

FROM SHAITAAN'S SKETCH TO THE DEVIL'S DIGITIZATION PHOTOGRAPHY'S ILLEGITIMATE LINEAGE

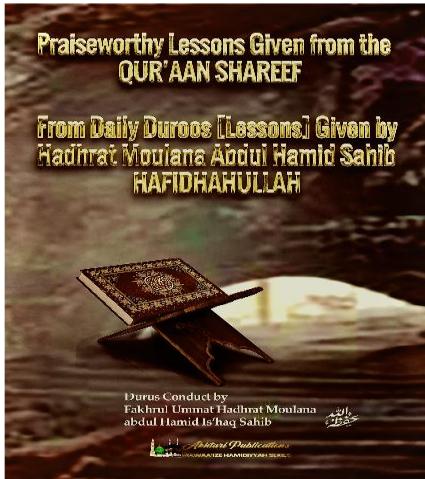


BY FAKHRUL UMMAT HADHRAT MOULANA
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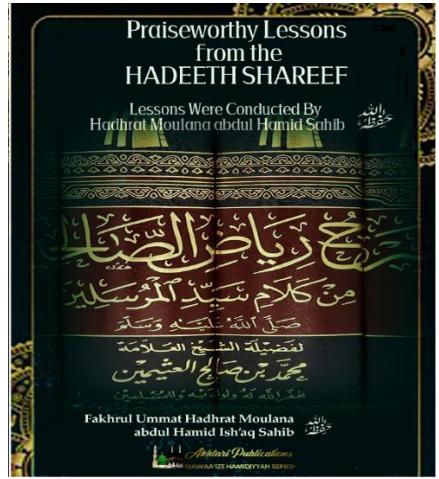
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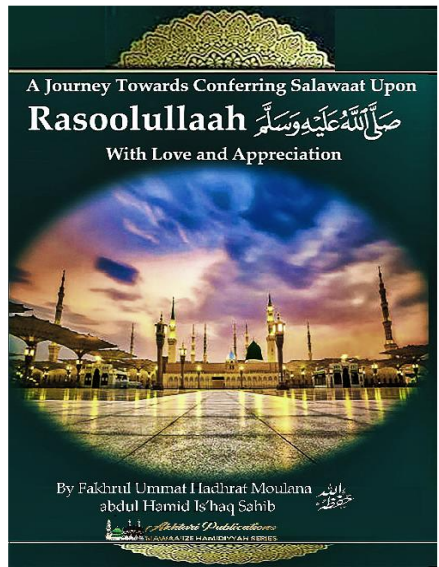
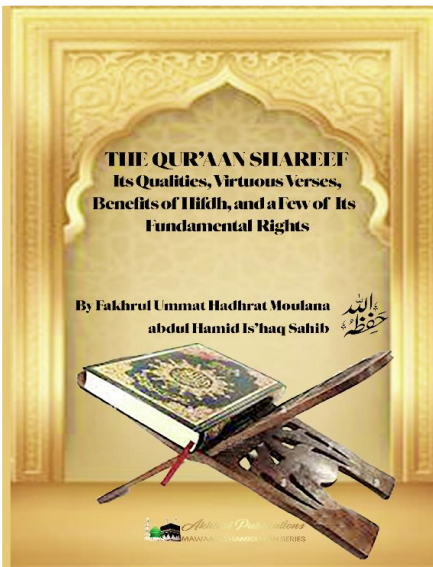
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Photography's Illegitimate Linage

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An Appropriate Du'aa¹

This du'aa is appropriate in all facets of life. However, considering the topic of this book and the varying views and opinions of the topic it is felt that it fits hand in glove here. Please recite this du'aa before reading this book and make it a practice of reciting it daily with intent. Also, the commentary of this du'aa given below will appetite the seeker of truth to want to recite the du'aa as regularly as possible.

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَرِنَا الْحَقَّ حَقًّا وَاَرِزْنَا اِتِّبَاعَهُ، وَاَرِنَا الْبَاطِلَ بَاطِلًا وَاَرِزْنَا اجْتِنَابَهُ

Meaning:

O Allah, enable me to see the truth as truth [make it as my sustenance] and give me the ability to follow it, and enable me to see the falsehood as falsehood [make it as my sustenance] and give me the ability to refrain from it.

The meaning of this du'aa is scripted above, however, the commentary of this du'aa is that we supplicate to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى not for taufeeq [the fortune] of following the truth as truth, and falsehood as falsehood, but we supplicate that Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى show us the truth as truth and falsehood as falsehood and make it our rozi [sustenance].

This portrays the linguistic mastery of Nabi-e-Kareem and the knowledge of the needs of his Ummat. It ascertains, that not only do we get the taufeeq [fortune] of the aspects below which are right, and which are important, as after 'ilm

¹ This du'aa is quoted by Imam Ghazali رَحِمَهُ اللهُ - without any chain - as that of Sayyeduna Abu Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ [See Sharhul Ihya, vol.10 pg.106. Hafiz Ibn Kathir رَحِمَهُ اللهُ has referred to this du'aa as a 'reported du'aa [Tafsir Ibn Kathir, Surah Baqarah, Ayah: 213]. The above references were extracted in parts from Website IslamQA from a question which was replied to by Hadhrat Moulana Muhammad Abasoomar and checked by Hadhrat Moulana Haroon Abasoomar رَحِمَهُ اللهُ.

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[knowledge], 'amal [practice] is important. There are four aspects linked to this point:

1. To see right from wrong. A person may misunderstand right from wrong throughout his life and depart from this world a loser.
2. Then there is the person who distinguishes wrong from right, and yet does not practice on what is right.
3. A person distinguishes wrong from right, and acts accordingly, which is termed taufeeq [the fortune], and is a great achievement.
4. Most important, is the rozi [sustenance]. In terms of this, one will see that which is right, make 'amal [act] upon it, and it will have become one's rozi [sustenance], as per the supplication of this du'aa, and will never leave one until death.

The difference between supplicating for the rozi [sustenance] to distinguish right as right compared to requesting for taufeeq [fortune] to distinguish right as right is explained by Hadhrat Moulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ as follows:

The Hadeeth Shareef states:

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْمُصَفَّى الْحِمَصِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا الْوَلِيدُ بْنُ مُسْلِمٍ، عَنْ ابْنِ جُرَيْجٍ، عَنْ أَبِي الزُّبَيْرِ، عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ . صلى الله عليه وسلم . " أَتَيْهَا النَّاسُ أَتَقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَجْمَلُوا فِي الطَّلَبِ فَإِنَّ نَفْسًا لَنْ تَمُوتَ حَتَّى تَسْتَوْفِيَ رِزْقَهَا وَإِنْ أَبْطَأَ عَنْهَا فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَجْمَلُوا فِي الطَّلَبِ خُذُوا مَا حَلَّ وَدَعُوا مَا حَرَّمَ "

It was narrated from Sayyeduna Jabir bin 'Abdullah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "O people, fear Allah and be moderate in seeking a living, for no soul will die until it has received all its provision, even if it is slow in coming. So, fear Allah and be moderate in seeking provision; take that which is permissible and leave that which is forbidden."

[Sunan Ibn Majah: 2144]

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Therefore, by using the word rizq [sustenance], we supplicate that until we do not follow all that which is true, our death should not come. If one knows that salaah is fardh, but one does not perform salaah, this du'aa means, Oh Allah, until I do not become completely paaband [completely compliant] with namaaz, till then my death should not come. Therefore, just as death will not overtake any soul until it is last drop of water, or grain of rice is partaken in terms of physical sustenance, similarly, until our spiritual 'food,' that is haj, fasting, deeni taaleem, and the like is not complete, death will not overtake us.

وَأَرِنَا الْبَاطِلَ بَاطِلًا وَأَرْزُقْنَا الْحَنِيبَةَ

... and, that I see the falsehood clearly as falsehood, and not only with the physical eyes, but the 'eyes of the heart,' this gives one the capability of saving oneself from evil

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Editor's Note

In the section below, "Dars-e-Hadeeth - Kitaabul 'Umoor," all the dars [lessons] that had taken place were concentrated only around photography and its harms. Although there were other aspects that formed part of the Ahaadeeth, for example dogs, the levelling down of qabars [graves] and the like, those aspects although described in detail in all the respective dars [lessons] were not included for the sake of remaining on the topic in question and for the sake of brevity. Also, aspects that were discussed in the dars [lessons], that were alluded to and explained in detail in Hadhrat رحمہ اللہ's discourses were also not included because they are included in detail in Hadhrat رحمہ اللہ's discourses.

Supplementary Section – A Prelude to the Book

**Dars-e-Hadeeth
Kitaabul 'Umoor**

The Prohibition of Photographs and Images 02 Jamaadi al Aakhir 1437/ 12 February 2016.

This is a chapter on the prohibition of making images of living things or animate objects whether they are on rugs, stones, clothes, coins, notes, cushions, pillows, and the like. Also, the prohibition of forming images on walls, paintings on walls, roofs, curtains, turbans, clothes and the like and the command to obliterate images.

That is, this chapter discusses Ahadeeth which ascertain that all image making is haraam irrespective of for that they may be painted, drawn, or imaged on. All 'Ulema are unanimous that photographs are haraam, the difference amongst the 'Ulema is with regard to how the image is made, if it is hand drawn, like an artist draws or sketches it, then all 'Ulema are unanimous that they are haraam. Other 'Ulema say that if the image is made by what we call a 'digital image' which consists of micro dots or squares or pixels, then they do not call or classify it as a photograph, therefore, according to them, they say that it is not haraam. However, anyone can see that that is a photograph, and everyone calls it a photograph. Hence, it is not how it is made, it is the image itself that is haraam.

Anyone in a conversation will refer to any image, be it a photograph or a digital image as a picture or a photograph. For example, "I've got a picture of this." or "I've got a photograph of this." All this is irrespective of what type of equipment was used to take the image, whether it was taken on a conventional camera or a digital camera. All 'Ulema are unanimous that photographs are haraam, and we should be also particular as we will read one Hadeeth, which forms part of this

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chapter that Malaa'ikah do not enter a house in which a dog is kept, or where there is a photo displayed.

Unfortunately, these days, many people have photographs of their children, wives, husbands, parents and even unfortunately animals as well on their mobile phones, photographs are being displayed exhibited on the walls of houses which is also common these days, and even under the dressing table glass covering. Key rings in which photographs can be fitted into are also quite common. Photo albums, whether they are of weddings, mementos of sporting achievement and memory joggers, or any other forms of photo albums are also aspects that must be obliterated. They should be thrown. They should be banned. By having these, we are keeping the Malaa'ikah [angels] of rahmat [mercy] away from us. It does not mean all Malaa'ikah stay away from us. the Malaa'ikah of azaab [punishment] will still come to us, but we ourselves are keeping the Malaa'ikah of rahmat away from us.

Hadeeth One

Sayyeduna ibne `Abbas رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said, "I will tell you only what I heard from Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. I heard him saying, 'Whoever makes a picture will be punished by Allah till he puts life in it, and he will never be able to put life in it.'

قَالَ كُنْتُ عِنْدَ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ . رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا . إِذْ أَتَاهُ رَجُلٌ فَقَالَ يَا أَبَا عَبَّاسٍ إِنِّي إِنْسَانٌ ، إِنَّمَا مَعِيشَتِي مِنْ صَنْعَةِ يَدَيَّ ، وَإِنِّي أَصْنَعُ هَذِهِ التَّصَاوِيرَ . فَقَالَ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ لَا أُحَدِّثُكَ إِلَّا مَا سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ سَمِعْتُهُ يَقُولُ " مَنْ صَوَّرَ صُورَةً فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ مُعَذِّبُهَا ، حَتَّى يَنْفَخَ فِيهَا الرُّوحَ ، وَلَيْسَ يَنْفَخُ فِيهَا أَبَدًا " . فَرَبَا الرَّجُلُ زُبُونَهُ شَدِيدَةً وَاصْفَرَ وَجْهُهُ . فَقَالَ وَنَحَاكَ إِنْ أُبَيِّتَ إِلَّا أَنْ تَصْنَعَ ، فَعَلَيْكَ بِهَذَا الشَّجَرِ ، كُلِّ شَيْءٍ لَيْسَ فِيهِ رُوحٌ . قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ سَمِعَ سَعِيدُ بْنُ أَبِي عَرُوبَةَ مِنَ النَّضْرِ بْنِ أَنَسٍ هَذَا الْوَاحِدَ .

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Narrated by Sayyeduna Sa'id bin Abu Al-Hasan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, "While I was with Ibn `Abbas a man came and said, "O father of `Abbas! My sustenance is from my manual profession, and I make these pictures." Ibn `Abbas said, "I will tell you only what I heard from Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ . I heard him saying, 'Whoever makes a picture will be punished by Allah till he puts life in it, and he will never be able to put life in it.' " Hearing this, that man heaved a sigh and his face turned pale. Ibn `Abbas said to him, "What a pity! If you insist on making pictures, I advise you to make pictures of trees and any other unanimated objects."

[Bukhari: 2225]

The prohibition here refers to images of animate objects. Such as human beings, animals, birds, fish, and the like. Photographs of these things are haraam they are things that have life in them, things which do not have life, for example, images inanimate objects such as trees, buildings, mountains, rivers, scenery, and the like are permissible to draw or create images of.

The Hadeeth Shareef provides a severe warning for the makers of animate objects, whether they are hand drawn photographs from a camera or digital imaging. 'Ulema state that if a person makes images of animate objects, that is living things, with the intention of imitating Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, if he takes a photograph with the intention that he can also make animate objects the way Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى made human beings, the way Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى made a bird, and he can make it too, he will become a disbeliever. If one does so without this intention, that he is not a creator, then one will be a flagrant sinner, an open sinner, and this Hadeeth refers to that person because he imitated Allah's Attribute of being the Creator, he will be reprimanded by being commanded to place life into it. One will obviously not be able to do so and will thus be punished.

The Prohibition of Photographs and Images 09 Jamaadi al Aakhir 1437/
19 February 2016.

Hadeeth One

حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ عَبْدَ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنَ الْقَاسِمِ . وَمَا بِالْمَدِينَةِ يَوْمَئِذٍ أَفْضَلُ مِنْهُ . قَالَ سَمِعْتُ أَبِي قَالَ سَمِعْتُ عَائِشَةَ . رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا . قَدِمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مِنْ سَفَرٍ وَقَدْ سَتَرْتُ بِقِرَامٍ لِي عَلَى سَهْوَةٍ لِي فِيهَا تَمَاثِيلُ، فَلَمَّا رَأَاهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ هَتَكَهُ وَقَالَ " أَشَدُّ النَّاسِ عَذَابًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ الَّذِينَ يُضَاهَوْنَ بِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ " . قَالَتْ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ وَسَادَةً أَوْ وَسَادَتَيْنِ.

In this Hadeeth, Sayyidah Ay'isha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا narrates that Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ Narrated `Aisha," Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ returned from a journey when I had placed a curtain of mine having pictures over [the door of] a chamber of mine. When Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ saw it, he tore it and said, "The people who will receive the severest punishment on the Day of Resurrection will be those who try to make the like of Allah's creations." So, we turned it (i.e., the curtain) into one or two cushions.

[Bukhari: 5954]

This Hadeeth teaches us that images of animate objects should not be kept or used for the decorative purposes. It is even worse when these pictures are kept hung up on the walls of the house. Or they are put under the dressing table glass protective covering, et cetera for display, or even just newspapers, et cetera, which are left open in the house, and they are pictures that have animate objects. The prohibition is even greater when such images are hung up or placed in a frame as a form of honour or respect.

Hadeeth Two

وَحَدَّثَنَا أَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ، حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ مُسْهِرٍ، عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ أَبِي عَرُوبَةَ، عَنْ النَّضْرِ بْنِ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ، قَالَ كُنْتُ جَالِسًا عِنْدَ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ فَجَعَلَ يُقِي وَيَقُولُ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حَتَّى سَأَلَهُ رَجُلٌ فَقَالَ إِنِّي رَجُلٌ أَصَوِّرُ هَذِهِ الصُّوَرِ . فَقَالَ لَهُ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ اذْنُهُ . فَدَنَا الرَّجُلُ فَقَالَ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ " مَنْ صَوَّرَ صُورَةً فِي الدُّنْيَا كَلِفَ أَنْ يَنْفَخَ فِيهَا الرُّوحَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَيْسَ بِنَافِخٍ "

Sayyeduna Anas bin Malik رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "I was sitting with Ibn 'Abbas when he gave religious verdicts, but he did not say that it was Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ who had said that. However, when a man said to him [Ibn 'Abbas], 'I am the painter of these pictures.' Sayyeduna Ibn 'Abbas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, 'I heard Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ saying, 'He who painted pictures in the world would be compelled to breathe soul in them on the Day of Resurrection, but he would not be able to breathe soul [in them].

[Sahih Muslim: 2110]

That is draw things that have not got life in them. In the same way, if one has a great desire to take photographs, if one is a photographer, and one wants to or loves capturing photographs, take pictures of scenery and things in which there is no life of anything. This Hadeeth teaches us that the more pictures one has made in this world, the more severely one will be punished in the Hereafter.

'Ulema state that while making pictures of inanimate objects is permissible, that is things that have not got life in them, like mountains, the sea, trees, any natural scenery, but at the same time, if it is done unnecessarily, it is makrooh because it is an act of futility, there is no for benefit in it. We have not been created to pass our time in futile activities or develop ourselves in arts or any pastime activities. Our object in life is the Akhirah [Afterlife]. However, if somebody's living is earned by photography and he takes photographs of things that have not got life in

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them, that will be quite order. Or if he is an artist, and he draws pictures of things that have not got life in it and for him it is his livelihood, it is also permissible, there is no problem with that. However, just to make it a hobby and a pastime wastes our good time in this world which should be used to prepare for the Akhirat and not for just wasting in these useless pursuits.

Regarding this, we can also deduce that just going fishing for the fun of it is also not permissible. If we are going fishing and we intend to eat the fish or we sell the fish to make it a source of income, then it is permissible.

But even just to take a life while fishing or hunting, just as fun and as a sport, that is not permissible.

**The Prohibition of Photographs and Images 10 Jamaadi al Akhir 1437/
17 February 2016**

Hadeeth One

حَدَّثَنَا الْحُمَيْدِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، حَدَّثَنَا الْأَعْمَشُ، عَنْ مُسْلِمٍ، قَالَ كُنَّا مَعَ مَسْرُوقٍ فِي دَارِ
يَسَارِ بْنِ مُمَيَّرٍ، فَرَأَى فِي صُفْتِهِ تَمَاثِيلَ فَقَالَ سَمِعْتُ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ
وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ " إِنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَذَابًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ الْمُصَوِّرُونَ .

It is narrated by Muslim, that, "We were with Masruq at the house of Yasar bin Numair. Masruq saw pictures on his terrace and said, "I heard `Abdullah saying that he heard the Rasoolullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ saying, "The people who will receive the severest punishment from Allah will be the picture makers."

[Bukhari: 5950]

There is another Hadeeth that also says that from amongst the people who will get the worst punishment is the person who killed a Nabi of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. From this we can understand how severe this warning is, as it is a sin equated to killing a Nabi of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ,

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by this we all can understand what a great sin picture making is. In the same way it is mentioned about taking, making, and keeping photographs. Sketching images of animate objects is a sin, some 'Ulema are of the opinion, that 'Al Musawwiroon,' [those who make pictures] here refers to those who make images of idols which could be worshipped.

Other 'Ulema are of the view that the word 'Al Musawwiroon,' [those who make pictures] is not only directed to people who worship those pictures but is general. Hence, all animate objects, effigies and pictures are included in this prohibition. The safest is that we should abstain from all types of pictures animate objects.

The Prohibition of Photographs and Images 16 Jamaadi al Aakhir 1437/ 26 February 2016.

Hadeeth One

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو زُرْعَةَ، قَالَ دَخَلْتُ مَعَ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ دَارًا بِالْمَدِينَةِ فَرَأَى أَعْلَاهَا مُصَوِّرًا يُصَوِّرُ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ " وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ ذَهَبَ يَخْلُقُ كَخَلْقِي، فَلْيُحْلِقُوا حَبَّةً، وَلْيُحْلِقُوا ذَرَّةً ". ثُمَّ دَعَا بِتَوْرٍ مِنْ مَاءٍ فَعَسَلَ يَدَيْهِ حَتَّى بَلَغَ إِبْطَهُ فَقُلْتُ يَا أَبَا هُرَيْرَةَ أَشَيْءٌ سَمِعْتَهُ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ مُنْتَهَى الْحِلْيَةِ.

It is narrated by Narrated Abu Zur'a that Sayyeduna Abu Huraira رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ entered a house in Madeenah and he saw a man making pictures at the top of the house. Abu Huraira said, "I heard Rasoolullah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ saying that Allah said, 'Who would be more unjust than the one who tries to create the like of My creatures? Let them create a grain: let them create a gnat².' " Abu Huraira then asked for a water container and washed his arms up to his armpits. I said, "O Abu Huraira! Is this something you have heard I from

² A very small insect that bites humans.

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Rasoolullah ﷺ "صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ" He said, "The limit for ablution is up to the place where the ornaments will reach on the Day of Resurrection."

[Bukhari: 5953]

Creation is the sole property of Allah ﷻ, and anyone who goes in that direction is the greatest oppressor. If that person feels he can create, let him create one atom. Scientists believe that matter cannot be created, and matter cannot be destroyed. They cannot create, they only use it for other purposes again and change its properties.

However, they must attempt to create an atom, or they must create one seed, a seed for grain or let them make one barley seed, or just one drop of water. Nobody can make any of these, these are only the creation of Allah ﷻ. They will not be able to do this, where can they create anything?

Today, they are talking of cloning a human being or an animal. This, they will not be able to do, they cannot do. These are stunted attempts from them. The sole property of creation belongs only to Allah ﷻ. To manufacture is something else. However, to create from non-existence into existence is only the work of Allah ﷻ. Such an action is oppression because it is the attribute of Allah ﷻ, because the attribute of Allah ﷻ is being self-assigned by the creation, to anyone besides Allah ﷻ Allah ﷻ tells them to create a minute thing like an atom or a seed as a form of rebuke to prove the inability and incapability of a person. It is as if we tell somebody to do an action if they can, knowing full well that they cannot do it.

This was also a miraculous insight of Nabi-e-Kareem ﷺ because man will never be able to produce any such object, despite his sophistication in science and progress in technology. This Hadeeth clearly explains the reason picture making is forbidden.

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One of the reasons why picture making is forbidden is that the creating and forming of living beings is amongst the special qualities of Allah ﷻ, and none may compete with him in it. By forming a picture, a person is practically showing that he is a partner with Allah ﷻ, in other words, he is making shirk, and therefore it is called the worst oppression.

Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'aan Shareef,

هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَلِيقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

He is Allah مُبْجَاهَةٌ وَتَعَالَى, the Creator, the Maker who shapes all forms and appearances. His [alone] are the attributes of perfection.

[Surah Al-Hashr: 59 Verse: 24]

He is the only Creator, the Perfect Maker, the Fashioner. We also learn from the Hadeeth, that the greater the degree of resemblance between the image and actual creation of Allah ﷻ, the greater the degree of prohibition.

This means that when an artist draws or sketches an image, he will never be able to draw the image exactly as it is. However, if one takes a photograph, then you have captured the image of the object photographed exactly as it is. So therefore, the taking a photo is more prohibited than an artist's impression of the object imaged. A photograph resembles the original to a greater degree than a hand drawn image. Hence, the former is prohibited to a greater degree.

Hadeeth Two

عَنْ أَبِي طَلْحَةَ . رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ . عَنْ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ " لَا تَدْخُلُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ بَيْتًا فِيهِ كَلْبٌ وَلَا صُورَةٌ " .

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Sayyeduna Abu Talha رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said that Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "Angels do not enter a house that has either a dog or a picture in it".

[Bukhari: 3322]

A Personally Experienced Incident

One very rainy, gloomy Sunday morning, a woman who was in the throes of death was suffering, she was in sakraat [in agony of the throes of death] while everyone around stood helpless. A community worker who was a friend of ours and who used to assist people in need was called to assist. After he arrived, he tried everything to terminate her suffering so that her soul would depart with ease, but the poor woman was just kept suffering. He thought that there must be something that was preventing her maut [death]. Eventually, he looked under the bed and saw that there was a puppy lying under the bed. Once the puppy was taken outside, her rooh [soul] got qabaz [got taken possession of [by the angels]].

Note must be taken here that reference to Angels does not refer to all Angels, it refers to the Angels of mercy. The Angels of punishment, the Angel of death and the like still have full access to the house.

The Prohibition of Photographs and Images 27 Jamaadi al Aakhir 1437/ 03 March 2016.

Hadeeth One

وعن عائشة رضي الله عنها قالت: واعد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم جبريل عليه السلام في ساعة أن يأتيه، فجاءت تلك الساعة ولم يأت! قالت: وكان بيده عصا، فطرحها من يده وهو يقول: "ما يخلف الله وعده ولا رسله" ثم النفث، فإذا جرو كلب تحت سريره. فقال: "متى دخل هذا الكلب؟" فقلت: والله ما دريت به، فأمر به فأخرج، فجاءه جبريل عليه السلام: فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "وعدتني، فجلست لك ولم تأتني" فقال: منعني الكلب الذي كان في بيتك، إنا لا ندخل بيتاً فيه كلب ولا صورة"

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Sayyidah 'Aa'ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا said: Jibril عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام made a promise with Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to come at a definite hour; that hour came but he did not visit him. There was a staff in the hand of the Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. He threw it from his hand and said, "Never does Allah شَبَّاحُهُ وَتَعَالَى back out of His Promise, nor do His messengers." Then he noticed a puppy under his bed and said, "O 'Aa'ishah, when did this dog enter?" She said: "By Allah, I don't know." He then commanded that it should be turned out. No sooner than had they expelled it, Jibril عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام came and Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said to him, "You promised to visit me. I waited for you, but you did not come." Thereupon he said: "The dog kept me from coming. We do not enter a house in which there is a dog or a picture."

[Muslim]

'Ulema have explained that this is when the photograph is displayed. If it is kept covered, like when a passport is closed with the cover, or an ID card is kept out of sight in a wallet, because the images on these documents are a legal necessity, then that won't prevent the Malaa'ikah from entering; however, photographs that are displayed as explained in Fadhaa'ile A'amaal in which Hadhrat Sheikh رَحْمَةُ اللهِ wrote that perhaps one person in the whole household has displayed one photograph and the whole household gets deprived of the Farishtahs [angels] of Rahmat [mercy] and we need the Farishtahs of Rahmat at all times. They are there to protect us and they are there to guide us.

However, by having these images carelessly displayed we are preventing them from coming to us. Angels also do not enter houses in which there are objects due to their hatred for those who disobey the commands of Allah ﷻ by displaying statuettes of various animate objects in the form of humans or animals like ornamental little statuettes of dogs, elephants, lions, and the like.

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The Prohibition of Photographs and Images 23 Jamaadi al Aakhir 1437/ 03 March 2016.

Hadeeth One

عن أبي الهياج الأسدي قال: قال لي علي رضي الله عنه: "ألا أبْعَثُكَ على ما بَعَثَنِي عليه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم؟ أن لا تَدْعَ صُورَةً إلا طَمَسْتَهَا، ولا قَبْرًا مُشْرِفًا إلا سَوَّيْتَهُ."

Abul-Haiyaj Haiyan bin Husain رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said that Sayyeduna 'Ali bin Abu رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said to me, "Shall I not send you to do a task that Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ had assigned to me? Spare no portrait unwiped out and leave not a high grave unlevelled".

[Muslim]

Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ practically demonstrated the teaching of destroying images when he gave instructions for the idols and images in the Kaa'bah to be destroyed when they conquered Makkatul Mukarramah.

Sayyidah 'Aay'isha رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا stated that Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ practically would not leave anything in the house that had images without destroying them. So, if we also have some old photo albums, pictures of ourselves when we were young, we should destroy them. If we have images on our phones, we should delete them. It is only harmful for us in this dunya, and severe punishment has been explained for the Aakhirah [Afterlife].

The Origins of Photography and its Evolution with the Advent of Inventions and Technology

It had begun during ancient times, a long time after the passing on of Sayyeduna 'Idrees عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, when people with good intentions, sincerity and innocence had begun making and sketching pictures of their pious predecessors.

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This misdeed was introduced by Shaitaan, who had firstly over a long, evolutionary period of centuries mislead people. He influenced people to go astray by creating sketches of their pious predecessors just to remember, but not to worship them.

Thereafter, again over a long evolutionary period that entailed centuries of having influenced the people to create statues of their pious predecessors, but still, not to worship them, but to remember them.

Thereafter, again over a long evolutionary period that entailed centuries of having influenced the people to create idols of their pious predecessors, he enticed the people to worship the idols that they made of their pious predecessors, to convert their remembrance of their pious predecessors to idol worship.

In ancient times pictures were made using charcoal, stone, and other methods and the picture was sketched. Then came the camera, and now with mobile phones and digital 'images' and all other methods that we are privy to as well as all methods that will be invented until the day of qiyaamat.

This is one of the most severe gunahs [sins], in Islam because it is purely shirk [associating partners with Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**], and yes, it still has got even 'Ulema debating, disagreeing, and having varied points of views with regard to photography. Since the current big talk among 'Ulema of all calibres and statures who are in favour – of course, there is no way that they can - try do loophole out of the prohibition of all types of images and photographs – we have coined a phrase in this book which constantly refers to this tactic as the 'Digitized is Authorized' loophole.

So, is 'Digitized is Authorized' permissible? Let us go into the matter and clarify this extensive topic. There are various eras related to images and imaging that begin with the people post the era of Sayyeduna 'Idrees **عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام** who were people who made sketches of pious people, and with Shaitaan's ploys and tricks it has

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evolved to the status quo with the advent of digital imaging. Unfortunately, these days, almost everyone is involved in this age old, abhorred sin. May Allah ﷻ protect us all.

This is a gunah that indicates the severity of the harms of what originally was termed 'tasweer' [an image, a picture, or a photograph]. It is internationally known and acknowledged, not only in the Qur'aan Shareef, but in the entire world, all historians attest to the fact that picture making leads to idol worship. That is enough proof for it to be haraam.

عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

A Synoptic History of Sayyeduna 'Idrees عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

Allah ﷻ says of Sayyeduna 'Idrees عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ in the Qur'aan Shareef,

وَأَذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتَابِ إِدْرِيسَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ صِدِّيقًا نَبِيًّا

And mention in the Book [the Qur'aan] "Idrees. Verily! He was a man of truth, [and] a Messenger.

[Surah Mariam: 19; Verse: 56]

People after the previous Nabi, Sayyeduna Sheeth عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and during the period of Sayyeduna 'Idrees عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ were all Muslims, and they were on one way, the correct way of Sayyeduna Sheeth عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ.

A time came in history when Sayyeduna 'Idrees عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, whose actual name is Akhnookh, was sent down to earth by Allah ﷻ. When he came, he was favoured by Allah ﷻ with immense favours.

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Allah ﷻ's Favours to Sayyeduna 'Idrees عليه السلام

Among the favours that Sayyeduna 'Idrees ؑ was given to by Allah ﷻ was the favour of knowledge, upon which our current day living still benefits us. Allah ؑ had bestowed Sayyeduna 'Idrees عليه السلام with.

1. The revelation of thirty short suhuf [booklets]. Sayyeduna 'Idrees عليه السلام taught the people about Allah ﷻ and called them to implement the rules of the religion. He emphasized that the only One Who deserves worship is Allah ﷻ.
2. The knowledge of numerals. We can well understand without numerals we would be lost. There is a misconception that the wheel was invented by some person or other, of which the fact is that,
3. It was an inspiration to Sayyeduna 'Idrees عليه السلام from Allah ﷻ. We know that almost all today's technology, advancement and progress depend on the wheel, nothing can move without the wheel. Not very long ago, we used to have numerous wheels to drive our watches for them to give us the correct time. Our cars would be immobile without the wheel. A jet craft that flies would neither be able to take off nor land without wheels. Practically everything revolves. around the wheel. Allah had blessed Sayyeduna 'Idrees عليه السلام greatly.
4. At the time of Sayyeduna 'Idrees عليه السلام, the people spoke 72 languages. Allah ﷻ made Sayyeduna 'Idrees عليه السلام know all the 72 languages, so that he could teach all the people in their own language. Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'aan Shareef,

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وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا بِلِسَانٍ قَوْمِهِ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ فَيُضِلُّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

And in no way have We sent any Messenger except with the tongue of his people, that he may make [the message] evident for them. Then Allah leads into error whomever He decides and guides whomever He decides; and He is The Ever-Mighty, The Ever-Wise.

[Surah Ibrahim: 14; Verse: 4]

5. Allah ﷻ gave Sayyeduna 'Idrees عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, the knowledge of sciences, which he taught the people. Allah ﷻ gave him the knowledge of Astronomy.
6. He was the first to investigate the science of medicine.
7. [as it did come in the time of Sayyeduna Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام].
8. Sayyeduna 'Idrees عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام was the first to set down the rules of city planning.
9. It is said that Sayyeduna 'Idrees ﷺ built the two famous pyramids of Egypt.

The title of 'Idrees was given to him since he used to give lots of dars [lessons]. That is how he became to be known as 'Idrees, 'Idrees, the person who used to give a lot of lessons. He had produced extremely great students.

