally incomplete, such as making an image of the face, head and chest or something similar to that, and that which is necessary for life to remain is removed from the image, then what is understood from the sayings of many scholars of Jurisprudence is that it is then permissible; especially if and when necessity calls for this type of image, i.e., partial images [for passports, driver's license, etc.].

In any case, the servant (of Allah) is required to fear Allah as much as he can, and refrain from what Allah and His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) have prohibited.

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<sup>386</sup> *Hadith #4 Chapter One.*

ومن يتق الله يجعل له مخرجا، ويرزقه من حيث لا يحتسب

*And whoever fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty). And He will provide him from (sources) he never could imagine...<sup>387</sup>*

[Muftee of Saudi Arabia...5<sup>th</sup> Ramadan, 1385AH]

### **What If Someone Needs to Travel, and It was a Necessity to Take a Picture.**

[It is permissible] in the case where it is for a very important matter, especially concerning the religion, such as pilgrimage (*Hajj*) and emigration (*Hijrah*), and he considers image making detestable.

Whoever says: He should not perform the pilgrimage in the case where he can not do it without his picture being taken—is mistaken. Verily, the forbidden matters are in degrees. Therefore, the curse (on the one who makes images) does not include him.

When we traveled to Egypt, a letter came to us from King Abdul-Azeez, which he had sent with us to Egypt. It contained clarification of the pardon from having to take pictures, for—I think he said—political reasons. We carried it with us to Egypt and were not photographed.

In brief, if someone is sick and it is a necessity [to travel] for treatment, or his traveling is to achieve some great good in the religion—this is considered as committing the lesser of two evils, in order to escape from the more evil of the two.

[The question came]: It would be good if you all could convene a conference in Makkah for the purpose of clarifying this matter, as well as the other Islamic affairs.

[The Shaykh responded]: ...If we knew that there would be some benefit (in doing such), we would be willing to walk to Makkah bare-footed.

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<sup>387</sup> *Al-Qur'an* 65:2, 3.

## His Statement: Image Making is Forbidden

This means [the prohibition of] images of *hayawaan* (living beings), including human, animal, bird and whatever is like them from among *dhawaat al-arwaah* (those creatures which possess souls).

Also, there is no difference between that which can be grasped by the hand [meaning: three dimensional solid images], which some scholars described as: *ma la-hu zhill* (that which cast a shadow) and that which does not have independent form like that which is [drawn] on paper or painted or woven [in cloth]. All of it is forbidden, since the objective is to produce the image and perceiving it with the sight.

An-Nawawee mentioned this as the position (*madh-hab*) of the Four Imaams and all other scholars, except for what has been narrated from some of the *Taabi'een* (students of the companions) who based their opinion on the hadith: "... *except designs or markings in a cloth.*"<sup>388</sup>

However, the evidence supports the position of the *Jumhoor* (Majority of Scholars). There evidence is more authentic [stronger] than this hadith. Also, this hadith is not clear [decisive in its declaration of what it is declaring permissible]. This hadith is *muqayyid* (restricted, confined and conditional). [It is declaring the permissibility of designs or markings in a cloth; not absolute and general permissibility of all types of images.]

The position of the *Jumhoor* (Majority of Scholars) is that image making is absolutely prohibited. This is based on [the hadith in] Sunan Abu Daawood:

*that when the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw the images in the Ka'bah, he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not enter (the Ka'bah) until he ordered that they be removed, and it was done.*<sup>389</sup>

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<sup>388</sup> Hadith #7. This is the opinion of al-Qaasim ibn Muhammad.

<sup>389</sup> See: Hadith no. 5, Shaykh Bin Baaz Essay, for exact text and references.

[Another evidence for the position of the Majority of Scholars is] the hadith narrated in the Saheeh of Muslim: That the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) missioned Alee (may Allah be pleased with him) [saying to him]: *Do not leave an image without **obliterating/effacing** it, nor a grave which is raised above the ground without leveling it to the ground.*

The words *al-mahyee* (to erase) and *al-tams* (to efface) is not used in reference to *al-mujassad* (three dimensional solid figures). On the contrary, it is used for that which is painted and what is similar to it.

Hence, the seizure and effacing of all such images found is obligatory. And what is worse than that are the idols which are actually worshipped. Following [the idols which are worshipped] in severity is that from which it is feared that it might be worshipped, such as those who have been revered and venerated.

The origin of image making stems from the image making of those who were revered and venerated, as is found in the story of *Wadd and Suwaaa'*.<sup>390</sup> In fact, image making is classified with *al-Kabaa'ir* (the major sins)—And Allah Knows Best – due to the hadith: *Every image maker will be in the Hell-fire...*<sup>391</sup>

So, here are three rulings: [The prohibition of] *Image making*; [the prohibition of] *use of* the images; and [the obligation of] *effacing* the images [wherever found]. This is based on the hadith of Abu'l-Hayyaa;<sup>392</sup> concerning this issue. There are also other ahaadith [related to this matter].

### ***Breaking of the Cross (Crucifix) and Images***

His saying: *...and a cross.* [This was mentioned] because it has been prohibited. It is the same whether it is *mujassad* (having a body) or otherwise. Verily, it must be destroyed.

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<sup>390</sup> *Al-Qur'an* 71:23, 24. *Al-Bukhaaree* 6/414, 415, no. 442.

<sup>391</sup> *Hadith #14 Chapter One.*

<sup>392</sup> *Abu'l-Hayyaa al-Asadee. Hadith #10 Chapter One.*

Other things besides the cross are considered images, there being no difference if it is of the type which is *grasped by the hand*, which cast a shadow (three dimensional solid images), or the type which is produced by the *camera*, or *paints* or by *sewing*. Every one of these are included in the stern threat which has been reported in the ahaadith concerning image making.

An-Nawawee mentioned, in his explanation of Saheeh Muslim, that these four [all types of image making] is forbidden by consensus of the Four Imaams.

Photography goes to the furthest extent in *al-mudaahaat* (imitation of Allah's creation), even though *al-mujassad* (solid figures) [are worse] because they are the idols which are actually worshipped instead of Allah.

The reason for the existence of *shirk* (association of something with Allah, as a god besides Allah) are two:

1. Image making.
2. Reverence and veneration of the (dead in the) graves.

However, the Muslims have been tried [and mislead] by the students of the Europeans. Some of them have taken from the Europeans the *European Shirk* which is *al-ghuloo* (exaggeration and exceeding the proper bounds) in [the praise and exaltation of] Jesus (peace be upon him). While another group held it to be a part of the religion to make images of whoever is revered and venerated by them.

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# Final Conclusions

AI-Imaam al-Bayhaqee has wonderfully summarized, in just a few words, the issue of Tasweer (Image-Making) and what is exempted from its general prohibition. He entitled a chapter in his famous book of hadith as-Sunan al-Kubraa: Chapter: The Rukhsah [permission or exception from the established prohibition] is for those images which are walked upon [thereby being degraded] or those which have the heads cut off, and those images which are made of things which have no soul such as trees etc.

From this it becomes clear that images can be divided into two categories:

(1) The image of that which has no soul.

(2) The images of creatures which have souls: animate beings such as humans, animals, birds or fish.

The first category is permissible, while the second is prohibited except if the head is cut off or the image is dishonored and degraded by being trampled upon or sat upon, like carpets, pillows, mats, etc.

The following can be derived from the text of the Authentic Ahaadith of the Prophet (Blessings of Allah and Peace be upon him):

1. Severe condemnation of the image-makers.
2. Clarification of the reason image-making is condemned; and that is because it constitutes not having the proper respect for Allah [the True and Only Creator]. This is based on the saying of Allah [in the Hadith Qudsee]: "...and who is more a wrongdoer (unjust) than one who tries to create creation like My Creation..
3. Calling attention to the power and capability of Allah in contrast to the incapacity and weakness of those who attempt to create. This is based on the statement of Allah: "...then let them create a small ant (dharrah) or a grain of wheat or that of barley. ,
4. The clear statement that the image-makers will be the most severely punished on the Day of Judgment.
5. Allah will create a soul in place of every image and the image-maker will be punished by it in the Hell-Fire.
6. The image-maker will be required to breathe a soul (life) into the images which he made. [But, he will never be able to do it, and will therefore be punished].
7. The command to efface/obliterate all images when found.
8. The image-makers are cursed.

9. Every image-maker will be in the Hell-Fire.
10. The presence of images in a house prevents the entry of the angels.
11. One should not enter a house which has images in it.
12. The image-makers have been equated with the rebellious oppressors and those who call on others as gods besides Allah.
13. The clothing (covering) of walls in ones home with curtains or drapes which contain images is forbidden, while covering them with curtains free of images is undesirable/detestable.
14. The prohibition of buying or selling images. This is the rule for everything which Allah has made unlawful. The applicable principle of Sharee`ah (Islamic Law) being derived from the hadith. I saw the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) sitting near the corner [of the Ka'bah]. He (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) raised his eyes up to the sky and laughed, saying: May Allah curse the Jews (he said this three times). Allah declared unlawful for them the fats (of the animals which died a natural death); they sold them and they enjoyed the price they received for them. When Allah declared eating of a thing forbidden for a people, He declares its price also forbidden for them.. , Also the hadith of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) where he said: Allah forbade wine and the price paid for it, and forbade dead meat and the price paid for it; and forbade swine and the price paid for it.

Finally, we pray to Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, that He reward all those who contributed towards the completion of this work, especially my family who was both helpful and patient throughout. And may He, the One Full of Bounty, also reward those who would be so kind as to inform us of any mistakes, errors or matters left unclear. Know that perfection in any work belongs to Allah Alone!

