



Fatwa no. 6435

Q: Your Eminence, I know that your time is precious, but I have to relate my problem to you in detail, so your Fatwa (legal opinion issued by a qualified Muslim scholar) will be compatible with my actual situation, because, as far as I know, explaining the problem is as important as the Fatwa itself. In brief, I am a graduate from the Faculty of Applied Arts in Cairo. I used to work as an artist to earn my living; drawing pictures on papyrus. This type of paper is expensive, even without drawings,

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and even more expensive with drawings. I used to draw pharaonic pictures of men, women, and birds. I used to live like so many Muslims, not knowing anything about Islam, except its name. I did not perform any of the Islamic acts of `Ibadah (worship), such as Salat (Prayer) or any other type of worship. But Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) favored me with guidance and commitment to the Din (religion) and enabled me to follow its Shari`ah (Islamic law). I hope that I will obtain Allah's Pardon from the Fire, enjoy His Mercy, and be among those who will be admitted to Paradise. I started to change my lifestyle, in accordance with the Shari`ah of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He), but I did not know the ruling of Islam on Taswir (painting, drawing, sculpture, and photography). In the wave of detentions that swept Egypt, I was arrested just like any bearded young man was. I was arrested on 4/9/1981 at the Masjid (mosque) in my village during Jumu`ah (Friday) Prayer and sent to prison until 20/1/1983 - all praise be to Allah in all cases. What is important is that while I was in prison, I learned from knowledgeable brothers that Taswir is Haram (prohibited), and consequently, the money that I earned from Taswir was Haram, and that I would have to change my work when I was released from prison. All praise be to Allah, I am now working as a calligrapher, writing signs and other such things. However, I am now asking for a Fatwa, because I have some papyrus that I bought, which is worth around 800 Egyptian Pounds, that has pictures on it, and I paid for the paint to draw those pictures. I did this before I knew the Islamic ruling on Taswir, as I did this before I was arrested. I used to sell the pictures to European tourists, who were non-Muslims, but I still own some of these pictures now, as I was arrested before

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selling them. Following my release from prison, I am in dire need of money to repay the money my family borrowed to support me while I was in prison and also to pay the original cost of the paper. I support a family of four brothers, but I cannot save money from my current work and I have also made the intention to marry from the money I earn through this work. Should I sell these pictures and use the money, as I mentioned to Your Eminence, or would this money be Haram, because it would be gained from the selling of Haram pictures? It should be borne in mind that I sell these pictures to foreigners.

A: It is obligatory for you to erase the pictures of beings with a soul that you have, as you cannot benefit from them at all. As to the sheets of paper themselves, you may benefit from them by selling them or drawing on them - but not living beings with souls. We hope that Allah will accept your Tawbah (repentance to Him) and compensate you. Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) says: [﴿And whosoever fears Allâh 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.﴾](#) It is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, [﴿"Anyone who leaves something for Allah, Allah will replace it with something better."﴾](#)

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

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