However, he had five students who were extremely famous, righteous, knowledgeable, and perfect role models. These five students are spoken about in the Qur'aan Shareef's Surah Nooh, Aayat 23, in which Shaitaan urged and influenced the people not to leave their blasphemous practices of idol worship, of these five exceptionally righteous and pious students of Sayyeduna 'Idrees عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام. Their names were, Wadd, Suwa, Yaghuth, Yauq and Nasr, who were extremely great people. Besides these five students, he had many more as well. It is said that Sayyeduna 'Idrees ﷺ lived 82 years on Earth.

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The Demise of Sayyeduna 'Idrees عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام

It is reported that Sayyeduna 'Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام did not have a natural death, he was lifted into the Heavens. According to some narrations, like Sayyeduna 'Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى raised Sayyeduna 'Idrees عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام as well into the heavens. Then he was descended again, and he died on Earth. Whether he had passed on earth, or whether he was lifted into the Heavens, everyone must leave this world. He also left the world and these people, his five choicest, extremely great students had continued with his teachings and with their great worship as well as propagating his teachings to others.

However, the inevitable can never be held back,

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ

Every soul shall have a taste of death.

[Surah Ankaboot: 29: Verse: 57]

Yes, every soul shall taste of death. These five special and beloved students of Sayyeduna 'Idrees عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, who were extremely righteous, pious, who had barakaat [blessings] upon barakaat in their hands, mustajaabud daawaat [one whose du'aas are readily accepted], having to give great, beautiful advice and hope to others, their guidance and acceptance all had to come to the inevitable mortal end. When they had passed on, people lost heart, they became extremely sad that they had lost such great people.

In true experience, when there is a true, loving connection with anyone dear to us, when a husband loves his wife, or the wife loves her husband, parents who love their children, a mureed loves his Sheikh, a student loves his Ustaad, and it is especially for these people, we become fida [sacrifice

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ourselves]. We give our lives for them, and these are those people who we come to know as the Auliya [the friends of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى], those who are more concerned of us and they spend all the time worrying about us, they worry about how to guide us, how to teach us. Those who respond reasonably, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى blesses them greatly, and when we come onto the righteous path, all we can do is make du'aa for whatever we had got from our elders. Only du'aas can be poured out, and we feel sad thinking of the efforts that they had taken to guide us.

The First Invention of Contempt Rears its Ugly Head – Shaitaan Prompts the Sketch

Coming back to Sayyeduna 'Idrees عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام's students, they had also passed on. People were extremely sad and were extremely grieved and forlorn after they had passed on. Shaitaan went to them and 'sympathized' with them regarding the loss of the pious elders. Grief stricken they replied that it is true that each of them had passed on, everybody must pass on. Shaitaan asked them as to how they would remember them. They replied that they would remember them by the actions that they had taught them and continue to live their lives as they had been taught by them.

Shaitaan in turn said that if they made pictures or sketches of them, if they had an artist from among them who would sketch an image of them, it would inspire more in memory of them and their extreme piety and so much more. This made sense to them and thought it to be the correct way.

From here we learn a very great lesson, that a minute change in direction one takes, or if one moves one hundredth of a millimetre away from deen, one is already throwing the seeds of deviation for the future. This is that little bit of instigation to merely sketch pictures, no worshipping of them, just to remember them and to get inspired, and their 'ibaadat would take a better form as well. You see the picture of the person, he was a great person, and nothing more, no shirk,

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no idolatry, nothing of the kind. A minute's agreement to deviation eventually led to idol worship. Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'aan Shareef,

فَأَسْتَقِمَّ كَمَا أُمِرْتُ

Remain firm, then on right course, as you have been commanded by Allah.

[Surah Hud: 11; Verse: 112]

Remain very rigid and firm as you have been commanded. This command was for Nabi ﷺ himself, and he had said that this was one of the most difficult commands that had come. The command to remain firm.

At all times people think to themselves and feel that they should not be so hard, or so strict on themselves, they feel that they should 'take it a bit easy now', they are making a great deal of 'ibaadat. Allow the family to take it a bit easy. However, the minute we move a little bit, this is where we fall.

This slight deviation causes a person to go in the wrong direction. People who deliberately intend this come in overly sweet with sugar-coated ways. These sugar-coated suggestions appeal to a person. Shaitaan came at a strategic time when the people were emotionally charged. These people have left them, they were so pious, they led them to piety and to righteousness and Sayyeduna 'Idrees عليه السلام who had been given the title 'Idrees', who came to be known as 'Idrees' due to the amount of dars he gave, and the scholars, students and Mashaa'ikh, he had produced. They all had great feeling for those people. Anyway, he got them to sketch their images, yet they continued worshipping only Allah ﷻ.

How many times do we say that if something is doubtful it is not haraam; however, when we start moving in that direction, we are already being led onto the wrong track. Sketching the pictures was only a way of remembering their pious predecessors, and this to them was not wrong, and was in full practice.

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The Second Invention of Contempt Rears its Ugly Head – Shaitaan Prompts Construction of Idols

Again, after centuries, Shaitaan went to them and said to them that their pictures of the pious people had become faded, they will wither away, they get worn out over time. Rather than that, they should make statues of them with stone, brass, gold, and silver, seeing that they were such great people. The people again complied, they began making statues of silver, of stone, yet their object was not to worship those statues and they did not worship them.

They were on Tauheed [the Oneness of Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**] one hundred percent, on the Oneness of Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**, with no shirk whatsoever, and they passed away as Mowahhideen, [those who died in the belief that Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** is one]. They only used the statues for inspiration. Their inspiration gradually evolved into ta'zeem [respect and reverence], they began respecting and honouring the idols. Remember, although their inspiration evolved to ta'zeem, they still did not worship the idols, it was evolutionary, it had taken place over an extremely lengthy era, not just a week, a month, or five or ten years. This had taken place over generations. We must understand that when Shaitaan plans, he does not foundation his plan to work over a decade or a century, he needs to establish his plan over extremely long eras.

Shaitaan's Agents Our – Contemporaries are Alive and Kicking

In a slight but important deviation, I take this opportunity to discuss an aspect that a good friend, who has passed on narrated to me. He said that he was seated in a business meeting with some Jewish people and a stage had come during the proceedings in the meeting discussions that sounded odd to him. Trying to get grips of the discussion, this friend of mine said that the Jew who was sitting next to him told his friends, this is not in our one-hundred- year plan, this is in our two-hundred-year plan. The agents of Shaitaan also work in that way. We unfortunately are fast asleep, and these people are planning for over periods of

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one and two centuries from now. Shaitaan plans for thousands of years in advance, as for how he would destroy the people after thousand years. He first merely ploughs the ground, and we do not understand the reason for him having to plough the ground, and where he would eventually lead a person.

Initially it began with a sketch of the image of the pious people from which they had taken inspiration, then, it evolved into making idols of the pious people; thereafter, they began honouring and respecting the idols that they had made.

The Third Invention of Contempt Rears its Ugly Head – Shaitaan Prompts Idol Worship

However, as generations passed, the children of the previous generation grew, and they saw the way their parents had respected these idols, and they did not make the difference between ta'zeem and 'ibaadat. Shaitaan then approached their children and in fact it is narrated that he caused a sound to be released from the idols. Those idols said puppeted words from the cunningness of Shaitaan:

قَالَ رَبُّكُمْ وَرَبُّ آبَائِكُمُ الْأَوَّلِينَ

I am your Sustainer, as well as the Sustainer of your forefathers of old!

[Surah Ash-Shu'ara' : 26; Verse: 26]

I am you Rabb [sustainer] and the Rabb of your forefathers. This had them convinced, and they had seen to what extent their parents had respected those idols. They neither knew what ta'zeem was, nor did they make the difference between ta'zeem and 'ibaadat. They were not privy to the fact that their parents and their forefathers did not make the 'ibaadat of those idols. They respected those idols, and they took inspiration from those idols. From inspiration it went to respecting and honouring those idols, and from there, their children who saw the outward actions of their parents, not knowing the reality, had begun worshipping those idols. This worship went to such an extent that, after Sayyeduna 'Idrees

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عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, Wadd, Suwa, Yaghuth, Yauq and Nasr had all passed away, after untold centuries the progeny of that era of people had begun worshipping idols, and then Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى sent Sayyeduna Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام to call these people to Tauheed [the Oneness of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى]. Until long after Sayyeduna 'Idrees عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام there was no idol worship that took place. Centuries after Sayyeduna 'Idrees عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام had passed on idol worship had begun³.

Centuries after Sayyeduna 'Idrees عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and his five favoured scholars had passed on, and Shaitaan had succeeded in his ploy to evolve the belief of the original believers who had followed the teachings of Sayyeduna 'Idrees عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام to their generative progeny from Tauheed to idolatry, which itself was not only practiced, but on the rise for centuries beyond.

In his Sahih [authentic] Book of Hadeeth, Imaam Al-Bukhari narrated on the authority of 'Ata', from Ibn 'Abbas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that he said, "The idols that used to be worshipped among the people of Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام came to be worshipped by all the Arabs. As for Wadd, it was worshipped by Kalb in Dawmat-ul-Jandal. As for Suwa, it was worshipped by Hudhayl. As for Yaghuth, it was worshipped by Murad and then by Banu Ghutayf in Al-Juruf near Sheba. As for Yauq, it was worshipped by Hamadan. As for Nasr, it was worshipped by Himyar, the people of Dhul-Kila'. These were the names of righteous men among the people of Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام.

When they died, Shaitaan whispered to their people to make idols of them in the places where they used to sit and to name these idols after them. They did, but they were still not worshipped.

³ This is not an 'aayat [verse] of the Qur'aan Shareef. It was narrated by 'Ikrimah, Al-Dahhak, Qatadah, and Ibn Is'haq. [See the Tafsir of ibn Kathir, vol. 4, p. 426, and the Tafsir of Al-Qurtuby, vol. 9, p. 308].

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When those people died and knowledge was abrogated, these idols were worshipped." This was also narrated by `Ikrimah, Al-Dahhak, Qatadah<sup>4</sup> and Ibn Is-haq<sup>5</sup>. Thus, based on what is previously mentioned the interpretation of the statement of Ibn `Abbas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ is that those idols were of righteous men among the people of Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, that is, the people to whom Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was sent, who were followers of Islam before Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was sent to them. When they died, their people made idols of them to remember and follow them. They were not worshipped in the beginning.

When those people died and knowledge was abrogated, the idols were worshipped and Shirk [associating partners with Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى in His Divinity or worship] spread. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى sent Sayyeduna Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ to resist this and to call them to worship Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى alone.

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى sent Sayyeduna Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ to guide the people back to Tauheed [the Oneness of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى].

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى Sends Sayyeduna Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ to Guide the Idolaters

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى then sent Sayyeduna Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ to guide the idolaters back to Tauheed [the Oneness of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى]. Sayyeduna Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ lived for a period of 1 500 years and he made sincere, earnest, and devoted efforts for 950 years which consisted of constant and consistent preaching and propagating towards the truth and guiding the people towards Tauheed [the Oneness of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى]. However, almost all those people by this time were idolaters and totally saturated in idolatry. He preached to generation after generation. He thought that despite their ignoring him, turning deaf ears on him, and even mocking, jeering,

⁴ Tafsir of Ibn Kathir, vol. 4, p. 426,

⁵ Tafsir of Al-Qurtuby, vol. 9, p. 308

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and persecuting him, at least one generation would take heed to his calling. Yet, generation after generation came and went and none would pay heed to his guidance. Sayyeduna Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام called to Allah سُبحانه وتعالى regularly with the plea,

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي دَعَوْتُ قَوْمِي لَيْلًا وَنَهَارًا فَلَمْ يَزِدْهُمْ دُعَائِي إِلَّا فِرَارًا وَإِنِّي كُلَّمَا دَعَوْتُهُمْ لِتَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ جَعَلُوا أَصْصِعُهُمْ بَيْنِي وَأَدَانِهِمْ وَأَتَسَعَسَعُوا فِيْهِمْ وَأَصْرُوا وَأَسْتَكْبَرُوا أَسْتَكْبَرُوا ثُمَّ إِنِّي دَعَوْتُهُمْ جَهَارًا ثُمَّ إِنِّي أَعْلَنْتُ لَهُمْ وَأَسْرَرْتُ لَهُمْ إِسْرًا فَقُلْتُ أَسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفَّارًا يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِدْرَارًا

[And after a time, Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام said to Allah], "O my Sustainer! Verily, I have been calling unto my people night and day. But all my calling added nothing but to [their] flight [from the truth]. And verily! Every time I called unto them that You might forgive them, they thrust their fingers into their ears, covered themselves up with their garments, and persisted [in their refusal] and magnified themselves in pride. Then verily, I called to them openly [aloud]. Then verily, I proclaimed to them in public, and I have appealed to them in private, I said [to them]: 'Ask forgiveness from Allah; verily, He is Oft-Forgiving.

[Surah Nooh: 71; Verses: 5 -10]

Sayyeduna Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام persisted calling to them saying, "Your worshipping of these idols is wrong, it is haraam, make istighfar, taubah, Allah ﷻ will bless you, He is very forgiving, He will forgive you. To the extent that you have committed these grievous sins of shirk, by associating partners with Allah سُبحانه وتعالى. Allah سُبحانه وتعالى had created you; Allah سُبحانه وتعالى grants you all your ni'mats [bounties], and you worship somebody else besides Allah? Do you deny Allah سُبحانه وتعالى?"

When a person commits shirk, he then goes into kufr. With shirk, although he believes in Allah سُبحانه وتعالى, but he associates partners to Allah سُبحانه وتعالى.

At the time they were suffering with droughts, Sayyeduna Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام coaxed them by telling them,

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يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِدْرَارًا

Allah will send rain to you in abundance.

[Surah Nooh: 71; Verse: 11]

Due to the droughts their financial conditions became poor. Their livestock died, their children and wealth had suffered. Sayyeduna Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ continued,

وَمُتَدِّدُكُمْ بِأَمْوَالٍ وَبَنِينَ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ أَنْهَارًا

And Allah will grant you increase in wealth and children and bestow on you garden and bestow on your rivers.

[Surah Nooh: 71; Verse: 12]

كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً

In the beginning mankind followed one single way.

[Surah Baqarah: 2; Verse: 213]

He said to them that they should make taubah. He painted an extremely beautiful picture. Jannat [Paradise] is Jannat [Paradise], but he had showed them that life could be extremely beautiful in this dunya as well. Imagine where did these people originate from? They were the children of those people who totally, and devoutly worshipped Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى one hundred percent.

In the beginning mankind followed one single way.

مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَرْجُونَ لِلَّهِ وَقَارًا

What is amiss with you that you cannot look forward to Allah's Majesty?

[Surah Nooh: 71: Verse:13]

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مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَرْجُونَ لِلَّهِ وَقَارًا۝

What is amiss with you that you cannot look forward to Allah's Majesty?

[Surah Nooh: 71: Verse:13]

What has happened to you? Why don't you turn back to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى? He told them that Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is so Great, so Merciful, so Kind. He forgives so greatly. Everything is in his hands. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has given you everything, all the ni'mats of this dunya,

وَجَعَلَ الْقَمَرَ فِيهِنَّ نُورًا وَجَعَلَ الشَّمْسُ سِرَاجًا

And [Allah] has made the moon a light therein and made the sun a lamp. And Allah has brought you forth from the [dust of] earth.

[Surah Nooh: 71: Verses:14 - 15]

Despite all this, Sayyeduna Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام saw generation upon generation pass. It is not that people's lives were so long. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى had granted Sayyeduna Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام an extremely long life by way of a great miracle. In his life generations upon generations of people had passed on but nobody listened to Sayyeduna Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام. When he had given up hope, he said to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى,

قَالَ نُوحٌ رَّبِّ إِنِّهُمْ عَصَوْنِي وَاتَّبَعُوا مَنْ لَّمْ يَزِدَّهُ مَالُهُ وَلَوْلَدَهُ إِلَّا خَسَارًا

[And Nooh continued], "O my Sustainer! Behold, they have opposed me [throughout], for they follow people whose wealth and children lead them increasingly into ruin.

[Surah Nooh:71; Verse: 21]

They disobey me. They do not want to listen, and they have done every wrong. They used to hit Sayyeduna Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام until he became unconscious, until they left him for dead. When he would gain consciousness, again he would continue

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to invite them towards Allah ﷻ. They used to persecute him in many ways, they used to mock at him and humiliate him, but he continued doing what Allah ﷻ had ordained him to conduct. These people who were the children of those who were one hundred percent Muwahhideen, and who had great love and respect for Sayyeduna 'Idrees عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and they were their children of Wadd, Suwa, Yaghuth, Yauq and Nasr, and other great people. These are the progeny, the offspring of extremely pious and dedicated folk, and they had reached a stage to which they would talk amongst themselves openly tell one another in the presence of Sayyeduna Nooh.

وَقَالُوا لَا تَذَرُنَّ آِهَتَكُمْ وَلَا تَذَرُنَّ وَدًّا وَلَا سُوَاعًا وَلَا يَغُوثَ وَيَعُوقَ وَنَسْرًا

In as much as they said [to their followers], 'Do not ever abandon your gods: abandon neither Wadd nor Suwa', and neither Yaghuth nor Ya'uq nor Nasr!'

[Surah Nooh:71; Verse: 23]

They kept telling each other to never ever give up the worship of their idols. Many other verses in the Qur'aan Shareef explain the extent to which Sayyeduna Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام went in giving da'wat [calling] to his people. In return, what was their reply? They said to each other, "Don't listen to [Sayyeduna] Nooh, [na'oothubillaah] he is a mad man. Among other aspects, they persisted in denigrating, disparaging and being despicably disrespectful, and they continued to illtreat Sayyeduna Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام.

Now I ask with tears in my eyes, if you have love for the Ambiya عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَام, the Messengers of Allah ﷻ, is a photograph, image, call it what you will, digitized or not, worth the persecution the denigration of what Sayyeduna Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام had endured? Even if photography in whichever form from Shaitaan's sketch to the Devil's digitization, an illegitimate lineage was permissible, [which it is not], it is enough just for the difficult endurance of Sayyeduna Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام's despicable disrespect and persecution to boycott photography in all its forms.

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Sayyeduna Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام despite being a Nabi, and all Nabis are by nature meek, kind, and merciful had become distraught. He thought of what he did for his people, the extent of his guidance, his explanations, encouragement, invitation, talking, and how much more had he done for them to make amends?

Where had all this begun?

With picture making. Yet, we think of it as a minor aspect. Also, do not think of other people. Today, to take an image of animate objects using the Hellphone is so easy, and we take photographs of anything, anytime, anywhere, animate, or non-animate at our whims and fancies. Before we take, look at, place away for safety, file, distribute or send images, even if it is not for the prime and most important reason, which is to refrain for the pleasure of Allah سُبحانه وتعالى, and thankfulness for him for his immense bounties that shower upon us every split second, then at least think of the taunts, mockery, beatings, jeering and persecution that Sayyeduna Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام had endured – and refrain.

Allahu Akbar! Allah سُبحانه وتعالى had decided to punish them. Allah سُبحانه وتعالى said that when We sent our punishment to those people,

أُغْرِقُوا فَأَدْخَلُوا نَارًا

They were drowned, then were made to enter the Fire.

[Surah Nooh: 71; Verse: 25]

Meaning, they will be carried from the flood of the seas to the heat of the Fire. Allah سُبحانه وتعالى said that We had drowned them due to their gunahs [sins]; we drowned them. When the water came from the Heavens, limitless waters just poured from the Heavens for forty continuous days.

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Just a few days ago it rained for just a few days in Kwa Zulu Natal, and we stand testimony to the havoc it caused.

It rained continuously for forty days, and not just little rain, waters tormented not only from the sky, but water also flooded from the earth as well, and these waters merged. Allah ﷻ's Quadrat [Power] is exponentially infinitely great. He is Qaadire Mutlaq [The Omnipotent Powerful]. Allah ﷻ says, "We drowned them. And after we drowned them,

فَأَدْخَلُوهُمُ النَّارَ

Then they were made to enter the Fire.

[Surah Nooh: seventy-one; Verse: 25]

From the punishment of water, We had entered them into the punishment of fire. That is Allah ﷻ's Quadrat. Water puts out fire, but Allah ﷻ destined that their Alpha was water, and their Omega was fire,

فَلَمْ يَجِدُوا لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنْصَارًا

And they found none to help them instead of Allah ﷻ.

[Surah Nooh: seventy-one; Verse: 25]

Meaning, they had no helper, assistant, or saviour who could rescue them from the punishment of Allah. This is similar to Allah ﷻ's statement,

لَا عَاصِمَ الْيَوْمَ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا مَنْ رَحِمَ

This day there is no saviour from the decree of Allah except him on whom. He has mercy.

[Surah Hud: 11; Verse : 43]

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And you will not find any helper besides Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*. Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* is your only helper. We learn from here that when we disobey Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*, as small as our disobedience may be, we must be cognizant of it.

'Ulema have written that Surah Hood, had caused the hair of Nabi *صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ* to turn white not due to old age. Surah Hood is well known for the fearsome verses it consists of, and most reliable 'Ulema are of the view that the Ayat,

فَأَسْتَقِمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ

Pursue, then, the right course, as you have been commanded [by Allah].

[Surah Hud: 11; Verse: 112]

was the verse that caused Nabi-e-Kareem *صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ* the worry, but other 'Ulema are of the view, and both views are correct, that it was the azaab that Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* that had sent to the people of the Ambiya *عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَام* which is mentioned in Surah Hud,

وَالِىْ اَعَادِ اٰخَاهُمْ هُوْدًا

And unto [the tribe of] `Ad [We sent] their brother Hud.

[Surah Hud: 11; Verse: 50]

Great and disastrous punishments came upon those people, the manner in which they were destroyed was unimaginable and varied, whether it was,

سَحَرَهَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَبْعَ لَيَالٍ وَثَمِيْنَةَ اَيَّامٍ

Which He willed against them for seven nights and eight days without cease.

[Surah Al Haaqqah: 69; Verse: 7]

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The winds that blew, and the people of 'Aad who said,

مَنْ أَشَدُّ مِنَّا قُوَّةً

"Who could have a power greater than ours?"

[Surah Fussilaat: 41; Verse: 15]

Who is stronger than us? We are the most powerful. Allah سُبحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى sent down rains of stone upon those people.

What happened to the people who tormented Sayyeduna Moosa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ? All the disobedience of the people of all the different eras had one starting point, and that was picture making, yet today, taking pictures is taken as a small matter.

Now that we have learnt the history, evolution, and link of the initiation of Shaitaan's evil plan of getting Muslims involved in making sketches of their pious predecessors with his trickery – which was the mother of all evils – and how it had evolutionized to idolatry, we have become more familiarized with the nature, extent, and gravity of the evils of photography. The above explanation gives a true reflection as to why the sketch is forbidden irrespective of how, why, when, or whether it is permissible in one way or the other towards its evolution to a digitized pixelated image.

History's Testimony to Leaders of all Religions and all Eras Who Had Erred Mistakenly or Were Enticed Monetarily

There are those who take haraam and convert them into halaal and this is borne out in the Qur'aan Shareef, where Allah سُبحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says of them,

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اتَّخَذُوا أَحْبَابَهُمْ وَرُهَيْبَهُمْ أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ

They have taken their rabbis and their monks for their lords beside Allah.

[Surah: At- Taubah: 9; Verse:21]

This is an extremely important and beautiful point. Qur'aan Shareef is Qur'aan Shareef. One can never imagine the perfection of the Qur'aan Shareef. 'Ulema have written that all the learned people of the Yahood and Nasaarah, were not just merely 'learned people' per sé, they were extremely knowledgeable 'Aalims, in their religion, they had pious people, their 'Ulema and their pious people made them gods besides Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى [This does not mean that they had literally made their 'Ulema gods and worshipped there 'Ulema. What they did is they bought off and bribed their 'Ulema to amend their scriptures to suit their manner and way of living. They bribed their 'Ulema to change the commands of Allah]. The Qur'aan Shareef phrases it as follows, it is mentioned,

اتَّخَذُوا أَحْبَابَهُمْ وَرُهَيْبَهُمْ أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ

They have taken their rabbis and their monks for their lords beside Allah.

[Surah: At- Taubah: 9; Verse:21]

What is meant by this is among all the other divine laws that these pious people altered, was the law of taking haraam and converting it to halaal, which is the sole right of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Hence, they were made into gods by their people by changing the divine laws of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, they took Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى's laws and altered it to suit them. Immediately after this, referring to the Nasaarah Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says,

الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ

As well as 'Isa, the son of Mariam.

[Surah: At- Taubah: 9; Verse:21]

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This aspect is mentioned separately, and they made 'Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ also a God besides Allah سُبحانه وتعالى. The reason for this is that the manner in which way they made their pious people gods differ.

With regard Sayyeduna 'Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, we know very well the Nasaarah worship him. They have a statue of him, they regard him as part of God in the trinity and they regard him as being the as the son of God. Hence, they have in actual fact made him a God which is open kufr. They have made actual partners of Sayyeduna 'Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ with Allah سُبحانه وتعالى.

An analogy of this is about the Ahle Bid'at [innovators]. Commonly, they make sajdah [prostrate] to their Sheikhs, and they make tawaaf around the qabars [graves] of their Peers [Sheikhs]. This is actual 'ibaadat [worship] of that person. This is not that they had made Gods out of their pious people, what it is, is that they made rulings that went against Allah سُبحانه وتعالى's rulings and altered it to suit them. What Allah سُبحانه وتعالى had made haraam, they made halaal.

This is what is meant by the statement that they had made Gods besides Allah سُبحانه وتعالى. deen is straight forward and clear-cut. The finer points and inner depths and details are different; however, basic deeni matters are clearly known and understood even by ordinary people.

They made things that were haraam as halaal. The reasons regarding why they did this vary, some did it for the most common reason, which is for money. They sold their deen. They were sellouts and they sold their deen for paltry, useless gain of this dunya, they pleased the people and took money from the people, and they changed the laws.

Our Ummat is united about the pathetic actions of the Jews and Christians doing this; however, when we ourselves engage in it, we take a different stand. We question their stance and ask how could they sell their religion? Do we claim how stupid some of us are too? Many have sold our deen for the sake of this dunya.

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Alas! 'We' have now been caught up in the same thing. The very reason Allah ﷻ has mentioned it in the Qur'aan, is because we should take heed of this so that we do not sell out our deen. This is for the 'Ulema and for the pious people. The Qur'aan Shareef has made it clear that whoever does this, despite the person being extremely pious and the deeply religious, Allah ﷻ exposed them in the Qur'aan to make it clear to us so that we do not fall into these traps. No matter who it is, if he commits an act which is haraam, it is haraam. We can go to ends to try to cover it up, but it is a haraam.

The Universal Belief that Pictures Making and Sketching Lead to Idolatry

Apart from Islamic history, international history unanimously agrees that picture making and sketchings of the devout and pious led to idol worship. It is because of this sin people are misled to the worst type of transgression, which is shirk, and Allah ﷻ will not forgive shirk. If a person makes taubah of shirk, he will be forgiven. However, on the day of qiyaamat, a person who had died in shirk will not be forgiven. Besides that, all other gunahs [sins] be forgiven by Allah ﷻ, but Allah ﷻ will not forgive kufr and shirk.

All Faiths Unanimously Agree on the Harms Caused by Photography

Muslims and non-Muslims are unanimous regarding the harms caused by photography, which include idol worship and indecency, and which has 'given birth' to its lovechildren, television, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp and all these media platforms. They control the minds and thought processors of all individuals. They are extremely harmful to the extent that they not only enslave a person in terms of altering one's thought processes, but they also cause one's physical and mental health to deteriorate, for example, the television as well as mobile phones deteriorates one's sight, it is harmful for one's health, the radiation from it is harmful to the body, in fact all aspects of these

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devices come with a number of harms for us. It has come to a stage where it is not only the non-Muslims who are deaf, dumb, and blind. All these media platforms control the minds and thought processors of all individuals. It has come to a stage where it is not only the non- Muslims who are deaf, dumb, and blind.

صُمُّكُمْ عُمِّي فَهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ

Deaf are they, and dumb, and blind: for they do not use their reason.

[Surah Al Baqarah: two; Verse: 18]

صُمُّكُمْ عُمِّي فَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ

Deaf are they, and dumb, and blind: for they do not use their reason.

[Surah Al Baqarah: 2; Verse: 171]

They are deaf, dumb, and blind, we have got nothing to do with them. They are the fuel of Jahannam [Hellfire]. However, when the Muslims and the leaders of the Muslims and the scholars of the Muslims submit and fall prey to this it pains our hearts extremely greatly. Deep cries from with the crevices of our hearts are sounded to the fact that we are the people who have fallen prey to this, and it is so clear that all these things are so harmful.

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The Fourth Invention of Contempt Rears its Ugly Head – The Invention of the Camera

It appears that the first 'Aalim to allow permissibility for photography was a great Egyptian 'Aalim, an extremely learned scholar, Sheikh Mohammed bin Bakheer. He was a very well- known and a very great scholar. He had declared the permissibility of photography. He was an 'Aalim of such calibre, that Sheikh Muhammad Zaahid al Kausari رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, himself who was regarded and acknowledged to be an extremely great 'Aalim too, referred to Sheikh Muhammad bin Bakheer as,

آيَةٌ مِنْ آيَةِ اللَّهِ

A sign from among the signs of Allah.

He was a sign of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى due to his vast knowledge as far as the Madhaahib namely the Hanafi, Shafi'i Maaliki and Hambali Madhabs are concerned, their proofs of any subject, their adhilla [all the details regarding those subjects matters]. These matters were like an open book in front of him. His knowledge and understanding of the details of each of the Madhaahib extended to well beyond masah [running one's fingers over] on mozas [leather socks], what breaks wudhu, wuqoof in Muzdalifah, and all through anything that could be thought of. He would present anything related to any of the four Madhaahib immediately and on the turn together with all the proofs and counter arguments.

This is the basis upon which Allamah Muhammad Zaahid al Kausari رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ referred to Sheikh Muhammad bin Bakheer as,

آيَةٌ مِنْ آيَةِ اللَّهِ

“A sign from the signs of Allah.”

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'Ulema in general told Allamah Muhammad Zaahid al Kausari رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ that he praised Sheikh Muhammad bin Bakheer in excess even to the extent of calling him,

آيَةٌ مِنْ آيَةِ اللَّهِ

Sheikh Muhammad Zaahid al Kausari عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was born in 1879 in Düzce, now in Turkey [back then in the Ottoman Empire]. The Sheikh edited classical works of Fiqh, Hadith and Usool, bringing them back into circulation. In particular, he wrote short biographies of prominent personalities of the Hanafi school of thought.

Contemporary to Sheikh Muhammad bin Bakheer was Allamah Tantaawi of Al Azhar University in Egypt, who together with other 'Ulema gave the fatwa that photography is jaa'iz permissible].

Although Allamah Tantaawi and his consorts had claimed and admitted unanimously that tasweer [a picture] is haraam, but the photograph is 'something else', thus differentiating what a tasweer and what a photograph is.

Egyptian 'Ulema had begun differentiating a sketch and a photograph with the advent of the camera. Tasweer then was loosely referred to as a 'sketch', and the image created by the camera was referred to as a photograph. They said that the photograph was permissible because it was not a 'tasweer', it was not that original 'sketch' that was always generally referred to.

'Ulema of former eras also held the view that whatever the name the picture was given was still considered haraam and whichever method was used, was also still considered to be haraam. Hadhrat Allamah Anwar Shah Kashmiri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ said that it was Allamah Tantaawi and his consorts mistake in differentiating between the sketch and the photograph. They are both the same. In the same way, Sheikhul Islam, Hadhrat Moulana Shabbir Ahmad Uthmani Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ also said both are the same thing and both are haraam.

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Isn't it amazing as to how history repeats itself? Despite calling them different names, they produce the same result. History is merely repeating itself with terms like 'digital', 'pixelated', and all the technical jargon that goes with it. It is a mere change in method which produces the same result.

Some of today's 'Ulema are echoing the same sentiments. They all agree unanimously that tasweer is haraam, however the, "But the digital pixelated 'image' is 'something else'", and "There is a difference of opinion," must be appended to their unanimous underlying agreement that, "Tasweer is haraam."

This was the exact thing that was said a hundred years ago when for the first time all the talk of photography began emerging.

Exactly as the incidents unfolded around a century ago, incidents are rearing their ugly heads with a slight amendment in the technical jargon, which is used, by which they want to 'differentiate' a tasweer from a digital image.

'Ulema of the Subcontinent Who Acceded that Photography was Permissible.

There were very few 'Ulema from the subcontinent who acceded to the permissibility of photography. For the sake of brevity, we will discuss two such 'Ulema due to the stature and standing among the masses, their extensive knowledge of deen, and their great insight. Among them was Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, and the other was Moulana Abul Kalam Azaad رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ.

May Allah ﷻ reward our 'Ulema, and not only our 'Ulema, the 'Ulema of the subcontinent, but also the great and knowledgeable 'Ulema of Egypt and greater Arabia who refuted the permissibility of photography completely.

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A Synoptic Insight to Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ

Moulana Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was better known as Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi, and this is factual and famous when 'Ulema speak about him. Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was a prolific writer as well. Hadhrat was such a great 'Aalim, other 'Ulema have said,

انہں نے غلغلہ مپایا

Which literally translated means that he was a roaringly great 'Aalim, and loosely translated means that he was an extremely great 'Aalim who had an extremely great position.

He had an extremely great following as well. His knowledge was so great, and he, at the time, despite being such a great 'Aalim, he was also the only 'Aalim in the subcontinent who gave permission of photography.