"He is Allah, besides Whom there is none that has the right to be worshipped, the All-knower of the unseen and the seen (open). He is the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful. "He is Allah besides Whom there is none that has the right to be worshipped, the King, the Holy, the One Free from all defects, the Giver of security, the Watcher over His creatures, the All Mighty, the Compeller, the Supreme. Glory be to Allah! High is He above all that they associate as partners with Him.

"He is Allah, the Creator, the Inventor of all things, the Bestower of forms. To Him belong the Best Names. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorify Him. And He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise."



# APPENDIX A

## ON AVOIDING THE DOUBTFUL MATTERS<sup>393</sup>

The scholars of Islaam, from the earliest generations until our present era, have been keen to extract rules and principles from the texts of al-Qur'aan and the Authentic Sunnah to be used as guidelines for the people in all matters of life.

These principles have been collected and explained in books dealing with what came to be known as the science of *Usool al-Fiqh* (the science of the fundamental principles used to derive rulings in the specific issues of Islamic Law).

The following are only two of those principles from the science of *Usool al-Fiqh*, which may be used to give further clarification to the issue of avoidance of doubtful matters:

### The First Rule:

Whenever the [ruling of something being] lawful and [the ruling of something being] unlawful come together [in one issue, case or matter]—the ruling of unlawfulness takes precedence over the ruling for lawfulness.<sup>394</sup>

### The Second Rule:

The evidence which prohibits will never come together with [in contradiction to] the evidence which permits, except that the one which prohibits will take precedence (i.e., the ruling will be based on it).<sup>395</sup>

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<sup>393</sup> Most of the material for this appendix has been summarized from al-Qawaa'id al-Fiqhiyyah, by Alee Ahmad an-Nadhawee, with some additions from other sources.

<sup>394</sup> The First Rule: "idha ijtaama'a al-Halaal wa'l-Haraam ghallaba al-Haraamu al-Halaala."

<sup>395</sup> The Second Rule: "Maa ijtaama'a Muharrim and Mubeeh illa ghallaba al-Muharrim."

This rule is one of the important rules related to the issue of *at-Ta'arud wa at-Tarjeeh* [deciding which of two or more evidences is stronger or more closely related to the issue in question, then giving it precedence over the other evidence which is in contradiction to it].

This rule is valid in matters of the lawful (*halaal*) and unlawful (*haraam*). It represents the position of *Ihtiyaat* (taking precautions) in the religion [to avoid evil, sin, and disobedience, etc.].

It is important to stick to it in so many rulings (*ahkaam*), because the Law is more concerned about avoiding the prohibited things (*al-manhiyaat*) than its concern about fulfilling the commanded things (*al-ma'mooraat*).

The foundation which this principle is built upon, is the saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) : "That which is lawful is clear and that which is unlawful is clear; and between the two of them are doubtful matters (*al-mushabbihaat*) about which not many people know. Thus, he who avoids doubtful matters clears himself in regards to his religion and his honor. But, he who falls into the doubtful matters, falls into that which is *haraam* (unlawful). His case is like the shepherd who grazes his flock around a sanctuary, all but grazing therein..."<sup>396</sup>

*Al-Mushabbihaat* is the plural of *mushabbih*: it includes every thing which is neither clearly lawful nor clearly unlawful. The evidences (relating to it) could possibly indicate either ruling, while the (related) meanings support both contentions; sometimes being supported by the evidence for lawfulness, and sometimes being supported by the evidence for unlawfulness.<sup>397</sup>

The scholars have agreed upon the great importance of this hadith and its many benefits. This is because of its encouragement to perform that which is lawful, avoid the prohibited and refrain from the doubtful (*shubuhaat*). [It also calls for] taking precautions and being safe (*al-Ihtiyaal*) in matters

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<sup>396</sup> al-Bukhaaree 1/44, no. 49; Muslim 3/840, no. 3882.

<sup>397</sup> Fath al-Mubeen, Sharh al-Arba'een, by Ibn Hajar al-Haitamee, pg. 112 - 113.

of religion and honor; and that one should not do anything which leads to evil suspicions or causes one to fall into that which is prohibited.<sup>398</sup>

There are many reports in the Pure Sunnah which indicate the importance of having concern for taking precautions and being safe in matters of religion. One such report is what has been narrated from ‘Atiyyah as-Sa’adee, the Companion (may Allah be pleased with him), that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

“No one can achieve the level where he will be counted as one of the *Muttaqeen* (the pious, who are very conscious of Allah, performing what He has commanded and avoiding what He has prohibited) until he avoids that which is harmless for the sake of avoiding that which is harmful.”<sup>399</sup>

[About the authenticity of this hadith] Al-Manaawee said, in *Faid al-Qadeer*,<sup>400</sup> : It was narrated by at-Tirmidhee and al-Haakim. At-Tirmidhee said: (This hadith is) *hasan ghareeb* (a good hadith, whose chain of narrators at some level only contained one narrator). As-Suyootee indicated its authenticity through the abbreviation “s” accompanying this hadith.<sup>401</sup> Al-Albaanee graded it as weak (*da’eef*).<sup>402</sup>

Another such report is the Prophet’s (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saying: “Leave that which makes you doubt, for that which does not make you doubt.”<sup>403</sup> There is a strong directive in the hadith just

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<sup>398</sup> Fath al-Mubeen, pg. 121.

<sup>399</sup> *Ibn Maajah*, 2/1409, no. 4215 [Edition of Muhammad Fu’aad Abdul-Baaqee].

<sup>400</sup> *Faid al-Qadeer* 6/573, no. 9942.

<sup>401</sup> as-Suyootee used to indicate the grade (level of authenticity) of the ahaadith in his book *al-Jaami’ as-Sagheer*, by the letters “s” (saheeh - authentic), “h” (hasan - good) and “d” (*da’eef* - weak).

<sup>402</sup> *Da’eef Sunan Ibn Maajah*, pg. 346, no. 924 [4215].

<sup>403</sup> at-Tirmidhee [no. 2520], who said: This is a *hasan saheeh* (good, authentic hadith). *Gardens of the Righteous*, pg. 340, no. 593. Al-Albaanee declared it authentic in *Saheeh Sunan at-Tirmidhee* 2/309, no. 2045 [2650].

mentioned to stay clear of whatever is not clearly lawful. And there is no doubt that this hadith is one of the fundamentals upon which is based the principle of *Ihtiyaat* (taking precautions and seeking the safe way).<sup>404</sup>

Shaah Waliyyu'llah ad-Dihlawee—may Allah have mercy on him—after mentioning some ahaadith concerning this topic, says: Two views in an issue might contradict each other—one side showing permissibility and the other showing prohibition.

This may either occur at the source from which the issue originates in the Islamic Law, like two (apparently) contradictory hadith, or two conflicting analogies (*qiyaas*). Or it may occur at the point of application, i.e., the attempt to match the incident or action with what has been established in the Islamic Law, in terms of the rulings of permissibility and prohibition, [to determine if the action in question falls into the category of what the Law has determined lawful or the category of what the Law has determined as unlawful].

In such case, the (relationship) between Allah and the human being would never be clear, unpolluted, pure or serene except by abandoning that (doubtful) matter, and taking hold of/doing that which has no doubt or uncertainty in it.<sup>405</sup>

Related to this is that which is mentioned in *Saheeh al-Bukhaaree*, under the heading *Tafseer al-Mushtabihaat*, from hadith 'Adee ibn Haatim (may Allah be pleased with him), his saying: "...I asked: O Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) I release my dog by mentioning the name of Allah and then find with it, at the game, another dog on which I have not mentioned the name of Allah. I do not know which one of them caught the game. Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said (to him), 'Do not eat it as you have mentioned the name of Allah on your dog and not on the other dog.'<sup>406</sup>

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<sup>404</sup> Review *Fath al-Baaree, Kitab al-Buyoo'*, 4/343 for further discussion of this hadith.

<sup>405</sup> *Hujjatu'llah al-Baalighah*, 2/101.

<sup>406</sup> *al-Bukhaaree*, 3/154, no. 270.

This very point can also be seen in the saying of “Uthmaan ibn ‘Affaan (may Allah be pleased with him) when he was asked about the joining of two sisters [in marriage to the same man, at one and the same time]—by way of *Milk al-Yameen* (that which your right hand possess) [the two sisters being his property, or war captives from *Jihaad* between the Muslims and non-Muslims]. ‘Uthmaan (may Allah be pleased with him) said: An *ayah* (of Qur’aan)<sup>407</sup> has made them lawful (*halaal*) and another *ayah* (of Qur’aan)<sup>408</sup> has made them unlawful (*haraam*). [Considering them] unlawful (*haraam*) is more beloved to me.”<sup>409</sup>

أوما ملكت أيمانكم

The saying of Allah, the Most High: “...or (the captives and the slaves) that your right hands possess...”<sup>410</sup>

includes two sisters. This *ayah* indicates the lawfulness of every slave girl or captive, it being the same if she is taken along with her sister [by one and the same man] in sexual relations or not. This, in consideration of the general meaning of the word *maa* (“what,” i.e., whatever captives or slaves your right hands possess).

The other *ayah*<sup>411</sup>

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<sup>407</sup> “And if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with the orphan-girls, then marry (other) women of your choice, two or three, or four. But, if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one or (the captives and the slaves) that your right hand possess. That is nearer to prevent you from doing injustice.” *al-Qur’aan* 4:3.

<sup>408</sup> “Forbidden to you (for marriage) are: your mothers, your daughters, your sisters... and two sisters in wedlock at the same time, except for what has already passed; Verily Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” *al-Qur’aan* 4:23.

<sup>409</sup> *ad-DaarQutnee* 3/281; *al-Bayhaqee as-Sunan al-Kubraa* 7/164 - 167.

