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First question from Fatwa no. 2017 :

Q: What is your ruling on an innovator in religion, who invents a Bid`ah Shirkiyyah (rejected innovation in religion which is tantamount to associating others in worship with Allah), in which he seeks help from the dead Awliya' (pious people) and prays in their shrines, hoping that they will give him their blessing. He married a woman, after her last husband divorced her; he used to have sexual intercourse with her secretly time after time, until she got pregnant by him, so he quickly contracted marriage with her after her pregnancy became obvious. This marriage was carried out without Guidance from Allah. She gave birth to a baby girl, who is two years old now, then he repented to Allah from such Bid`ahs (innovations in religion) and firmly adhered to the Sunnah (whatever is reported from the Prophet, peace be upon him) and read, "Fath Al-Majid Sharh Kitab Al-Tawhid" and other books by Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jama`ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim mainstream). He has repented for having committed Zina (illegal sexual intercourse) and other abominations. His wife is now pregnant and he is asking about what should he do? Is there any expiation for committing Zina? What should he do with his relatives who are still adhering to their Bid`ahs Shirkiyyah (rejected innovations in religion which are tantamount to associating others in worship with Allah)? Please give me your legal opinion.

A: Firstly: Undoubtedly, Shirk (associating others with Allah in His Divinity or worship) is the gravest of major sins and Bid`ahs introduced into religion and is one of the most hideous crimes. Zina is one of the abominations and among the gravest of major sins; whoever has committed it should rid themselves of it, shun it completely and beg forgiveness from Allah. They should repent for the crimes in which they indulged; perhaps Allah may accept their Tawbah (repentance to Allah). If the person meant in the question has already repented to Allah and begged His Forgiveness, we hope that Allah accepts his repentance, forgives him his sins, protects him in future and turns his bad deeds into good ones. But he must feel great regret, do a lot of Tawbah, beg for forgiveness and perform a lot of good deeds, for they wipe out evil ones.

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He must not follow the footsteps of Satan, for he commands people to commit vice and sin; Allah (Exalted be He) says: **﴿And those who invoke not any other ilâh (god) along with Allâh, nor kill such person as Allâh has forbidden, except for just cause, nor commit illegal sexual intercourse - and whoever does this shall receive the punishment.﴾** **﴿The torment will be doubled to him on the Day of Resurrection, and he will abide therein in disgrace;﴾** **﴿Except those who repent and believe (in Islâmic Monotheism), and do righteous deeds; for those, Allâh will change their sins into good deeds, and Allâh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.﴾** **﴿And whosoever repents and does righteous good deeds; then verily, he repents towards Allâh with true repentance.﴾** Allah (Exalted be He) also says: **﴿O you who believe! Follow not the footsteps of Shaitân (Satan). And whosoever follows the footsteps of Shaitân (Satan), then, verily, he commands Al-Fahshâ' [i.e. to commit indecency (illegal sexual intercourse)], and Al-Munkar [disbelief and polytheism (i.e. to do evil and wicked deeds; and to speak or to do what**

is forbidden in Islām)]. This man must praise and thank Allah for finding his way back to the right path after going astray.

Secondly: He must exert his utmost efforts to guide his kindred and the rest of his people and call them to pure Tawhid (monotheism), and make them renounce Bid`ahs and superstitions. He must awaken in them the desire to hold fast to the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and to act upon them, for preaching may prove fruitful. They may respond and make Tawbah to Allah from Shirk and the rest of their Bid`ahs. Thus, together they become one united force supporting the Call to Truth. And Allah is the One Whose help is sought.

Thirdly: If what had been done earlier by this man is the consequence of behaving like the people of Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic time of ignorance), before the mission of the Prophet (peace be upon him), and committing what they committed, and he contracted his marriage with the previously mentioned woman during the days of his ignorance, his Tawbah for having committed these sins is considered an abandonment of Shirk and immorality and the start of a new Islamic life.

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Thus, we should acknowledge the marriage-contract that he has concluded with that woman during the days of their ignorance, if she was like him when they contracted marriage and then she repented from the Shirk and immorality she had committed; for the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to acknowledge those who embrace Islam from among the Kafirs (disbelievers) with their past marriage-contracts, contracted during Jahiliyyah, and he neither asked them about the details upon which these contracts were entered into, nor did he renew their marriage-contracts for them and he considered whatever offspring they had as their (legitimate) children. All they had to do was to follow a bad deed with a good deed and do a lot of righteous acts and avoid all the evils which Allah has prohibited.

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

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