He used to publish a monthly magazine titled, 'Ma'aarif', which would be published in Daarun Musanniffeen [Academy of Authors] in Aazamgar in Uttar Pradesh (UP) in the northern part of India. In his periodical for around a period of six months, he was known as Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, [22 November 1884 – 22 November 1953] was a Pakistani historian, writer, and scholar of Islam. He co-authored Sirat-un-Nabi and wrote Khutbat-e-Madras. He was a member of the founding committee of Jamia Millia Islamia. In 1908, he was appointed as an instructor of Modern Arabic and Theology at Dar-ul-Uloom Nadva. His contemporary at Nadva was Moulana Abul Kalam Azaad رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ who had come from Kolkata [Calcutta] and also joined the Nadva. Both Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ and Moulana Abul Kalam Azaad رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ were favourite pupils of Maulana Shibli Nomani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ. Allamah Sayyed Suleiman

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Nadvi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ became one of the biographers of the Seerat of Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, and a historian during his own lifetime.

When spoken about in the great 'Ulema circles, Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadvi he was referred to as a prolific writer as well. Hadhrat was such a great 'Aalim, other 'Ulema have said,

پورے عالم میں ان کا علمی سلسلہ غلہ مچائے تھا

Which literally translated means that he was a roaringly great 'Aalim, and loosely translated means that he was an extremely great 'Aalim who had an extremely great position.

He had an extremely great following as well. His knowledge was so great, and he, at the time, despite being such a great 'Aalim, he was also the only 'Aalim in the subcontinent who gave permission of photography while the gunah [sin] of photography was common.

He used to publish a monthly magazine titled, 'Ma'aarif', which would be published in from Daarun Musanniffeen [Academy of Authors] in Aazamgar in Uttar Pradesh [UP] in the northern part of India. In his periodical for around a period of six months, he discussed the permissibility of photography and photographs with his proofs.

When he gave his fatwa and his explanation, people had begun regarding photography as being permissible and this caused great harms in deen. Already in those days, this fitnah [trial] was 'let loose' in the subcontinent and it created a similar mayhem as discussed previously, where photography today has taken out the very 'Rooh' [spirit] of our 'ibaadaat of Haj and Umrah, of qurbaani and all 'ibaadaat. Today there is just the outward form of these 'ibaadaat that have been left.

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A Synoptic Insight to Moulana Abul Kalam Azaad Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ

Moulana Ghulam Muhiyuddin Ahmed bin Khairuddin Al-Hussaini رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was born on 11 November 1888 in Makkatul Mukarramah, then a part of the Ottoman Empire. He was a renowned 'Aalim who was also trained in the Madhaahib of the Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali fiqh in Shariat. He was more commonly known as, 'Moulana Abul Azaad Kalam'. He was also an Indian independence activist, writer, and a senior leader of the Indian National Congress. He is also commonly remembered as, 'Moulana Azaad'; and he had adopted Azaad [Free] as his pen name. Moulana Azaad was imprisoned, together with the entire Congress leadership.

In the same way as Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, Moulana Abul Kalam Azaad who also referred to as Allamah, but he was more of a liberal type of an 'Aalim, more of a modernist, and more politically driven.

Once one becomes involved in politics, one becomes quite liberal and free in one's ways of thinking. In 1919, or somewhere around that period, he also used to publish a periodical as well, and he used to insert and include photographs in the periodical. He also had regarded photographs and photography to be permissible.

'Ulema Who Refuted the Permissibility of Photography

From among the foremost 'Ulema to refute this fatwa, and who previously referred to Sheikh Muhammad bin Bakheer as,

آيَةٌ مِنْ آيَةِ اللَّهِ

"A sign from among the signs of Allah."

He had then said – which may have been a form of retraction – that with regard to the matters of photography, Sheikh Muhammad bin Bakheer had made such a

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great blunder, that Allamah Muhammad Zaahid al Kausari رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ's stance on Sheikh Muhammad bin Bakheer regarding photography was,

كَانَ غَيْرَ مُؤَفِّقٍ فَنَوَازِلَ

“He was unsuccessful, it is catastrophic.”

This is with regard to the modern, mas'alaas like photography, which was an invention at that time. He had failed completely and miserably, and he did not understand those masaa'il, though he was such a great 'Aalim.

At this stage we should introspect and repent as who we are directing this to. May Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى forgive us. We have no right to be judgmental. This is merely a talk on the history of photography, and of what had in fact taken place historically so that we are kept informed. However, these are the words of an extremely great 'Aalim. I have merely quoted Allamah Muhammad Zaahid al Kausari رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ. We have no right to be critical, may Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى forgive us. What knowledge do we have? What piety do we have? What insight do we have? Nothing. We are quoting what a great 'Aalim had said.

Our 'Ulema, with names that come to mind especially were Allamah Anwar Shah Kashmiri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, Sheikhul Islam Moulana Shabbeer Ahmad Uthmani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ and Mufti Shafi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, amongst others who all declared it completely haraam.

'Ulema of the various Arab countries and especially the sub- continent had also given clear decisions, proofs and fatwas that photography is not permissible.

Mufti Shafi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ is Requested to Refute Allamah Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ's Theories on Photography

During the time that this furore regarding the permissibility of photography was unfolding, Hadhrat Mufti Shafi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was a young 'Aalim of around 18 years

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of age. Hadhrat Mufti Shafi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ had just newly graduated and was kept as a Mu'een Ustaad [Trainee Ustaad] at Daarul Uloom Deoband, as he was being trained to become a teacher. Mufti Shafi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ's Ustaad, Moulana Habeebur Rahmaan Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, who at that time was the principal of Daarul Uloom Deoband, and another Ustaad of Mufti Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, Moulana I'zaaz 'Ali Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ instructed Mufti Shafi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ to write a reply to contrary to Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ's permissibility of photography refuting his views, opinions, and theses that photography is permissible. Hadhrat Mufti Shafi Sahib complied.

Being such a young person, Hadhrat Mufti Shafi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ himself said that his 'ilm [knowledge] was extraordinarily strong. Despite being just newly qualified, Mufti Shafi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ wrote a reply. He had also admitted to using harsh words in his reply. Where was the knowledge of Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi and where the knowledge of Hadhrat Mufti Shafi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ?

In the reply he wrote, and he proved in very clear proofs from Hadeethe Mutawaatir⁶, complete and continuous Ahaadeeth, that have the power of totally prohibiting photography. The reply turned into a chain of correspondence exchanged between the two. There was an occasion when Hadhrat Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ wrote to Mufti Shafi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ personally, this engagement and correspondence was in the form of a discussion and Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ stood his ground firmly and was extremely hard on his stand without waivering at all.

Remember, he was Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ. Also, bear in mind the difference in age between the two. Mufti Shafi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ was not known to

⁶ A Hadeeth is said to be mutawaatir if it was reported by a significant, though unspecified, number of narrators at each level in the chain of narration, thus reaching the succeeding generation through multiple chains of narration leading back to its source.

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anyone at that time while Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was renowned and an extremely well-known Allamah, not only in the subcontinent, but worldwide, and he was very firm on his point. Yet, Mufti Shafi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ did not relent, he explained the truth and put his points across very strongly. The correspondence between Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ and Mufti Shafi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, had lasted over a period of around six months. Hadhrat Mufti Shafi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ had by this time converted all his correspondence with Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ into a booklet.

In the Meantime, ...

After having written the renowned kitaab, 'Seeratun Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ' which was the brainchild of his Ustaad [tutor], Allamah Shibli

Numani Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, to completion, Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ questioned himself if the Seerat had an effect on him, or whether had had just written it, this was some sort of thought guidance that was borne in him. He then thought long and hard as to who he could go to, in order to ease his mind. Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ himself said that people [all history and references use the word 'people' - they could have been former colleagues, friends, associates, other 'Ulema. They could only have been 'people' who had close, friendly, casual, or informal ties with Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ had requested and advised him to connect to Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ who was in Thana Bhowan. Initially, his heart did not incline to Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ. In any case, he eventually went to Thana Bhowan.

Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi said that when Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ approached him and requested for Hadhrat رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ's advice, he was flabbergasted as to what advice he could give to such an illustrious Allamah. It was at the time when Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ's majlis had just ended, and it was time for namaaz, so Hadhrat Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ thought to

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himself that after namaaz would be a good time to ponder over what advice to give to Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ. When the namaaz was over, Hadhrat Moulana Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ performed two rakaats of namaaz requesting Allah سُبحانه وتعالى's assistance saying, "O Allah! I have in front of me a very great individual, and since he had requested advice from me, hence, bring to my tongue such words that will be beneficial to me and to him."

Ponder about the humility of Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, who was an exceptionally great Sheikh already and who had so many great 'Ulema as his mureeds. Despite this he had so much of respect for the person who had requested for his advice. Have made du'aa to Allah سُبحانه وتعالى, Allah سُبحانه وتعالى had inspired Hadhrat Moulana Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ. Thereafter the majlis continued, Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ sat close to Hadhrat Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, and requested Moulana Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ to give him some advice.

Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ looked at Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ and made a sign with the palm of his right hand closed with the thumb sticking out, and he ran his thumb down his chest saying, "Should you want to be aligned to our spiritual chain, the crux of our spiritual chain is that one should annihilate oneself." While finishing the sentence, Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ removed his thumb from his chest and directed it to Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ.

Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ reports that as Hadhrat Moulana completed the sentence and directed his thumb to him, it felt as if all the pride he had in his heart got snatched and was dispelled from him.

Whatever was said was said from one heart and accepted and settled into the other heart. Allah سُبحانه وتعالى had bestowed upon Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ such great humility that the world had seen that standing at the threshold of the Khanqah of Thana Bhowan, when people came to the Khanqah, Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ should straighten their shoes. The bounties of

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Allah ﷻ's acceptance of Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi ﷺ, as well as fame, neither because he had written. 'Seeratun Nabi ﷺ', nor that he was an Ustaad [teacher] at the Daarul Uloom in Nadwa, it is all based on how much one lowers oneself, and to what extent.

Mufti Shafi Sahib ﷺ had taken bay'at at the hands of Mufti Mahmood al-Hasan ﷺ, and after Mufti Mahmood al-Hasan ﷺ's return from exile in Malta, Hadhrat Mufti Sahib ﷺ had reached the Mercy of Allah ﷻ. Mufti Shafi Sahib ﷺ had thereafter taken bay'at at the hands of Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi ﷺ.

Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi ﷺ Takes Bay'at at the Hands of Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi ﷺ

Once he asked Hadhrat Moulana Thanwi ﷺ a question, Hadhrat Moulana Thanwi ﷺ replied, "You are a great Allamah, what reply can I give you? I am like your student. I am like your son. What am I going to tell you? But I will tell you what I heard from my elders regarding your query." They related to each other with beauty and adab [respect].

Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi ﷺ said that it was only after taking bay'at at the hands of Hadhrat Moulana Thanwi ﷺ he felt as if he had started getting knowledge. Until that time, he was just fulfilling duties for people, he only attained enjoyment in deen after having taken bay'at to Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi ﷺ. What did he mean by this? He meant that everything he had done until that time, giving discourses, writing books, authoring articles, together with editing periodicals all seemed as if he had done nothing thus far. This echoes exactly what Hadhrat Moulana Jalaaluddeen Rumi had said in a Persian couplet,

مولوی ہرگز نہ شد مولائے روم
تا غلام شمس تبریز نہ شد

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*The scholar Rum would not have become a Sufi.
Should he not have become a slave of Shah Shams Tabrez.*

Moulana Rumi is originally known as Moulvi Rumi, before he pledged allegiance to Shah Shams Tabrez, he was a great scholar and taught and preached, that is, he was what one could term an 'Allamah'. However, after pledging allegiance to Shah Shams Tabrez, he gave up teaching and giving sermons and became a Sufi and later became known as the great Moulana Rumi.

Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ and Mufti Shafi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ Eventually Meet Each Other

It was at the Khanqah of Hadhrat Moulana Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ that Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ and Mufti Shafi Sahib® got more acquainted to each other. Mufti Shafi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ himself used to attend the Khanqah of Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, as he was a khaleefah of Hadhrat Moulana Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ. Mufti Shafi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ said that at one time he and Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ were at loggerheads, they were travelling in opposite directions. He said that at that stage they started smiling at each other and they used to sit and have their meals together.

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A Small but Important Digression Regarding Having Meals Together

With regard to eating, an especially crucial point that 'Ulema explain is that the eating itself is not the point, but by eating together friendships are formed. It is all about who you sit and socialize with, who you talk to, who you eat with and while eating, you engage with the other person, you joke, and this is what results in eating together.

It works the other way too; therefore, it is extremely dangerous to sit and eat with sinners, as the effects of the sinner's sins will have an effect on you. Hence it is obvious that sitting to have meals with non-Muslims is out of the question. If a sinner comes to a pious person to benefit from him, it will be a benefit for the sinner. That is why sohbat [the company one keeps] is extremely important. It is important that we choose carefully whose company we keep. This point comes from the Hadeeth Shareef,

Sayyeduna Abu Sa'eed رضي الله عنه narrated Rasoolullaah صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وسلم said, "Do not accompany except a believer, and do not serve your food except to one with Taqwa."

[Jami' at-Tirmidhi 2395]

In the same way, do not eat, but with a muttaki [a pious person]. It has got nothing to do with the food. The food may be one hundred percent halaal, no doubt or question of that. It may be halaal and tayyib [pure; healthy], but it is who you are sitting with and who is on that dastarkhaan [dining spread] with you, who you socialize with, who you sit with in your gatherings, as well as in a gathering where no food is served, you may just be paying a social visit, at weddings, at waleemahs, at other places, be aware of who our companions are. Our company has an extremely significant effect on us. Hence, a person must be incredibly careful of that.

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This is the excellent quality of the righteous of the pious people. He retracted all his fatwas on photography, and he said that he had erred in this matter, he had made a big mistake and that he retracted all his views and that he too now holds the view that photography is totally haraam. He retracted not only from the issue of the permissibility of photography, but also in all matters in which he claimed that he had erred.

The Importance of Having a Sheikh – A Spiritual Guide

One can only have garments sewn by a tailor, a haircut from a barber, books from a stationer, meat from a butcher, so how is it that one can attain deen and the knowledge of deen by oneself? Align yourself with a Sheikh to learn deen to uplift oneself spiritually.

Allah ﷻ had destined it such that Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ had gone to Thana Bhowan for his islaah., changing his life, his ways, and getting the maarifat [recognition] and the love of Allah ﷻ. Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ's islaah was made at the hands of Hadhrat Moulana Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ and he began following the pattern of our Salaf-e-Saaliheen [our righteous and great elders].

After Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ returned from the Khanqah of Hadhrat Moulana Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, he wrote رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ Mufti Shafi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ and requested for all the articles that he had written over a period of around six months which now was converted into a booklet. Mufti Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ sent it to him, and then he had come to realize where he had erred.

Again, we are not saying that he had erred, our great Buzurghs had said this and Allamah Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ himself said he had made mistakes.

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Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ Concedes and Retracts His Views on Photography

Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ had then subsequently printed his retraction in the periodical in which he used to circulate all his views, verdicts, and articles. Not only did he retract the verdict he had perceived and publicized that photography was permissible, but together with that he had corrected all other incorrect verdicts views and articles that had been publicized by him in the past.

The Magnanimity of Admitting that One had Erred.

However, we must take lesson from the following point. Despite being extremely firm on his point, apart from that, his position, stature, reputation, and all that go with it, Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ had subsequently printed and published his retraction in his periodical.

This was his great, bold, and noble achievement and it was an indication of his extreme sense of sincerity and humility. All this had occurred after he had made his islaah at the hands of Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, that in public, he had retracted all his errant views. He had particularly retracted all his previous views on photography.

What an elder? What a great 'Aalim? What calibre does one need to have to be so bold? Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi had retracted his verdict that photography is permissible. How can we fall for the same mistake? For the mistake that was made and corrected, we yet again, want to fall headlong into the same mistake?

May Allah ﷻ grant us the proper understanding of these matters and the object again is that we must not take photographs, period. Leave the differences and arguments for the 'Ulema to discuss. Our realization must be concentrated

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around the fact that to take photographs is totally haraam and the sin it carries is extremely severe. Photography is totally haraam.

Moulana Abul Kalam Azaad Retracts His Stance on the Permissibility of Photography

Moulana Abul Kalam Azaad was jailed in Ranchi, most probably by the British as a political prisoner, one of his ardent followers wrote his biography and he wanted to insert a photograph of his in the book. Moulana Abul Kalam Azaad replied to the person saying - these are his words in translation – “Taking of photographs, keeping them, publishing them are all haraam.” He had also totally retracted from his previous perceptions, and he came clean stating that this is totally haraam and that there is no room for it at all. He continued by saying that it was his great mistake by which he had regarded photography as permissible, and he had now retracted them.

He also stated that if you come to know of the faults of a person, the Hadeeth teaches us to cover them, he said that he made all these mistakes, and they should be covered up and not publicized. He had commanded that his photograph is not included in his biography. He continued by saying that he had made taubah totally and that he regarded photography as totally haraam.

When journalists requested his photographs, because he was heavily involved in politics in India against the British, Moulana Abul Kalam Azaad رَحِمَهُ اللهُ went to the extent saying that that he had erred. He said that he understood that taking photographs is haraam.

Unfortunately, just as before, this is just Shaitaan that beguiles people and makes them think that they can get away with it. As this incomprehensible reasoning did not make sense then, it makes even less sense today. Photography in any way, means or form was not acceptable, is not acceptable, and will never ever be acceptable in any way whatsoever. Eventually, Alhamdulillah, other 'Ulema,

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especially of India, together with Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، had retracted the fatwa after having understood and said that they had erred.

All these are proofs that photography is haraam. These are extracts of our recent history of about a hundred years ago where such great people had taken a stance to publicly admit having erred, and this is what made them even greater. They had the courage and the conviction to publicly retract from their previous beliefs and perceptions. They had retracted so we do not repeat the same mistake today. For us to say, "I made a mistake," is extremely difficult. There are very few people who will be able to admit and say that they had erred.

All this proves very clearly that there is absolutely no room for photography in Islam. We as ordinary people should not worry about its permissibility and non-permissibility, leave that to the 'Ulema to discuss. What we must be worried about, is that it is haraam, and we must stay away from it.

After all, great 'Ulema in the calibre of Hadhrat Allamah Sayyed Suleiman Nadwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، who was far superior to any of our current day 'Ulema, had admitted his mistakes. In the same way, Moulana Abul Kalam Azaad, who too was a very great 'Aalim admitted his mistakes.

The Fifth Invention of Contempt Rears its Ugly Head – The Introduction of Television

Television has a tremendous effect on us because many unfortunate people spend many hours watching it. Much of what one sees and hears on television is being absorbed by one's mind; therefore, it influences one's thinking and behaviour. The information sent through television is contrary to the principles found in the Qur'aan, it leads one to a sinful way of life. Unfortunately, those who are in charge of the programs on television have no fear of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى or respect for the Sunnat and Shari'at. Television has a devastating effect on our morals. Shaitaan

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has gained almost complete control of this medium. Sin is glorified on most programs.

Universal morality is deteriorating. The proof of this is seen in the increasing rate of crime, abortion, rate of divorce, number of couples living together without being married, number of people who engage in homosexual acts; adult bookstores; pornographic literature, etc. Most television programs encourage people to participate in all manners of wickedness. Sinful activity such as fornication, adultery, petting, lying, swearing, stealing, murdering and the like is promoted by television as a smart thing to do.

Most programs have endorsed evil so long and so much that we cannot discern between good and evil. People have become accustomed to hearing and seeing filth for so long that they are no longer embarrassed by it and have gradually accepted it into their lives.

The Sixth Invention of Contempt Rears its Ugly Head – The Advent of the Television Age

During the 1960's television was introduced to Saudia. The Saudi 'Ulema tied themselves to electric poles, and they said that they will not loosen themselves until the television sets were not disposed of. The Americans, who were behind this, realized the Saudi public was not ready for the introduction of televisions in their country. They took back all the units that they had exported to Saudia, worked on the minds of the people, and they re- introduced it in the seventies.

An 'Aalim of Madeenah Shareef had a dream in which in which he saw that Jews have entered every Muslim home. He could not understand the dream, but after Maghrib namaaz as he was going home from the Haraam Shareef, he saw television sets in all the shops. He then understood the interpretation of his dream. The Jews have now entered into the homes of the Muslims through the

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television sets. Yet there are those people who are extremely cautious and particular.

A good friend of ours, may Allah grant him Jannat, he has passed on, did not even have a landline in his house. There were no mobile phones in those days, let alone smartphones or mobile phones, he did not even have a landline in his house. He said that by keeping a phone in the house, you give access to anyone to have access to your house at any time. Because anyone can phone at any time and speak to your wife, daughters, sisters, and the like, and we now know that harm of this, just the fitnah of the telephone has crossed every boundary. Good homes and people with solid and strong deeni consciousness have been broken down.

Today we all have cameras on our phones, and we can easily take photographs. We should ponder about severity gunah [sin] we are committing. During Eidul Adha, we take photographs, and we digitally record all the happenings. It is like we have gallons and gallons of Zam Zam water, and we urinate in them. We find so many good, religious people who otherwise are very pious, also fall prey to the unfortunate ease by which taking photographs has become on the mobile. This is the worst type of the picture image that is being currently made. We should be careful regarding this. We had also mentioned that a name change, and a method change does not change the reality.

Sheikh Mahmood Effendi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ Crosses Swords With Television and Secular Education

Coming back to the discourse on the harms of photography, Hadhrat continued, "I am going to read certain extracts from this kitaab entitled 'Pictures and Photography', prepared by the madrasah, authored by Moulana Moosa Kajee Sahib, Masha Allah, it is available in the bookshop now, do to get a copy and read through it, really not only read it, but study it and then see Insha Allah your perspectives before and after studying the kitaab.

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This kitaab from which I am going to read extracts of was written by Sheikh Mahmood Effendi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ of Turkey. We all must have heard of him; he was an extremely great and pious person. He lived to in excess of 90 years, and he has just passed on perhaps a month or two ago. Masha Allah, Moulana Moosa Sahib conveys what was written by Sheikh Mahmood Effendi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ.

He emphasized in all of his lectures that the two most important causes of degeneration in the Islamic way of life are without doubt television and co-education." He was very much against these two aspects which ranked the highest, among others. Co-education is not only a matter of co-education, but now we understand it is the secular, which is minus Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and minus religion, which is atheism; therefore, it is very, very harmful.

He has always been against co-education, or man teaching woman, and vice versa. As for television, he always opposed it, and used harsh and critical language against the fitnah, and continuously warned Muslims about its dangers.

Alhamdulillah! We had the good fortune of meeting Sheikh Mahmood Effendi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ when we were in Jamaat while in Turkey. He was an extremely soft natured, mild person, but really, as we listen to what is written ahead, the harsh language he uses, and the firm stand he takes on it makes us understand clearly the severity of this. Here just a few of them,

Excerpt of Sheikh Mahmood Effendi: "Those who watch television are destroying their Jannah [Paradise]. The situation of a man whose house is burned down is better than the one watching television. Because his stone made house has burned down while the other person's Akhirah [Afterlife] is collapsing."

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Hadhrat's Comment: If your Aakhirat [Afterlife] is collapsing and your house of the Aakhirat [Afterlife] is burning down, it means you are in the fire of Jahannam [Hellfire], which is much more serious. Your house burned down here, that is not so serious.

Excerpt of Sheikh Mahmood Effendi: " An intelligent man does not have a television at home."

Hadhrat's Comment: These are his words, and it indicates his tone of how he used to speak in terms of his harshness regarding television.

Excerpt of Sheikh Mahmood Effendi: "So far, life without television was possible. Why is it not possible now? "

Hadhrat's Comment: This was around about the seventies.

Excerpt of Sheikh Mahmood Effendi: "I am giving a fatwa right now, that the one who watches television does not love his deen. It is better to sit with the snake than to sit with the television. Television is Fitnah Vision."

At another time he asked,

"Do I ever watch television? No, I do not. One night a Muslim man who consistently listened to lectures from ' Ulema dreamt of our Nabi ﷺ, and in the dream, the number of 'Ulema accompanying Nabi ﷺ were very few. Nabi ﷺ asked his friends who were with him, and why are they so few?' His friend pointed to Sheikh Al Haider Effendi "

Hadhrat's Comment This was in reference to the Sheikh of Sheikh Mahmood.

Excerpt of Sheikh Mahmood Effendi: " . . . in the congregation and said to ask him."

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Hadhrat's Comment: Sheikh Al Haider Effendi ؒ, who was the Sheikh of Sheikh Mahmood Effendi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ's Sheikh, was also an extremely pious and devout person.

Excerpt of Sheikh Mahmood Effendi: "When Nabi ؐ asked him the question, he replied, 'Most of the 'Ulema bought a television.' This means that an 'Aalim that owns a television can't accompany the Nabi of Allah."

Hadhrat's Comment: What a stern, severe thing, that just by owning a television, having a television in the house, you will not be in the company Nabi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ of being his friend.

Excerpt of Sheikh Mahmood Effendi: "However, you ignore this and watch television. Is there anyone in the world more stupid than you? Yes, there is. Again, it is you. Tell me, if Nabi ؐ came back today, would he have a television in his house? Would he send his daughter to high school? Television spreads such poison that not everyone is able to see. If television were a good, harmless, thing, as some claim, would there be these disgraceful and shameful scenes?"

Hadhrat's Comment: What terrible things come on the television. Now they are mocking deen on television.

Excerpt of Sheikh Mahmood Effendi: "It was reported that on television, an Imam was leading the Salaah, but was taking too long to make the Salaam, when one among the Jamaa'ah [congregation] in the Salaah stood up, held the Imam's ears and made him terminate the Salaah forcefully making him to say the Salaam. People watching it burst into tears of laughter. The one who laughs at it, and the one who made the scene become disbelievers."

Hadhrat's Comment: There are plentiful thing of this nature that take place, just as this one. Also, on radio stations the things that are being said and done are beyond explanation. Unfortunately, very few seem to make out all the kufr that is openly perpetrated on radio stations, television, and the like.

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Excerpt of Sheikh Mahmood Effendi: "The one who mocks deen, and the one who laughs at their mocking become disbelievers. Their Imaan [Faith] and Nikah will become void. Pull yourselves together, we are traveling towards Aakhirat [Afterlife]."

Hadhrat's Comment: Now with the sun going to rise in the west, Allah ﷻ has given us obvious signs. Clear signs have been given to us. Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'aan,

سُرِّيهِمْ ءَالِئِنَّا فِي الْآفَاقِ وَيَوْمَ أَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي أَيُّهَا النَّبِيِّنَ هُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ

We will show them Our Signs in the universe, and in their ownelves, until it becomes manifest to them that this [the Qur'aan] is the truth.

[Surah Fussilat: 53; Verse: 53]

We will show them Our Signs in the universe, and in their ownelves, until it becomes manifest to them that this [the Qur'aan] is the truth.

[Surah Fussilat: 53; Verse: 53]

Excerpt of Sheikh Mahmood Effendi: "Don't poison your families and children. Do you and your children know how to read the Qur'aan?"

Hadhrat's Comments: You can hear through the tone, the passion and what concern how he is conveying his message.

Excerpt of Sheikh Mahmood Effendi: "How to perform Salaah, as well as the conditions of Salaah. If you bring a television into your house, while all these principal duties are awaiting us, do you think your children will recite the Qur'aan even if you wanted them to? Or better yet, do you think for one moment they will listen to your advice?"

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May Allah open our eyes to all this and make us take full benefit from the above extract

The Seventh Invention of Contempt Rears its Ugly Head – The Invention of Digital Imaging

With the advent of digital imaging, some 'Ulema have given rulings based on digital imaging being permissible. Again, as in the past it has been proven that any kind of image is not permissible. However, there appears to be a deadly silence about this, unlike the vociferous, and bold backlash of all previous forms of imaging permissibility's that were vehemently countered and dismissed with contempt by our pious predecessors.

It is because of the permissibility 'ordained' for digital photography by those 'Ulema, that the sanctity of the Haramain Shareefain as well as right in front of the Kaa'bah Shareef, and the Roudhaa Mubaarak are desecrated, and there is no limit to it. People take selfies from these sanctified and hallowed sancturies and send them to their home countries. This has completely killed the life, the Rooh, of Haj, Umrah and Ziyaarat. The life of deen has been extracted.

Today almost all of us have cameras on our mobile phones, and we can easily take photographs. We should ponder about severity of the gunah [sin] we are committing.

The Greatest Evil of the Modern-Day – the Digital Imaging Frenzy

The greatest fitnah [trial] of the modern-day digital image frenzy is that some 'Ulema have rubber stamped its permissibility. This has caused confusion among the Ummat. There are 'Ulema of varying stature, some who have given open permissibility, while others strictly adhere to the fact that a picture is a picture, be

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it in any way, form, or measure, from the sketch of an animate object to a digitized image. Who should the layperson follow?

The Eloquence and Articulation of the Severity of a Hadeeth of Rasoolullaah ﷺ

A great aspect is that the following Hadeeth may not directly be linked to photography as such; however, it could not be closer to any other indirect link to photography and the reader will clearly see the eloquence and wisdom of this Hadeeth Shareef.

وَعَنِ الْحُسَيْنِ مُرْسَلًا قَالَ: بَلَغَنِي أَنَّ رَسُولَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: "لَعَنَ اللَّهُ النَّاطِرَ وَالْمَنْظُورَ إِلَيْهِ" رَوَاهُ
الْبَيْهَقِيُّ فِي شُعَبِ الْإِيمَانِ

Sayyeduna Hasan رضي الله عنه said in Mursal that he heard Rasoolullaah ﷺ had said, "Allah curses the one who looks and the one who is looked at!"

[Mishkat al-Masabih 3125]

This is an extremely great Hadeeth of Rasoolullaah ﷺ. Allah سبحانه وتعالى curses the one who looks and the one who is looked at. This is referring to looking at the satar from the naval to the knee. A man is not allowed to look at another man from the naval to the knee. unless there is a necessity. If it is due to a medical need, if an examination is required by a doctor, or if some treatment is required, it is allowed.

Whereas for a woman to look at another woman the same applies. There is no satar in the case of spouses. However, this is the basis upon which it is referred to in the Hadeeth. Allaahu Akbar! May Allah سبحانه وتعالى bestow and shower our 'Ulema with bountiful rewards.

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Let us look closer at this Hadeeth Shareef and analyse the way it links itself to photography.

In the first part of the Hadeeth, the subject is mentioned, but the object is not mentioned, and in the second part, the object is mentioned, but the subject is not mentioned. This portrays the vast knowledge and the extremely intensive wisdom, brevity, conciseness and eloquence of the knowledge and speech of Nabi ﷺ. He gave this one ruling, but to what extent had he ﷺ, included in it?

Commenting on the reason for this, Mullah 'Ali Qari رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ writes,

This means that everything that is not jaa'iz to look at can be included. Knowing well that photography is haraam [this includes whatever content is seen on all types of imaging, which already are deemed haraam including photographs, videos, YouTube clips and broadcasts and the like]. This relates not only to the satar of a person, but everything that is not permissible to look at. By presenting it in this beautiful way, the eloquence of the speech of Nabi-e-Kareem ﷺ is beyond being incredible. There is also another reason, and that is to express the great severity and gravity and seriousness of it.

That is why Nabi-e-Kareem ﷺ presented it in this way, so that from this we can understand that this is a profoundly serious sin. It is not a small sin.

Unfortunately, we have taken this very lightly. It means nothing to us. While paging through a newspaper, driving, or walking in the streets, looking at billboards, when we see a woman projected in all types of media and advertising it means nothing to us. Not even taubah comes to our minds. Do we even think that it is wrong? Do we turn our eyes away? Though we should not be looking,

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yet we just keep on looking. Then in Lam'aat⁷ Sheikhul Hadeeth Dehlavi⁸ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ writes in the commentary of this Hadeeth, The apparent words of this Hadeeth includes everything that is haraam to look at – everything. Now let us just analyse this further. Whatever is haraam on television and YouTube, not even taking into consideration the lesser evils, like looking at ghair mahram opposite gender newsreaders, the worst of evils like porn, and the all the other filth and dirt that go in between. Let us separate the wheat from the chuff, **let us specifically address 'Ulema and ladies who present them 'Religious programs' using these publications and broadcast means.**

There are many women who are Qaariahs, and who recite the Qur'aan Shareef while being totally portrayed with full face view on screen. There are many who present nasheeds in the same way as well and some who recite Qaseedah Burdah Shareef, all of this while their image with full face portrayal on screen. This goes for 'Ulema who present deeni subjects and deeni matters as well.

We must firstly understand that for a man looking at another man on television, YouTube and any other streaming or recorded media.

Then there is a haraam that is multiplied two-fold, when a man looks at a woman who is presenting on screen or recorded media. She may be reciting the Qur'aan Shareef beautifully while a man is looking at her makes it a 'double haraam'. The first is that the man is looking at the image of an animated being, the second is that he is looking at a ghair mehram. The same applies to a woman watching a man either reciting or delivering a discourse – whatever – while streaming or on

⁷ Lam'aat-ut-Tanqeeh fi Sharh Mishkat-il-Masabih the Arabic tashreeh [commentary] of Mishkat-ul-Masabih comprising 10 volumes / Ashi'atul-Lam'aat fi Sharh-il-Mishkat the Persian tashreeh [commentary] comprising 4 volumes. These commentaries are said to be unmatched.

⁸ The great Muhaddith, Sheikh 'Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlavi V who propagated the knowledge of Hadeeth in the Indian subcontinent. He was bom in 958 Hijri, corresponding to 1551 AD, in Delhi, India. He spent his entire life in protecting Islam and propagating its message. Most part of his 94 years' life span was spent in writing and composing books and booklets. [Noor Chehrey, pp. 114, 116]

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recorded media. She too engages herself in two gunahs, one is looking at the image of an animate being, and the other is that she is looking at a ghair mahram.

Then there is a third haraam as well, and this is the most severe and most serious haraam. This is when a deeni talk, or Qur'aan Shareef recital is being streamed or recorded with the persons image on screen. This third haraam is when reverence, respect, and honour is afforded to the person who renders the recital on the screening or streaming and the person is given adoration that eventually leads to idol worship, and we should not think it is farfetched, it is happening presently. Reading on further in the book will give validity to this.