<sup>410</sup> *al-Qur’aan* 4:3.

<sup>411</sup> *al-Qur’aan* 4:23.

حرمت عليكم أمهاتكم وبناتكم وأخواتكم وعماتكم  
 وخالاتكم وبنات الأخ وبنات الأخت وأمهاتكم اللاتي أرضعنكم  
 وأخواتكم من الرضاعة وأمهات نسائكم وربائبكم اللاتي في  
 حجوركم من نسائكم اللاتي دخلتم بهن فإن لم تكونوا دخلتم بهن فلا  
 جناح عليكم وحالات أبناءكم الذين من أصلابكم وأن تجمعوا بين الأختين إلا  
 ما قد سلف إن الله كان غفورا رحيما

“Forbidden to you (for Marriage) are: Your Mothers, daughters,  
 sisters, and two sisters in wedlock at the same time, except for  
 what has already passed; verily Allah is oft-Forgiving, most  
 merciful.”

indicates the unlawfulness of joining together two sisters, it being the same  
 whether through marriage *nikaah* (to one and the same man) or by way of  
 the two each being a sexual partner (to one and the same man) *al-wat'u bi-*  
*milk al-yameen* because they are in his possession (through captivity or  
 slavery).

This same incident is reported in the *Sunan Sa'eed ibn Mansoor*, from ash-  
 Sha'bee, who said: “Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his  
 father) was asked concerning the issue of two sisters being joined together  
 (with one man) due to both of them being in his possession *milk al-yameen*.  
 He said: “I do not consider it lawful *halaal*, nor do I consider it unlawful  
*haraam*. An *ayah* (of Qur’aan) has made it lawful and another *ayah* has  
 declared it unlawful.” When this reached Ibn Mas’ood (may Allah be  
 pleased with him) he said: “The two (sisters) can not be joined together.”<sup>412</sup>

In another narration also from Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him  
 and his father) it is reported that he said: “An *ayah* has made them unlawful

<sup>412</sup> *Sunan Sa'eed ibn Mansoor, Tahqeeq (verification) by Habeebur-Rahmaan al-*  
*A'zamee, First Part of the 3rd Vol. pg. 404.*

while another *ayah* has declared them lawful, and I definitely would not do it.”<sup>413</sup>

Az-Zarkashee—after mentioning the narration of ‘Uthmaan (may Allah be pleased with him)—says: “The *Imaams* have said: Verily, the reason why considering this matter as unlawful *haraam* was more beloved (to him) was because it is the way of abandoning that which is allowed *mubaah* in order to avoid the forbidden *muharram*. And (to do this) is better than the opposite [i.e., in order not to leave that which is allowed one commits the forbidden].”<sup>414</sup>

Concerning this topic one might also draw upon what has been reported by al-Bukhaaree, from Ibn ‘Abbaas, Jarhad, and Muhammad ibn Jahsh (may Allah be pleased with them all), all of them reporting from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that he said: “The thigh is *‘awrah* (that which is unlawful to uncover).” Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: “The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) uncovered his thigh.”

Here al-Bukhaaree (may Allah have mercy upon him)—commenting upon these two reports—said: “The narration of Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) is *asnadu* stronger from the perspective of its chain of narrators, while the hadith of Jarhad (may Allah be pleased with him) is *ahwat* (safer to give precedence to it over the other), in order to escape from the difference of opinion between the two reports.”<sup>415</sup>

We intend to make clear through these comments that al-Bukhaaree (may Allah have mercy on him) favored giving precedence (*tarjeeh*) to the factor which prohibits (*al-muharrim*) over the factor which permits (*al-Mubeeh*) for the sake of being safe, taking precaution (*al-Ihtiyaat and at-Tawarru’*) and to escape from the difference of opinion (*al-Khurooj min al-Ikhtilaaf*). This is indicated by his saying: “...the hadith of Jarhad (may Allah be

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<sup>413</sup> Sunan Sa’eed ibn Mansoor, pg. 404.

<sup>414</sup> al-Manthoor fee al-Qawaa’id, by az-Zarkashee, Tahqeeq (verification) by Tayseer Ahmad Faa’iq Mahmood, 1/126

<sup>415</sup> al-Bukhaaree 1/223, Chapter 12.

pleased with him) is *ahwat* (safer to give precedence to it over the other)...”.

We might also consider what al-Bukhaaree has reported under the chapter he entitled: “Explanation of Doubtful Matters.” Under this title, al-Bukhaaree mentions the saying of Hassaan ibn Abu Sinaan: “I found nothing easier than to be pious and Allah-fearing (*al-Wara'*); (and to achieve this aim) Leave that which makes you doubt for that which does not make you doubt.”<sup>416</sup>

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<sup>416</sup> al-Bukhaaree 3/153, chapter 4.



# APPENDIX B

## TELEVISION<sup>417</sup>

### *Introduction*

The great need for discussion of the Islamic perspective concerning the issue of television is clear to us all. Since television has entered the homes of people in every corner of the earth, the rich and the poor, the educated and un-educated, Muslim and non-Muslim—it has become a necessity to address the issue and explain the problems and dangers of television in a clear and concise manner for the benefit of every Muslim who is seeking to please Allah, the Most High, and earn His reward.

### *The Definition of Television*

The Encyclopedia Britannica defines television as follows:

The electrical transmission of *pictures* in motion and the simultaneous electrical transmission of the accompanying sounds.

The Encyclopedia International explains television as:

The unique feature that distinguishes television from radio is the conversion of an *image* into an electrical current which is later reconverted to the original *image*...

### *The Working of Television*<sup>418</sup>

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<sup>417</sup> This appendix is a summary, with slight changes, of an excellent and enlightening book entitled *Television and the Institution of Photography or Picture-Making*, published by the Majlis al-Ulama, of South Africa.

<sup>418</sup> For an interesting and comprehensive discussion of the technical functioning of *Television*, refer to the book: *Television and the Institution of Photography or Picture-Making*.

The equipment consists of a camera which converts the *image* into electrical impulses; these are transmitted by radio to a receiver which converts the impulses by means of a cathode-ray tube into a corresponding *image* on a screen.

### ***The Image***

The illusion of motion in television is produced by showing 30 still *pictures*, or frames, each second. Through persistence of vision the brain retains each *picture* until the next comes along. We are not aware of the fact that our eyes are really seeing a rapidly changing sequence of a large number of slightly different still *pictures*. Each still *picture* consists of about 250,000 picture dots of varying brightness which appear as if painted on the screen. This process is called scanning.

[Encyclopedia International]

It should at this juncture be said that the undesirability and the Islamic prohibition of this institution of television is not based solely on the stand that *photography* (picture-making) of animate objects is employed. Without minimizing the importance and the decisiveness of the prohibitory factor of *picture-making*, it has to be said that a number of other evil and un-Islamic factors accompany the institution of television. It is this conglomeration of evil factors which make television illegal in Islam although, in most cases, *each single one of these factors is sufficient to secure the verdict of illegality of TV*. Insha'Allah, we shall outline these prohibitory factors (Asbaabul Hurmat) of television in the ensuing pages.

### ***Picture-Making—The Mother of Television***

Photography which is merely a method of *picture-making* is the actual basis of TV. Without the institution of photography television is not possible. Whether shows are “live” or otherwise, the institution of photography is employed. Now, according to the Law of Islam *picture-making* of animate objects is severely criticized and banned.

### ***Music and Television***

We can consider music as an integral part of television programs. No TV show is complete without music. Islam has forbidden music in no

unmistaken terms.<sup>419</sup> For the purposes of the present subject it will suffice to state that Islam categorically forbids all types of music. Music in Islam is regarded as a Kabirah (great sin). With regard to music our Prophet (may the blessings of Allah and peace be upon him) said:

There will be men from among my Ummah who will consume alcohol, giving it another name (so as to deceive themselves and others). Singing girls and musical instruments will be playing to them. Allah, Ta'ala will cause the earth to swallow them. Allah will transform them into apes and swine.<sup>420</sup>

It is reported from Abdullah ibn Mas'ood (May Allah be pleased with him):

“Music sows hypocrisy in the heart like water causes seeds to grow in soil.”<sup>421</sup>

Allah says in the Quran:

وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا اللَّغْوَ أَعْرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَقَالُوا لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ

لَا نَبْتَغِي الْجَاهِلِينَ

*And when they (the believers) hear what is futile they turn away from it, and they say, Unto us our deeds; and, unto you your deeds. Peace upon you. We do not follow the ignorant ones.*<sup>422</sup>

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<sup>419</sup> For further details and a full discussion of the evidences concerning the prohibition of Music in Islam, refer to: The Islamic Ruling of Music and Singing, by Abu Bilal Mustafah al-Kanadi.

<sup>420</sup> Ibn Maajah, al-Bayhaqee 10/221, no. 20989. Al-Albaanee declared it to be authentic in Silsilat Saheehah 1/136-139, no. 90.

<sup>421</sup> Ad-Durru al-Manthoor, by As-Suyootee 5/307-308, explanation of verse 31:6 of the Qur'an.

## ***The Female Voice***

The female voice, according to Islam, is also included in the category of Satar, i.e., it has to be “concealed” and not “revealed.” Since the female voice is an entity not to be displayed or advertised, it is not permissible for males to listen to women singing or even reciting the Quran.

When necessity demands that they have to speak to males then their speech should not be attractive, gentle and alluring like the deliberate “lure” put in speech by “trained” women of the disbelievers. Recognizing the danger of allurements in the female voice, the Quran commands women thus:

فلا تخضعن بالقول فيطمع الذي في قلبه مرض

*“And, do not speak in alluring tones, so that he in whose heart there is a disease (of lust) desires...”<sup>423</sup>*

Van de Velde in his book *Ideal Marriage*, states:

The tone-color of a voice, and the intonation of a single word—and it may be a word of no special meaning or association in itself—may excite incredible intensity of desire. The unique and precious significance that a woman’s voice can give to “you” or “thou” can suffice to overwhelm man’s power of endurance and control...

