



Fatwa no. 1258

Q: A person made a statue from useful material such as gold,

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silver, or the like and the statue represents a human being or an animal and is used as a decorative ornament. Then this person makes Tawbah (repentance) to Allah and wants to convert the statue into something lawful and beneficial by changing it into coins, jewelry or making use of it in building. Is this permissible? What is the interpretation of the word "worshipped" in the saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to the person who wanted to sacrifice camels as a vow at Buwanah: (Did the place contain any idols worshipped in pre-Islamic times?) ?

A: It is obligatory to destroy these statues and obliterate their drawings. It is also obligatory to wipe pictures out and remove their traces. This has to be done whether they are taken for `Ibadah (worship) or used as decorative ornaments as a means of rejecting the Munkar (that which is unacceptable or disapproved of by Islamic law and Muslims of sound intellect) and protecting Tawhid (monotheism). As for the word "worshipped" in the Prophet's Hadith: (Did the place contain any idols worshipped in pre-Islamic times?) , it denotes that the idols were erected, in most cases, for `Ibadah not for possession. It is permissible to make use of the remains of destroyed statues and idols in building houses, walls and Masjids (mosques), or in making coins or jewelry and the like. Also, it is permissible to make use of the papers, boards and cars bearing images after obliterating them and effacing their traces. This is based on what was narrated by Muslim, on the authority of Abu Al-Hayyaj who said that `Aly said to him: (Should I not send you on the same mission as Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) sent me? Do not leave an image without obliterating it, or a high grave without leveling it.) The Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered `Aly (may Allah be pleased with him) to just obliterate the images and level the high graves.

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Also, he (peace be upon him) told `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) to change the curtain that was in her room into cushions after cutting them into smaller pieces and obliterating the images drawn on them. However, the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not order her to get rid of the curtain because the basic ruling is the permissibility of using these raw materials and the impermissibility is due to certain reasons. If the specific cause is removed, it is permissible to use the materials once more as long as they are used for a permissible purpose.

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

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