What About Having to Deal with Photograph Legalities – Identity Documents, Passports, Driving Licenses?

After having read the contents of the previous heading, the question will naturally be posed, "What about having to deal with mandated legal requirements for national and international legislations that require photographs?"

What must be noted is that there were some Buzurgs who did not perform Haj during their entire lives because they did not want to be photographed. They had that level of taqwa.

Although Shari'at does however give a certain amount of leeway regarding the inevitable 'necessities.' However, we need to learn to what extent the leeway Shari'at allows us, as well as where the boundaries of their permissibly end. For this we need to consult a Mufti or a Muqtada⁹.

Some recommendations and guidelines for having photographs we are forced to take include not to smile or portray a happy face. Have the photograph taken with

⁹ A Muqtada is in loose terms a leader, an imitable person. In short, for us a Muqtada would be a Mufti or an 'Aalim.

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a frown on your face. Nobody wants to take a picture with a frown. Everybody wants to have a smile. In most countries coloured photographs were not permitted; however, these days the majority of countries permit coloured photographs to be submitted. Do not have a coloured photograph taken, have a monochrome [black and white] photograph taken. Further, if we have to have photographs taken and we know that we would be required to obtain visas and we would need photographs for those visas as well, do not for the sake of convenience have more photographs taken than are necessary, for example we would have around twenty photographs taken at a time for future use – ‘just in case’. No! Have only the amount taken that are required for the present need and to the extent of what is necessary. Do not have more than what is absolutely necessary, and do not keep extra photographs. This too, is an especially important aspect.

Also, make taubah and istighfar with the intention that one had to have this photograph taken, because one was forced to have it taken.

The Importance of Consulting a Mufti or Muqtada

When Allah ﷻ places a person in a position of being Muqtadaa, they must be incredibly careful of their actions, as people follow them, they listen to them, and the Muqtada is in a leadership position.

However, despite being a Muqtadaa, if what he does is wrong, its wrong, and it cannot be justified. He should not be run down, belittled, and the like; however, if he is in a leadership position, people should be warned, and they should be warned in a suitable way about what this person who is in a leadership position is doing wrong.

A Mufti is a Muqtada, an ‘Aalim is a Muqtada. They are people who dedicated their life towards the ‘ilm of deen. They should set examples and lay foundations that are firm and solid among the Ummat. The layman needs to be vigilant,

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careful, and firmly decisive when following a Mufti or an 'Aalim and when seeking advice from a Mufti or 'Aalim. Is he punctual with his namaaz? Does he follow the Sunnah and to what extent? Is his aqaa'id [beliefs], mu'amulaat [dealings], mu'asharaat [social etiquettes], a'amaal [actions] and akhlaaq [character] in line with the Sunnats and Shari'at? All lay people know the basic dictates of the Shari'at, and it is from this that one can seek advice from a Muqtada that is compatible with one's nature. Having mentioned this, one should firmly decisive when following a Mufti or an 'Aalim. What is meant by this is that once a Muqtada is chosen by one, do not go around swopping one's Muqtada in trying to get the reply to the advice you seek or get a reply you desire until one finds a Muqtada that meets your need. Stick to one Muqtada, and follow his advices stringently, whether it appeals to you or not.

A Mufti or Muqtada Must Know and Practice on the Dictates of the Shari'at and Sunnats

Once when I was in Madeenatul Munawwarah, a good friend of mine, who is a good Qari, and Masha Allah, a good 'Alim as well, just happened to keep bumping into me for a number of days – while either going to or returning from Masjid-an-Nabawi ﷺ. This is strange, because the precincts of Masjid-an-Nabawi ﷺ is so large and expansive, that sometimes one would meet a person once and you would never meet again. It so happened that on this one occasion when we met again, adhaan was being called. The Mu'adhdhin was at the stage of calling.

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

I bear witness that Muhammad [ﷺ] is the Messenger of Allah [ﷺ].

As per the practice of Sunnat we replied to the Mu'adhdhin's call by repeating what he had called out, this friend of mine repeated. what the Mu'adhdhin called

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, and he added صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ [Salallaahu 'Alaihi wa Sallam]. I mentioned to him that he is a Muqtada - a leader - people look up to him. He is a great 'Aalim, he is a great Qari. To read صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ [Salallaahu 'Alaihi wa Sallam] here is not the proper place. The narration in the Hadeeth Shareef is that we should repeat what the Mu'adhdhin calls, except for

حَيَّ عَلَى الصَّلَاةِ،

Hayyaa Alas Salaah, [Come to Salaah],

حَيَّ عَلَى الْفَلَاحِ

Hayyaa Alal Falaah, [Come to success].

and

الصَّلَاةُ خَيْرٌ مِنَ النَّوْمِ

As Salaatu Khairum minan Noum. [Salaah is better than sleep].

The Mu'adhdhin does not say صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ [Salallaahu 'Alaihi wa Sallam], so we should not say it. [This is all the Barakat of our Sheikh رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, as he had taught us this]. The narration of the Hadeeth states that when the adhaan is complete, and one had completed what should be repeated by the Mu'adhdhin.

Now send salutations and blessings upon me.

ثُمَّ صَلُّوا عَلَيَّ

ثُمَّ [Thumma], according to Arabic grammar comes as a delayed action -taraakhi - now recite Durood Shareef. You wanted to recite at that stage, do not recite it at

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that stage, now recite Durood Shareef, and then make the du'aa for waseelah [intercession], and Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى الْأَوْسَلِّمْ will intercede for us. It is narrated in a Hadeeth,

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْمُثَنَّى، حَدَّثَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ جَهْضَمٍ، حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ، عَنْ عُمَارَةَ بْنِ غَزِيَّةَ، عَنْ حُبَيْبِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ إِسَافٍ، عَنْ حَفْصِ بْنِ عَاصِمٍ بْنِ عُمَرَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ جَدِّهِ، عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ - أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ " إِذَا قَالَ الْمُؤَدِّنُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ فَقَالَ أَحَدُكُمْ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ فَإِذَا قَالَ أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ . قَالَ أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ . فَإِذَا قَالَ أَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ قَالَ أَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ قَالَ حَتَّى عَلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَالَ لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ ثُمَّ قَالَ حَتَّى عَلَى الْفَلَاحِ قَالَ لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ ثُمَّ قَالَ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ قَالَ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مِنْ قَلْبِهِ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ " .

Sayyeduna 'Umar ibne al-Khattab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ reported: Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى الْأَوْسَلِّمْ said, "When the Mu'adhdhin says, 'Allah is the Greatest', 'Allah is the Greatest', and one of you should make this response, 'Allah is the Greatest', 'Allah is the Greatest'; [and when the Mu'adhdhin] says, 'I testify that there is no god but Allah', one should respond, 'I testify that there is no god but Allah', and when he says, 'I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah', one should make a response, 'I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger Allah.' When he [the Mu'adhdhin] says, 'Come to salah', one should make a response, 'There is no might and no power except with Allah'. When he [the Mu'adhdhin] says, 'Come to salvation', one should respond, 'There is no might and no power except with Allah', and when he [the Mu'adhdhin] says, 'Allah is the Greatest, Allah is the Greatest', then make a response, 'Allah is the Greatest, Allah is the Greatest'. When he [the Mu'adhdhin] says, 'There is no god but Allah', and he who makes a response from the heart, 'There is no god but Allah', he will enter Paradise.

[Abu Dawud 527]

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Thus, it is clear that you should not add the salawaat [blessings] on Rasoolullaah ﷺ when repeating after the Mu'adhdhin, because Rasoolullaah ﷺ did not teach us to do that, and neither did his Sahabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, and it is not known that any of them added anything when they repeated after the Mu'adhdhin.

Therefore, those who are Muqtadaa must be more careful of their actions because people follow them.

Take Assistance from a Muqtada for the Right Reasons

Regarding another incident, it was most probably Hadhrat Moulana Thanwi Sahib رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ who said this, as it appears to be said in his spirit and tone. People wrote to him and said that in India at that time, by and large people are not paying for, or they are not buying train tickets. They travel free of charge. Now that all the people participate in this, give a fatwa that it is permissible not to pay for train travel.

Hadhrat رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ asked if the Moulvi is left just for this? What people get involved in and become widespread, the Moulvi has no other work than permit what takes place giving a verdict that now it is jaa'iz [permissible]. Be it photographs, banking, and whatever the issue is, accept it as being haraam, and make taubah, even if we are involved, unfortunately how many get involved in this, and regard it as a very major sin.

Allah declares war on those who participate in taking photographs, banking, and interest in any way. Accept it as haraam, make taubah. There is a great possibility you will get taufeeq [the fortune] of coming out of it. If not, and you die with it, there is also a great possibility Allah will forgive you, and if not, and you have to pay for it in Jahannam [Hellfire], you will eventually enter Jannat [Paradise].

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On the other hand, if you regard the haraam as a halaal, then there is no question of coming out of Jahannam [Hellfire], then you will have died on kufr, and you will stay in Jahannam [Hellfire] forever. So let us make taubah and make lots of du'aa. Ask Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى will change your situation, and how Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى changes, our minds we will never be able to comprehend. Impossible things are solved when Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى opens what we perceive as blocked just in a moment. In a moment, your way will become opened. Therefore, we must make du'aa firstly for our condition then for the condition of the entire Ummat, and for the whole of mankind.

Shaitaan's Ploys and Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى's Promise.

Currently there is a lot of talk going around and making its way too many of us regarding colonization and the impact it has had on us. The colonists had firstly colonized us, then they stole our land, took our resources, and they took away our Imaan [Faith]. This is nothing new, it did not begin here, it had begun in Jannat [Paradise], with Shaitaan.

In verses aplenty using a variety of word structures he had emphasized and reiterated that according to him, he will make certain to lead us astray. This is already when he was expelled from Jannat by Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.. Therefore, this is not something new. Already then Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى gifted us His Words, "Turn to Me, and take My help. Allah said that those who are saaliheen [pious] will be saved, those who are Shaakireen [thankful] - those who make Shukr - will be saved, those who turn towards righteousness will be saved.

Therefore, we must do that which is straightforward. Bear in mind that the greatest solution for any fitnah is Ittiba-e-Sunnat [following the Sunnat] in a manner which is,

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حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ حَنْبَلٍ، حَدَّثَنَا الْوَلِيدُ بْنُ مُسْلِمٍ، حَدَّثَنَا ثَوْرُ بْنُ يَزِيدَ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي خَالِدُ بْنُ مَعْدَانَ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ عَمْرِو السُّلَمِيُّ، وَحُجْرُ بْنُ حُجْرٍ، قَالَا أَتَيْنَا الْعِرْبَاضَ بْنَ سَارِيَةَ وَهُوَ مِمَّنْ نَزَلَ فِيهِ { وَلَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ إِذَا مَا أَتَوْكَ لِتَحْمِلَهُمْ قُلْتَ لَا أَجِدُ مَا أُحْمِلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ } فَسَلَّمْنَا وَقُلْنَا أَتَيْنَاكَ زَائِرِينَ وَعَائِدِينَ وَمُقْتَسِبِينَ . فَقَالَ الْعِرْبَاضُ صَلَّى بِنَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ذَاتَ يَوْمٍ ثُمَّ أَقْبَلَ عَلَيْنَا فَوَعظَنَا مَوْعِظَةً بَلِغَةً دُرِفَتْ مِنْهَا الْعُيُونُ وَوَجِلَتْ مِنْهَا الْقُلُوبُ فَقَالَ قَائِلٌ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ كَأَنَّ هَذِهِ مَوْعِظَةُ مُوَدِّعٍ فَمَاذَا نَعْهَدُ إِيَّانَا فَقَالَ " أَوْصِيكُمْ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ وَالسَّمْعِ وَالطَّاعَةِ وَإِنْ عَبْدًا حَبَشِيًّا فَإِنَّهُ مَنْ يَعِشْ مِنْكُمْ بَعْدِي فَسَيَرَى اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا فَعَلَيْكُمْ بِسُنَّتِي وَسُنَّةِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الْمَهْدِيِّينَ الرَّاشِدِينَ تَمَسَّكُوا بِهَا وَعَصُوا عَلَيْهَا بِالتَّوَّاجِدِ وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَمُحَدَّثَاتِ الْأُمُورِ فَإِنَّ كُلَّ مُحَدَّثَةٍ بَدْعَةٌ وَكُلَّ بَدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ " .

Al- 'Irbad ibn Sariyah reported: Rasoolullaah ﷺ, prayed with us one day. Then, he faced us and delivered an eloquent sermon that brought tears to our eyes and hearts were shaken by it. It was said, "O Messenger of Allah, it is as if this is a farewell address. What do you instruct for us?" Rasoolullaah ﷺ said, "I advise you to fear Allah, listen, and obey, even if an Abyssinian slave is put in charge of you. Whoever lives after me will see many conflicts. You must adhere to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the righteous, guided successors. Hold firmly to it as if biting with your molar teeth. Beware of newly invented matters in religion, for every new matter is an innovation and every innovation is misguidance."

[Sunan Abu Dawood 4607]

A Current Day Aspect Taken for Granted Which Requires the Guidance of a Mufti for Most People

This is only one aspect of many where rulings of Permissibilities and non-Permissibilities are overlooked or taken for granted. Similarly, many other things are conducted which tend to become 'grey areas'. Seated on a chair and performing Namaz has become quite common. At one time, there were no chairs

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in the Masaajid whatsoever, and unfortunately it has become common to such an extent that there are fixed benches on the sides of some Masaajid.

The fear is clear, that over time, like in Christianity, things change. We see that when they enter the church, they walk a bit down the aisle, and kneel. This gives the notion that there had been movement and actions during their praying routine. There was rukuh and sujood, but because they started sitting on chairs, the entire church had evolved into having benches - or what they call pews - filled in their churches. Khuda na kasta [Allah Forbid], Khuda na khasta, we see today that what we perceived as impossible to take place, are taking place. Our Masaajid are getting filled with chairs and benches.

There so many Masaajid in which we noticed in many parts of the world where chairs and benches are permanently fixed, where people casually enter and seat themselves, whether they have a valid reason to do so or not. We notice that even youngsters' seat themselves on chairs. People feel just a bit tired, or lazy, and they seat themselves on a chair. It is incumbent for us to first consult with a Mufti and put forward our case to him, explaining to him of any physical pain we suffer when we perform our namaaz while standing. Tell him in detail and with all honesty and let him give you the ruling as to your specific permissibility to sit and perform namaaz.

Even if the Mufti gives you the ruling that it is permissible for you to sit and perform namaaz, then we should preferably sit on the floor and perform namaaz. If one cannot sit on the floor and perform namaaz, then we should seat ourselves on a stool without any backrest or arm supports. We should be initiative-taking in enquiring about the mas'alas [rulings] regarding performing namaazes. We should take an interest about the conditions and rulings about being in a resting position, or even taking support from anything while performing specifically our Fardh namaaz.

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Can we imagine the notion of the occurrence that we had spent our entire lives performing namaaz, but when we reach the qabar [grave], we find that our namaazes have not been deposited there. While we assumed that we were depositing our namaazes into our accounts, we mistakenly had not had them recorded at all. There is no record of them. It is extremely important for us to consider these matters.

The definition of a necessity is that there is a legal and valid reason for it according to Shari'at, and that is not for us as laypeople to decide. A Mufti must rule on the necessity. What must be seriously considered is that perhaps due to the permission that has been granted with regard to be seated while performing namaaz, the entire practice by all and sundry has gone completely out of bounds and everybody has taken for granted that irrespective of how slight an ache or injury may be, open permission is the rule of jurisprudence that one can be seated on a chair and perform namaaz.

From the above example, let us introspect on how many things we are taking from granted without consulting a Mufti, and to what extent we are harming ourselves.

Explanations as to Why Laypersons Should Not Make their Own Rulings on Halaal and Haraam Issues

Muftis, 'Ulema – or the Muqtada in general have gone through stringent deeni knowledge and they have studied to great lengths regarding the jurisprudence and theological aspects, Fiqah, as well as issues pertaining to halaal and haraam thoroughly.

A brief understanding of this is scripted in the headings that follow concentrating only on the aspects of halaal and haraam. I re-iterate 'a brief understanding' together with some Malfoozaat of Hakeemul Ummat, Mujaddide Millat, Ashraful 'Ulema, Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ.

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A Precursor to Haraam is Whatever Leads to Haraam - However Permissible - is Haraam as Well

Another aspect which is especially important, and which the Fuqahaa [Jurists] refer to in various terms which is

سَبَبُ الْحَرَامِ حَرَامٌ

Whatever leads to impermissibility, is also in itself is impermissible.

The steps that lead to haraam, though the steps themselves are not haraam, but they lead to haraam, are also haraam.

Therefore, photography, which leads to idol worship, shamelessness, and crime, is also haraam. Even if photography was permissible, though I vehemently re-iterate it is not permissible, but if it was permissible, due to it leading to things that are haraam, it naturally, automatically and through the dictates of Fiqah [jurisprudence] becomes haraam. The compounding fact of the abhorrence of photography is that it leads to other great haraam acts like idol worship, television, and all that come with it like the filth, dirt, indecency, crime, porn, and the like which deems destruction to individuals, families, societies, communities, nations, and the world.

سَبَبُ الْفُرْدِ ، فُرْدٌ

The steps that lead to a compulsory act, becomes a compulsory act.

Though it may be a step which is merely permissible or optional, but because it is the cause of fulfilling a compulsory act, it too becomes compulsory. This is one basic, concept of the Fuqahaa and many examples of this aspect are given.

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The First Narrative of the Seriousness of Applying Even Reasonable Precursors to Haraam

In round the 1950's, Chhota Mota of Umzinto, Kwa Zulu Natal [KZN] – [formerly known as Natal], Qari [Sufi Ismaeel's] ^{رحمته الله} 's father, who was a naturally talented artist, and this is evident from his artistic work done in the Daarul Uloom he had constructed which is breathtakingly beautiful. Many people to this day have some artwork or other that was done by Chhota Mota, none of which were animate objects. He once undertook the mubaarak journey for Haj. One day, while in the Haram of Makkatul Mukarramah, he was sketching the Haram Shareef, only the Haram Shareef and nothing else as in people, birds, or the like. He was an extremely pious person, and he knew very well that sketching animate objects is haraam, all he was sketching were the structures of the Haram Shareef and surrounding buildings. The police arrived and promptly arrested him. The judgment made was that his hands be cut off.

Those days it was required that all people who went for Haj had to go through a Mu'allim, and his Mu'allim intervened and the judgment of having his hands cut off was overturned. The reason for his arrest was that he has possessed the means to sketch - though he was not making sketches of any animate objects - but he had possessed the means to sketch the picture of an animate object, just due to that possibility, the authorities were going to have his hands cut off.

The Second Narrative of the Seriousness of Applying Even Reasonable Precursors to Haraam

At the same time there was another Haji from KZN who took with him a gramophone. For those who are young, a gramophone is a piece of equipment that had a round turntable on which was placed a flat, thin, round disc, what was called a record similar to a CD or DVD, but much larger. An arm with a needle was placed on the record, and the needle would go around minute tracks of the

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record which in turn would play whatever was recorded at that spot on the track of the record.

With the gramophone he had taken records with recordings of Qiraat and deeni recordings. He too was a pious person, and because the gramophone was a means by which one could play music, he was caught, arrested, and convicted too. The punishment that was meted out him was that he had to carry that gramophone on his head and walk gullies and alleys of Makkah Shareef as a punishment of humiliation and disgrace because he possessed equipment that had the means to play music.

A Personal Memoir Regarding Precursors to Haraam

I remember so well, though I was still incredibly young, my Marhoom Bajee [may Allah ﷻ grant him Jannatul Firdose], my father would not allow my elder brothers who were also relatively young to sit on the stoep [veranda]. What is wrong with sitting on the stoep? Nothing. One could sit and enjoy the cool breeze in the shade while sitting there.

However, we had a coloured family living in the neighbourhood who had young girls and they would generally come from their home walking toward our house occasionally. Therefore, for my brothers to be just sitting there despite there being nothing wrong with it, could start becoming involved with those girls by a mere conversation. Hence, the result of sitting on the stoep - which is not haraam - could give way for the cause for haraam to take place. It can lead to haraam.

My brothers understood this without the need for any detailed knowledge or explanation, that just by merely sitting on the stoep could lead to haraam; hence, the prevention. This clearly explains how an aspect or a step which is not haraam can become haraam because it leads one to haraam. Fuqahaa have given numerous examples of this.

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For example, Allah سُبحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says in the Qur'aan Shareef,

وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ

But do not revile those beings who they invoke instead of Allah, lest they revile Allah out of spite, and in ignorance.

[Surah Al An'aam: 6; Verse:108]

Do not swear, speak ill of and bad mouth, or even demonize those people who worship things besides Allah سُبحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, because if you do that, they will swear Allah سُبحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, and you will become the cause of it.

In the same way a narration in the Hadeeth Shareef states that that one of the signs of Qiyaamat will be when a person will swear his own parents,

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو بْنِ الْعَاصِ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ " مِنْ الْكِبَائِرِ شَتْمُ الرَّجُلِ وَالِدَيْهِ " . قَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ هَلْ يَشْتُمُ الرَّجُلُ وَالِدَيْهِ قَالَ " نَعَمْ يَسُبُّ أَبَا الرَّجُلِ فَيَسُبُّ أَبَاهُ وَيَسُبُّ أُمَّهُ فَيَسُبُّ أُمَّهُ "

It is narrated on the authority of Sayyeduna 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al-'As that Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ observed, "Abusing one's parents is one of the major sins." They [the hearers] said: Messenger of Allah, 'does a man abuse his parents too?' He [Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ] replied, "Yes, one abuses the father of another man, who in turn abuses his father. One abuses his mother and he in turn abuses his [the former's] mother.

[Sahih Muslim 90a]

This clearly shows that the cause of a haraam is also haraam. Therefore, do not swear anyone's parents.

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This is the basic concept about not enacting a permissible action that can lead to haraam and there is quite a bit of detail by the Fuqaha on this matter. A cause of haraam is also haraam. If photography of animate objects was permissible, though again, it is not permissible, but if it was, and if there were benefits to taking photographs of animate objects, in it, then too, due to the harms that it causes, it will be considered necessary to declare it haraam because it is a steppingstone to idol worship as has been experienced, it is a historical fact which nobody can deny till today. When I was in Indonesia, many people would request that we perform namaaz in their shops and houses. It is surprising that there were photographs of their Mashaa'ikh just above the place where sajdah is made everywhere we went.

There are so many good friends of ours who have photographs of our pious elders and of various Buzurghs of ours, and they revere them. We should be extremely careful and totally stay away from it. The harms of photography on their own are sufficient to declare them haraam. Even if photography itself was permissible the Fuqahaa would declare them haraam because of the harms that it leads a person to.

Understanding the Necessities that Permit Haraam

The Shari'at is incredibly open and clear-cut about the aspect of being bound to the aspect of necessity. The first rule of necessity is.

الْضَّرُورَاتُ بَيِّحُ الْمَحْظُورَاتِ

Necessities make things permissible.

Which means that a necessity allows something which is not normally allowed - which is haraam. This is the point where we must clearly understand the difference and the gravity of making a haraam, halaal, or a halaal haraam and the graveness of allowing it. There is a distinct difference between the two.

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A fundamental rule taken from the Qur'aan Shareef, is a verse in which Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* says,

وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا ذُكِرَ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَقَدْ فَصَّلَ لَكُمْ مَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِلَّا مَا اضْطُرُّتُمْ إِلَيْهِ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا لَّيَ ضُلُّونَ بِأَهْوَاءِهِمْ بَعِيرٍ عَلِيمٌ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُعْتَدِينَ

And why should you not eat of that [meat] on which Allah's Name has been pronounced [at the time of slaughtering the animal], while He has explained to you in detail what is forbidden to you, except under compulsion of necessity? And surely many do lead [mankind] astray by their own desires through lack of knowledge. Certainly, Allah knows best the transgressors.

[Surah Al An'am: 6; Verse: 119]

Compulsion of an extreme need, and what is prohibited, what is forbidden to do, and the meaning of the rule is that what is forbidden in Shari'at is permissible when necessary, and the jurists have represented this rule with examples, including:

1. The permissibility of eating dead meat at the time of hunger, i.e., starvation.
2. Diluting a morsel with wine for someone who choked, and
3. The permissibility of the word of blasphemy for the one who is compelled to do so by killing or severe torture.

This rule is a branch of a general rule that the scholars call "The removal of a harm."

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A Hypothetic Analogy

Let us for example assume that we are on a road driving and there is some obstruction ahead of us. May Allah ﷻ save us all, there may have been an accident that had taken place, and the traffic officer himself is guiding the traffic to cross over not just a single, but three solid barrier lines, which under normal circumstances is an extremely strict traffic offence. You cross over them, though it is a forbidden act according to the law. However, because the traffic officer has given you the instruction, you crossed those barrier lines.

A few hours later, you are returning on the same route and overtake on a single solid barrier line. The same traffic officer pulls you up and he prepares to give you a citation [a traffic fine or penalty] in terms of a traffic fine for crossing over a single barrier line. You explain to him that he had just a little while ago allowed you to cross over three solid lines, now you just cross over only one solid barrier line and he has a problem with it. Try as you might, you have contravened a traffic law, and you will, come Hell or high water have to pay for the contravention.

The first time you crossed over three solid barrier lines was by his permission to alleviate a traffic jam for your convenience and benefit. The second incident was a pure and deliberate contravention.

From this we understand the first incident proved to be a necessity, it was a necessity. Another term used for necessity in Arabic is **ضَرَرٌ**, which means 'harm'. The second rule of necessity is,

الضَّرَرَةُ تَقْدَرُ بِقَدْرِ الضَّرُورَةِ

[Meaning harm]. The second rule of necessity is. Harm [necessity] must be taken to the extent of the permissibility of the harm [necessity].

This means that a necessity lasts only to the point of the extent of the necessity. Like for example, it is said in the Qu'raan Shareef,

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مَنْ كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌّ بِالْإِيمَانِ

As for anyone who denies Allah after having once attained to faith, and this, to be sure, does not apply to one who does it under duress, while his heart remains true to his faith,

[Surah An Nahl: 16: Verse: 106]

If somebody is forced to say words of kufr, he has the permission to say those words, but only for that time and only outwardly, not in his heart

وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌّ بِالْإِيمَانِ

While his heart remains true to his faith,

Though in this case it will be preferred that those words of Kufr not be uttered, and that one should give one's life.

[Surah An Nahl: 16: Verse: 106]

Eating haraam food is haraam. It is not allowed. However, as revealed in the Qur'aan Shareef,

فَمَنْ أَضْطُرُّ فِي مَخْصَصَةٍ غَيْرِ مُتَجَانِفٍ لِإِثْمٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

But as for him who is forced by severe hunger, with no inclination to sin [such can eat these above-mentioned meats], then surely, Allah is Oft- Forgiving, Most Merciful.

[Surah Maidah:5: Verse: 3]

Therefore, if a person who becomes helpless and his life is at stake, he has no food. There is only haraam available, that person will not be in the disobedience of Allah, he is not of the nature to break the laws of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and he does not go over the limits, then he is allowed at that time to eat that haraam. Although, whatever he has available to eat which is haraam, he is allowed to eat it, to save

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his life. He should eat merely to the extent to satiate his hunger, neither with relish nor enjoyment. He should not even fill his stomach, but only eat to the extent that he can save his life. This is what dharoorat means.

Therefore, similarly, regarding photography, there is also a dharoorat, having said that, we must still be careful and aware. We should not make our own decisions about what is a necessity and what is not. Ask a Mufti, as despite it being a necessity it is especially important for it to be legal, valid, and given a concession by Shari'at. We cannot declare on our own accord whether anything is a necessity or not. By asking a Mufti, and explaining one's situation, letting the Mufti know with the full truth, with honesty that this is what you take part in, what should you do? Explain to the Mufti that this is what I have done until now, is there anything further that I need to do? What should I do now? Is it allowed? Will it be haraam to do it? One must not on one's own declaration according to one's logic and thought processes assess that the haraam one is committing is converted to halaal by yourself. Even if a Mufti does grant you permission, it will still be haraam.

Making Halaal Haraam and Vice Versa – Advice Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ

Remember, keep in mind! As this is especially important, to make a haraam halaal is kufr, and to allow it for a genuine reason, a legal, genuine reason, according to Shari'at, is permissible to the extent to which it is, permissible.

There is a narrative of Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi ؒ about this which is aptly explained. May Allah ﷻ grant us the understanding from which should take lesson.

On one occasion Hadhrat رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ said that if one cannot make one's full, and proper islaah, then at least do two things. The first is to make certain that your aqaa'id [beliefs] are correct. This is an extremely important facet, because these days from

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among the most dangerous aspects is incorrect aqaa'id - beliefs - are instilled among the masses.

Make certain, make it a point to study kitaabs with regard aqaa'id which are written by 'Ulema of the Ahle Sunnah wal Jamaa'ah, and make sure that our beliefs are according to that. If we do not understand anything, do not follow your whims, by which we do not understand by making our own decisions in a 'jigsaw' pattern that go in accordance with our understanding, accept it as it is.

Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ himself was an extremely great 'Aalim, he says of himself that he had opened two accounts, one account consists of all the things that he understood and accepted, and the other is an account with regard to matters that he did not understand. In that account Hadhrat رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ said that he neither tried to prove himself right, nor did he force his thinking upon them, he just placed them in the account of things that he did not understand. When a person practices upon this, from time-to- time Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى grants one the understanding, when one wants to be on the right path in deen.

Hadhrat says that as he understood certain things which he did not previously understand, he transferred them from the account from which he did not understand into the account into which he had things that he had understood In this way everything is perfect, according to all aspects – Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى's knowledge, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى's system - everything, and where are our little brains? They are too small to fathom the expanse and wideness of these aspects.

We must perish the thought of, "If I don't understand the ruling, then the ruling is not right." Our brains hold no criteria. What brains have we got compared to the vastness and expanse of all knowledge - particularly and especially Islamic, deeni knowledge? Not even bird brains. We must accept what Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has laid down, and when Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى does give you the understanding, make shukr for it. Many a times all of us, at some stage of our lives admit that we did not understand something, but later in life, when a certain incident or occurrence had

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taken place, we got the understanding and the wisdom of the occurrence. There are many things we do not understand, but we must never deny the things we do not understand. Accept it with our yaqeen [extreme surety], although our minds cannot comprehend it, but accept it, and day Allah ﷻ does grant us the understanding, we are obliged to make shukr for it.

Precious Malfozaat of Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ on Halaal and Haraam Matters

The second aspect of what Hadhrat Moulana Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ narrated, which is more relevant, Hadhrat says,

جو ناجائز عمل آپ کرتے ہیں ان کو حرام سمجھ کر کرے

Consider the impermissible deeds you do as haraam.

For example, being involved in photography, in interest, in music, or any other haraam, accept it as haraam, and understand it to be haraam.

کھینچ تا ننگ کر اسکی جائز کی کوشش نہ کرے

Do not try to justify it by 'spreading it apart forcefully' to make it halaal by hook or crook].

Do not try to prove it as being permissible, with all your own fancy proofs and verdicts that are in accordance with the meagre way that your unknowing mind dictates. The dictates of the Qur'aan and Hadeeth point to what is clear cut haraam, and this is even known to the ordinary layperson.

One does not have to be a great 'Aalim, or a person having an extremely great deal of knowledge to know what the clear cut haraam aspects are in our deen. It is noticeably clear; hence, do not try and prove them jaa'iz and permissible.

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کیونکہ لہو تول سے حرام فعل حلال نہیں ہو سکتا

Because even after habitually doing this for a long while, the haraam will never become halaal. Due to your stupid and ignorant arguments and your stupid reasoning, by you acting upon them will not convert what is haraam to become halaal. You might satisfy yourself, you might fool some people, you may even fool a massive amount of people, but the fact still is that you are just fooling yourself and with your useless argument, the haraam does not become halaal, it remains, and will always remain haraam.

مگر اس تول سے یہ مقصد لازم آگیا

However, if you persist in [making haraam halaal] over a long while, it will without doubt become your objective, your second nature.

However, these arguments of yours in trying to prove haraam as halaal will definitely lead you to a definite purposeful belief and understand that haraam is halaal.

اور ر حرام کو حلال سمجھنا کفر ہے

And to believe that haraam is halaal is kufr.

قبحی یا ظنیہ حالت سخت خترناک

Whether this is absolute, or it is a possibility, in any case, to make a haraam halaal is an extremely serious matter.

اور اگر حرام سمجھ کر کریں گے تو کفر کا خطرہ نہ رہے گا

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If you accept the fact that what you are doing is haraam, you are guilty, and you are a sinner, then you will not be involved in kufr.

You will attain humility. You will not consider yourself as pious, you will always have in mind that you are involved in gunahs-It will [only] be considered a sin, and not kufr.

یہ کفر سے اہون ہے

This is lesser than kufr, [kufr is the worst sin]

دوسرے جب آپ اسکو سمجھتے رہیں گے

Another important point is that if you accept that what you are doing is haraam and accept it as haraam, [that you are doing wrong].

کیا عجب ہے کہ کسی وقت توبہ کی توفیق ہو جائے

It will be neither strange, nor far-fetched that you would get the guidance to make taubah.

Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ's malfooz [narrative] on the matter of haraam and halaal is re-iterated in whole for the benefit of the reader below:

Consider the impermissible deeds you do as haraam. Do not try to justify it by spreading it apart forcefully. Because even after habitually doing this for a long while, the haraam will never become halaal. However, if you persist in [making haraam halaal] over a long while, it will without doubt become your objective, your second nature. And to believe that haraam is halaal is kufr. Whether this is absolute, or it is a possibility, in any case, to make a haraam halaal is an extremely serious matter. If you accept the fact that what you are doing is haraam, you are guilty, and you are a sinner, then you will not be involved in kufr. It will [only] be considered a sin, and not kufr. This is lesser than kufr, [kufr is the worst sin]. Another important point is that if you accept that what you are doing is haraam and

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accept it as haraam, [that you are doing wrong]. It will be neither strange, nor far-fetched that you would get the guidance to make taubah.

Haraam would only be permissible when there is a desperate need, for that period and to that extent. It is not that it has become halaal and now you can go to town with it.

While a person who made haraam halaal, naturally he will by instinct, and with his true conviction believe that what he is doing is halaal, despite it being haraam, where will the guilt ever come that he is a sinner? He will develop pride, and he will not make taubah. He will not even think of making taubah. Should you, through your entire life not be able to give up haraam, but you accepted haraam as haraam, you will be saved from kufr. Also, even if you did not have the opportunity throughout your life to make to taubah from the haraam you had committed, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى's forgives in great abundance. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى will forgive you, and if Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى does not forgive you, you must go to Jahannam [Hellfire] and pay for your transgression.

However, finally, you will eventually be released from Jahannam [Hellfire], and permanently, eternally, you will go to Jannat [Paradise]. Alas! If you committed haraam and you passed on in the state of kufr, I leave you to imagine your condition for the eternal Afterlife!

Kufr and shirk which includes making haraam halaal are unforgiveable gunahs. If taubah is not made, should one have committed any one of them, and one passes on in that condition, will have grave situations. Please take cognizance and be aware.

Also, keep in mind that should you be faced with a situation where you are forced to adopt a haraam action, and there is some legal permission that grant you some concession, you will not be taken to task for it. Having said that, I must add that the proviso which is that you keep to the limit of the extent you involve yourself in

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the haraam. Do not go headlong excessively into the act with the thought that a Mufti has directed you and that it would be legal and permissible for you to take the route.

One must keep to the limit. Even if there was not any legal permission and you understood and accepted it as haraam, you will feel guilty you will make taubah, and if not, it will not be regarded as kufr. Finally, you will enter Jannat [Paradise]. This is a profoundly serious matter.

The so-called technical progress today makes man call himself 'highly intelligent'. Human beings have become so far technically advanced, and they have developed themselves to become experts in all spheres. Unfortunately, we are all guilty. We have been caught up in mental slavery.

If Photography is Haraam, Why Do Certain Buzurgs Appear on Television and YouTube?

Regarding those friends who after having listened to this discourse over a few weeks began questioning the fact that if photography is haraam, how is it that certain Buzurgs appear on television and YouTube, and they have their own regular channel.

Let us first pose this question inversely, as one of our fingers is pointing to someone else while three fingers are pointing towards ourselves. How much are we staying away?

What photographs and images do we have on our mobile phones? There are so many of us who have hordes of photographs on our mobile phones we look at them, yet no taubah no istighfar is made. Should there be any deeni related matter on our mobile phones, and it consists of the image of an 'Aalim in it while looking at his image we are involving ourselves in haraam. There is no need to look at it. Repent, and stay away from these trophies of Shaitaan.

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These days Ijtimahs are digitally recorded, not by the authorities, not the people in charge, by only plain, ordinary individuals. We can be anywhere, doing anything, and for any small matter, the Hellphone is out – recording We are ready to photograph and record whatever comes ur without realizing where it leads to.

In reply to the question posed in the heading, if photography is haraam, why do certain Buzurgs appear on television and YouTube.

Firstly, there may be twenty, may be two hundred, or maybe even 2 000 in our circles, even if there are 2 000, of which I very much doubt to be to that extent, is still very small compared to the very vast majority of those who do not appear on television and YouTube and who have their YouTube channels. It is just some of them, and it is just a big noise that these people make, and we take their names, stating that they appear on these media platforms.

Secondly, as for us, we should not look at which 'Aalim is doing what, or which of the 'Ulema are appearing on television and YouTube, we are not going out to argue and debate with 'Ulema. It is neither our work nor our duty or even within our scope to do that at all. Do not even think about that. Think about ourselves. Shaitaan fools us by diverting us from what our responsibilities and duties are and from that which we owe to ourselves. We become overtaken by his ploy to disengage us from what we must be doing, while revolving in our minds are what the 'Ulema and others are doing.

Whoever may be appearing on television, YouTube and the like is a different story. However, we, for ourselves should not be engaged in any sort of photography or picture making in any way whatsoever. In keeping tabs of ourselves we should remain firm upon ourselves not to get involved in any kind, form, or method of photography in any way whatsoever.

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Thirdly, because the vast majority do not appear on any public viewing or broadcasting channel does not mean that nothing should be done about it. Though they are silent; the majority are against it. It is assumed to be 'quiet diplomacy' that they do not take some tangible steps to promote the eradication of this vice. This is a great sorrow.

Why the Silence?

Instead of asking, "How is it that certain Buzurgs appear on television and YouTube, and they have their own regular channel?" As Muslims, Mu'mins and Ummatis, the question that should be posed is, "Why the Silence?"

Unfortunately, when the Covid pandemic broke out, all and sundry got involved. 'Muftis' were found a dime a dozen, giving their own two pence worth of fataawa about this pandemic. How come the silence with regard to photography, television, YouTube, and their cronies, which are far worse than the Covid pandemic? It is extremely strange and extremely thought provoking that there is a general 'deadly silence' from all quarters regarding let alone the curses and harms of photography, but the fact that photography is haraam, leaving alone those who grant it the status of being permissible. There are no protocols regarding either the intensity, or any plans in place to map out in order to curb it. Nobody is sending out cautionaries, warnings, or even looking out towards those who are prone to 'be infected' by the effects of this pandemic or even giving pointers for protection and prevention from it.

Protocols of Photography Versus Protocols of Covid

Study all the protocols that were put into place even before the Covid pandemic, which the authorities and the medical fraternity themselves admit and it is something that they knew of which they now openly admit, that none of those protocols could do anything to prevent the pandemic.

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What I want to highlight about these two scenarios is that all and sundry were so eager to see and promote those protocols. We kept reminding each other reprimanding one another as to where their masks were, why were they not wearing their masks, the exceptional care and promotion of social distancing was hampered on perpetually.

However, the real protocols we must attend are those regarding our deen, about photography video recording and YouTube appearances. Do we advise anyone like we used to regarding the mask, the social distancing and do we even take it as our responsibility? It is not just the duty of the 'Ulema and the Muqtada, it is the duty of all Muslims. All of us should inform one another and not remain silent when this pandemic which is killing the Ummat, killing our deen, to remain silent about it is worse than keeping silent about a pandemic like Covid that we had experienced. We are all responsible. We are responsible as parents, as the elders in our family. We are responsible for our community; we are responsible as teachers and Ustaads. Yet we do not speak out nor do we tell anyone. We are just mute about it.

We are guilty and we have become accomplices to this sin as well. We must inform and educate our children and make them aware of this. If we do not, they will take advantage of the situation and exploit it and be ambassadors of the propagation of the falsehood that photography and video recording is permissible. They will fall headlong into this trial, and they will become involved in photography and video making. We are already living through those times. Is all that we can do and all that we must do to just to keep quiet while all the haraam takes place around us?

We must save our own skin because we also, when the occasion arises, take a photograph here and there. We should firstly abstain from this sin of photography completely and speak out against it, and that will help us to save ourselves and families. Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'aan-e-Paak,

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O you who believe, save yourselves and your families from a fire.

[Surah At Tahreem: 66; Verse: 6]

Save yourself and your families. If we are not speaking about it as being a terrible sin, then we are also part of it.

In the same way, regarding namaazes, when we have a family function, we decide that we would have our meals nicely, and we will perform our namaaz at home. All namaazes must be performed in the Masjid.

Other Similar Oft Asked Questions Regarding 'Ulema Who Grant Permissibility to 'Digitized is Authorized'

Other similar oft asked questions from friends are, "If these 'Ulema appear on television and YouTube, what should we do? They are extremely great 'Ulema, and who are we? We are nothing and come nowhere regarding their knowledge. What should we do?"

Firstly, the Qur'aan Shareef has given us complete guidance in every matter. Our Sheikh, Hadhrat Moulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ has taught us that the greatest right that is held upon us in regarding dunya's rights is the rights of our parents. They have the greatest rights upon us. Then it is our Asaatizah our teachers of deen], and third is our Sheikh, though we got deen from our Asaatizah, we got the reality of deen from our Sheikh.

Allah سُبحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has held the greatest rights held by our parents. Should our parents or even our Asaatizah, or for that matter even our Sheikh appear on television or on YouTube, the Qur'aan has given us clear instructions. The instruction is that if your parents tell you, argue with you, and force to associate partners to Allah سُبحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, and] commit gunah, or force you into doing any wrong then Allah سُبحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says in the Qur'aan,

فَلَا تُصَعِّهْمَا

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Do not obey them.

[Surah Luqman: 31; Verse:15] Similarly, it is stated in a Hadeeth,

وَعَنِ النَّوَّاسِ بْنِ سَمْعَانَ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «لَا طَاعَةَ لِمَخْلُوقٍ فِي مَعْصِيَةِ الْخَالِقِ»
. رَوَاهُ فِي شَرْحِ السَّنَةِ

Sayyeduna An-Nawwas bin Sam 'an رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ reported Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ as saying, "A creature is not to be obeyed when it involves disobedience to the Creator."

[Mishkat al-Masabih 3696]

There are many other such principles with different variations in similar wording that there is no obedience to the creation in the disobedience of the Creator. and Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى himself has ordered and commanded obedience to parents and made it an exceptionally great 'ibaadat. Yet if they tell you to do wrong, then there is no obedience for them in that matter. However, observe further what Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says in the Qur'aan Shareef,

وَأِنْ جُهِدَاكَ عَلَى أَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا وَصَاحِبُهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

Revere your parents, yet should they endeavour to make you ascribe. divinity, side by side with Me, to something which your mind cannot accept as divine, obey them not; but even then, bear them company in this world's life with kindness, and follow the path of those who turn towards Me.

[Surah Luqman: 31; Verse:15]

Treat them in an effective and good way in dunya's matters. If they need financial help, help them. If they need physical help, help them, though they command you to do wrong. Do not do the wrong, but still be good to them. Therefore, whether it is our Asaatizah or whoever it may be that does wrong, if it is wrong, we must take

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it to be wrong. Should any great 'Aalim,irrespective of his stature or calibre do wrong, by him doing wrong does not make the wrong permissible.

Again, most important, and this is a re-iteration, I phrase what I have phrased above verbatim, "Secondly, as for us, we should not look at which 'Aalim is doing what, or which of the 'Ulema are appearing on television and YouTube, we are not going to argue and debate with 'Ulema. It is neither our work nor our duty or even within our scope to do that at all. Do not even think about that. Think about ourselves. Shaitaan fools by diverting us from our responsibilities and duties that we owe to ourselves. We have become overtaken by his ploy to disengage us from what we must be doing, while revolving in our minds are what the 'Ulema and others are doing.

Whoever may be appearing on television, YouTube and the like is a different story. However, we for ourselves should not be engaged in any sort of photography or picture making in any way whatsoever. In keeping tabs of ourselves we should remain firm upon ourselves not to get involved in any kind, form, or method of photography in any way whatsoever.

From the 'Horse's Mouth '

Before we even attempt to discuss what our Aslaaf [our pious predecessors] had written, said, did, acted out and experienced which in the way of an unbroken chain had reached us so that we could be guided in the correct way, I want to highlight a fact that had come out of 'the horse's mouth' that is indisputable. It is as follows.

Professionals and experts in the field of digital imaging technology were interviewed and the question that was posed to them was to define what exactly the digital image was and how would they term it. To make their task easier, and you're understanding much easier, the question posed was, "What would a digital

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image be termed in simple layperson terms. Will it be called a 'pixelated image' [an image made up of millions of micro-tiny squares put intricately together to form a perfect image that is formed as close to the original form of the image as possible], or a photograph? They responded by saying that in its best explained simplistic form, it is always referred to either a photograph or an image. What the blatantly honest fact here is that the criminal in the dock is saying, "I'm guilty your Honour." While the Public Prosecutor, who is there to use all the evidence he has accumulated in order to prove him guilty tells the Judge, Your Honour, he is not guilty."

Hence the 'Ulema who say that it is digital, and due to this it is not haraam, but the people in the forefront of digital imaging technology claim that it is a photograph or an image, they are admitting their 'guilt,' our Muqtada want to prove that it is not a photograph, and we show our immense talent and knowledge to prove that it is not a photograph. What a paradox!

It is a photograph, and it is totally haraam. As for those who regard it as halaal should take note of what our pious elders have had to say in terms of this. For example, Hadhrat Moulana Ibraheem Dewla Sahib and Mufti Shafi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِمَا say that it is Qat'i [solid clear proof, when one sees it, he shall acquire certainty, meaning the knowledge we gain from this piece of evidence is certain. Denying these types of evidence would take one out of Islam]. There is no ikhtilaaf [differences in opinion] on the matter.

Some of the Immense Evils Borne by All Types of Imaging of Animate Objects

Scripted in the section are but a few of the innumerable and endless evils of all types, methods, and forms, from sketchings to photographs, to television, to digital imaging mentioned for the sake of brevity. However, attention should not be focused of the quantity, as many, many more evils can be pointed out. Attention should be focused on the severity of the evils scripted.

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Evil 1: The Narration from the Hadeeth Shareef Explained Above – Repeated for Readers Benefit

A great aspect is that the following Hadeeth may not directly be linked to link to photography and the reader will clearly see the eloquence and wisdom of this Hadeeth Shareef.

وَعَنِ الْحَسَنِ مُرْسَلًا قَالَ: بَلَغَنِي أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: «لَعَنَ اللَّهُ النَّاطِرَ وَالْمَنْظُورَ إِلَيْهِ» .
رَوَاهُ الْبَيْهَقِيُّ فِي شُعَبِ الْإِيمَانِ

“Sayyeduna Hasan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said in Mursal that he heard Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had said, “Allah curses the one who looks and the one who is looked at!”

[Mishkat al-Masabih 3125]

It is advised that readers go back to the full commentary of this Hadeeth Shareef and persistently revise it as its eloquence and articulation of the severity the sin is so well conveyed by Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

Evil 2: Another Narration from the Hadeeth Shareef

Let us begin with a Hadeeth Shareef,

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مَسْعُودٍ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ أَشَدُّ النَّاسِ عَذَابًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ رَجُلًا قَتَلَهُ
نَبِيٌّ أَوْ قَتَلَ نَبِيًّا وَإِمَامًا ضَلَالَةً وَمُتَمِّلًا مِنَ الْمُتَمَلِّلِينَ

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Sayyeduna Abdullah ibn Mas'ood رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ reported; Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, "The people punished most severely on the Day of Resurrection are a man who was killed by a Messenger or who killed a Messenger, an Imam of misguidance, and a sculptor of graven images."

[Musnad Ahmad 3868]

This Hadeeth mentions that the worst harms and the most severe punishments on the day of qiyaamat will be for those people who killed a Nabi. Can one imagine somebody who would be so evil, that will kill a Nabi? The Bani Isra'eel were the guiltiest regarding this, as they had slaughtered the Ambiya عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ.

Also, a person who a Nabi kills. One can imagine what a terrible gunah that is. A Nabi is an embodiment of mercy. He will not just kill anyone. He was sent for the goodness of people, and he expects nothing and wants nothing from people, no benefit whatsoever. He was sent only for the welfare and the goodness of people in this world and the Aakhirat. The second is those people who lead others to misguidance, those who are leaders, who are Miftahul Shar [the keys of evil]. They were the ones who lead people towards evil. It is mentioned in many verses of the Qur'aan Shareef that Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى mentions what their arguments will be on the day of Day of qiyaamat in Jahannam [Hellfire]. The blame- game will start, where they will blame one another, and the worst punishment will be for those people.

Their followers will say, "You people mislead us" and they will tell them, "We did not force you. We did not make you do the wrong, you did the wrong on your own. Hence, this will be the worst punishment for them on the day of qiyaamat.

In the same category are people who take pictures also and who make pictures. The third is for those who create photographs, we can well imagine that this is in the same category of those who killed the Ambiya. From this, one can imagine so how severe this sin is. As explained in previous talks, and I take it that we understand that historically how photography led to idol worship. We can imagine how evil it is.

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Firstly, the sum total of this is that we must always be on our guard. We know that photography is such a thing that it is almost impossible for us to stay away from. Taking photographs is definitely out of the question as we have read above, as well as what we are going to read ahead. It has become easy to take a photograph [or these days referred to as an image] as well, with the advent of the mobile phone. One sees one's two-year-old child and his cuteness overtakes you. He is performing and doing something that is unusual or amusing, let alone a photograph, one even wants to capture a video recording of his stunts. Never ever commit that haraam.

Looking at photographs is haraam as well, yet it is so widespread that it has become almost impossible to resist. A person is sitting and performing namaaz, he has his ID card with him, though not displayed, it is covered in his wallet, pouch or in his pocket, but it is there. Therefore, what is necessity should be kept to the extent of necessity. Remember, permission does not make haraam halaal. Let us not make our own decisions as to what is haraam.

We can see the necessity of following a Mufti, 'Aalim or Muqtada who teaches us matters relating to the Aakhirat, and not Dunya's matters. 'Ulema who teach us to follow the deen of Nabi ﷺ, not some modern deen, a deen that has prepared in the White House in America or anywhere else. We must follow the correct deen. As Allah ﷻ says.

And follow the path of those who turn towards Me.

وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ

And follow the path of those whose hearts are inclined and who incline their hearts towards Me. Look for that, that is what you must follow.

[Surah Luqman: 31; Verse: 15]

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The Qur'aan Shareef gives us that command. Not those who teach you to be obedient to the government or to be impressed with television broadcasts and announcements which are made on television, or what the atheist scientists say. Do not follow those people. Allah ﷻ says, Our Sheikh رحمه الله used to say, fadhlan - it is waajib upon Allah ﷻ to constantly have such people in the world. It is a matter for us to look for them. They will always be there, though their numbers will decrease as qiyaamat draws close, but they will be there. It is for us to look for them and follow them.

Evil 3: The Effects of Television –A Personally Experienced Narrative

Once we were in Cape Town for an Ijtima, and we were living in a certain house. We were given rooms on the top floor of the house where we had slept. When we were going for Fajar namaaz, we went down to the bottom floor to leave the house to go to the Masjid. What we noticed was astounding. The television was still left on, though the screen was blank because all the programs had come to an end at some time during the early hours of the morning. The lounge area was like a war zone. The owners of the house seemed to have fallen asleep while watching whatever program was on. The people who were watching, made the lounge resemble a battle scene. There was a person lying on the floor, another person lying on the couch a couple slouched in armchairs.

Imagine falling asleep in that manner watching the filth and dirt on the television with no kalimah on the tongue with such a terrible looking scene? The harms of the television could so easily be measured by what greeted us when we got to the lounge. The amount of harm that that television causes is quite clear.

Evil 4: Hadhrat Moulana Bhaijaan رحمه الله's Narration

Moulana Bhaijaan who was here recently, explained that there was a young boy who watched television for 72 hours continuously. After that, he took his father's

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pistol and he shot and killed a person. When the police came and questioned him under investigation, he said in total innocence that he watched programs on the television and despite being shot at and killed, the person comes back to life. Therefore, he also assumed that the person he had shot will come back to life and nothing serious would happen. Mental slavery to this extent. They have led us, and we know of endless stories about young children who think they are Superman and Tarzan, and they try the things they watch on television, and they get killed in the process. It has the effect of hypnotism; their minds become completely hypnotized, and a person stops thinking. The mind does not function anymore.

Evil 5: Various Evils - Janaab Jawaad Abdul Mateen Sahib¹⁰ Implores
Hadhrat Mufti Taqi Uthmani Sahib حفظہ اللہ

Janaab Jawaad Abdul Mateen Sahib is an associate of the Islamic Academy of Communication Arts in Pakistan. Some time ago he wrote Hadhrat Mufti Taqi Uthmani Sahib informing Mufti Taqi Sahib that he had 13 years of year of experience in Information on Digital Technology and Modern Sciences. He is a very deeni conscious person. Without having to delve into the entire letter, I would like to discuss some aspects that he had wrote about in the form of a small summary.

He writes, “One aspect, as we have mentioned, is that it leads to idol worship. As we understand that this had become extremely rife during the time of Sayyeduna Nooh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام that they openly declared.

¹⁰ Jawaad Abdul Mateen is the founder and CEO of the Islamic Academy of Communication Art who work in the field of Education and Skill development since 2008. They found it as a great opportunity to develop solutions for privileged and under privileged people of Pakistan, for educating them and developing their essential skills, improvement of quality of life and living standard.

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وَقَالُوا لَا تَذَرُنَّ آهْلَكُمْ

In as much as they said [to their followers], 'Do not ever abandon your gods

[Surah Nooh: 71; Verse: 28]

They kept telling each other not to worry of what Nooh [عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام] was saying. They said to each other not ever give up on idol worship. Their disobedience had reached those proportions.

Another terrible aspect pointed out by Janaab Jawaad Sahib to Mufti Taqi Sahib was that it led to shamelessness and immodesty. The types of photographs that are shot and sent around, and of course, when it comes to pornography, outwardly people who portray themselves wearing Islamic garb like topis, kurtas, having beards and the like, but inward shamelessness had settled into them with the desire from of evil, filth, and dirt. Photography is a big contributing factor to this shamelessness.

Unfortunately, many women dress immodestly especially in airports, marketplaces, and the like. We see women dressed immodestly, but that does not have an effect on a person as much as the photograph that lustful people carry with them at all times, and they watch it 'on demand' as they are available on their mobiles having a library of varieties watching several types of photographs and video clips. Also on television, be it a news reader, some journalist, or even people in general who make up the news content these days dress as they please, and this tempts a person, and all this leads to many gunahs committed by a person.

Shamelessness leads to the acceptance of that which is immodest as something normal. For example, the mini skirt and nudity. Today, the norm is clichéd. How often do we hear people saying, "You know how these women dress?" It sounds so accepting, while it should be a thing a person abhors and hates. She should not be dressed in that manner, how can it even come to her mind to dress in that way? Alas! It has become an accepted fact for all.

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It is wrong, we understand, but the gravity and the seriousness of that wrong is not with us. That is unfortunately because they have not seen the righteous and pious environment. We have grown up with all this evil around us; so, we just accept it as the norm. But if we just got a taste of what piety and righteousness really are and we become exposed to this, a person would not be able to tolerate it for one moment.

Photography is a catalyst of all things immodest. This person, Janaab Jawaad Sahib writes that photography is eating away the entire Ummat, like white ants, also known as termites. Most are not aware of the destruction white ants' cause.

When we were in India, if we did not check our kitaabs regularly, termites would come from inside and consume the entire kitaab. This is how they devour and destroy wood and paper as these are their 'staple' foods. When the kitaab is opened one would find nothing except for the borders that are left, and the whole kitaab used to be eaten away. Termites are so destructive that they eat through a tree from the inside, and just the outside shell stays. Then, with just a little touch or a little gust of wind, the whole tree falls. This is what is happening to the Ummat regarding photography.. The very foundation of the Ummat is being destroyed. Janaab Jawaad Sahib continues by saying that the youth of the Ummat are on the path of destruction. They are engulfed in these trials wherever they go. Be it where they work or what their work entails. They persistently are involved with and seeing these things happening. He sees great destruction for the Ummat in the future. Lives of lust and fulfilling one's lust from digital images are being destroyed.

He discusses this from a scientific point of view as well. We do not have to go into all those details and technical terms as to what they discuss. We know that photographs are the steppingstones the worship of a picture. A person satisfies his lust from a picture. Usually and naturally, a person satisfies lust by means of a man with a woman, but we have reached a stage where a person satisfies his lust from looking at a picture.

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He adds that this can be expected at schools and universities, but now from his experience, boys, and girls of Daarul Uloom are involved as well. We know it as a fact. More common is sending and taking photographs, selfies, and the like.

A married student of ours from this madrasa took a photograph of his wife who was posed in an extremely compromising way and by mistake or whatever, he sent the photograph to a friend. How terrible these things are.

The very root cause of all these misdemeanours is these photographs. The reason for this discussion is that we should understand the gravity of photography. These days it has become the norm - it is just a photograph. Good, pious people who one would never imagine having anything to do with mere play take photographs of anything be it a child, a cat, and other things, and of people who are insignificant. All these are extremely terrible gunahs, which are especially important for us to stay away from.

Janaab Jawaad Sahib adds that from his experience to see the boys and girls of Daarul Uloom involved in such activities is extremely fearsome and heart-breaking, it burns one's heart and makes one feel that to be sunk in the ground is better than being involved in these gunahs. Conscious Muslims will be in the ground, in the grave rather than to have to learn about the things that are taking place regarding photography.

However, for us it is just one of those things, we have become immune to the seriousness of the situations, or we take it very lightly. Worse, still, is that the after having become immune to the situation, one doesn't tend to recognize the gunah as a gunah, as narrated in the Hadeeth Shareef that there are those people who are munaafiqs, they commit the worst gunahs and for them it is as if a fly had sat on their noses, and they just shooed it away or waved it away.

Whereas a Mu'min would feel as if a mountain has fallen upon him, and he would not rest until he had made taubah. Masha Allah there are those friends of

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ours who do take heed - and this proves the benefits of attending the majaalis as the more one attends, the more the effects of the bayaans penetrate one's heart. A good friend of ours who had a wedding album full of photographs. When he came to realize the seriousness of the harms of photography and the gunahs appended to them, he says that went home and it was during the winter months. A fire was crackling in the fireplace. He took the entire album and threw it into the fire.

This should be the boldness in all of us as well. However, even if any of these talks have even a fledgling effect on us take hold of the opportunity, whatever photographs we have, be they in an album, our mobile phones or wherever, destroy them completely we should not keep one animated photograph of anything, no animate objects at all. We should destroy them completely. This act will please Allah ﷻ immensely. It would be like destroying idols, just like Sayyeduna Ibraheem عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام had destroyed the idols, like Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had destroyed the idols in the Kaa'bah Shareef as is stated in the Hadeeth Shareef,

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو مَعْمَرٍ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ عَمْرٍو بْنِ أَبِي الْحَجَّاجِ، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْوَارِثِ، عَنْ أَيُّوبَ، عَنْ عِكْرَمَةَ، عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَمَّا قَدِمَ مَكَّةَ أَبِي أَنْ يَدْخُلَ الْبَيْتَ وَفِيهِ الْأَهْلَةُ فَأَمَرَ بِهَا فَأُخْرِجَتْ قَالِ فَأُخْرِجَ صُورَةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَفِي أَيْدِيهِمَا الْأَزْلَامُ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " قَاتَلَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ عَلِمُوا مَا اسْتَفْسَمُوا بِهَا قَطُّ " . قَالَ ثُمَّ دَخَلَ الْبَيْتَ فَكَبَّرَ فِي نَوَاحِيهِ وَفِي زَوَايَاهُ ثُمَّ خَرَجَ وَمَمْ يُصَلِّ فِيهِ.

Sayyeduna 'Abbas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: "When Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ came to Makkah he refused to enter the House [the Kaa'bah for there were idols in it. He ordered to take them out and they were taken out. The statues of Sayyeduna Ibraheem and Ismaeel were taken out and they had arrows in their hands. Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said: "May Allah destroy them! By Allah, they knew that they never cast lots by arrow. He then entered the

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House [the Kaa'bah] and uttered the takbir [Allah is most great] in all its sides and corners. He then came out and did not pray.

[Sunan Abu Dawud 2027]

For doing this, Insha Allah one will reap great thawaabs [rewards] for destroying all the animate photographs one has.

Continuing with Janaab Jawaad Sahib's correspondence, he writes that now the water has gone over the heads already. In other words, we are in an extremely sorryful state and the sad part for us is that we do not even realize this. We are so much involved in this, we have newspapers in our houses, and it means nothing. We may be shopping online, and we may want to order something, we have the animated photographs alongside and we buy what we want to and make our choices while we are ordering on the phone with no consciousness that it is around. The thought does not even occur to us to turn our eyes away from the image. It means nothing to us. To speak to a woman, whether she is a teller at a bank, or someone one must speak to over the phone to get some work done, one speaks to her because we are obliged to speak to her to get one's work done.

However, it does not occur to one, one is not even conscious of the fact that one has corresponded with a ghair mahram woman. At least let the consciousness be jogged as a reminder so that some guilt stays.

As we have mentioned, we come to the Masjid, and we do not feel any happiness in our heart. When we come to the Masjid, we should make shukr that here we have solace. Somebody is reciting the Qur'aan Shareef, somebody is performing namaaz, these things should bring joy to our hearts. The day of Jum'ah comes, naturally joy should fill one's heart. What a wonderful day this is? When Ramadaan sets in, joy should fill our hearts and when the last ash'arah [ten days] of Ramadaan set in and the Qur'aan is being recited to completion, sadness should fill our hearts, but we do not feel those feelings. We in fact feel happy when Ramadaan ends.

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We feel that the bayaans are going on for too long, while we should enjoy listening to the talks of deen. There are some people who say that they wish that the talk could just continue, or the qiraat of the Imaam's beautiful recitation should just continue.

When the du'aa is made, some people make du'aa in their hearts asking that they wish that the person making the du'aa could just stop now, how much time is he spending on making du'aa? How much time do we spend in the 24 hours that we have making du'aa? This opportunity comes but once a year and how much longer? Ten to fifteen minutes? Very seldom the du'aa would go on for twenty minutes. Twenty minutes a year for du'aa, and that is also too long for some of us.

This reflects that our Imaani condition [condition of our Faith] is in an extremely weak state and that we must become conscious. Take into consideration the trials at the time of maut and compare them to our weak Imaan [Faith] condition, how are we going to cross the Pul Siraat [the bridge over the Hellfire leading to Paradise]? One needs strong Imaan [Faith] as Shaitaan comes in various forms at the time of maut, so we must build ourselves to have strong Imaan [Faith]. However, when we go to a shopping mall, we do not feel any sorrow, any sadness in the hearts, the feeling of being in a place of gunah [sin] does not even enter our minds so that we could make taubah after that.

Janaab Jawaad Sahib writes that in the 1970's in the name of deen most of the authorities in the Arab countries gave permission for 'Ulema to appear on television and to give talks to inspire the people. It was at the time of when television was just being introduced. He says that the core consequences can be seen particularly among the Arab youth they had become far from deen.

Shamelessness and indecency are among these consequences. Also, it had led many youths by their noses towards a Western way of life. These are but are few results of the permission granted for photography. It was allowed for a good intention that deen will be propagated, and would spread, but it had a different

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effect. This is the system of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, when we use the wrong method, despite doing it with the right intention. The intention is not enough, the adverse effects it has on people had turned out to be worse than the intention.

If we steal money from somebody and our intention is good, we will give the money to the poor, and we distribute it though we do not keep one cent for ourselves. Would this be correct? Let alone Islamically, but according to any other religion? Let alone religion, would it be morally, correct? This is proof enough that both, the intention, and the method must be correct. Should anyone employ this method, he must be encouraged to spend on the poor as there is a dire need, but we cannot do it in the wrong way. The same goes for deen, the intention may be good, sincere, in that the television is at our disposal, it is an effortless way to spread deen. However, the reality is that deen will never be able to be propagated through this wrong channel and through the wrong way.

Yes, evil will spread in that way, not deen. May our lives, our parents be sacrificed. What a Nabi Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ has afforded us and what teachings? At that time until the day of qiyaamat he had made photography haraam so that no matter what the methods or what name changes occur, accept that they are haraam for us to be saved of all these trials. Trials that would lead us back to idol worship, shamelessness, indecency, and immodesty which has overtaken us like a silent cancer. Nabi صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had declared it haraam from the root so that we would be saved from all these trials. The effect of photography without any doubt is nothing less than the effect of Jinn and jaadu.

On the one hand, when people revere, respect and honour pictures and photographs, it converts into the worst forbidden act - shirk.

Also, when it is of a woman who is nude, a man's mind does not function anymore. People completely lose themselves when it comes to porn. They lose control of themselves as those photographs take control of them. In today's time it is not any mere 'sneak-peek' of one nude photograph anymore. There are books

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and magazines compiled, and as for the filth that is made available on the internet, they come for even less than a dime a dozen. The basis of all this is the permission of photography, which Nabi.

ﷺ had categorically and totally declared haraam for the Ummat to be saved from these trials.

Janaab Jawaad Sahib then pleads in his letter, and he writes that to protect deen and the honour and sanctity of deen, a robust, clear-cut, compelling and strong worded fatwa should be formulated against photography. his, as written by Janaab Jawaad Sahib is the root cause that is consuming our deen from the inside. When we are destroyed from the inside, it takes no effort to just push us around. What is happening in Palestine, what happened in Bosnia, of course, over all these places, look at what is happening in India today, the news we got from Sri Lanka a short while ago, how the Muslims are being treated in France, yet we obviously continue. May Allah ﷻ guide us and make us understand so that we can save we completely from this extremely terrible gunah which has become worse. It is so despicable, yet we do not think of it as a gunah we just take it for granted, it means nothing to us and we have got photographs splashed around everywhere, we have no ehtiyaat, even with our money make some ehtiyaat [be careless or negligent] and cover it up. We should not display it all the time, we should try to take precautions and save ourselves from it.

