



Fatwa no. 6303

Q: I am a teacher at a primary school.

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All praise be to Allah for what He has granted me. I am very happy and comfortable with this honorable work. But what worries me the most is that I believe in Tawhid (Oneness of Allah) and I try to fear Allah as much as I can and I hope that I do not do this for Riya' (showing-off). I fear Allah and I try my best to do what pleases Him and avoid what incurs His wrath. My greatest concern now is to know what things are considered Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) in order to avoid them.

As I have mentioned I am a teacher who is sincere in his work. But when I know that one of the supervisors who oversee the application of the educational program, the educational level of the students and other things related to the department, is coming, I feel great fear that is similar to the fear of a believer who stands before his Lord. I feel that my face turns pale. Do you think that fearing human beings who have no power or might is a kind of Shirk especially that these people do not fear Allah at all? My brothers, I ask you to guide me to the right way as I fear that this fear may lead me to Shirk. My regret is about to tear me up inside. To clarify further, I try to multiply my efforts when I feel that one of the supervisors is coming. Guide me to the straight path and advise me! May Allah reward you with the best!

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A: Fearing Allah is one of the best ranks of Din (religion) and one of the comprehensive kinds of `Ibadah (worship) that Allah commands human beings to offer for Him Alone. Allah (Exalted be He) says: **(...so fear them not, but fear Me, if you are (true) believers.)** He (Glorified be He) promised two Gardens in Jannah (Paradise) to those who truly fear Him in His saying: **(But for him who fears the standing before his Lord, there will be two Gardens (i.e. in Paradise).)** Allah praises angels because they fear their Lord above them. Allah (Exalted be He) says: **(They fear their Lord above them)** There are many other Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) that support this meaning.

Shaykh `Abdul-Rahman ibn Hasan mentioned in his book Fath al-Majid **that fear is of three types:**

Firstly: Fearing anyone other than Allah such as idols or Taghut (false gods) and believing that they may cause harm. Allah (Exalted be He) says that the people of Hud (peace be upon him) said to him: **(All that we say is that some of our gods (false deities) have seized you with evil (madness)."** He said: **"I call Allâh to witness and bear you witness that I am free from that which you ascribe as partners in worship,** **(With Him (Allâh). So plot against me, all of you, and give me no respite.)** Allah (Exalted be He) says: **(Yet they try to frighten you with those (whom they worship) besides Him!)** This is the case of grave and idol worshippers.

They fear their idols and try to frighten those who believe in Tawhid when they deny their behavior or ask them to worship Allah Alone. This kind of fear violates Tawhid.

Secondly: To abandon what should be done out of fear of certain people. This is prohibited and is a type of Shirk that violates the perfection of Tawhid. It is also the reason behind the revelation of the Ayah: ﴿Those (i.e. believers) unto whom the people (hypocrites) said, "Verily, the people (pagans) have gathered against you (a great army), therefore, fear them." But it (only) increased them in Faith, and they said: "Allâh (Alone) is Sufficient for us, and He is the Best Disposer of affairs (for us).﴾ (So they returned with Grace and Bounty from Allâh. No harm touched them; and they followed the good Pleasure of Allâh. And Allâh is the Owner of Great Bounty.) ﴿It is only Shaitân (Satan) that suggests to you the fear of his Auliyâ' [supporters and friends (polytheists, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allâh and in His Messenger, Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم)]; so fear them not, but fear Me, if you are (true) believers.﴾

Thirdly: Natural fear like fearing an enemy, a beast, or other things. This is not a prohibited type of fear. Allah says, in the story of Musa (Moses, peace be upon him): ﴿So he escaped from there, looking about in a state of fear.﴾ 

Therefore, it is evident that fear of your supervisors is considered the third kind of fear which is the natural one. You have to be sincere in your work whether one of the supervisors is present or not. You also have to multiply your efforts in teaching students what is of benefit to them and to help making their Iman (Faith) stronger through reciting, understanding and acting upon the Qur'an, performing Salah (Prayer) on its due time and other laws of Islam.

We ask Allah to keep us all firm with the truth and to guide us to righteous deeds.

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

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