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Ruling on swearing by other than Allah

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Fatwa no. 436

Q: I had a discussion with a Muslim brother concerning the impermissibility of swearing by other than Allah.

In this discussion I told him that based on what I have studied, swearing by other than Allah is Shirk Asghar (minor form of associating others in worship with Allah), as Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab explained it in his book: Al-Shirk-ul-Asghar is to swear by other than Allah, such as when a person says, 'I have none except Allah and you', or 'I put my trust in Allah and you' ...Etc. However, he said: It is permissible to swear by the Qur'an because it is one of Allah's Attributes. There are numerous opinions held by some practitioners of Ijtihad (juristic effort to infer expert legal rulings) supporting his view. We would like the Committee to issue a Fatwa regarding this matter, for we know that they depend on the Sahih Hadith (a Hadith that has been transmitted by people known for their uprightness and exactitude; free from eccentricity and blemish), may Allah reward you!

A: As to swearing by any other than Allah, such as saying: "What Allah wills and you will", "I have none except Allah and you" and so on: if the people who make such oaths glorify in their hearts the creatures that they swear by the same as they glorify Allah, this is Shirk Akbar (major form of associating others in worship with Allah). If these people are ignorant of the ruling, they should be informed; but, if they willfully persist after knowledge, then they and those already aware of the ruling are alike; they are both committing an act of major Shirk.

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The case is the same when saying, "What Allah wills and you will" or "Had it not been for Allah and you"; if they believe that what they are swearing by is a partner with Allah and that nothing takes place except by Allah's and this person's will. They should be informed of the ruling, if they are ignorant; but, if they willfully persist after knowledge, then they and those already aware of the ruling are alike; they are both committing an act of major Shirk. On the other hand, if people swear by other than Allah verbally and do not glorify whatever they swear by in their hearts, and also when they say, "What Allah wills and you will" or "Had it not been for Allah and you" out of ignorance, then they should be informed of the ruling. If they willfully persist after knowledge, then they and those

already aware of the ruling are alike; they are both committing an act of minor Shirk. This does not mean that a Muslim becomes lenient towards this, for Al-Shirk-ul-Asghar is the gravest of major sins after Al-Shirk-ul-Akbar. Ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) said, [\(I would rather swear by Allah falsely than swear by other than Him in truth.\)](#) Making false oaths is one of the major sins, but Ibn Mas'ud regarded Al-Shirk-ul-Asghar as graver; the secret behind this lies in the fact that swearing entails glorifying the thing sworn by, that is the essence of the word. On the other hand, the function word "and" in the phrase, "What Allah wills and you will" indicates connection and equality between what is before and after it, whereas Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) states (what means): [\(There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.\)](#) As to swearing by the Qur'an, it does not fall under the category of oaths sworn by other than Allah, because the Qur'an is the Word of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) and His Speech is one of His Attributes.

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The lawful oath is to swear by Allah, His Names, or His Attributes. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, [\("Whoever swears \(an oath\), should swear by Allah or else remain silent."\)](#) Related by Al-Bukhari on the authority of `Umar.

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

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