Then Mufti Taqi Sahib replied verbally and unfortunately in a very subdued and apathetic reply in which he said that photography and its harms are terrible, and it leads to lot of wrong, denouncing photography, yet still in the same breath that photography is still permissible. It is like a person who says that it is halaal to go to a brothel or a bar, but it is but haraam to commit adultery or drink there respectively.

There was a mashura held in Pakistan in which Mufti Taqi Uthmani and many other senior and great 'Ulema of Pakistan were present where the question about

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the permissibility of photography and it harms arose. However, Mufti Taqi Sahib still opted to keep the view that photography is permissible.

Evil 6: A Factual Incident – A Woman Falling Madly in Love with an Imaam of the Haraam Shareef Watching Television

It is happening presently. There are cases where I personally experienced, where women have phoned saying that they have fallen in love with a certain 'Aalim.

The actual case, that I am referring to is in fact before the YouTube, smartphone, and social media era. It was the time when only the television was at the disposal of those who possess it. A woman from our country, a very pious woman who had access to a television, despite being pious, she used to watch programs and namaaz broadcasts from the Haraam Shareef. She used to watch the namaaz performed by the various Imams of the Haraam.

She had somehow fallen in love with Sheikh Shuraim the Imam of the Haraam, and it was mindboggling what she was fantasizing about him. In the same way women are viewing the entire Haram all over the world with live and sometimes recorded broadcasts of the Imams of the Haramain Shareefain and all the people performing namaaz.

This is nothing new, many such people go into the other matters. They do not only look at the fact that they are married, but they opt for marriage a second and third time. There is no problem about the number of times they get married. Get married for the fourth time as well, but all these are haraam relationships and it all came from images of ghair mehram being presented and portrayed on YouTube and the streaming and recording media fraternity.

There are many other similar incidents of people who contacted us claimed to have this problem, when they see the photographs and images of these people, they fall in love with them and then they get themselves involved in haraam.

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Being 'happily' and 'gracefully' representing and promoting Islam on a video streaming platform, and by being viewed and recorded in the media, people are naïvely unaware of not only the haraam of portraying themselves on screen. The added series of evils that are attached to 'just appearing on screen happily with the impression that they are 'promoting and propagating deen,' which is also haraam should be taken into cognizance with regard to the Hadeeth quoted above.

Evil 7: Having to Have Oneself 'Made-Up' Before Appearing on Screen for Audio-Visual Screenings

I revert to the Hadeeth Shareef mentioned twice above in this book. It is the 'backbone' of the numerous Ahaadeeth that forbid photography. The Hadeeth Shareef states,

وَعَنِ الْحَسَنِ مُرْسَلًا قَالَ: بَلَغَنِي أَنَّ رَسُولَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: «لَعَنَ اللَّهُ النَّاطِرَ وَالْمَنْظُورَ إِلَيْهِ» .
رَوَاهُ الْبَيْهَقِيُّ فِي شُعَبِ الْإِيمَانِ

Sayyeduna Hasan رضي الله عنه said in a narration in Mursal that he heard Rasoolullaah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم had said, "Allah curses the one who looks and the one who is looked at!"

[Mishkat al-Masabih 3125]

Appearing as a presenter on television would naturally cause one to be conscious of one's looks and how one will be presented to be looked at by everyone watching, this is even the case regarding 'deeni' programs. One presents oneself to be looked at by viewers in one's 'best look'.

Do not be conscious of what you are going to look like before your audience, be conscious of the Hadeeth quoted above.

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One is mandated to go through a facial preparation process by which cosmetics of several types are applied to one's face because of the glare of the bright lights that surround the area of the shoot. With the absence of natural light, in a studio, bright lights, and white umbrellas, and excessively wasteful equipment to get the best lighting, yet the most 'natural' look possible are used. This is the case with shooting in natural light as well.

In this, there are many other harms which already have been clearly mentioned in the Hadeeth, like making oneself up, making oneself look smart enough to be presented to appear to others.

Only Allah ﷻ and the manufacturers of the cosmetic products that are applied to the presenter know what the ingredients in the cosmetics that they apply to one's face consist of. As explained above, they may even consist of by-products of pig residue.

Then, one makes certain that one's spectacles are not skew, one prepares oneself with great diligence just to present oneself to others. 'Ulema have amaamahs on their heads and the amaamah is also tied in style. Women tie their scarves in fashionable styles. Unnatural accents are put on, and all this because one is presenting a broadcast on television in the name of promoting and propagating deen.

The Hadeeth Shareef says that Allah ﷻ's laanat [curse] is on those people. The curses of Allah ﷻ, the flames of the fire of Jahannam [Hellfire] are on them, just for presenting themselves to be looked at. As for those who watch, make themselves happy while they sit in the folly presenter being filmed is doing magnificent work by presenting and promoting deen, while the presenter is living in a fool's paradise of happiness that they are participating in a 'deeni' event.

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Photography in itself is haraam, that is a separate gunah, but just presenting yourself to be looked at has just been described above. these are all extremely great acts of haraam.

Evil 8: The Digital Image Gives an Imaged Object a Look that is Closest to Accuracy of the Actual Object

Over time, inventions and developments got more intricate, and imaging edged closer to the 'real thing' over the centuries like the development and production of the camera, and today we have high resolution visual recording cameras and the smartphone.

The reason why illat¹¹ is mentioned in the Hadeeth, is that you are copying the creation of Allah ﷻ, which is what makes it haraam. The attribute of the creative quality belongs exclusively to Allah ﷻ. by imaging in anyway whatsoever, you are emulating and copying Allah ﷻ' attribute in indication of having that creative quality. This is best accomplished in accuracy by both, the camera, and more so with the mobile smartphone, because an artist does not capture his subject - the person or animal - as precisely as he would be able to with the camera, or even the more sophisticated and extremely expensive high-resolution movie recording digital camera or a smartphone.

With these equipment and apparatus at hand one can attain an accuracy and the diligence that are closest to the object imaged. In these finds,

¹¹ Illat in English is counteraccusation. Other similar words are shikayat [complaint], tohmat [accusation], ilzaam [accusation], Bohtan [slander] and jhoota ilzaam [false accusation]. The synonyms of counteraccusation include are answer, confutation, counter charge, counter claim, defence, rejoinder, and reply. [Reference]: Urdu Point online dictionary.

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بدرجه هتم

The closest and most complete emulation of the creation of Allah ﷻ. In reply to the argument of some people who claim it is permissible due to the fact that it is digital, falls flat on its face, because really, due to it being digital gives it its closest accuracy to the actual object imaged, which causes it to become more harmful than even the camera and more so to the artist who uses his hand to sketch the picture.

The actual aspect that is declared haraam is,

الْمُصَوِّرُونَ

The picture makers.

Which means all people who make or take pictures irrespective of how they produce the picture or image. Be it a sketch, a photograph, and for that matter even an image created by a digital pixelated imager.

Drawing the picture with the hand is not as accurate as a camera, and more accurate than the camera is a digital image. The excuse and loophole that is made about the permissibility of digital images are because they are in a 'different pixelated' form does not stand, save for the fact that making digital images more haraam. The creativeness is more manifest when a person creates it with a digital image which makes the image clearer and more accurate to Allah ﷻ's creation; therefore, this makes it 'more haraam' than any other mode of picture making. We should avoid it at all costs.

Even if one appears on the front page of a newspaper and the feeling of importance, sentiment, and sense of achievement overcomes one, one's allegiance is to what Allah ﷻ and Nabi ﷺ had commanded. Oh yes! And remember, the animated monitor on your computer background is haraam if it is of an animated object.

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I re-iterate, because of due importance and due responsibility, yes, taking photographs is haraam, keeping photographs is haraam, albums or files of photographs is haraam.

It is haraam even if you appear on the front page of a newspaper and the feeling of importance, sentiment and achievement overcomes you. Your allegiance is to what Allah ﷻ and Nabi ﷺ had commanded. Oh yes! And if the background you have displayed on your computer monitor has an animate object portrayed is haraam.

Evil 9: A Critical 'Digitized is Authorized' [Pro YouTube] Mufti Confines a Tableegh Jamaat to Discomfiture from the Mimbar of a Masjid

A Mufti in Pakistan had a program in a Masjid, in his pre- arrangement checklist, he asked the Imam if his program will be video recorded and if the video cameras and the other required equipment was there. He then asked the Imam if he had a problem with this [the recording of his discourse]. The Imam replied that he did not have a problem, but there was an 'Ulema Jamaat who had set out for one year, they may have a problem with his discourse being streamed. The Mufti replied that the Imam should not worry about them, as he would sort them out, just as long he - the Imam, did not have problem with it.

The Mufti started his discourse, and it entailed photography with an outright justification of trying to prove it permissible. We are all aware, locally, and internationally, whether we are in the Jamaat, or whether we have never been in Jamaat, as well as all those people who are 'anti-Jamaat', we know that anyone and everyone who goes out in Jamaat never argue, they just do their work - to propagate deen. They will lose an argument and listen to whatever anybody tells them and keep silent.

This is no reason to think that they do not have the answers. In most cases they do have the answers, but their principle is not to debate, not to argue.

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They will just keep quiet and listen. But the Mufti 'thought better', and he began debating with them while they just listened silently.

He then continued that those who were in Jamaat, are in a one-year International Jamaat]. They were aware that they were going to be travelling to foreign countries. Hence, they had to take photographs for their passports for them to travel internationally.

They claim that they are doing this work for the Tableegh - the propagation - of deen, and when he appears on television and on YouTube, which is also for the propagation of deen, it then becomes a problem. He asked, why these double standards? How is it permissible for them, yet not permissible for him? What is sauce for the gander is sauce for the goose. If it is permissible for them people, it must be permissible for him.

However, the reply to this was outstandingly clear, but of course, none in the Jamaat even flinched. They did not reply. It is clear as crystal that not only the Jamaat but everyone who has a need to travel internationally is assigned by international to obtain a passport, and it is also mandatory for each, and every individual to have photographs taken for identity purposes to obtain the passport.

Unfortunately, this is the international law; however, for the Mufti to appear on television, YouTube, and the like, there is no mandatory rule or law demanding that his face be perpetually shown throughout the entire segment of his discourse on screen. He is doing this fully of his own free will, he is not being forced by individuals or organizations like the participants of the Jamaat are to obtain a passport.

Another extremely important aspect to take note of is the fact that the Jamaat is conducting their work of propagating deen, the work of Da'wat [calling people to Islam] in the closest manner to the Sunnat of Rasoolullaah ﷺ, which is the ideal method, addressing people one on one. One should address the person personally

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and individually. While the Mufti is using technology, and if the use of technology is allowed within the bounds of Shari'at, it still is far from the ideal manner. Doing it by broadcast online is not really the desired system.

Yet another aspect is that all participants of all Jamaats must have photographs unwillingly and involuntarily. While the Mufti is broadcasting, and publicizing not only voluntarily, but with great passion. If he really must broadcast and propagate his discourse on television, YouTube, and the like, why should his face appear on the monitors and television screens? What is the necessity? He can have the Kaa'bah Shareef, the Roudha Mubaarak, any beautiful natural Allah made scenery portrayed, or even a combination of all of them if he wants to 'spice' it up with some 'flavouring'. It is not that there is immense noor on his face, and the Kaa'bah Shareef does not have that noor.

Therefore, it is not necessary that his face be portrayed on the screens.

Worse, still, is that his face will not only be viewed by males only, which is, in any case haraam to begin with, however, even worse is that it will also be viewed by females as well.

Is there any necessity or wisdom to this chain of thought? Despite the Jamaat not having replied, his argument holds no water whatsoever.

Evil 10: Hadhrat Moulana Muhammad Haneef Jaalandri Sahib رحمة الله عليه

Observations

Although Hadhrat Moulana Muhammad Hanif Jaalandri Sahib used to appear on YouTube and allowed photographs of himself to be taken, he is yet another great 'Aalim who had realized the gravity of its harms. Hadhrat made complete taubah and declared photography, filming, and digital imaging all to be totally haraam.

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Hadhrat went on further to say that amongst the very many other evils, photography has converted our Masaajid into wedding halls with the photographs taken, drones flying around, and all the video recordings that takes place.

The way photographs are taken in the Masaajid where there is no control, which in turn, waives away the sanctity of the Masaajid, and its sanctity is also totally lost. Like in a wedding hall, the immodesty, disrespect, joviality, and all that go with it and its atmosphere have been transferred to the Masaajid, and all the tranquillity, respect, and sanctity of the Masaajid are lost. The Malaa'ikah are bound, and we are - so to say - chasing them away, and we are inviting the Shayaateen into the Masaajid.

Further, Hadhrat Moulana Muhammad Hanif Jaalandri رحمۃ اللہ علیہ complains that numerous 'Ulema have their television crew, or their video recording crew with them, who set up the cameras and all the equipment before their bayaans begin. They lug their cameras and all the equipment that go with it along with them from which they relay to their YouTube channels. Really, this is a source of entertainment, and it is really a money-making scheme, a tool for name and fame.

So many of such 'Ulema give their own names to their channels, Sheikh so and so, or Hadhrat so and so. They just put their own names there and they are doing it all themselves and making themselves famous. Clearly it shows that we are just after name and fame and we are after money with all these things, and absolutely no deen can spread in that form. It is just an outward form, and it is destroying deen right from the inside just like the white ants, the termites do.

The very foundation of deen is being eroded and destroyed. The root cause of all this is photography. May Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى grant us the understanding so that we can be from among those who become examples cutting this cancer out completely and we do not allow it at all for us, our children, our family, especially now with qurbaani coming up, we should stand firm. Hopefully, some change can come.

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With pain I ask, just how many more evils should be discussed? Do not the mere ten evils scripted above bring upon you disgust?

Another Short but Important Diversion – Please Do Not Desecrate the Sanctity of Our Masaajid

At this point, I take the opportunity to divert a little, as I strongly feel that importance should be given to what I want to discuss. Please take heed. All of us must firstly be extremely conscious, and then be extremely careful, not only in the Masaajid, but our tableeghi maraakiz [centres] as well especially after a nikah [the solemnization of a marriage] has been solemnized, regarding congratulating the groom, and also in the case of the tableeghi maraakiz, when tashkeel takes place. By all means, tashkeel must take place, but the sanctity of the venue becomes the scene of a marketplace, voices are raised and, in the process, adhaan takes place. At that juncture, the adhaan is not afforded the respect or the reply that is duly incumbent and obliged for us to give due respect and rights to are ignored. These too are also extremely serious matters and extremely harmful. Yet alas! Nobody takes note.

May Allah ﷻ reward those 'Ulema who announce after the nikah that should anyone want to congratulate the groom, they could congratulate him, there is no problem with that; however, the sanctity of the Masjid must remain intact. There are many people in various communities, speak loudly and laugh loudly when in the Masjid.

Once we were in Masjid-an-Nabawi ﷺ, not extremely far behind the Roudha-e-Mubaarak, and some people who resembled either students or 'Ulema who were joking, lying down, rolling on their stomachs, and laughing loudly. This was utterly disrespectful, in Masjid-an-Nabawi ﷺ at the threshold of Roudha-e-Mubarak. In the khilaafat of Sayyeduna 'Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ there were two people who were conversing a little bit audibly, Sayyeduna 'Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ did not even use his voice, he took a pebble, and threw it another Sahaabi to draw his

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attention. He did not even speak to get his attention. For example, by saying, "Zaid, come here." Not even to that extent, it was just like a little like tap. He then whispered into the Sahaabi's ear to go to those two people and request that they go to him. When they got to Sayyeduna Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, he enquired as to where they were from. They said that they were from Thai. He said to them that had they been from Medina Shareef he would have given them a severe punishment. He asked them as to how could they speak so loudly in the Masjid- an-Nabawi?

As for us, speaking loudly in the Masjid means nothing. 'Ulema have shown us the aadaab [etiquettes] of even reciting the Qur'aan Shareef loudly when you are in the Masjid, and it causes disturbance to somebody it is incorrect. How much of etiquette have we been taught, yet we are just oblivious of all this.

The 'tussle', although the word 'tussle' used here is deliberate, as there is no question that photography is haraam, but todays Mu'min has made it a 'tussle,' or a 'challenge' of respect they choose between photography and the sanctity and honour of the Haramain Shareefain. It seems to have been swopped. The 'sanctity and honour' of the photography seems to have granted an 'Honorary Degree' status be the 'Deans' and the 'Rectors' of current day theologians - the laypeople - about firstly the permissibility of photography and secondly its sanctity and honour over the sanctity and honour of the Haramain Shareefain.

The sanctity of the Haramain Shareefain is totally lost to photography. There was a time when people used to have their entertainment, through their televisions in their rooms or in the shopping malls. Now they are having that entertainment in the Masjid with the mobile, not only taking photographs, but also watching recordings on the mobile in the Masjid. So much so, a Pakistani person had a mobile tied to a stick with which he held up, recording the events taking place and relaying it to Pakistan. The whole object which is the honour of the Kaa'bah Shareef and the Roudha Mubaarak is lost. People take selfies right at the Kaa'bah Shareef. The fact that Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has kept us away from the Masjid is a punishment from Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى for us to open our eyes, yet we go heedless, we

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do not take any lesson, we just continue in our blind stupor, and we just still do as we want to do.

It looks like only maut will open our eyes when it will be too late. The conditions we currently face, load shedding, in other places, water shedding where water is in short supply, the potholes in us roads, the condition of our roads what governance is coming to us, Allah ﷻ only knows, but nothing will open our eyes. The illnesses we are experiencing, the kind of illnesses our family members are going through, the price of fuel is skyrocketing, but we're traveling more, yet nothing seems affect us, all we do is we just want to carry on and we like to complain, we complain that qurbaani animals are so expensive, yet eat out much more, and we consume all the wrong things doing all the wrong things. It appears that only when Malakal Maut will appear, we will come to our senses, but then of course it will be far too late.

My Passionate Call and Plea

Photography is an evil which has been entirely misjudged and under-estimated.

A dubious convention was cited for the legality of television in Bangalore, India in the year 2005.

According to information received from one of the conveners of the convention, was that this convention should bury the controversy surrounding the permissibility and use of television for Islamic purposes once and for all. Upon this basis and pretext many 'Ulema attended the convention. But alas, when the convention started, it was hijacked by the hosts and its theme was changed to "Looking at the Permissibility of television and its usage for religious/political purposes."

During the convention, many spoke out against its permissibility, but the hosts consistently silenced them with phrases such as, 'your time is up', 'give others a

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chance to speak', 'you are too loud' 'your approach is too strict and harsh', and the like. In short, the whole convention was hijacked and steamrolled. This information was obtained from a senior and very reliable Ustaad of Daarul Uloom Deoband. While writing this article I had been informed by a Mufti who was present throughout the three-day convention that the final decision and verdict of the conference was issued by Hadhrat Mufti Saeed Palanpuri of Daarul Uloom Deoband.

Hadhrat, who had been appointed as head of all the proceedings, announced that the use of the television cannot be declared permissible for deeni purposes.

The Ameer had given his decision! It was now waajib [compulsory] upon everyone to abide by his decision.

At that point, Hadhrat Moulana Asad Madani رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ commented that people are becoming murtad [falling out of the fold of Islam] and you are still discussing whether it is permissible or not. Mufti Saeed Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ looked at him, smiled, and maintained his stand that it is not permissible. The convention ended on this decision.

The ameer had given his decision! It was now waajib [compulsory] upon everyone to abide by his decision.

The information conveyed to us is completely in contrast to what transpired there. Even if this convention wasn't surrounded with so many question marks around it, it is in any case not a fatwa, but merely the opinions of those mentioned, who are not even Muftis.

According to information we have, one such 'Aalim told the 'Ulema of the Jamiat to leave the Muftis alone, as it is a political need of the time. If this is true, it is a very serious statement. If one were to spell out these words it would spell out as,

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“Leave the Shari’at, inter alia, leave Qur’aan and Hadeeth and look at the political needs of the time.”

The very fatwa of Daarul Uloom Deoband, and so many other Muftis and Daarul Ulooms, who have always been seen as the true bastions of knowledge do not permit the use of television at all for any purpose.

It is also very surprising and shocking that none of the Muftis or Daarul Ulooms of South Africa itself were ever consulted on the issue, forget getting a fatwa from them. Not even the resident Muftis of the Jamiat itself.

Why have we departed from the ways of our pious, illustrious, learned, and noble elders?

Why have we departed from the ways of Hadhrat Mufti Sanjalvi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، Hadhrat Moulana Abdul Haq Umarjee رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، Hafiz Abdur Rahman Mia رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، Moulana Ansari رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، Moulana Muhammad Akhalwaya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، Moulana Salloo رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، Moulana Abdul Qadir Manekpuri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، Moulana Zubair Ali عَطَّائِي، Moulana Ahmed Hathurani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، Moulana Ahmed Garda رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ etc., etc.?

Why have we abandoned the teachings of our pious predecessors under whom our Asatizah studied, amongst whom were giants like Hadhrat Moulana Muhammad Zakariya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، Hadhrat Mufti Shafi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، Hadhrat Moulana Maseehullah Khan رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، and their Asatizah, with Hadhrat Thanvi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، Hadhrat Madani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، Hadhrat Moulana Rashid Ahmed Gangohi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، Hadhrat Moulana Qasim Nanotvi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ etc. being in the frontline?

By abandoning their teachings and not treading in their path, we shall ultimately be separating ourselves from our glorious, noble, protected chain that links us directly to Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

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We can never accept new, Islamic models and abandon the classic. model of Rasoolullah ﷺ. This alone is the path to Jannah, and that is where we want to reach and nowhere else.

Rasoolullaah ﷺ ordered that we grasp firmly to the path which he ﷺ and the Sahaba رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ treaded, as though we are biting onto it with our molars.

Students of Allamah Anwar Shah Kashmiri Sahib رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ Wait in Bated Breath for His View on the Deliberation

When Allamah Tantaawi presented his argument in a very impressive and very wonderful way, it had reached Allamah Anwar Shah Kashmiri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ's students who were of the opinion that Allamah Shah Sahib رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ will become mild on the issue of the permissibility of photography, and he will accept it because of the way and manner in which the arguments he had been presented with it. There was really no way a flaw in it. Allamah Anwar Shah Kashmiri Sahib رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ studied the fatwa of Allamah Tantaawi.

An Excerpt of a Script Moulana Sayyed Ahmad Ridha Bijnoori رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ Wrote Regarding Allamah Anwar Shah Kashmiri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ's Reply.

I take the liberty at this stage to read an article related to Hadhrat Moulana Anwar Shah Kashmiri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, written by his son-in-law, Moulana Sayyed Ahmad Ridha Bijnoori رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ who was a great 'Aalim himself, and being his son-in-law, he was very close to Allamah Anwar Shah Kashmiri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ.

Allamah Anwar Shah Kashmiri رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ's knowledge was extremely vast, and his memory was photographic [for lack of a better phrase]. Allah سُبحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى had given Hadhrat exceptional intelligence, and also abundance of taqwa and piety.

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Hadhrat Ahmad Ridha Bijnoori رحمۃ اللہ علیہ writes,

“In my opinion, his most outstanding feature which has already been stated in passing, was his exceptional firmness on the path of the Salaf [pious predecessors] in spite of all his knowledge. Despite his vast knowledge, extensive research, and in-depth study, in my opinion, there was no kitaab in the libraries of India, and the Haramain Shareefain, whether still in manuscripts, or published that had not been studied by Shah Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. Yet, he would never be prepared to digress from the maslak [rule of conduct] of the Aslaaf in even the smallest of masaa'il.

Hadhrat Shah Sahib رحمۃ اللہ علیہ would give the highest degree of consideration to the path of the Aslaaf and his Akaabir. In this present age, the Akaabir of Deoband are the few selected 'Ulema who are free from any type of extremism, and he adopted a moderate Hanafi maslak and an approach that has been passed down from the Aslaaf, which in the light of the Qur'aan and in the Hadeeth shines out as a perfect model.

If he found scope for any ease in a statement of the Aslaaf, he would accept it. However, he would never employ his own reasoning and make ijtihaad [independent reasoning by an expert in Islamic law]. This was Hadhrat's greatest achievement, for there were many in the past and present who on account of being endowed with vast knowledge and extensive research, resorted to their own ijtihaad.

Subsequently, they began interpreting the Qur'aan and Hadeeth based on their personal opinions resulting in them disregarding the explanations of the former 'Ulema. This then led to greater dangers and problems in generations to follow.

It is perhaps on account of such an outlook that the poet said,

فَاُكْتُ لَا تَدْرِى فِتْنَتِكَ مُصِيبَةٌ دُونَ كُنْتَ تَدْرِى فَاُصِيبَةٌ اَعْظَمُ

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Implied Meaning: *If you are ignorant, then that is a big problem. But if you think you know, that is even a greater problem. That is, you think you are a 'Mr. Know it All'.*

Hence, this would be the greatest quality of Shah Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ، where he would not tolerate the slightest deviation from the path of the Aslaaf. You would be aware that almost all of Egypt permit photography. Allamah Tantaawi had presented all the proofs for its permissibility in his tafseer. When I studied these proofs presented it in his mesmerizing and captivating approach, I was convinced that after studying it, Hadhrat Shah Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ would indicate towards its permissibility, even if the slightest of permissibility could be drawn out from it.

However, what was answer? Hadhrat's only answer was.

اپنے حضرات کی رائی نہیں ہے

This is not the opinion of our Elders.

The value of this statement can never be explained. It has been 28 to 29 years since this discussion had taken place. Yet, when I recall the statement, I ask myself, "What did Hadhrat رَحْمَةُ اللهِ say?" Many 'Ulema in India were influenced by the article of Allamah Tantaawi and had views of permissibility in mind. That is as it may, but Hadhrat's comprehensive and complete answer is most sufficient and all encompassing. It is impossible to express due appreciation to this statement. For it did not only answer my question, but it served as a guide for others as well, that whenever any such perplexity arises in a mas'ala, then simply ask yourself, what was the opinion of our elders?"

Hadhrat Moulana Abdul Hamid Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ

Comments on Extracts of the Above Script.

Extract from the Script: "In my opinion, his most outstanding feature which has already been stated in passing, was his exceptional firmness on the path of the Salaf in spite of all his knowledge."

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Hadhrat's Comment: Salaf - our Akaabir and Aslaaf. He was very firm in spite of all his knowledge, but he would remain very firm on the path of our Akaabir and Aslaaf. He would remain firm, although his knowledge was so vast.

Extract from the Script: "If he found scope for any ease in a statement of the Aslaaf, he would accept it. However, he would never employ his own reasoning and make ijtiḥad. This was Hadhrat's greatest achievement, for there were many in the past and present who on account of being endowed with vast knowledge and extensive research, resorted to their own ijtiḥad."

Hadhrat's Comment: This is a very terrible disease, where 'Ulema get just a little bit of knowledge and they become 'free thinkers' themselves, and unfortunately this is also common among great 'Ulema, as he writes here.

Extract from the Script: "It is perhaps on account of such an outlook that the poet said,

فَاِئْتِ لَا تَدْرِى فَيْلَكَ مُصِيبَةٌ دُونَ كُنْتُ تَدْرِى فَاِئْتِ بِأَعْظَمِ

If you are ignorant, then that is a big problem. But if you think you know, that is even a greater problem.

Hadhrat's Comment: Then you just do not consider anyone, even the Aslaaf, you just make them.

نَسِيًا مُنْسِيًا

Forgotten, omitted, and left out. As though they do not even exist.

Extract from the Script: "You would be aware that almost all the of Egypt permit photography. Allamah Tantaawi had presented all the proofs for its permissibility in his tafseer. When I studied these proofs presented in his mesmerizing and captivating approach, I was convinced that after studying it, Hadhrat Shah Sahib

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رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ would indicate towards its permissibility, even if the slightest of permissibility could be drawn out from me.

Hadhrat's Comment: A great 'Aalim [Allamah Tantawi], and he had the art of presenting his arguments.

Extract from the Script: "However, what was answer? Hadhrat's only answer was.

اپنے حضرات کی رائی نہیں ہے

This is not the opinion of our Elders.

Hadhrat's Comment: Hadhrat Shah Sahib's reply was a simple, "This is not the opinion of our Elders. It is not permissible, so we will not accept it. We will regard it as haraam.

Extract from the Script: "The value of this statement can never be explained. It has been 28 to 29 years since this discussion had taken place. Yet, when I recall the statement, I ask myself, "What did Hadhrat رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ say?"

Hadhrat's Comment: This was written around 70 to 80 years ago. He was just taken aback at how Hadhrat Shah Sahib trusted on the words of the Aslaaf and Akaabir.

Extract from the Script: "That is as it may, but Hadhrat's comprehensive and complete answer is most sufficient and all encompassing. It is impossible to express due appreciation to this statement.

Hadhrat's Comment: This means that we will remain on the tareekah [way] of our Aslaaf, and as many of our 'Ulema say, and that should be our tareekah as well.

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ہم اندھے مقلد ہیں

We are blind followers.

Yes, we are blind followers of our Aslaaf and our Akaabir. We do not use our own thinking. However, today, some put their own thinking in front, and they put away the thinking of our Aslaaf and Akaabir.

Extract from the Script: "For it did not only answer my question, but it served as a guide for others as well, that whenever any such perplexity arises in a mas'ala, then simply ask yourself, what was the opinion of our elders?"

Hadhrat's Comment: But today some say, "Times have changed. conditions have changed." Islam is not going to change. We change but Islam remains the same. Allah ﷻ is one. Allah ﷻ is the same, Aakhirat is the same. We are all going to the same Aakhirat, not anywhere else.

May Allah ﷻ grant us taufeeq [the fortune] to understand and realize the severity of photography. The main aspect is to reiterate that we should neither take pictures, nor keep pictures, or look at pictures, and even spread pictures of animate objects.

Allamah Yusuf Binnoori Sahib رحمۃ اللہ and the President of Egypt Jamaal Abdul Nasser

Another aspect is that already in 1970, Allamah Yusuf Binnoori رحمۃ اللہ was sent as a delegate from Pakistan to the 'Majma'ul Abhaathil Islaamiyyah' conference that was held in Cairo, Egypt. After the convention had ended, an announcement was made that the then President, Jamaal Abdul Nasser was to meet with all the 'Ulema at the Presidential residence, and that there will be a photoshoot with him. Also, whoever wanted to discuss anything with him, would be given opportunity to do so.

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Allamah Yusuf Binnoori Sahib رَحِمَهُ اللهُ narrated that most of the 'Ulema became extremely happy since they would be photographed with the President of Egypt, and they had lined up to go.

As they were being called, Allamah Binnoori Sahib رَحِمَهُ اللهُ says that he began perspiring profusely and he was in a perplexed state as to what would take place. Hadhrat continues that he said to himself that he did not have the taqwa, the piety to save himself from this gunah.

On the other hand, how could he allow this? As his self-respect and his honour of deen with the Fadhl of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى came to the fore, telling himself that he could not do this, and he would follow the way of his elders with the knowledge that this is haraam. Among all the participants – all of whom were 'Ulema - were extremely happy and jovial, and Hadhrat was the odd one out.

As Hadhrat's chance came closer, he saw a vacant room and he went to sit in the room. It so happened that the room he went to sit in was directly opposite to where the President was having his 'Meet and greet' photographic session.

The President had glanced over a number of times as he saw Hadhrat sitting there. The President then gave an instruction to two Mashaa'ikh of Al Azhar University that they should call that Sheikh from Pakistan who was sitting in that room to come and have a photograph taken with him. Hadhrat narrates that through Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى's Fadhl, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى inspired him to the extent that he felt deep in his heart that he would not go.

Hadhrat made a resolution that he will hold firm onto his Akaabir's and Aslaaf's tareeqah. When the two Mashaa'ikh approached Hadhrat, Hadhrat explained to them that he did not regard it as correct and that the honour and decorum that is held in the hearts of those who are being photographed with the President holds no honour that is in his deen. Hadhrat added that he holds no regard for it.

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The Mashaa'ikh went to the President and explained to him what Hadhrat had told them, although Hadhrat was out of earshot from them, he did not know what they conveyed to the President and whether the message conveyed by them to the President was correct or not. After the photograph session had ended, Hadhrat then had the opportunity to go to meet the President. Hadhrat told the President that Allah ﷻ has blessed him with an extraordinarily strong heart, and that he is an extraordinarily strong person. If he used these attributes to connect with Allah ﷻ, he would become stronger. Hadhrat relates that this is the message that he had given the President, which was a good message.

The President pondered over what Hadhrat had told him, and he shook Hadhrat's hands a few times. He then held Hadhrat's hands firmly, then he dropped it a little bit. This was a sign of acceptance, acknowledgement, and appreciation of what was told to him. Hadhrat said that he did not think that he would at any time in the future get another opportunity to give da'wat to the President of Egypt again. He was a President, and Hadhrat said that he was just an ordinary person. However, the opportunity was there, and Hadhrat took advantage of the opportunity.

Hadhrat Moulana Yusuf Binnoori رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ's Firm Advice on the Right Way of Propagating and Promoting Deen.

Also, with regard to our recent history, Mufti Taqi Uthmani himself narrates that during the last meeting, and that was just a few days prior to the passing away of Allamah Yusuf Binnoori رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, there was a meeting held of the Islamic Council of Pakistan, in Pakistan. Allamah Yusuf Binnoori رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, and Mufti Taqi Uthmani عَطَانَهُ were present. In fact, Allamah Yusuf Binnoori رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, Mufti Taqi Uthmani, had travelled together to that meeting.

At the meeting, the attendees requested Allamah Yusuf Binnoori رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ to deliver a public radio broadcast to which they had agreed. Then, the attendees again requested Hadhrat to appear on television for a broadcast. Hadhrat flatly and

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bluntly refused. What Hadhrat said at that juncture is particularly important and should be cast in stone. Hadhrat said that one principle of deen must always be remembered. It is that we are not obligated, it is not fardh, not waajib upon us to use impermissible means in order to spread deen.