Islam has, hence, forbidden its women to speak in a soft or “sexually” sweet tone. If anyone is aware of the workings of sex-psychology he will clearly see the justification for Islam’s restriction in this matter.

Islam commands the concealment of the female voice and prohibits its display in public, but television demands the contrary. Great use is made of the female voice on TV to advertise, to allure, to excite lust, and female singing with the accompaniment of music is most popular...

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<sup>422</sup> *Al-Quran 28:55.*

<sup>423</sup> *Al-Quran 33:32.*

The importance of television programs, like the importance of all the mass media of the disbelievers, hinges on maximum exhibition of the female body and the female voice which have been subverted by the bestial culture of the unbelievers, to pamper the inordinate sexual desires of men who have no belief of Allah—of men who have no fear of Allah left in them.

### ***Serials, Romances and Stories on Television***

What is Islam's attitude to fiction, novels and romantic stories? Allah Ta'ala says in the Quran:

ومن الناس من يشتري لهو الحديث ليضل عن سبيل الله بغير علم ويتخذها هزوا أولئك لهم عذاب مهين، وإذا تلى عليه آياتنا ولي مستكبرا كأن لم يسمعها كأن في أذنيه وقرا فبشره بعذاب أليم

*And among mankind are those who purchase idle tales (lahwu'l-hadith) so as to lead astray (others) from the Path of Allah. And, they make a mockery of the Laws of Allah. To them, there is a disgraceful punishment. And, when our verses are rehearsed to them they turn away in pride as if they did not hear, as if there are plugs in their ears. Give them the news of a painful punishment.*<sup>424</sup>

These verses of the Quran were revealed to prohibit, according to the Mufasssireen and Jurists, music and the stories of romances imported from Persia. Since these things divert man's attention from the remembrance of Allah and transport one into the realm of illusion and imagination the Quran outlaws them. Islam strongly discourages fiction and encourages one to live in reality and not in illusion which has the tendency to make one negligent and forgetful of the prime purpose of man's creation which is to gain Allah's Pleasure by fixing the gaze on the Akhirat (Hereafter) and not on the TV screen. Islam, therefore forbids the wasting of time in listening to idle tales and fiction or false stories.

### ***Nudity, Immorality and Television***

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<sup>424</sup> Al-Quran 31:6, 7.

The most glaring evil propagated by the television media of the world is the crime of nudity and sexual immorality. Commercialized nudity and sexual immorality under the camouflage of “educational” pictures are accepted and necessary features of world television. The Western world is haunted by the obsession of illicit sex, and it is this carnal obsession of illicit sex coupled with the unbeliever’s god of materialism which makes capital of the female body on TV as well as all other mass media.

The Islamic concept of morality and modesty is the very antithesis of the immorality and lasciviousness dished out to the world via TV. Islam demands the concealment of the female body. The Messenger of Allah (may the blessings of Allah and peace be upon him) said:

“Woman is an object of concealment.”<sup>425</sup>

TV is an institution which is widely used to exhibit the female body. Islam has banned all forms of immorality and immodesty, but TV exhibits immodesty and immorality in their crudest forms by depicting the actual sex acts and, above all, it audaciously and shamelessly passes these off as “educational.” Television as a prime agent of immorality is very well known...

The Messenger of Allah (may the blessings of Allah and peace be upon him) said:

“Shamelessness (immodesty) is vice, and vice will be in the fire.”<sup>426</sup>

### ***Television As An Agent of Zina (Fornication)***

Allah Ta’ala says in the Quran:

ولا تقربوا الزنى

“And come not near to zina.”<sup>427</sup>

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<sup>425</sup> *At-Tirmidhee. It was declared authentic by al-Albaanee in Saheeh Sunan at-Tirmidhee 1/343 no. 1189.*

<sup>426</sup> *Muslim 4/1375, no. 6309.*

The words, come not near, means: stay away from all such things and practices which lead to zina—which are stepping-stones to fornication.

All practices, things and institutions which aid and foster fornication and immodesty are forbidden by Islam. There are different categories of this abominable crime of Zina. The Messenger of Allah (may the blessings of Allah and peace be upon him) said:

The zina of the eyes is the gaze (at that which is unlawful, e.g. nudity); the zina of the ears is to listen (to talks of nudity which excites the carnal desire); the zina of the tongue is to speak (what is evil); the zina of the hand is to touch (the female which is unlawful to you); the zina of the feet is to walk (towards immorality); the zina of the heart is to desire (what is unlawful), and it is the private parts which either commits or shuns the actual act of fornication.<sup>428</sup>

In this Hadith the Messenger of Allah (may the blessings of Allah and peace be upon him) speaks of the zina committed by the various parts of the human body. Thus, to look at the nudity and evil portrayed on the television screen constitutes the zina of the eyes. To listen to the immodest and illicit sex talks of the television is zina of the ears. Lust which is aroused by the display, discussion of nudity and lascivty and perversion on the TV screen constitutes the zina of the heart.

Television, therefore, is without any doubt a powerful agent and a stepping-stone for fornication...

We find today the whole family—father, mother, sons and daughters—sitting huddled together around the TV screen. Together, in a display of stark shamelessness, the whole family is committing zina of the eyes, zina of the ears and zina of the heart, and Allah alone knows how many multitudes of men and women indulged in the final act of fornication as a result of watching and being aroused by the evil on the TV screen...

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<sup>427</sup> *Al-Quran 17:32.*

<sup>428</sup> *Muslim 4/1397, no. 6421, 6422.*

Islam lays great emphasis on modesty, so much so, that our Prophet (may blessings of Allah and peace be upon him) said:

“Modesty is a part of Imaan (Faith).”<sup>429</sup>

But TV with its emphasis on illicit, depraved and bestial immorality is the very negation of the Islamic concept of modesty and shame. Mother, father and children together viewing the zina -- the fornication and vice on the TV screen. What is now left of humanity? May Allah Ta’ala protect us and our children from the filth and depravity of the Western world sunk in perversion and immorality.

Allah Ta’ala says:

اليوم نختم على أفواههم وتكلمنا أيديهم وتشهد أرجلهم بما كانوا يكسبون

*“Today (the Day of Qiyamah) we shall seal their mouths—and, their hands shall speak (the evil they committed); and their feet will bear evidence as to what they practiced.”*<sup>430</sup>

### ***TV In Stride—Terror of Copy Rapes***

The horror of a TV rape came true for two women. They were attacked only days after the screening of a documentary “Cry Rape” on British TV.

The maniac who broke into their homes at Reading, Berkshire, acted just like the TV rapist. He struck by day, threatening his victims with a knife. He robbed them and stacked his loot in a neat pile ready for a quick getaway. The police chief leading the hunt for the rapist said: “He may have seen this program. It could have stimulated these attacks.” Now police may ask ITV for a private screening of the film to seek possible new clues.

(Sunday Times, 8th February, 1976)

### ***Television and Crime in General***

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<sup>429</sup> *At-Tirmidhee. It was declared authentic by al-Albaanee in Saheeh Sunan at-Tirmidhee, 2/195, no. 2094 [1634].*

<sup>430</sup> *Al-Quran 36:65.*



Television besides being a powerful agent of immorality, generally fosters various types of crime. Violence, aggression, robberies, murder, etc., are crimes which the young readily learn from TV shows. Much of the delinquency and youth crimes being perpetrated in the Western world could be traced to the TV.

In an article entitled: TV Shows Blamed For Crimes, Los Angeles judge, Mark Brandler, blasted a TV crime show recently as the cause of a "seven-hour nightmare" in which two teenagers taped shotguns to the heads of hostages and extracted a huge ransom from a Californian bank.

### ***Television Encourages Acceptance of Aggression***

The regular and continuous shows of violence and aggression slowly, but most certainly, claim their victims. Viewers are "brain-washed" by the perpetual scenes of violence to such an extent that violence and aggressiveness becomes accepted as a mode of behavior.

### ***Television Encourages Imitation of Crime***

Research has established that TV exercises a very strong influence on the minds of people causing them to imitate and enact the crime shown on the TV screen. Dr. Robert Liebert, a child psychologist who was a leading researcher in the United States Surgeon General's investigation into TV and social behavior, says: Violence on home screens encourages an acceptance of aggression as a mode of behavior... Perfectly normal children will imitate anti-social behavior they see on television, not out of malice, but curiosity... In showing displays of violence and criminal acts, the media is "teaching," people are "learning," he says.

### ***The Brainwashing Action of Television***

Television is here and its biggest fans are children. Overnight they've become instant pundits, immediately recognizing personalities who are still just faces to the rest of us. It's the kids who grab the TV guide and plot their viewing with military precision; the kids who know every cop and cowboy and exactly why it could not have been the butler who did it.

Will reading become a forgotten art only necessary to decipher the basic English of the TV guide or the secret message flashed on the screen by Agent X who has seconds to read the scrawl before it self-destructs?

Researchers have established that the young minds of children are readily susceptible to being brainwashed by TV. In America organizations have been formed in scores of cities in order to fight the evil effect of TV on children. The President of the Organization, Action For Children's Television, a Boston-based parents' organization with branches in 60 cities says:

"At present, from Monday to Friday, children are subjected to 16 minutes of commercials an hour, and 12 minutes an hour on weekends."

"Television advertisers in America are pouring unprecedented millions of dollars into the child slots for the autumn season, despite a storm of public indignation over 'brainwashing' on children's shows."