Hadhrat continued by saying that we are commanded to spread deen according to the commands of Allah ﷻ and we cannot break the commands of Allah ﷻ and spread deen.

Hadhrat said if hundreds, thousands, ten thousand, tens of thousands of people accept Islam, but we broke the laws of Allah. ﷻ, we contradicted those laws of deen's propagation, it holds no value by Allah ﷻ because we had contravened the laws of Allah ﷻ. We will be unsuccessful by Allah ﷻ because we used the wrong means. On the other hand, Hadhrat said that if we do the work of deen the correct way, and only one or two people accepted Islam, or even if nobody accepted Islam, we will be successful if we kept up the laws of Allah ﷻ.

This is clearly borne out by the aayat,

الْأَمْرُؤْنَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّاهِؤْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ

Enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong.

[Surah At Taubah: 9; Verse: 112]

And immediately after this Allah ﷻ says,

وَالْحَفْظُؤْنَ لِحُدُودِ اللَّهِ

And keep to the bounds set by Allah.

[Surah At Taubah: 9; Verse: 112]

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Our Sheikh, Hadhrat Moulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ used to say that here is an indication that in your passion for propagating deen, a person would easily go beyond his limits. That is why Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says, "Keep within the limits".

An Off the Agenda Question Asked to Moulana Yusuf Binnoori Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ

Allamah, thereafter, despite it not being on the meeting's agenda, was asked off the record, asked of the merits and demerits of making a film - cum documentary - on the principles, aspects, history and any and all aspects regarding deen in order to propagated deen. It went to the extent that Hadhrat Moulana Yusuf Sahib was asked what his views and impressions were if the film does not consist of any haraam, there would be no immodesty of the women who participate in it, and all the women would be attired in the stipulated and true Muslim garb.

It is so unfortunate that we have gone so far off the mark. May Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى grant us the taufeeq [the fortune] of taubah and return us to the true and genuine reality of deen.

Hadhrat commented at that time saying that this will lead to behijaabi. Hadhrat said that they will use women without purdah, and they will portray immorality and immoral gatherings. There will be gatherings of music and dancing.

We are witnessing this firsthand, and exactly as Allamah Yusuf Binnoori Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ had said. The rave and the craze of the current Turkish television series being currently broadcast [*Derulus Ertugrul* - editor] bear testimony to this. Who are the people that appear in series of these types? They are lesbians. They are gay. They are 'spreading' the deen of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and we become impressed. How many of our people claim that through this series they learnt so much history of Islam. What kind of Islam? Are these the type of people that can teach you Islam?

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They are mere actors; they know how to act. All they do is learn their parts from the scripts that are given to them, they act accordingly, and we fall for that.

It is unfortunate that so many good, deendaar [religious] people have confessed that they had learnt a lot about deen from that Turkish film series. How can you learn deen from a lesbian and a homosexual?

Then further women are being used. We are unfortunately witnessing this firsthand. I mean, the reality in front of us, what Allamah Yusuf Binnoori Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ's foresight was already upon us. It has led to women discarding the purdah and Muslim women. Other actors and actresses in the film cast are non- Muslims. They act like Muslims. Some have Muslim names, but they are, as I said, lesbians, they are homosexual. How can they spread deen and what deen can we get from them? Whether it is on television, YouTube, a film, anything whatsoever. What comes with photographs, and imaging is not permissible at all.

Hadhrat Moulana Yusuf Binnoori رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ said that if today we use, photography, television, films, and the like to propagate deen, then tomorrow we will use dance parties and singing girls and will take place in the name of propagating deen.

We might think that this is far-fetched, an impossibility, but it is a reality taking place already. We see that a radio station, for example, spreading Islam and on the awards night, they are there with the glitter and glamour and to top it liquor is served, where immodest women are doing the serving. These are the things that are taking place and all this in the name of Islam, and spreading Islam, and spreading deen. How can deen ever be spread in this manner? May Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى grant us some understanding.

Moulana explained further - these are the exact words of Hadhrat in translated form, "Photography inherently contradicts the injunctions of Islam. There is no room for it. This last advice of Hadhrat Moulana Yusuf Binnoori رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ should be inscribed in the hearts of every person involving propagating and spreading deen.

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deen cannot be spread in haraam ways, and we all should inscribe these words in gold on our hearts. Moulana Yusuf Binnoori Sahib رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said that deen cannot be propagated using these means at all. These are his exact words translated.

This was so clear with regard to the Ambiya عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَام. We unfortunately use the word 'story', but they are not stories, they are realities in the manner in which they had propagated deen.

During the time of Sayyeduna Nooh رَحِمَهُ اللهُ from that entire Ummat, giving da'wat for 950 years, only eighty people accepted deen, and his whole community rejected his propagation. With some Ambiya only two or three people accepted the deen propagated to them, and with other Ambiya not one person accepted his teachings and propagation. yet all the Ambiya were successful, the people who did not accept the teachings and propagation of those Ambiya were unsuccessful.

This an especially important condition when doing any type of work related to deen. Be it a Khanqah where, women also attend and sit together with the men, it is haraam. Totally haraam. There are so many evils that take place in so many Khanqahs. Be it a Daarul Uloom where boys and girls sit together.

Today in our time, a graduation of Bukhari Shareef takes place, and a girl comes forward to accept the certificate she is given while and boys, girls, men, and women are all sitting together, what work of deen is that, where we break the laws of Allah? Whether it is by television, a gathering which caters for men and women to be apart, and far apart from each other with proper purdah facilities, but there is a television monitor in the ladies section by which they [the women] can view the proceedings and they are able to view all the men in the men's section on the monitor, all these 'shut eye' practices are breaking the laws of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, and that is no work of deen. That is the work of Shaitaan, and we only bluff ourselves.

May Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى grant us the taufeeq [the fortune] to understand as to what our stand should be. Therefore, from this aspect too, taking into consideration our

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recent history, very recent. This also proves clearly that there is no room for photography. As for us, it is not the matter of the mas'ala itself, we should leave that to the 'Ulema to discuss. Our duty is not to get involved in any way. We should not take any photograph. Today with the mobile and the smartphone it is so easy to take a photograph, it costs nothing.

We are just looking at the surface of things that take place, we do not see the reality. We are under the impression that we are doing the work of deen, but we are doing the work of Shaitaan. We will discuss further with regard to how our elders did not allow photographs at all. It was to the extent that they were compelled by mandated legal authority that they would have to be photographed. Photography was abhorrent to them.

Moulana Maseehullah Khan Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ's Response to Egyptian 'Ulema After Having Been Shown a Camera

Hadhrat Moulana Shah Maseehullah Khan Sahib visited Al Azhar University in Egypt and the discussion regarding photography was raised. They asked what is haraam [regarding photography], because 'musawwiroon' as mentioned in the Hadeeth are referred to as those who sketched pictures with their hands, and a camera is a machine which automatically captures a photograph. According to them there was a difference between the two, therefore any picture taken with a camera was not haraam. Hadhrat asked how is that so? They replied that with a sketch, the hand is used, whereas with the camera, the hand is not used. So Hadhrat asked them if there was not a button or anything to the effect that required the camera to capture the picture? Isn't there a necessity to use one's hands in any way? They had absolutely no answer for that, photography is totally haraam even if you use the camera.

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Hadhrat Mufti Mahmood Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ's Response to Having been Shown a Photograph of a Buzurgh

I now take the opportunity of relating my first-hand experience and knowledge about what our 'Ulemas and Buzurghs attitude was in terms of photography.

I was once with Hadhrat Mufti Mahmood Gangohi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ, who many of us know, and many of us have seen as well. On the occasion, a person had brought photographs of some of our Buzurghs to him. These photographs circulate regularly, they are usually found on the internet as well, not even knowing if those images are authentic or not. Do not ever go to search or even look for them. Many people have a collection of these photographs, this includes good, pious people as well.

This person, with great reverence, and with sincere piety showed the photographs to Mufti Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ. Mufti Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ at once took the photographs and tore them up. From this we can deduce how strict they were.

Admittedly the pictures of filth of porn are haraam, watching them is for the satisfaction of one's lust, as these are pictures of women dressed scantily and terribly. Despite this also being totally haraam, and it destroys a person completely, it is, however, a 'picnic' compared to the pictures of Buzurghs and great, pious people, which are much more dangerous than porn. Though porn is worse in its content, it is terrible, and an extremely grave gunah, but much more dangerous than that are images of Buzurghs.

The reason for this is that while porn leads one to the gunahs of satiating one's lusts and one's desires, images, and photographs of Buzurghs and great, pious people leads one to shirk. It takes one out of the fold of Islam. The photographs of our Buzurghs are more haraam, as they can lead one to idol worship.

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With photographs of porn, filthy and naked women, and the like will excite one's lust, though it is an exceptionally great gunah, it is less in terms of when compared to the gunah of shirk.

In the same way, 'Ulema appearing on television is exceptionally perilous. People who called to explain their own experiences of the kind of admiration they hold in their hearts for those 'Ulema is something to reflect upon.

Hadhrat Moulana Fakhruddin Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ's Encounter with a Television News Camera Crew

We were having sabaq on one occasion with our Ustaad-e- Muhtaram, Hadhrat Moulana Fakhruddin Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ, who was the Sheikh-ul-Hadeeth of Daarul Uloom Deoband for innumerable years. Hadhrat was a great internationally renowned figure. The hall of the Daarul Hadeeth had a balcony. Somebody reported to Hadhrat that there were newspaper reporters outside who had cameras and they were taking photographs of the Daarul Uloom because they intended to publish a report most probably of the Daarul Uloom. It appeared as if they wanted to publish an article with a photograph that showed Hadhrat teaching, and all the students learning. Hadhrat became extremely angry.

We, as students, knew what Hadhrat's nature was, but at that time, Hadhrat's anger was uncontrollable. Hadhrat shouted at them from where he was, and the reporters grabbed whatever they could in terms of equipment like cameras and the like and they fled - just by listening to the way Hadhrat had shouted at them. They became extremely frightened. This was the condition of our elders.

Hadhrat Sheikh, Hadhrat Moulana Zakariya رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ's Hadeeth in Fadhaa'ile A'amaal.

Hadhrat Sheikh رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ has written, which we read every year in Fadhaa'ile Ramadaan, that during Lailatul Qadr the Malaa'ikah go to the houses of all the

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believers. Continuing, Hadhrat writes that there may be one person in the family who has kept an animated photograph in the house which is displayed - if it is covered or hidden, it is a different case - but it deprives the entire household of the Barakat of Lailatul Qadr. The Malaa'ikah are not allowed to enter that house. Each one of us are going into our own qabars.

[graves]. Here we can shout, scream, make a noise, make people happy, we can do what we want, but our main matters await us in our qabars [graves]. While we stand at the qabar [grave] of a newly departed, we will never know what is taking place underneath, we are also going to have to travel the same route, there is no other way. What will happen in the qabar [grave]? What will occur on the day of qiyaamat?

May Allah ﷻ protect us from His anger and wrath. May Allah ﷻ save us from Jahannam. May Allah ﷻ grant us taufeeq [the fortune].

Hadhrat Moulana Hakeem Muhammed Akhtar Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ س Narrative After Having Conducted a Discourse in Sharjah

"I do not want to even see the gadget of sin." Hadhrat Moulana Shah Hakeem Akhtar Sahib's conducted a discourse in Dubai's Masjidul Ghurair. After the completion of the discourse, some people of Sharjah said to a companion of Hadhrat رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ س's entourage, "You have concealed your Shaikh. We have connection with the Sharjah television company. If your Shaikh appears on television, many people will accept Islam, and many Muslims will become the friends of Allah."

The person mentioned this to Hadhrat, who replied, "Ask them if they go to their aunt's house, and she gives them a spoonful of sweetmeats which she uses to clean the stool of her child despite having cleaned it, will they eat from it?"

The person returned to those people who made the request and Hadhrat accompanied him to those people as it is assumed that this had taken place

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outside the Masjid while the people were in the process of dispersing and posed the question that Hadhrat رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ had advised him to ask them, and they replied in the negative.

Hadhlat exclaimed, "Aah! How can it be permissible then to disseminate the deen of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى on the same television which teaches music, naked dancing, fornication and stealing, and makes a mockery of the divine laws of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and the Sunnah?

Our elders prohibit us from seeing and hearing tilaawat of the Qur'aan and watching the taraaweeth of the Haram Shareef on television. We will disseminate the deen, by the grace of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, by remaining within the parameters of the Shari'at.

Numbers are not the object. The object is the pleasure of Allah. Till today, tell me of any person who became a wali of Allah by watching television. How long are the deeni programs and how long are the other immoral programs? How will one save oneself? If one manages to save himself, how will he manage to save his children?"

Hadhlat Moulana Shah Hakeem Akhtar Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ at a Hotel in Dubai

Hadhlat Moulana Shah Hakeem Akhtar Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ was on his way to South Africa. At the Dubai Airport, he stayed at a hotel in transit. There was a television in this room. Hadhlat placed a sheet over the television and instructed that it be completely covered.

He remarked, "This is used for acts of disobedience. There is music, there are females that are screened, and it portrays immoral scenes and pictures. Therefore, place this sheet over the screen since I do not want to even see the gadget of sin.

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Even though it is off, and there is no sin taking place, I feel pain by merely looking at it."

Hadhrat رحمہ اللہ continued, "Today, there are televisions in every house. Women look at the thighs of men. There is a cricket match taking place, which I call "kora karkat" [dustbin filled with dirt]. Men challenge each other boxing while wearing nothing but shorts. When a woman goes for Haj, how sad it is that she is involved in Shaitani work, whether she is aware or not [by looking at ghair mahram men]. It is not permissible for a female to look at strange men, just as it is not permissible for males to look at females.

This is sufficient reason for television to be forbidden, since men are looking at women and vice versa, even if it is related to the Qur'aan Shareef.

If a woman is reciting the Qur'aan Shareef or reciting a nazm, it is forbidden to look at her and hear her voice. If a man knows that a woman is reciting Qur'aan Shareef on the radio, it is not permissible for him to listen to her recitation."

Another Short Narrative of Hadhrat Moulana

Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Sahib رحمہ اللہ

After, our Sheikh, Hadhrat Moulana Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar Sahib's Wife, Ammijaan رحمہ اللہ had passed on, having completed the post burial formalities, Hadhrat رحمہ اللہ asked for her photograph, which was her ID document, and he cut it up himself. He said that we needed it until now and we had to keep it. Now we do not need it.

In converse, what would we say? "It's my mother's photograph, I want to keep it to remember Ma." or we hold onto the photographs of our fathers. We say, "My mother was very pious, I must keep this photograph, you can cut up all the other photographs, but Ma's photograph. No! That we have to keep." A Mu'min will be very firm on these matters.

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A Personal Narrative Highlighting a Request That My Discourse be Screen Recorded for Security Purposes

Once, when I was in Trinidad, on one of our safars, a friend of ours who lives there called me requesting that they wanted me to conduct a bayaan at the main Masjid in Monroe Road for Jumuah. I agreed. He later he called me again and said that he had to tell me -I suppose they knew my disposition - that all programs are video recorded, and they get streamed to their main television channel. He asked if I had a problem regarding this. I replied, "Of course, I have a problem with that."

He then explained that this was being done for intelligence purposes, as the government is required to know what is being talked about and discussed in the lecture programs held in the Masjid. This is for transparency protocols. I replied by saying which government is there that does not have the intelligence to know what is being talked about in the Masjid? They are well informed of all matters, as their intelligence is everywhere. They have spies everywhere. They have got their spies here amongst us as well, whether they are in the madrasah or whether they are in the Khanqah. They have their spies, and they are sitting with us here as well. He replied by saying it will be fine. I should continue with the bayaan, and they will see that all the recording equipment is removed.

A Repeated Request for Screening and Recording My Discourse

Later, during that same day they called me again. They informed me that they were having their annual Bukhari Shareef Khatam Jalsah on the coming Sunday and they requested that I give a talk there. I agreed; however, again they let me know that the entire Jalsah would be recorded on television, also, that there will be a television screen in the women's section, and whatever takes place in the men's section will be relayed to the women's section as well. They again enquired whether I would have a problem with that. Further, they informed me that there was a great Sheikh from India who was also in attendance, and he had no

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problem about the video recording of the proceedings. I replied by asking them, "What is my knowledge? What is my taqwa? I have nothing. You are telling me that there is a great renowned Sheikh who is accepted by all, and he has agreed to the recording process. I requested that they give me an hour to decide and get back to them. I then called Hadhrat [Moulana Shah Hakeem Akhtar Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ] in Karachi. I explained the situation to Hadhrat, and Hadhrat's immediate reply to me was, "Never ever! Do not ever think about it. Not at all!" Hadhrat رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was extremely strict about photography and video recordings.

I called the organizers who wanted to host me and informed them that I was not under any circumstances prepared to accept the video recording of the program. They requested that I continue with my talk, and they will not have any recording take place. Here too, they removed all the recording equipment that they were going to use for the Jalsah.

Hadhrat's رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ's standing rule during his life and after he had reached the Mercy of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى was that anyone who had been given ijaazat and khilaafat and they appear on television, whether live or recorded, their khilaafat will immediately become void.

Statement Voicing the Haq regarding Photos and Videos by Hadhrat Moulana Qari Muhammad Hanif Jaalandri Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ

By Hadhrat Moulana Qari Muhammad Haneef Jaalandri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ.
Secretary-General of Wifaaqul Madaaris Al- Arabiyya Pakistan.

Hadhrat Moulana Shabbeerul Haq Kashmiri, Ustaad [Teacher] of Hadeeth at Jaamia Khairul Madaaris, Multan] had passed on, on the night of Thursday, 3rd Shabaan. His Janaazah Salaah [Funeral Prayer Rights] was performed in a massive stadium the next day. On that occasion, Hadhrat Moulana Qari Muhammad Haneef Jaalandri gave a momentous speech.

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Amongst other issues, he mentioned the following, “Hadhrat Moulana Anwarul Haq had chaired the meetings of Wifaaqul Madaaris in the preceding days. Mufti Taqi Uthmani was also present. The topic of prevalent videos was discussed at the sessions. All the delegates agreed that even though the prevalent videos are debated by the ‘Ulema, we have to stay away from it. Those occupied with deeni ilm [knowledge] should take special care not to video their programs.”

Thereafter he said, “Henceforth no video will emanate from Jaamia Khairul Madaaris. I plead to all Asaatizah [Tutors] and students to leave it once and for all. I make istighfar [repent] for whatever transpired until today. From now no one should come to my office and say I want to take a photo with you. If anyone does so and I decline, he shouldn't feel bad.”

Even more stunning were the following words by Hadhrat Moulana Muhammad Haneef Sahib,

“In future, any graduate of Khairul Madaaris who is guilty of making videos has nothing to do with us, we disassociate from him...” at this stage Moulana Muneer Ahmad Munawwar Sahib رحمه الله interjected saying, “In view of being forbidden now however it has become very necessary to leave it.”

Hadhrat Qari Sahib commented, “One hundred percent, Jazakallah!”

I cannot express adequately my, happiness, joy, and peace of mind at having heard this public statement of Haq from Hadhrat Moulana Muhammad Haneef Sahib.

It is difficult to give this public statement the due appreciation it deserves. This is the heartfelt cry of every passionate person. This was passionate cry raised by Hadhrat Moulana Saleemullah Khan Sahib رحمه الله at the end of his life. The two majors Daarul Ulooms of the country, Jaamia Uloome Islaamia Binnori Town and Jaamia Farooqi Karachi's previous stance was the same as this public statement.

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Two and half months ago Jaamia Daarul Uloom Karachi had affected the same rules applicable in the Daarul Uloom premises. Students are not allowed to use camera phones. I have even heard that they have only given limited permission to use button phones. This year the Khatame Bukhari Shareef Jalsah of Daarul Uloom Karachi was only via live streaming instead of live video.

Today the Jumuah Bayaan of Jaamia Khairul Madaaris, Multan by Hadhrat Qari Sahib was only broadcast via live streaming without video. The truth of the matter is that videos and pictures have deprived us of a lot. Students pursuing the highest form of knowledge, the knowledge of Qur'aan and Hadeeth at the Madaaris have been deprived of safeguarding their souls, hearts, and eyes by viewing videos and having a presence on social media which is vital and integral to pursuing this knowledge.

Paying attention and focusing on the lessons had become extremely rare. Intellect and capability have been affected and the number of failures in examinations has risen.

Social media has alienated students from their Asaatizah. It has created rebelliousness and pride in students besides involving the students in futility. We witness that wherever cameras are used, all its evil corollaries and dictates are prevalent. May Allah ﷻ forgive us, some of the programs in the Masaajid have the feel of wedding halls.

Furthermore, videos have affected our peaceful lives. Video makers don't think that some people are sick whilst others are ill. They haven't even left the dead alone. They have discarded everything to do with precaution in their quest for more likes on their Facebook pages and views on their YouTube channels. Al Majaalisu Bil Amaanah [Discussions that are confidential] have been torn to pieces.

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nder these circumstances, Hadhrat Moulana Qari Muhammad Haneef Jaalandri رحمۃ اللہ علیہ's public announcement disassociating himself from pictures and videos sets a precedent for change. He has done so without any hesitation and without any fear of criticism. We shouldn't only receive this with open arms but rather we should spread the contents of this statement of Haq as much as possible by implementing it in our Madaaris.

May Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى bless the Akaabir with goodness and blessings on account of this decision and may Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى grant us firmness on this, Ameen.

Servant of the 'Ulema-e-Haq Muhammad Ahmad Hafidh Editor of the monthly "Wifaaqul Madaaris" journal.

An Extract of a Reply Re - the Permissibility of Digital Photography by the Daarul Ifta Daarul Uloom Azaadville

Digital photography Category: Miscellaneous According to Madhhab: Hanafi
Reference: 1440-222

Question:

What is the ruling on digital photography?

An Extract of the reply:

Here are some Fataawa of senior Muftis of the recent past in regard to taking pictures of animate objects:

Mufti Abdur Raheem Lajpuri رحمۃ اللہ علیہ has written: "The making of animate objects whether it is by drawing on walls, pages, clothes, by the means of pens, machinery, capturing by a camera, digitally or any other instrument for that matter, is not permissible. Doing this will be tantamount to committing a grave in.

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However, if the nature of the pictures is of non-animate objects like beautiful sceneries, rivers, the sea, trees, and mountains etc. then this will be permissible."

Mufti Mahmood Hasan Gangohi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ has written: "Any animate picture is Haraam, irrespective of whether it is made from wood, mud, metal, gold or pen, whether it be on paper, a board, or a reverse image captured by a machine, all of this is in no way permissible."

Mufti Muhammad Shafi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ has written, "For taking a picture, whether colour is put by means of the ink of a pen or a machine, it does not change the mas'alah in any way."

Mufti Rasheed Ahmad Ludhyanwi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ has written, "Taking a picture of any living thing is totally Haraam and it is a major sin, no matter what kind of picture it is, big or small, on clothes or on paper, or by means of camera.

There is a principle in Islam that whatever is fundamentally Haraam, its ruling and regulations will not vary, regardless of the instrument used. An example of this is found in alcohol, which will remain Haraam whether it is fermented, squeezed by hand or by means of machinery. Similarly, murder is Haraam whether it is implemented with a knife or with a firearm. Based on this analogy with regard to picture making also, we can say that Islam is not interested in the method adopted. The prohibition is directed to the end result, which is the forming and producing of pictures.

Hence, if any of the above-mentioned methods or any technique yet to be invented is used to create pictures of animate objects, then it will be a picture and thus fall under the Islamic prohibition of capturing pictures of living things. A digital picture is a picture at the end of the day. The only difference is that a digital picture appears on a screen and not on paper.

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The argument of digital pictures simply being a reflection is an invalid one. A reflection disappears as soon as the thing being reflected moves away from the mirror or whatever may be casting its reflection, whereas a picture has an independent existence. As soon as the "reflection" has the ability to independently exist and stay in one place, we find now that man plays a role in its independence, and thus making this "reflection" into a picture. The scholars that have said that a Tasweer [Arabic word for picture] is that which is made on paper were speaking in regard to their respective time eras, where there were no such thing as digital cameras/pictures. Had they been alive today, they would have seen that by the manufacturing of man, the "reflection" has attained independent existence, thus becoming a picture.

There is a law in the Shari'at, that when there is a clash of proofs for being Halaal and Haraam, then the side of being Haraam will be given preference. There are those who say that digital pictures are merely a reflection, and there are those who say that a digital picture is a Tasweer. So now, preference will be given to the side of Hurmat [prohibition] as it is the safer route.

There is another law that as long as one has full conviction in regard to a matter, then as long as convincing proofs have not been presented to prove otherwise, the ruling will remain the same. An example of this is when one is sure that he is in the state of Wudhu, he then has doubts as to whether his Wudhu has broken or not. As long as he does not come to the definite conclusion that he has indeed broken his Wudhu, he will not have to make a fresh Wudhu. In regard to the Mas'alah under discussion, we know that a digital camera has a shutter through which light passes to catch a reflection of the object that the picture is to be taken. This then becomes a picture. In this aspect, they are both the same. Until it can be proved to be otherwise, the digital picture will remain under the Shar'i ruling of a normal picture.

The ruling of pictures being a Tasweer is also based on "Urf" [the common practice and understanding of people]. Mufti Rasheed Ahmad Ludhyanwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ

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has written: "The ruling of something being a Tasweer or not should be based on the "Urf", not science. The "Urf" is that digital pictures are Tasweer. This is similar to how the Shari'at has left Subah Saadiq, sunrise, and sunset to the apparent sighting of people, not scientific intricacies. We would only have to resort to explanation from the experts of an invention in the case wherein no prior examples of the invention already exist. Keeping this in mind, we know that a picture from a digital camera is just like a picture that a person makes with his own hands in the sense that both come into existence by the works of man. So, to render digital photography as a totally new invention the likes of which have not yet been seen is wrong. We would only need to resort to scientific explanations for those inventions the like of which have never been seen before, like in the case when microphones were first invented [the discussion under which was lengthy because it had to be found out whether the sounds from a microphone were echoes of the speaker's voice or an amplification of the speaker's actual voice as he spoke]. The thing that brings these two together is the fact that both come into existence by the manufacturing of man.

Trying to justify pictures by using the concept of a picture becoming data and then only becoming a picture once displayed on screen is even more frowned upon in the eyes of the Shari'at. Mufti Rasheed Ahmad Ludhyaawi Rahimahullah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ says, "If we accept that a picture is erased and then it becomes a picture once more, then this is in all cases even more frowned upon. Now, a person is taking a picture again and again."

The word used for picture-making in Arabic is tasweer or/and its derivatives. tasweer can be of two types: one that has a solid body, like a statue or an idol, which is often called timthaal [statue] or sanam [idol] or one that is made on paper or clothing etc. In any case, the making and usage of both is Haraam.

Taking pictures of animate objects have been declared Haraam for two reasons:

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1. Attempting to imitate Allah ﷻ in the act of creating.
2. Pictures are a doorway to shirk The first reason is obvious, and mention of it comes in the Ahadeeth as well. As for the second reason, Imaam Fakhruddin Raazi رحمه الله has written in his Tafseer Al-Kabeer the reasons of why such pictures are Haraam, and therein he has written, “many a times when a king or a big entity passed away, the people would make a picture/statue of that person and they would look at it and console themselves over the loss. Then, the people that came after them thought that their forefathers used to worship these pictures and so they too, began to worship these pictures, or it happened such, that the sons of Adam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, Wadd, Suwaa’, Yaghoos, Ya’ooq, and Nasr passed away, so Shaitaan told the people to make pictures/statues of these people so that they may remember them and console their grieving hearts. However, when they passed away, Shaitaan told those that came afterwards that their forefathers would worship these pictures, hence, the aftercomers would begin to worship these pictures/statues. It is for this reason, that Nabi ﷺ had prohibited the visiting of the graveyards in the early days.

Similarly, Hafiz Ibne Hajr رحمه الله has written that these pictures were originally made to comfort the people, to take lessons from the lives of the pious ones that passed and so that the people might exert themselves in doing good deeds etc. Then, Shaitaan started giving them Waswasah [evil whisperings] that the pious ones before them had worshipped these pictures and honoured these pictures, and telling them that they too, should worship these pictures. Thus, prohibited us from pictures so that the door leading to shirk may be closed off altogether.

Generally, shirk comes from pictures of Messengers عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَام or pious people رحمه الله. Shameless pictures lead to fornication and immorality, but it is the pictures of the pious that lead to shirk. For this reason, under the Hadeeth of Umme Salamah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا in which prohibition of pictures is mentioned, Allaamah Ainee

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رحمہ اللہ has written: “And this is a proof of the prohibition of making pictures of living beings, especially the pious people.” Mufti Muhammad Shafi’ رحمہ اللہ has written: “Because shirk is such a great and unforgivable sin, Shari’at has prohibited all those things which lead to shirk, and from amongst those things is the making and usage of pictures.

Fatwas of Our Akaabireen Regarding Photography Being Haraam

The following senior ‘Ulema, the likes of whose ilm, taqwa and firaasat [foresight] cannot be found today, were all unanimous on the impermissibility of photography:

1. Hadhrat Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi رحمہ اللہ [Imdaadul Fataawa, 4/253].
2. Allaamah Zafar Ahmad Uthmaani رحمہ اللہ [Imdaadul Ahkaam 4/382].
3. Hadhrat Mufti Mahmood Sahib رحمہ اللہ [Fataawa Mahmoodiyyah 5/90].
4. Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Shafi’ Sahib رحمہ اللہ [Jawaahirul Fiqh 3/227].
5. Hadhrat Mufti Azeezur Rahmaan Sahib رحمہ اللہ [Azeezul Fataawa, Fataawa Daarul Uloom Deoband, 2/742].
6. Hadhrat Mufti Rasheed Ahmad Ludhyanwi Sahib رحمہ اللہ [Ahsanul Fataawa, 8/191].
7. Hadhrat Allamah Binnori رحمہ اللہ [Bayyinaat-Ishaa`at-e- Khaas, [page 350].
8. Moulana Yusuf Ludhyanwi رحمہ اللہ [Aap Ke Masaail, 10/309-10].
9. Hadhrat Mufti Sayyid Abdur Raheem Sahib Lajpuri رحمہ اللہ [Fataawa Raheemiyyah, 6/271].
10. Hadhrat Mufti Kifaayatullah Sahib رحمہ اللہ.
11. Hadhrat Allamah Anwar Shah Kashmiri رحمہ اللہ [Malfoozaat-e- Kashmiri, page 41/42].

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All the senior 'Ulema of both the former Jamiat 'Ulema [Transvaal] and the 'Ulema of Deoband are unanimous that all forms of photography are impermissible, yet the current 'Ulema that had taken over from our bastions of keep on insisting that they are on the same path as our pious predecessors.

The Summary of a Booklet Written on Photography by Hadhrat Mufti Shafi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ

A booklet titled 'Photography and Picture Making' regarding authored by Hadhrat Mufti Shafi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ has been translated and is in the process of being printed and published.

Hadhrat wrote this kitaab in 1920, that is about a hundred years ago. This book was prepared while all the debate was taking place in India particularly. Towards the end of the book, Hadhrat writes in the epilogue which entails the following:

Hadhrat Mufti Shafi Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ's Epilogue of the Book He had Written Regarding Photography

The Sahaabah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, Taabi'een [the generation of Muslims who followed the Sahaaba رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ], the Jurists and the Imaams have reached the following conclusion from the Ahaadeeth that they give with regard to photography. It is not permissible to make or take pictures of animate objects in any condition whatsoever.

Today is the time wherein there is an abundance of negligence regarding the Aakhirat, and there is a plenitude of sin. However, this technological age has brought about a new calamity. In times of before, things that would be made by hand are now being made clearer and better by means of machines. Things are made much quicker now, in comparison to before.

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Whatever the Shari'at has declared haraam under a specific name, and now that particular name does not exist, we find that some people have used this issue as a means to permit it. In this day of machines, the names of items are kept different from those of before.

This is the very same calamity that Rasoolullaah ﷺ warned under in the topic of being a sign of qiyaamat.

Rasoolullaah ﷺ said that there will be some people of my Ummat, that will change the name of liquor and consume it. They will be singing woman in front of them. Allah ﷻ will cause them to sink into the earth, and He will change the features of some of them into that of monkeys and pigs.

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، حَدَّثَنَا مَعْنُ بْنُ عِيسَى، عَنْ مُعَاوِيَةَ بْنِ صَالِحٍ، عَنْ حَاتِمِ بْنِ حَرْبٍ، عَنْ مَالِكِ بْنِ أَبِي مَرْيَمَ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ عَنَمٍ الْأَشْعَرِيِّ، عَنْ أَبِي مَالِكٍ الْأَشْعَرِيِّ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ. "لَيَشْرَبَنَّ نَاسٌ مِنْ أُمَّتِي الْخَمْرَ يُسَمُّوْهَا بِغَيْرِ اسْمِهَا يُعْزَفُ عَلَى رُؤُوسِهِمْ بِالْمُعَازِفِ وَالْمُغَنِّيَاتِ يَخْسِفُ اللَّهُ بِهِمُ الْأَرْضَ وَيَجْعَلُ مِنْهُمُ الْقِرَدَةَ وَالْخَنَازِيرَ ."

Sayyeduna Abu Malik al-Ashari رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ reported: Rasoolullaah ﷺ said, "Some people from my nation will drink wine, calling it by different names, and musical instruments will be played for them, and girls will sing to them. Allah will cause the earth to swallow them up, and he will turn some of them into apes and pigs."