### ***Television Stunts Intellectual Growth***

An eminent American educationist, Professor Lowell Little, claims that TV raises ignorant students. At an education seminar in Florida he said:

"Today's youth are so used to plopping down in front of a television set and not having to put their brains to work that when they come to sit in a classroom of a university all they are capable of doing is day-dreaming and vacantly watching the clock."

"As the first generation of youngsters all but raised on television has now reached college age it is abundantly clear that the boob tube (i.e. television) has destroyed any curiosity they may ever have had."

"Their level of communication is just at the sixth grade level."

"Television has more influence on them than parents, teachers or clergy—and that is a disgrace."

“If I get through to four students out of 30 and arouse their interest that’s the best I can expect.”

### ***The Addictive Influence of Television***

The addictive influence of TV over its viewers is a serious malady which has reached alarming proportions. Viewers become so addicted to TV that it becomes most difficult for most viewers to live without TV. Research in this field of the “addictive influence of TV” has established that if those who are addicted to TV are deprived of television they become increasingly nervous, short-tempered and unhappy.

In an article captioned: Millions Addicted To The Box, the *Eastern Province Herald* of the 23rd October, 1975, reports:

Television’s addictive grip was emphasized some months before when three socially varied ‘guinea pig’ families agreed to try a switch-off for a month. The lowest income family could stand the deprivation only a week; the other two lasted for four weeks, hating every minute of it. They said they felt as if they had lost a friend, were depressed and thought their work was suffering too.

In an earlier psychological experiment 182 West Germans volunteered to try to give up television for a year, with the inducement of payment as long as they kept off. One brave family stood the strain for nearly six months—till they wanted to watch a crime serial. The first volunteer, a bachelor, failed after three weeks. Others became increasingly nervous, short-tempered and unhappy...

### ***Television Diverts Man’s Attention From The Remembrance of Allah***

The Prophet (may blessings of Allah and peace be upon him) said:

Every sport or amusement that a Muslim occupies himself with is *Baatil* (baseless, null and not permissible) -- except three: [the three types being] his practicing with your bow (and arrow); his training your horse and his playing with his family.<sup>431</sup>

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Allah Ta'ala says in the Quran:

وما الحياة الدنيا إلا لعب ولهو والدار الآخرة خير للذين يتقون أفلا تعقلون

*“The life of this world is but play and amusement, and the abode of the Hereafter is best for those who Fear (Allah).”<sup>432</sup>*

The above stated Hadith and verse of the Quran, as well as many other verses of the Quran and Ahaadith make it quite clear that Islam does not tolerate futility, idle sport and amusement. This is so because amusement and entertainment divert one's attention from the Remembrance of Allah Ta'ala. It also interferes with one's worship causing neglect of *Salaat* (in general) and the congregational prayers ( particularly for the men). Amusement and entertainment which Islam describes as *Lawh, la'b* make a person indolent, negligent and irresponsible. Hence, we find the Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah and peace be upon him) condemning very strongly even such play as chess and backgammon, etc., in the following hadith:

*“Whosoever plays with chess and backgammon is like one who has dipped his hand in the flesh of swine.”<sup>433</sup>*

### ***Research on Television has shown...***

- Research studies on the effects and influence of television on society has shown:
- That the average American child stares at more than 11,000 murders on television by the age of 14.
- That most American children spend more time before a set than with their teacher in any one year.

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<sup>431</sup> *Ibn Maajah. It was declared authentic by al-Albaanee in Saheeh Sunan Ibn Maajah 2/132, no. 2267 [2811]. See also Silsilah Saheehah 1/562, no. 315.*

<sup>432</sup> *Al-Quran 6:32.*

<sup>433</sup> *Muslim 4/1222, no. 5612.*

- That in a national survey many young viewers claimed to watch television for up to 46 hours a week.
- That television takes one away from reality.
- That TV has created a vast tribe of mini-stars, pop-idols, schmaltzy gurus, talking-heads, telegogues and cardboard “personalities” whose only achievement is to be on the box.
- That TV causes lethargy in children.
- That television is responsible for the falling standard of literacy.
- That millions of dollars are spent by advertisers to “brainwash” children by means of television to increase demand for consumer goods.
- That television makes viewers insensitive to violence perpetrated by others.
- That public apathy and failure to respond to a victim’s cries for help is blamed on television.
- That television is detrimental to the physical and mental health of children...

### ***What They Say About Television***

“The Church of England General Synod, in a report to a Government appointed committee deplores scenes of heavy drinking, chain smoking and casual use of obscene language and blasphemous language on TV.”  
*(Eastern Province Herald, 23rd October, 1975)*

The psychiatrists, Dr. William Tompkins of the George Washington School of Medicine, and Dr. Paul Fink of the East Virginia Medical School, have been engaged in intensive research into the effect on people of television advertising. They say that TV commercials “encourage belief in mysticism by making viewers believe they can get what they want almost by magic.”

Dr. Tompkins says: "Television advertising gets us to accept nonsense and leads us to go looking for a fantasy world."

"...the FCC (Federal Communications Commission) was ticked off by the House and Senate Appropriation Committee and told to report on fresh measures to curb video violence or face 'punitive action'."

Mr. Tindall, Director of the Audio-Visual Center of Sydney Teachers' College said: "Children were learning that violence is not only rampant but frequently justified."

"For years, people had been saying the good thing about TV was that it brought news to the living room. But the survey indicated that few children, if given the option, watched the news or current affairs."

"An almost unbelievable avalanche of sex, perversion, pornography, blue films, sadism, masochism, bestiality, murder, rape and brutality has flooded into the public view through the modern 'boob tube' of television, or the movies and lurid novels."

"In British television, almost unbelievable references to lewdness, perverted sex and depravity are as open and unabashed as news reports."  
(*Tomorrow's World*, August 1971)

### ***Television and Time***

Television undoubtedly dominates the free time or leisure of millions who have become addicted to it. Hours of precious time are daily squandered in the presence of the TV set. This malady of wasting hours daily doing "justice to the TV screen" is so serious that even necessary and important work and activities are neglected, especially when the TV program or serial clashes with the time when a particular work has to be done. *The Eastern Province Herald* dated 23rd October, 1975, states in a report:

"Britons spend more time with television than with radio, books, theater and newspaper combined."

"The average person watches television nine hours and six minutes a week in winter and seven hours 42 minutes in summer—but these estimates seem conservative.

“Three-quarters of homes in one British Midlands industrial area were found to have the ‘telly’ on the entire evening everyday and in one national survey many young viewers claimed to watch for up to 46 hours a week.

“When early in 1974 the Government put a 10:30 p.m. curfew on television to save electricity for several weeks the outcries were loud and long.”

A recent survey conducted by the Audio-Visual Center of Sydney Teachers’ College (Australia) revealed that the average child watched over 21 hours of TV a week. Mr. Tindall, Director of the Center asked: “What does TV offer the child in exchange for about 1,100 hours of almost undivided attention each year?”

Time in Islam is of great importance. So important indeed is Time that Almighty Allah in the Quran takes an Oath by Time, and says:

*“Wal- Asri”—By the Token of Time.*

A Muslim is not permitted to waste time, more so, when the wasting of time is a result of an institution portraying vice and evil, and when the wasting of time on a practice or “past-time” involves interference or neglect with ones duties to Allah and man. The addictive grip of television over its viewers is so powerful that the viewer becomes a helpless victim wasting sacred hours glued to the TV screen, thus neglecting his *Salaat*, his family duties and his social duties. The student, undoubtedly neglects his studies and learning. In a survey, teachers have said that a direct link exists between television and the failing standard of literacy, particularly among lethargic children continually sitting up late in front of the “goggle box.”

والعصر إن الإنسان لفي خسر. إلا الذين آمنوا وعملوا الصالحات وتواصوا بالحق وتواصوا

بالصبر

*“By the Time .. Verily! Man is in loss, Except those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, and recommend*

*one another to the truth, and recommend one  
another to patience.”<sup>434</sup>*

***Should anyone be watching television?***

***JUDGE FOR YOURSELF!***

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<sup>434</sup> *Al-Quran 103:1-3.*



# APPENDIX C

## A Biographical Sketch of Some of the Scholars Who Contributed Essays

### Imaam an-Nawawee

Imaam Muhyiddeen Abu Zakaria ibn Sharaf an-Nawawee was born in the first month (Muharram) of 631 AH [corresponding to 1233 CE] in a religious family of *Nawa*, a village near Damascus. He spent his adolescence and reached maturity in this village where he memorized the Qur'an.

Shaikh Marakashi, a religious man of Nawa, says: "I saw Shaikh Nawawee at Nawa when he was a youth aged 10 years. Other boys of his age used to force him to play with them, but the Shaikh would not like to play with them, and would remain busy in his studies. If his friends insisted on his joining them in their games, the Shaikh would start weeping (in disgust)." Shaikh Marakashi further says: "I started loving (Imaam) Nawawee immensely from that moment."

Imaam Nawawee's father wanted his son to join him in his business, but on account of his lofty and religious temperament, the latter did not like this. Allah had ordained for him a noble mission. He therefore, showed no inclination for business. During this time he completed his memorization of the Qur'an, and thus completed the first step of his learning.

Imaam Nawawee's father had by now realized the intellectual gifts of his son. Keeping in view his quest for learning, the father resolved to arrange for a proper and befitting education for his son. Therefore, he took him to Damascus, which was then the center of learning. In Damascus, Imaam an-Nawawee started his studies under the renowned teacher, Kamal ibn Ahmad.

Imaam an-Nawawee says: "When I attained the age of 19 years, my father took me to Damascus where I joined Madrasah Rawaha. I studied in this institution for two years. During my stay in Madrasah Rawaha, I lived on the food supplied by the Madrasah. However, in 4 ½ months I was able to commit to memory in full, the book *al-Muhadh-dhab*, but a major part of my time was spent in the study of commentaries and correction of books. When my teacher, Shaikh Ishaq Maghribee, saw my interest and progress in my studies, he started loving me immensely and showed greater concern for my education. In 650 AH, I performed Hajj along with my father and stayed in the city of al-Madeenah for 1 ½ months."

### **His Preoccupation with His Studies**

Ata-ud-Deen Atar says that Imaam an-Nawawee told him that he used to study about 12 subjects daily from his teachers. Some of the subjects were *Saheeh Muslim*, Syntax and Etymology (related to Arabic Language), Logic and Principles of Fiqh or Islamic Jurisprudence, etc.

Imaam an-Nawawee further says: "Allah, the Most High, blessed my time and memory and enabled me to complete my studies." He also mentioned the fact that: "Once I thought that I should study medicine, and for this purpose I even purchased a book on the subject. But, soon after this I started feeling gloomy and inactive, as if my heart had plunged into darkness; so much so that I even lost interest and control of my favorite subjects. This state continued for some time, when all of a sudden it dawned upon me that my studies of medicine were of no use to me. I, therefore, at once sold the book on medicine and removed all literature on this subject from my house. This gave me relief and brightened my heart."

### **His Teachers**

Imaam an-Nawawee studied Hadeeth from the celebrated Muhadditheen (Scholars of Hadeeth) of his time, and was taught Islamic Jurisprudence and its Fundamentals (Usool al-Fiqh) by great scholars. The number of his teachers is very large.

Some of them were: Abu Ibraaheem Ishaq ibn Ahmad al-Maghribee, Abu Muhammad Abdur-Rahmaan ibn Nooh al-Maqdisee, Abu Hafis Umar ibn Asa'ad ar-Rabee'ah, Abu'l-Abbaas Ahmad Misree, and Abu'l-Farj Maqdisee.

## **His Students**

Like his teachers, the number of Imaam an-Nawawee's students is large.

Some of his students were: Ala-ud-Deen ibn Athar, Abu'l-Abbaas Ahmad ibn Ibraaheem, Abu'l- Abbaas Jafree, Abu'l-Abbaas Ahmad ibn Farj, Raahid Ismai'eel ibn Muallim Hanafee, and Abu Abdullah Hanbalee.

## **His Piety**

Imaam an-Nawawee was not only an accomplished scholar, but also a highly pious person, very much devoted to praying and worship. He always strictly followed the Sunnah or the traditions and practices of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He always ate simple food and refused invitations to sumptuous dinners and feasts.

The learned people, elite of the society and the common man of the period greatly respected the Imaam on account of his piety, learning and excellent character. He avoided all pomp and show and worldly riches. He never accepted any monetary allowance, benefit or favor from the Government of his day. He spent most of his time either in the spread and expansion of religious knowledge or in prayers and worship. He used to take very little rest, and would take only one meal a day.

## **His Works**

Imaam an-Nawawee only live 46 years, but even during this short period he had written a large number of books on various subjects, each of which is a master piece and treasure full of beneficial knowledge and information. Some of his works are:

1. *Sharh* (Commentary of) *Saheeh al-Bukhaaree*;
2. *al-Minhaj Fi Sharh* (Commentary) *Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj*;
3. *Riyaadh as-Saaliheen* [English Translation: *Gardens of the Righteous*]; and
4. *Arba'een an-Nawawee* [English Translation: *Forty Hadith of Nawawee*].

## **His Death**

In 676 AH Imaam an-Nawawee returned all the books taken by him on loan, to their respective owners and he visited the graves of his teachers and elders and *prayed for them*. On this occasion he was so much moved that he became tearful. Thereafter bidding goodbye to his friends and admirers, he turned towards his home town Nawa. A group of his friends accompanied him beyond Damascus to bid him farewell. They asked him: "When shall we meet again?" The Imaam said: "After two hundred years." Those present on the occasion understood that by this the Imaam meant the Day of Judgment.

After this, the Imaam went to Bait al-Maqdis (Jerusalem), where he visited the tomb of the Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) and then returned to his home town Nawa. Soon after his arrival at this place, he fell ill and died on the night of Wednesday the 14<sup>th</sup> of the month of Rajab, 676 AH, in the life time of his father.

When the news of the death of Imaam an-Nawawee reached Damascus, the city and its neighboring areas were plunged into grief and the Muslims were overwhelmed with sorrow. The Chief Justice of Damascus, Izzuddeen Muhammad ibn Sa'igh, visited the Imaam's grave in Nawa, along with a deputation of the dignitaries, and *prayed for him*. A number of poets composed eulogies praising him and lamenting his demise. Shaikh Wali-ud-Deen ibn Khateeb, the compiler of *Mishkaat*, dedicated his book *Ikmaal Fee Asmaa 'Ar-Rijaal* to Imaam an-Nawawee. May Allah Multiply his Rewards in the Next Life and Grant him Peace!

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### **al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalaanee**

Though born in Egypt on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Sha'baan in the year 773 AH [1372 CE] Abu'l Fadl Shahaabud-Deen Ahmad ibn Alee ibn Muhammad al-Kinaanee ash-Shaafi'aa al-'Asqalaanee came from a family that was originally from 'Asqalaan in Southern Palestine. When he was four years old his parents died, and a friend of his father, az-Zakee al-Kharroobe, was appointed his legal guardian.

Al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar was a Hadeeth Scholar, Judge and Historian whose life work constitutes the final summation of the Science of Hadeeth, and

makes him one of the foremost representatives of Muslim religious scholarship.

He entered school when he was five and by the age of nine had completely memorized the Qur'an. He also memorized the book of Ibn al-Hajib *Mukhtasar* and other important books. In 784 AH [1382 CE], az-Zakee al-Kharroobee took the then eleven-year-old Ibn Hajar on a pilgrimage to Makkah. While there he continued his education by studying *Saheeh al-Bukhaaree*. After their return to Egypt, his guardian, az-Zakee, died.

Another guardian and early academic teacher, Shams al-Deen Muhammad ibn Alee ibn al-Qattaan, greatly influenced the direction of Ibn Hajar's studies by introducing him to historical literature and stimulating his interest in the historical side of religious studies. When he decided to specialize in Hadeeth, Zayn al-Deen al-Iraaqee (d. 806 AH/1414 CE) became his principal teacher. Also, profiting him greatly were his ten years of study with Izz al-Deen ibn Jamaa'ah, which marked the beginning of his scholarly research at the age of twenty. Additionally, he studied under the great scholars al-Balqinee and Ibn al-Mulaqqin. He also recited some parts of the Qur'an in all the seven manners of recitation before at-Tanukhi.

The month preceding his marriage to a girl from a highly respected family, in Sha'baan 789 AH [May 1396], he spent in study and research in Alexandria. The following year, in Shawwal 799 AH [July 1397], he left for Hijaaz and Yemen, where he studied language, literature and prosody. This journey extended into 801 AH [1398] as he continued his studies in Palestine and Syria. He returned in 803 AH [1400], having finished his travels as a student.

The last years of the eighth century of the Hijrah saw the beginnings of his work as an author; a paper written in 795 AH [1392-93] on prosody is his earliest recorded publication. His professional career followed the usual pattern of lecturer, professor, head of a college, and finally judge, along with many other roles, such as Muftee, preacher and librarian.

He became the Qaadee of Egypt, then Ash-Sham was added to his jurisdiction which he held for more than twenty-one years. He was against holding office of the Qaadee at first, until the Sultan assigned to him a special case, then he accepted to represent al-Balqinee when he begged him

to preside for him as Qaadee. He was assigned to hold the office of Chief Judge on the 12<sup>th</sup> of Muharram 827 AH. He then left, but had to again take the office of Chief Judge seven times until he left it finally in 852 AH which is the year he died in.

He started lecturing on Hadeeth in Shawwaal 808 AH [March 1406], and his teaching career continued until his final illness in January, 1449, which was followed soon by his death on 28<sup>th</sup> Dhu'l-Hijjah 852 AH [Saturday, February 22, 1449].

Ibn Hajar's numerous works on the entire range of Hadeeth studies, but mainly on the Science of Hadeeth (*Mustalah*) are the reason for this enduring fame. He wrote over one hundred and fifty books, the most famous of which is the commentary on Saheeh al-Bukhaaree (*Fath al-Baaree Sharh Saheeh al-Bukhaaree*).

He firmly established his scholarly reputation in his early thirties when, in 804 AH [1401-02], he completed a draft of a work on the *asaaneed* (chains of narrators) of the *Saheeh* entitled *Tagh-leeq at-Ta'leeq*. The introduction to his great commentary on the *Saheeh* was completed in 813 AH [1410], and the commentary itself gradually evolved from lecture courses extending from 817 AH [1414] to the final completion of the book on 1<sup>st</sup> Rajab 842 [18<sup>th</sup> December 1438]. The fame of this work was so great that in 833 AH [1429-30], even before the commentary was completed, Shah Rukh, the Timurid ruler of Fars and Sijestaan, asked Egypt's ruler, Barsbay, to secure for him copies of the material written thus far. The Hafsid Abu Faaris Abdul-Azeez, on the other end of the Muslim world, also called for copies of the work.

Among al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar's other important works are:

1. *al-Isaabah Fi Tamyeez as-Sahaabah*, which deals with the men who have been declared to be Companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).
2. *Tah-dheeb at-Tah-dheeb*, which deals with the narrators of Hadeeth from the six main books of Hadeeth.
3. *Lisaan al-Meezaan*, which deals with the narrators of Hadeeth who have been criticized—sometimes unfairly—from the six main books and others besides them.

4. *Raf' al-Isr 'an Qudaat Misr*, which includes biographies of the judges of Egypt
5. *al-Durar al-Kaaminah Fi A'yaan al-Mu'ah ath-Thaaminah*, which contains biographies of all the noteworthy individuals who died in the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century; this work is the first of the all-inclusive centenary biographical collections.
6. *Inbaa' al-Ghumr bi-Abnaa al 'Umr*, an analytic history of noteworthy events from 773 AH [1372], the year of his birth, to 850 AH [1446].

He also wrote a number of handbooks and minor works on Hadeeth and history, among them a collection of *Forty Hadeeth*, which has been translated into English.

As concerns his personality, he was humble, tolerant, patient and enduring. He was also described as being ascetic, selfless, generous and a person praying and fasting voluntarily. He had good manners when dealing with others, whether highly or lowly placed, and with all those who sat with him, whether old or young.

Al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar, one of Islam's greatest scholars, died after the Isha prayer on Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> Dhu'l-Hijjah, 852 AH -- May Allah Multiply his Rewards in the Next Life and Grant him Peace!

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### **Shaikh Muhammad Naasir-ud-Deen al-Albaanee**

Shaikh Naasir-ud-Deen al-Albaanee was born in the city of Ashkoder, then the capital of Albania, in the year 1332 AH (1914 CE) into a poor family. His father al-Hajj Nooh Najjaatee al-Albaanee had completed Sharee'ah studies in Istanbul and returned a scholar to Albania. After Albania was taken over by atheism the family made Hijrah to Damascus. In Damascus Shaikh al-Albaanee completed his initial education and was then taught the Qur'an, Tajweed, sciences of Arabic Language, Fiqh of the Hanafee Madhab and further branches of the Deen by various Shaikhs and friends of his father.

He also learned from his father the art of clock and watch repair, became highly skilled in it and famous for it and derived his earnings through it.

He began to specialize in the field of Hadeeth and its related sciences by the age of 20—being influenced by articles in *al-Manaar* magazine.

He began to work in this field by transcribing al-Haafiz al-Iraaqee's monumental *al-Mughnee 'an Hamliil Asfaar fil-Asfaar fee takhreej maa fil-Ihya min'al-Akhbaar* and then adding notes to it.

He delved further into the field of Hadeeth and its various sciences despite discouragement from his father. Furthermore, the books he needed were not to be found in his father's library which was composed mainly of various works of Hanafee Fiqh. And since he could not afford many of the books he required he would borrow them from the famous library of Damascus, *al-Maktabatu-z-Zaahiriyyah*, or sometimes from book sellers.

He became engrossed with the science of Hadeeth to the extent that he would sometimes close up his shop and remain in the library for up to twelve hours—breaking off his work only for prayer. He would not even leave to eat, but would take two light snacks with him.

Eventually, the library authorities granted him a special room to himself for his study and his own key for access to the library before normal opening time. Often he would remain at work from early morning until after Ishaa. During this time he produced many useful works, many of which are still waiting to be printed.

The Shaikh's studies of Hadeeth of Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had a great affect on him and resulted in his turning away from blind following of his former madh-hab and instead to accept and act upon the Book and the Sunnah—with the understanding of the pious predecessors (as-Salaf As-Saalih). This naturally meant he was sometimes at variance with some of the local Shaikhs who blindly followed the Hanafee Madh-hab, and likewise with the local Soofi Imaams and innovators who began to oppose him and incite the common people against him by calling him a "Wahhaabi deviant." He was, however, encouraged by some of the noble Shaikhs of Damascus who urged him to continue, amongst them Shaikh Bahjatul Baijatul, Shaikh Abdul-Fattaah—the Imaam, and Tawfeeq al-Barzah—Raheemahumu'llah.

The Shaikh therefore faced much opposition in his efforts to promote Tawheed and the Sunnah, but he bore this with patient perseverance.



After some time, he started giving two weekly classes attended by students of knowledge and university teachers in which he taught various books of Aqeedah, Fiqh, Usool and Hadeeth sciences. He also began organized monthly journeys for Da'wah to the various cities of Syria and then Jordan.

After a number of his works appeared in print, the Shaikh was chosen to teach Hadeeth in the new University of al-Madeenah, Saudi Arabia, for three years from 1381 - 1383 AH, where he was also a member of the University board.

After this he returned to his former studies and work in *Maktabatuz-Zaahiriyyah*, leaving his shop in the hands of one of his brothers. He visited various countries for Da'wah and lectures—amongst them Qatar, Egypt, Kuwait, the Emirates, Spain and England.

He was forced to emigrate a number of times moving from Syria to Jordan, then Syria again, then Beirut, then the Emirates, then again to Amman, Jordan, where he now resides. May Allah keep him strong and healthy, and continue to bless the Muslims through his precious writings and recorded lectures.

His works - mainly in the field of Hadeeth and its sciences number over 100. His students are many and include many Shaikhs of the present day, among them: Shaikh Hamdee Abdul-Majeed as-Salafee, Shaikh Muhammad Eid Abbaasee, Dr. Umar Sulaimaan al-Ashqar, Shaikh Muhammad Ibraaheem Shaqrah, Shaikh Muqbil ibn Haadee al-Waadi'ee, Shaikh Alee Khushshaan, Shaikh Muhammad Jameel Zainoo, Shaikh Abdur-Rahmaan Abdus-Samad, Shaikh Alee Hasan Abdul-Hameed al-Halabee, Shaikh Saleem al-Hilaalee and Shaikh Abdur-Rahmaan Abdur-Khaaliq.

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### Shaikh Abdul-Azeez ibn Baaz

He is the exemplary Scholar, the *Zaahid*<sup>435</sup>, mild and forbearing in nature, the *Faqeeh*,<sup>436</sup> the *Muhaddith*,<sup>437</sup> the Scholar of *Usool*<sup>438</sup> and *Tawheed*. Abu Abdullah Abdul-Azeez ibn Abdullah ibn Abdur-Rahmaan ibn Baaz was born in the city of Riyadh in the month of Dhu'l-Hijjah, 1330 AH [1911CE]. He memorized the Qur'an before reaching the age of maturity and then went on to study under some of the major Scholars of the time.

Some of his teachers were Shaikh Muhammad ibn Abdul-Lateef Aal-Shaikh, Shaikh Saalih ibn Abdul-Azeez Aal-Shaikh and the eminent Shaikh Muhammad ibn Ibraaheem Aal-Shaikh who, in his time, was the Muftee of Saudi Arabia. Shaikh Ibn Baaz accompanied the eminent Shaikh and learned from him for about ten years.

Shaikh Ibn Baaz excelled in the various branches of Islaamic Sciences, even though he became permanently blind at a young age. He has devoted all of his life to the Cause of Islaam and its people, authoring many books, teaching and serving the masses, while also aiding the spread of correct knowledge world-wide.

He has served in the judiciary as a Justice for fourteen years, until he was transferred to the education faculty. He remained engaged in teaching for nine years at Riyadh Islaamic Law College, Riyadh Religious Institute. Then he was appointed Vice-Chancellor of the Islaamic University in Al-Madeenah. Shortly thereafter, he was made the Chancellor with full administrative powers.

Later he was appointed President of the General Presidency of Islaamic Research, Ifta, Call and Propagation, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Presently, he is the Grand Muftee of Saudi Arabia.

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<sup>435</sup>*Zaahid: One devoted to the service of Allah; not being concerned about the fineries of the world.*

<sup>436</sup>*Faqeeh: Scholar in matter of Jurisprudence.*

<sup>437</sup>*Muhaddith: Scholar of the sciences of Hadeeth.*

<sup>438</sup>*Usool: Fundamentals of the Religion, especially used to refer to Islaamic Creed.*

He is also the President of many Islaamic Committees and Councils, the most prominent of these are: Senior Scholars Committee of Saudi Arabia, Permanent Committee for Islaamic and Educational Research, the Founding Committee of Muslim World League, World Supreme Council for Masjids, Islaamic Jurisprudence Assembly Makkah; and member of the Supreme Council of the Islaamic University of Al-Madeenah, and the Supreme Committee for Islaamic Propagation.

He belongs to the Hanbali School of Jurisprudence, but his legal verdicts are based on the evidences from Qur'an and Sunnah. At eighty-six years of age, he is one of the foremost Imaams of *Ahlu-Sunnah wa-l-Jamaa'ah* in this age. May Allah, the Most High, protect him and

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### **Shaikh Ibn Uthaimen**

Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Saalih ibn Muhammad ibn Uthaimen at-Tamimi an-Najdi was born in the city of Unaiza, Qaseem Region on the 27<sup>th</sup> of Ramadan 1347 AH, in a famous religion family. He received his education from many prominent scholars like Shaikh Abdur-Rahman as-Sa'dee, Shaikh Muhammad Ameen Shanqitee and Shaikh Abdul-Azeez ibn Baaz.

When he began to teach, a great number of students from inside and outside Saudi Arabia benefited from him. He has his own unique style of interpretation and explanation of religious issues. He is from among those scholars who serve Islaam without any type of religious prejudice and keep themselves away from the limitations of blind-following. He is distinguished in his great exertion of effort (Ijtihaad) in religious matters and analogical deductions (Qiyaas) which clearly prove the religious understanding he possesses, and his correct usage of the Fundamentals of the Religion (Usool ad-Deen).

In giving religious verdicts (Fataawaa), like Shaikh Ibn Baaz, his rulings are based on evidence from Qur'an and Sunnah. He has about fifty compilations to his credit. Presently, he is teaching Religious Fundamentals (Usool ad-Deen) at the Sharee'ah Faculty of Imaam Muhammad Bin Sa'ud Islaamic University, Qaseem Branch. He is also a member of the Senior Scholars Committee of Saudi Arabia, and is the

Imaam and Khateeb of the Grand Masjid of the city of Unaiza. May Allah keep him in good health and continue to bless the Muslims through him!

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### **Shaikh Muhammad Jameel Zaino**

Shaikh Muhammad ibn Jameel Zaino is a renowned Islaamic Scholar who has devoted his life to the authentic presentation of Islaamic Teachings. For this purpose he has mainly focused on the written form of communication to provide guidance and information about the basic precepts of the religion of Islaam.

Shaikh Muhammad ibn Jameel Zaino is originally from Syria, but he has been a teacher for many years at Dar-ul-Hadeeth al-Khairiyah, in the city of Makkah al-Mukarramah. Besides being a great scholar, he is also the author and compiler of many books. He holds the honor of having a place in the ranks of those authors of the present time whose works have been widely accepted all over the Muslim World.

Many of his books have now been translated into other languages. The following are among those which have been translated into English:

*The Pillars of Islaam and Imaan, Islaamic Guidelines For Individual and Social Reform, and Acquire Your Creed From al-Kitaab was-Sunnah*, which was first translated into English about ten years ago in America, and afterwards it was translated again in England under the title of *Fundamentals of Aqeedah - Ahl-us-Sunnah*; then in Saudi Arabia under the title: *Islaamic Creed*.

The distinctive feature of his writings is simplicity. His books deal with all the various issues that concern Muslims, written in a simple style that can easily be understood by everyone. While writing, Shaikh Muhammad ibn Jameel Zaino exhibits his genuine concern for the common masses of the people and problems which they are faced with in their day to day affairs.

When explaining any Islaamic issue, he first presents the verses of the Noble Qur'an and the Hadeeth of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), always being careful only to quote authentic Ahaadith, while giving their full references. Afterwards, if he finds it necessary, he cites a few instances from the early scholars.

Because of his simple style, his books gained popularity in the Islaamic World. One of the reasons why his books are so much appreciated by the scholars and general masses, is because he tries to use only authentic sources in his writings.

Often, in the Islaamic World, and especially in the Arab World, the authenticity of a book is judged by its author's name, and his name has acquired such a position.

Shaikh Muhammad is a very kind, simple and practical man who practices, in his daily encounters with the common people, what he preaches. He is a true Daa'iyah (Inviter/Caller) to Islaam. He presently resides in a simple home, in the city of Makkah, where he is visited by students and scholars alike. May Allah protect and preserve him!

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### **Shaikh Muhammad ibn Ibraaheem Aali Shaikh**

Shaikh Muhammad ibn Ibraaheem ibn Abdul-Lateef ibn Abdur-raheem ibn Hasan ibn al-Imaam Muhammad ibn Abdul-Wahhaab, one of the leading scholars of his time, was the Muftee of Saudi Arabia before Shaikh Abdul-Azeez ibn Baaz and one of his foremost teachers.

Shaikh Muhammad was born in the city of Riyaadh in the year 1311 AH. He was raised in a family of scholarship and a very religious social environment. His father and uncles (on his father's side) were people of knowledge and da'wah and Jihaad. His father was the pious Shaikh and Qadee (judge) of the city of Riyaadh, Ibraaheem ibn Abdul-Lateef.

Shaikh Muhammad has to his credit many essays and collections of legal rulings; he also has to his credit the composition of some works of poetry. He was known and distinguished for being just and in support of truth and right.

When the Shaikh was seven years old he began to learn--from the scholar of Qur'anic Reading Abdur-Raheem ibn Faireej--how to read the Qur'an according to the rules of Tajweed. Then, when he was eleven years old, he began to memorize the Qur'an, and learn writing skills; at that time he still had normal sight.

At this time the Shaikh began to acquire knowledge from his learned father Shaikh Ibraaheem. He used to memorize the text of books and then recite them to his father. At the age of sixteen, he was struck with an eye disease "ar-Ramd" and was left blind.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> day of the month of Dhu'-Hijjah 1329 AH, his learned father passed at about the age of forty-nine. His father had four sons: Abdullah, Muhammad, Abdul-Lateef and Abdul-Malik. All of them were known for forbearance, scholarship and correct, level-headed decision making.

After his father's death, Shaikh Muhammad ibn Ibraaheem began to acquire knowledge from the notable and distinguished scholars of his land. He, then, became the most outstanding student among those who were seeking knowledge from those scholars.

He had studied (and memorized) with his father, books of *at-Tawheed* and *Inheritance*. He also studied the books of *Islamic Creed* with other scholars. Among those books which he studied and memorized from the scholars were two famous books of Shaikhu-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah: *al-Aqeedah al-Waasiteeyah*, and *Al-Aqeedah al-Hamaweeyah*.

Shaikh Muhammad also studied the books of *Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence), and memorized *Zaad al-Mustaqni*. He memorized *Buloogh al-Maraam*, and half of *Muntaqaa al-Akhbaar* (the original text of *Nail al-Awtaar* by Imam ash-Shawkaanee) which is comprised of more than five thousand Hadeeth related to matters of Fiqh, originally collected by Majd ad-Deen al-Barakaat, the grand-father of Shakhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah.

The Shaikh was awarded many different types of certificates (Ijaazaat) in the sciences of Hadeeth. Additionally, he narrated many Hadeeth directly from his teacher - with complete chains of narrator's from his teachers, going back to the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

Shaikh Muhammad also memorized and studied some of the most important books of Arabic grammar: *al-Ajroomeyah*, *Mulhat al-Iraab*, *Qatar an-Nadaa* as well as the famous book: *Alfiyah Ibn Maalik*.

The Shaikh died this year May Allah multiply his reward in the next life and grant him peace!

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# APPENDIX D

## INDEX OF LEGAL RULINGS

### ISLAMIC LEGAL RULINGS, Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Saalih Al-Uthaimen

- The Legal Ruling Concerning Tasweer (Image Making) By Hand and By Camera; and the Acquisition/Possession of Images
- Picture-Taking at Celebrations and Birthday Parties are not Permissible
- The Meaning of : “...except designs/inscriptions in a cloth”
- Hanging Images on the Wall
- The Legal Ruling Concerning Possession of Images (Suwar) out of Necessity.
- The Legal Ruling Concerning Production of Tamaatheel (Sculptured Images or Statues)
- What is the Legal Ruling Concerning the Drawing (Rasm) of that which Possess a Soul (Human or Animal)?
- Wearing Clothing Which Have Images
- Images (suwar) for Reminiscence (dhikraa)

### ISLAMIC LEGAL RULINGS, Shaykh ‘Abdul-‘Azeez ibn ‘Abdullah ibn Baaz

- Retention/Keeping of Magazines Which Have Images In Them
- Carrying Images (on one's person) During Prayer
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- Having Statues In the Home For Decorations
- The Ruling concerning Hanging Images

### ISLAMIC LEGAL RULINGS, Shaykh Saalih ibn Fawzaan al-Fawzaan

- The Ruling Concerning Acquisition and Retention of Children’s Toys which Have Body (Three- Dimensional).
- Making Images (tasweer) of That Which Has No Soul

### **ISLAMIC LEGAL RULINGS, The Committee of Senior Scholars, Saudi Arabia**

- Is Image-making considered to be under the ruling of images made by hand (at-tasweer al-yadawee) or is it outside of its ruling?
- The appearance of the picture of a Scholar in a magazine.
- Buying of magazines and newspapers which are filled with images. Placing these magazines in the place of prayer (al-musalla). Destroying them after reading
- The Use of [Viewing] a Television in the place of prayer
- Collecting images for memories
- Preserving small images or those which are taken of the upper portion of the body only, in a photo album, without intending to hang them on the walls
- Hanging images in houses or other places
- Performing prayers wearing a watch which has images of animals or a cross inside it
- The Drawing of caricatures in newspapers and magazines
- A Muslim who makes a livelihood from selling images (at-tamaatheel)
- If the prohibition of Images includes al-mujassamah (that which has body) as well as the photo on an ID card and that on Money, then what is the solution to removing all of these things (images) from the home?
- Does the Curse upon the Image-maker also apply to the one of whom the Image is made?

### **ISLAMIC LEGAL RULINGS, Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ibraaheem**

- Making a Statue of a “Revered” Person; Drawing on Paper and Cloth, and Hanging them up in Houses; Putting the Forms (of Images) in Magazines and Newspapers
- Small Three Dimensional Images (as-suwar al-mujassamah as-sagheera) and the Dolls of Aa’isha (may Allah be pleased with her)
- Photography (at-Tasweer ash-Shamsee) and the Invalidity of the Legal Ruling of Whoever Declared it Permissible
- At-Tasweer ad-Daw’ee (Photography) and at-Tasweer bi-l-Asbaagh (Image Making by use of Colors, Dyes or Paints)



- **Image Making of Seas, Rivers, Trees and Things Which Are Disdained or Despised.**
- **At-Tasweer an-Nisfee (Image Making of Half the Body) In Case of Necessity; The Difference between Three Dimensional Images and Photographs**
- **Permissibility of Partial Image-making In case of Necessity**
- **The Case of Someone Who Needs to Travel, and Is Required to Take a Picture**
- **His Statement: Image Making is Forbidden**
- **Breaking of the Cross (Crucifix), and Images**

# APPENDIX E

## MOST IMPORTANT REFERENCES

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- Fath al-Qadeer, *Ash-Shawkaanee*
- Ad-Durru al-Manthoor, *Jalaal ad-Deen As-Suyootee*

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- *Sharh Saheeh Muslim*, an-Nawawee

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- Nuzhatu-l-Muttaqeen, *Sharh Riyaadh as-Saaliheen*
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