[Sunan Ibn Majah 4020]

Today the people have extended this from liquor to other forms of sins, where the forms and features are new, and the names have changed, and they freed themselves from the worry of sin or reward.

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Interest and usuary has taken on a new form in the world. The consumption of interest has been called 'Banking'. Thousands of forms of gambling have been invented. All admit that gambling is haraam, but just change the form of it and the name of it. There are modern forms of playing the lottery in common terms, they are not referred to as gambling. To the extent that even according to government law, although gambling has been forbidden, [this is Pakistani Government Law] and many countries, but these new forms are given the purport that is beyond the given definition of gambling, and people have begun to indulge in it.

People bet huge sums of money on racehorses [horse racing]. There is forward trading which is a ridiculously huge market, and magazines also publish puzzles for gambling purposes. The reality behind all of this is gambling. People have fallen into the error because of the name change, and they have also gone into gambling under the guise of many ruses which the people use. Many people participate in gambling.

Also, the people understand that they are not involved openly in interest and gambling. No matter what it is, at least the name gambling and interest are not attached to it."

Therefore, they feel that the sin is light. However, the reality is different. Where the ruling of the Shari'at is being broken under a ruse, under some tricks, making the sin double. One is the original sinful action, and the second is where effort is being made to permit the sin.

This is the case with the matter and the discussion which is photography. This is a machine [the camera] created for taking pictures. The original thing is captured on glass or film, and after treatment it is taken out.

In this way, the picture resembles the original. One is saved from the trouble of using pens and brushes. The reality is that photography is an advanced form of

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drawing pictures. It has made the sin of drawing pictures easy and cheap. This has now become a severe disease.

There are some people who have adopted the philosophy where they say that when an illness spreads far and wide and becomes common, that then we should stop saying that it is an illness. There is no need to treat it. Nor is there any need to save oneself from it.

They have made up the excuse and the ruse that a picture captured in a photograph is not tasweer. It is a shadow or a reflection like a mirror that shows the face and body of a person clearly. In the same way the pictures acquired from a photo are a shadow and reflection. There is no problem in acquiring and using them.

However, there is no need to really think deeply over this point because there's a major difference between a reflection in water or a mirror and a picture acquired through photography. Making an analogy of one with the other is simply a ploy, and a sly excuse. The reality is that a shadow or reflection is not set and established, but it follows the person. If the person stands opposite the mirror, his reflection will be there. When he moves away, the reflection will also disappear. The reflection or image of a person on the 'mirror' of the camera will be said to be a reflection as long as the film is not treated with chemicals. Once it is a picture, then it then it is a photograph. When the picture has been developed, then it becomes a tasweer. If the picture is made and developed by means of paint and colours, or by a machine, the ruling does not change.

The example of this is that of a person who stands in front of a mirror and then colour is used to form the features of the person. As long as this image where the colours are not made, it will remain a reflection. There is no prohibition in this. When the reflection was made with colour and paint, it now becomes a tasweer. Therefore, after the colour and paint is applied, it does not remain as a taabi' [replica] of the reflection, the person goes away, but the picture remains. Some

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scholars have explained the reason that the photographer does not create the limbs. In the Hadeeth, the reason for prohibition of 'tasweer' has been explained that in picture making the person imitates the special quality of Allah in this way, he makes the claim of being a partner to Allah in creation, and this Allah dislikes totally. For this reason, he will be instructed to give life to what he made. When he will be unable to do so, he will be punished.

However, if we think over this, then no picture maker does the action of creating. He only makes the outer form of the limbs. He does not put veins into it. He does not make any bones or flesh. Whereas the Shari'at has referred to this as tasweer [just that outward form], the Shari'at has prohibited this.

So, what is the difference between taking a colour photograph and a pen drawn image? The Hadeeth does not refer to this as creation but imitating the creation of Allah. It is quite clear that there is no difference between the pen drawn image, and the image made by a machine, which is the camera.

Some people make statues of iron and copper by hand in the same way, there are statues made by machines. The methods are different in creating the forms, but the machines will make much more statues in quicker time. Will this be permissible?

Besides this, it will not be correct to say that in the case where the picture maker does not form the limbs and features, then the picture will be permissible. The reason for this is that in the Ahaadeeth there are various reasons given for the prohibition of pictures, whichever reason there is that a picture is haraam.

The summary is that to understand photography as something different from picture making and the images acquired through photography are not tasweer is something wrong and is simply a ploy of the nafs. There are many religious people and 'Ulema that are involved in this. No matter how great a person an

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'Aalim can be, he also can make mistakes and those mistakes have been made, and there are those 'Ulema who have rectified this.

They have caught the whole ploy of what Shaitaan is and they had corrected it. At this point, remember the letter of Moulana Abul Kalaam Azaad which he wrote from Ranchi jail. He refused that his picture be taken. He said that to take pictures, to keep them, are all haraam. He said that to take pictures and to keep them are all haraam. From this it is clear that even an 'enlightened thinker,' but he also regarded it as totally haraam, and he forbade that his picture be taken. Pictures have spread in the Arab world to epidemic proportions. However, even the true 'Ulema there have written booklets on its prohibition.

A scholar of Riyadh, Najd, Sheikh Abdur Rahmaan ibne Faryaan has written a booklet that I have seen. He explained the prohibition of photography and has made a heartfelt appeal that although this illness has become common, the Muslims should not lose hope. They should save themselves and have concern about saving others. If a sin becomes common, it does not make it halaal. But worse punishment can come from Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.

From Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى we seek help, and upon him do we reply.

Hadhrat Moulana Abdul Hamid Sahib حفظه الله 's Comments Regarding Hadhrat Mufti Shafi Sahib رحمه الله 's Epilogue.

This section has been included for the benefit of the reader, which is broken down into several segments for further explanation. To many, Hadhrat Mufti Shafi Sahib رحمه الله 's epilogue may have been well understood; however, there may be points that could have been overlooked by the reader, or maybe Hadhrat may give a comment of varied sorts from an angle which the reader had overlooked.

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Excerpt of Summary: "The Sahaabah رضي الله عنهم, Taabi'een [the generation of Muslims who followed the Saḥāba رضي الله عنهم], the Jurists and the Imaams have reached the following conclusion from the Ahaadeeth that they give with regard to photography. It is not permissible to make or take pictures of animate objects in any condition whatsoever."

Hadhrat's Comment: This is the conclusion after the entire discussion. Hadhrat Mufti Sahib says that to take photographs, to keep photographs, to look at photographs and to spread them, as today on the mobile phone, how easy it has become and how guilty we are of this sin.

Excerpt of Summary: "Today is the time wherein there is an abundance of negligence regarding the Aakhirat, and there is a plenitude of sin."

Hadhrat's Comment: Today about the matters of deen, people are generally, good people who are in deen, but we do not think about the qabar [grave], the Aakhirat. Gunahs have become so common that we do not even regard them as haraam. Like pictures, photographs, we do not give a second thought to it being haraam.

Regarding matters of deen today, people who are generally good people who participate in the work of deen, but they do not think about the qabar [grave], the Aakhirat, and gunah has become so common, there are so many gunahs that we do not even regard as haraam.

We do not even think of pictures, photographs as haraam. We will go shopping, we will buy our things and there are so many pictures on the bags and plastic packets that hold our purchases, and on the purchases themselves, yet we do not even think that we participate in haraam. We read newspapers or magazines, or we scroll through our phones as image upon image is glared at and scrutinized, yet the thought of making taubah and istighfar does not occur to us. Just going to a shopping centre or a supermarket with the music is blaring, we mix with so many women, how the women are dressed, but we do not think of making

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taubah or istighfar. Gunah has become so common and rife that we do not even regard them as gunahs anymore. Regarding the gunah of the eyes, how many of us sincerely make taubah daily for these misdemeanours.

Excerpt of Summary: “However, this technological age has brought about a new calamity. In times of before, things that would be made by hand are now being made clearer and better by means of machines.”

Hadhrat's Comment: This is one hundred years ago, just see how well it applies to our times. The camera takes a much more accurate picture, and the digital picture makes an even more accurate picture. By this, you are copying the creative Power of Allah ﷻ. It is more haraam with the digital phone because it makes a more accurate copy of a sketch which is drawn by hand.

Excerpt of Summary: “Things are made much quicker now, comparison to before.”

Hadhrat's Comment: Before one first had to possess a camera. No one could really afford a camera. After having bought a camera, with the camera, it used to cost money. You had to get the film, the film had to be loaded correctly, then you could take photographs, but only a limited amount depending on the number of films it could hold, then you could take the photographs you wanted to. After having filled the required number of films with the negatives on the film, you had to submit the negatives to the pharmacy to have them developed. Then you had to wait until the negatives were developed. This could take up to two weeks, it was expensive as well. It was not cheap. If you wanted more copies of the photograph, you had to pay more, if you wanted coloured copies, you had to pay even more.

Now, there are no costs attached to it whatsoever. You can just click away wherever you are, and you have the photograph instantly, and you can send as many copies to as many people you want it the world.

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Excerpt of Summary: "Whatever the Shari'at has declared haraam under a specific name, and now that particular name does not exist, we find that some people have used this issue as a means to permit it."

Hadhrat's Comment: This is very important, this means in other words, just a name change, first it was a sketch, a 'tasweer', then it became a 'photograph', and now it is called 'digital image' or a 'digitized image', or a 'digital pixelated image, and the like. All of them are the same. Just by a name change, by giving it a new name so now it is permissible in Shari'at.

Excerpt of Summary: "In this day of machines, the names of items are kept different from those of before. This is the very same calamity that Rasoolullaah ﷺ warned under in the topic of being a sign of qiyaamat. Rasoolullaah ﷺ said that there will be some people of my Ummat, that will change the name of liquor and consume it. They will be singing woman in front of them. Allah ﷻ will cause them to sink into the earth, and He will change the features of some of them into that of monkeys and pigs."

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، حَدَّثَنَا مَعْنُ بْنُ عِيسَى، عَنْ مُعَاوِيَةَ بْنِ صَالِحٍ، عَنْ خَاتِمِ بْنِ حَرْثٍ، عَنْ مَالِكِ بْنِ أَبِي مَرْيَمَ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ عَنَمٍ الْأَشْعَرِيِّ، عَنْ أَبِي مَالِكٍ الْأَشْعَرِيِّ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ. صلى الله عليه وسلم. " لَيُشْرَبَنَّ نَاسٌ مِنْ أُمَّتِي الْخَمْرَ يُسَمُّوْهَا بِعَيْرِ اسْمِهَا يُعْرِفُ عَلَى رُؤُوسِهِمْ بِالْمَعَازِفِ وَالْمُغَنِّيَاتِ يَخْسِفُ اللَّهُ بِهِمُ الْأَرْضَ وَيَجْعَلُ مِنْهُمُ الْقِرَدَةَ وَالْخَنَازِيرَ . "

Sayyeduna Abu Malik al-Ashari رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ reported: Rasoolullaah ﷺ said, "Some people from my nation will drink wine, calling it by different names, and musical instruments will be played for them, and girls will sing to them. Allah will cause the earth to swallow them up, and he will turn some of them into apes and pigs."

[Sunan Ibn Majah 4020]

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Hadhrat's Comment: This Hadeeth is recorded in the kitaab, 'Signs of qiyaamat'. This is what Rasoolullaah ﷺ has told us, and it will happen

Excerpt of summary: "Today the people have extended this from liquor to other forms of sins, where the forms and features are new, and the names have changed, and they freed themselves from the worry of sin or reward."

Hadhrat's Comment: Just by changing the name, they feel that they are not sinning anymore. Alternative due to the fact that the method of making an animated image had changed, they feel that they are not sinning.

Excerpt of Summary: "Interest and usuary has taken on a new form in the world. The consumption of interest has been called 'Banking'."

Hadhrat's Comment: This is one hundred years ago and see what the status quo is. It is exactly the same. All those 'Ulema and Muftis give fatwaas of interest being halaal. It is just in a different form. Now it is called 'Islamic Banking' and 'Islamic Finance'.

The son of a famous 'Aalim also started working at an 'Islamic Bank'. After he joined the bank, he asked them what his job description was. They replied, "Nothing, all you need to do is signing." He asked what more is entailed in his job description. The replied that there was nothing else. All he had to do was to sign documents. This proves that they do everything according to their system, and all they do is get it 'rubber stamped' by a Mufti, 'Aalim or even an ordinary Muslim.

Excerpt of Summary: "Thousands of forms of gambling have been invented. All admit that gambling is haraam, but just change the form of it and the name of it. There are modern forms of playing the lottery in common terms, they are not referred to as gambling."

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Hadhrat's Comment: By just changing the form and name of it, and everyone thinks it is permissible. Sports has become gambling now.

Excerpt of Summary: "To the extent that even according to government law, although gambling has been forbidden, [this is Pakistani Government Law] and many countries, but these new forms are given the purport that is beyond the given definition of gambling, and people have begun to indulge in it."

Hadhrat's Comment: It is now permissible in our country too. However, before, with the old government, gambling was forbidden, but there were other forms of it just with a name change. Just a different name, a different form, and people start indulging in it.

Excerpt of Summary: "People bet huge sums of money on racehorses [horse racing]. There is forward trading which is a ridiculously huge market, and magazines also publish puzzles for gambling purposes."

Hadhrat's Comment: It has become so common in different forms.

Excerpt of Summary: "The reality behind all of this is gambling. People have fallen into the error because of the name change, and they have also gone into gambling under the guise of many ruses which the people use. Many people participate in gambling."

Hadhrat's Comment: Many people are involved in gambling as well.

Excerpt of Summary: "Also, the people understand that they are not involved openly in interest and gambling."

Hadhrat's Comment: The word, 'gambling' is not used. It is just given another name, it is just a name change, and they feel that they are not gambling.

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Excerpt of Summary: "No matter what it is, at least the name gambling and interest are not attached to it."

Hadhrat's Comment: They make themselves happy with this.

Excerpt of Summary: "Therefore, they feel that the sin is light. However, the reality is different. Where the ruling of the Shari'at is being broken under a ruse, under some tricks, which multiplies the sin."

Hadhrat's Comment: That sin multiplies, which is worse.

Excerpt of Summary: "One is the original sinful action, and the second is where effort is being made to permit the sin."

Hadhrat's Comment: To commit a sin, understand it is a sin, make taubah, is not as serious as regarding a sin to be halaal. To regard a haraam as halaal is extremely serious. The second sin is worse than the first.

Excerpt of Summary: "This is the case with the matter and the discussion which is photography. This is a machine [the camera] created for taking pictures. The original thing is captured on glass or film, and after treatment it is taken out."

Hadhrat's Comment: This is how the photograph is made after it is shot on the camera.

Excerpt of Summary: "In this way, the picture resembles the original. One is saved from the trouble of using pens and brushes. The reality is that photography is an advanced form of drawing pictures. It has made the sin of drawing pictures easy and cheap. This has now become a severe disease."

Hadhrat's Comment: Now imagine using a mobile phone. This was written a hundred years ago, and it seems as if Mufti Sahib is writing it for the very present

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time. Also, these days with the mobile phone, how easy it for anyone and everyone to practically participate in it.

Excerpt of Summary: "There are some people who have adopted the philosophy where they say that when an illness spreads far and wide and becomes common, that then we should stop saying that it is an illness." There is no need to treat it. Nor is there any need to save oneself from it.

Hadhrat's Comment: When an illness becomes far, wide, and common, they say that it should not be called an illness. One should not treat it. What a philosophy?

Excerpt of Summary: They have made up the excuse and the ruse that a picture captured in a photograph is not tasweer. It is a shadow or a reflection like a mirror that shows the face and body of a person clearly.

Hadhrat's Comment: Here Mufti Sahib goes on to explain as the Fuqaha, but a simple understanding of this is, against their argument which is that when you see a reflection of yourself in a mirror, it is not haraam, then how is it that the photograph is haraam?

However, the easiest and most convincing explanation is that when looking at yourself in a mirror, Rasoolullaah ﷺ taught us that a du'aa should be read, and Rasoolullaah ﷺ would never have taught us a du'aa for haraam. The same beloved Messenger, Rasoolullaah ﷺ declared the severity of picture making. That very fact differentiates an image in a mirror or in water, compared to a photograph.

Fuqaha go deeply into explaining what a reflection is and how it is different to a photograph. Why it is not a picture, when it becomes a picture, and the like.

Excerpt of Summary: Just as a person sees his reflection in a mirror and in water, and a person will not be sinful for pictures or making picture by doing this. In the

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same way the pictures acquired from a photo are a shadow and reflection. There is no problem in acquiring and using them.

Hadhrat's Comment: However, Rasoolullaah ﷺ made looking at your reflection in a mirror an 'ibaadat. On the other hand, Rasoolullaah ﷺ mentioned the worst curses to picture making of all sorts, methods, and types.

Excerpt of Summary: However, there's no need to really think deeply over this point because there's a major difference between a reflection in water or a mirror and a picture acquired through photography.

Hadhrat's Comment: This is Qiyas Ma'al Faariq [the process of deductive analogy in which the teachings of the Hadeeth are compared with those of the Quran, in order to apply a known injunction] completely, there is no ground for this Qiyas, and for the analogy.

Excerpt of Summary: Making an analogy of one with the other is simply a ploy, and a sly excuse. The reality is that a shadow or reflection is not set and established, but it follows the person. If the person stands opposite the mirror, his reflection will be there. When he moves away, the reflection will also disappear. The reflection or image of a person on the 'mirror' of the camera will be said to be a reflection as long as the film is not treated with chemicals the picture itself is not made. Once the reflection on the film is chemically treated, the picture then becomes a photograph. When the picture has been developed, then it becomes a tasweer. If the picture is made and developed by means of paint and colours, or by a machine, the ruling does not change.

Hadhrat's Comment: Where the image was hand drawn or captured with a camera, the rule will not change.

Excerpt of Summary: The example of this is that of a person who stands in front of a mirror and then colour is used to form the features of the person. As long as this

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image where the colours are not made, it will remain a reflection. There is no prohibition in this. When the reflection was made with colour and paint, it now becomes a tasweer. Therefore, after the colour and paint is applied, it does not remain as a taabi' [replica] of the reflection, the person goes away, but the picture remains.

Hadhrat's Comment: The minute it is took a picture; it becomes completely haraam.

Excerpt of Summary: Some scholars have explained the reason that the photographer does not create the limbs. In the Hadeeth, the reason for prohibition of 'tasweer' has been explained that in picture making the person imitates the special quality of Allah ﷻ in this way, he makes the claim of being a partner to Allah ﷻ in creation, and this Allah dislikes totally.

Hadhrat's Comment: Allah ﷻ questions the picture maker asking if he wants to become a partner with Allah ﷻ, and does he want to compete with Allah ﷻ in making a sketch, picture, photograph, idol, and the like.

Excerpt of Summary: For this reason, he will be instructed to give life to what he made. When he will be unable to do so, he will be punished.

However, if we think over this, then no picture maker does the action of creating. He only makes the outer form of the limbs. He does not put veins into it. He does not make any bones or flesh. Whereas the Shari'at has referred to this as tasweer [just that outward form], the Shari'at has prohibited this.

So, what is the difference between taking a colour photograph and a pen drawn image? The Hadeeth does not refer to this as creation but imitating the creation of Allah ﷻ. It is quite clear that there is no difference between the pen drawn image, and the image made by a machine, which is the camera.

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Some people make statues of iron and copper by hand in the same way, there are statues made by machines. The methods are different in creating the forms, but the machines will make much more statues in quicker time. Will this be permissible?

Hadhrat's comment: None of this is permissible.

Excerpt of Summary: Besides this, it will not be correct to say that in the case where the picture maker does not form the limbs and features, then the picture will be permissible. The reason for this is that in the Ahaadeeth there are various reasons given for the prohibition of pictures, whichever reason there is that a picture is haraam.

The main aspect is to reiterate that we should neither take pictures, nor keep pictures, or look at pictures, and even spread pictures of animate objects.

The summary is that to understand photography as something different from picture making and the images acquired through photography are not tasweer is something wrong and is simply a ploy of the nafs. There are many religious people and 'Ulema that are involved in this. No matter how great a person an 'Aalim can be, he also can make mistakes and those mistakes have been made, and there are those 'Ulema who have rectified this.

They have caught the whole ploy of what Shaitaan is and they had corrected it. At this point, remember the letter of Moulana Abul Kalaam Azaad which he wrote from Ranchi jail. He refused that his picture be taken. He said that to take pictures, to keep them, are all haraam. He said that to take pictures and to keep them are all haraam. From this it is clear that even though he was an 'enlightened thinker,' he also regarded it as totally haraam, and he forbade that his picture be taken. Pictures have spread in the Arab world to epidemic proportions. However, even the true 'Ulema there have written booklets on its prohibition.

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A scholar of Riyadh, Najd, Sheikh Abdur Rahmaan ibne Faryaan has written a booklet that I have seen. He explained the prohibition of photography and has made a heartfelt appeal that although this illness has become common, the Muslims should not lose hope. They should save themselves and have concern about saving others. If a sin becomes common, it does not make it halaal. But worse punishment can come from Allah ﷻ. May Allah bless us all with a proper understanding of deen, and the taufeeq [fortune] to remain on the straight path. From Allah ﷻ we seek help, and upon him do we rely."

Now That We Realize that We are Caught in a Photographic Dilemma – What Should We Do?

For those who until this stage believed that digital imaging was permissible because certain Muqtada, Mufti or 'Alim had said so, or even if we were ardently following a certain or a number of 'Ulema regularly because the way in which they presented their discourses and we took to them for those reasons, or even, totally across the spectrum, those who did or did not know that photography, and audio-visual media streaming is not permissible, or for any reason in any way whatsoever, may be asking the question, "Now that I realize that I am caught in a photographic dilemma, what should I do?

It is not too late. The following are suggested remedies, and they are not in the least impossible to carry out. Persistently repeat in your minds, "I must not keep photographs, I must not file photographs, I must not hold onto photographic albums, I must not look at photographs These are my priorities these are the things I have to do."

Together with this, other aspects come into play as well, especially related to our infants. Dolls, teddy bears and all things that have eyes on them that are not permissible.

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Another extremely crucial point goes out to game hunters, who hunt wild game. It must be imprinted in their minds that trophies that are preserved by taxidermists for mounting their hunt and put up for show in their entrance halls, lounges, and other areas of the house that even these trophies are haraam to mount anywhere in the house.

These displays are evident in many a good Muslim's home as well. These are all haraam and we should totally keep away such displays. If we want Farishtahs of Rahmat [Angels of Mercy] to come into our homes, keep these things away. If we want Shaitaan to come, these are the invitations for Shaitaan.

All the above have become second nature to us. We had begun the practice of, "Cheese, . . . and . . . smile" for so long that it has become part of our lives.

Let us begin with a Hadeeth Shareef to ascertain that our actions until now were contrary to the commands of Allah ﷻ،

حَدَّثَنَا الْحُمَيْدِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، حَدَّثَنَا الْأَعْمَشُ، عَنْ مُسْلِمٍ، قَالَ كُنَّا مَعَ مَسْرُوقٍ فِي دَارِ يَسَارِ بْنِ مُعِيٍّ، فَرَأَى فِي صُفَّتِهِ تَمَاثِيلَ فَقَالَ سَمِعْتُ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ " إِنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَذَابًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ الْمُصَوِّرُونَ " .

Sayyeduna Masruq رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, "I heard `Abdullah saying that he heard Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ saying, "The people who will receive the severest punishment from Allah will be the picture makers."

[Sahih al-Bukhari 5950]

The Hadeeth mentioned above explains that the worst harms and the most severe punishments on the day of qiyaamat will be for those people who create photographs, and the reason given in the Hadeeth is that those who make and create photographs emulate Allah ﷻ in his creative power which is

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exclusive for Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**. This shows that they try to become partners with Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**.

Another narration in the Hadeeth Shareef says that on the day of qiyaamat the most severe punishment will be for three categories of people. The first is one who kills a Nabi, or one who a Nabi kills. One can imagine what a terrible gunah that is.

The Bani Isra'eel were the guiltiest regarding this, they slaughtered the Ambiya . A Nabi is an embodiment of mercy. He will not just kill anyone. He was sent for the goodness of people, and he expects nothing and wants nothing from people, no benefit whatsoever. He had come to the world only for the welfare and the goodness of a person in this world and the Aakhirat. Thus, a person who kills a Nabi is extremely serious. Similarly, a person who is killed by a Nabi is just as serious.

The second are those people who lead others to misguidance, those who are leaders, who are miftahul shar [they are the keys of evil], and they lead people towards evil. It is mentioned in many verses of the Qur'aan Shareef that Allah ﷻ mentions what their arguments will be on the day of Day of qiyaamat in Jahannam.

The people will tell them that they mislead them, they in turn will tell the people, "We did not force you. We, we did not make you do the wrong, you did the wrong."

The blame- game will start, where they will blame one another. They too will be the ones who will be given the worst punishment. The third is for those who create photographs, we can well imagine that this is in the same category of those who killed the Ambiya. From this, one can imagine how severe this sin is.

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After having discussed the above Hadeeth Shareef, here is a guide to what we should do to avert our previous actions.

This is the guidance that the Qur'aan Shareef gives as a command. Not the guidance of those who teach you to be obedient to the government or to be impressed with television broadcasts and announcements which are made on television, or what the atheist scientists say. Do not follow those people.

Allah ﷻ says, "And follow the path of those people who are inclined to Me."

Our Sheikh ﷻ used to say, fadhlan - it is waajib upon Allah ﷻ to constantly have such people in the world. It is a matter for us to look for them. They will always be there, though their numbers will decrease as qiyaamat draws close, but they will be there. It is for us to look for them and follow them.

1. What we should firstly do is that we must always be on our guard. We know that photography is such a thing, that it is almost impossible for us to stay away from. Taking photographs is definitely out of the question as we have read above, as well as going to read ahead. It has become easy to take a photograph [or these days referred to as an image as well], with the advent of the mobile phone. One sees one's two-year-old child and his cuteness overtakes one. He is performing and doing something that is unusual or amusing, let alone a photograph, one even wants to capture a video recording of his stunts. Never ever commit that haraam.

Looking at photographs is haraam as well, yet it is so widespread that it has become almost impossible to resist. While a person performs namaaz, he has his ID card with him, though not displayed, it is covered in his wallet, pouch or in his pocket, but it is there. Therefore, what is necessity should be kept to the extent of necessity. Remember, permissibility in cases of this nature does not make haraam halaal. Let us not make our own decisions as to what is haraam.

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2. We must get a ruling from a dependable Mufti as to whether whatever we are committing is permitted or not. We must follow the 'Ulema who are Muqtada, the people who are [imitated, imitable, a deeni Leader, or an exemplary person]. This means those who teach us matters relating to the matters of the Aakhirat, and not Dunya's matters. 'Ulema who teach us to follow the deen of Nabi ﷺ, not some modern deen, a deen that has conjured up in the White House in America, nor anywhere else. We must follow the correct deen, as Allah ﷻ says,

And follow the path of those who turn towards Me.

وَصَاحِبُهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ

And follow the path of those whose hearts are inclined and who incline their hearts towards Me. Look for that, that is what you must follow.

[Surah Luqman: 31; Verse: 15]

- 3 Do not focus your attention on other people, focus your attention neither on those 'Ulema who present themselves in these media streaming broadcasts, nor the people who watch the broadcasts. For whom are watching these media streams, introspect, contemplate that we are committing a gunah when we watch, and all of us are guilty to whichever degree and whichever way it may be, so we should make taubah to Allah ﷻ, and we should put a dead stop to all this haraam. It leads to devastation and destruction in our deen.

Only Allah ﷻ knows the kind of purdah and veils are over our eyes, brains, and our thinking which Allah ﷻ explains clearly in the Qur'aan Shareef,

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أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَتَكُونَ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ يَعْقِلُونَ بِهَا أَوْ آذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا فَإِنَّهَا لَا تَعْمَى الْأَبْصَارُ وَلَكِنْ تَعْمَى الْقُلُوبُ الَّتِي فِي الصُّدُورِ

Yet, verily, it is not their eyes that have become blind - but blind have become the hearts that are in their breasts!

[Surah Al-Hajj: 22; Verse: 46]

It is not the eyes of the head that are blind. The 'eyes of the heart', which are in your bosom are gone blind. These people are convinced they are doing right. Yet, it is clear that what they are doing is totally haraam. No matter who it is, haraam it is haraam.

If we do not call a haraam, a haraam it is a serious matter. All of us who are in a leadership position, whether we are parents, the elders of the family, in the community, whether we are Imams or 'Ulema, Mutawallees or community leaders, it is our duty to inform the people. If we do not, then all of us are also part of this sin.

Should we remain silent, we would become part of that sin. Wherever we can, be it among our families, even just our immediate family. Even if we have the rank and file to convey it to our extended family, it is our duty to inform everyone. We should not just keep quiet to keep the peace, but we must explain that what is being done is haraam. We do not have to be rude; we do not have to be harsh, we do not have to condemn, neither swear or use all types of adjectives and epithets but say what is to be said and say it in the most acceptable manner. It is our duty to do that.

Watch Your Track Lest You Go Astray

Do not focus your attention on other people, focus your attention neither on those 'Ulema who present themselves in these media streaming broadcasts, nor the

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people who watch the broadcasts. We who are watching know that we are committing that gunah when we watch, and all of us are guilty to whichever degree and whichever way it may be, so we should make taubah to Allah ﷻ, and we should put a dead stop to all this haraam. It leads to devastation and destruction in our deen."

This is a very important point to note as we should be concerned with the direction we take today, and how the route that we are taking today will be decisive of where it will lead us to. I say the following with the intention of making known the condition of one single aspect with regard to the Salafis in Saudia.

We might not really accept it, but we all know the Salafis especially in Saudia boast about and claim an extremely high and elevated level of Tauheed [the Oneness of Allah ﷻ]. They wrongly regard us, Deobandis as 'Quburis' - Qabar Pujaaris [Grave worshippers] as well.

Alhamdulillah! The greatest upholders of Tauheed [the Oneness of Allah ﷻ] are the 'Ulema of Deoband, and in the correct sense where everything is kept in the perfect path of Tauheed [the Oneness of Allah ﷻ]. The Salafis are extremely strong and totally against anything that has any atoms worth of inclination towards Shirk. They are staunch to the extent that they had demolished all the nameplates of people who are buried in Jannatul Baqi [The cemetery adjacent to Masjid-an-Nabi ﷺ]. They had also removed the nameplates of even the belated kings and heroes in the qabarastaan [cemetery] in Riyadh, called 'Heroes Acre'. Not one name of any of the kings is so much as even handwritten on any of the qabars [graves]. They are particular to that extent. However, those very people in Saudia are now teaching Hinduism in their schools. Which means that they are teaching idol worship.

It could never be conceived that a Salafi would ever teach idol worship. It is impossible. It is out in the open there in front of our eyes. Therefore, we must be

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incredibly careful with all that is haraam and what practices it can lead us to which are unimaginable, and what we may perceive as impossible. We will become oblivious to the route by which we had lost our Imaan [Faith] in the process, our a'maal [actions] also get destroyed, and the worst punishment will be meted out to us on the day of the qiyaamat. May Allah guide us all to righteousness and let us understand that we are in this world for a noticeably short while, let us be worried of our lives in the qabar [grave], and on the day of qiyaamat, and when the decision of Jannat [Paradise] and Jahannam [Hellfire] will be made for us, our children.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا

O you who believe, save yourselves and your families from a fire.

[Surah At-Tahrim: 66; Verse: 6]

Let us be concerned with the direction in which we take as well as how the route that we are taking today will be decisive of where we will be on that day. May Allah ﷻ guide us the righteousness and accept from us.

Allah ﷻ's destruction had descended upon all those who went against the teachings of the Ambiya who were sent to them, we may or may not know the dates and eras during which they had occurred, the places to which they belonged to, or the places they had come from, but this is the lesson that we take when it comes to disobedience.

On the other hand, those who obeyed Allah ﷻ and the greatest of all, Nabi-e-Akram ﷺ when we study the history of Nabi-e-Akram ﷺ, and his ﷺ's total obedience to Allah ﷻ, despite having to go through extensive and immense difficulties and hardships in Makkatul Mukarramah and Madeenatul Munawwarah as well, the successes he attained were declared by Allah ﷻ himself, in the finality of,

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إِذَا جَاءَ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ وَالْفَتْحُ وَرَأَيْتَ النَّاسَ يَدْخُلُونَ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ أَفْوَاجًا فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَاسْتَغْفِرْهُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ تَوَّابًا

When Allah's help comes with victory, and you see the people entering Allah's religion in throngs, then celebrate the praise of your Lord, and plead to Him for forgiveness. Indeed, He is all-clement.

[Surah And Nasr:110; Verses: 1 to 3]

and,

إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُّبِينًا

[Verily, we have given you [O Muhammad ﷺ] a manifest victory.

[Surah Al-Fath: 48; Verse: 1]

What remarkable successes had come? The crux of this is the lessons that we ought to take from this which are important. The lessons to learn are that Allah ﷻ says that all of mankind were on one religion, one creed, one way, then as time progressed, some of them went astray. This is when Allah ﷻ sent the Ambiya عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَام to give glad tidings to those people who obeyed Allah ﷻ. There are great benefits for them which they have enjoyed, are still enjoying, and will enjoy in eternity when the actual results of a'maal [actions] will be made known in the Akhirat. The Ambiya عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَام were warners to those who disobeyed Allah ﷻ.

Feedback from Friends Who are Attending These Discourses and Listening to Them Online

We have received extremely good and positive feedback from many of our saathies from who we will give and receive some kaal guzaari [feedback] in terms of aspects that seemed impossible, Allah ﷻ's help had been with them and

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how they had saved themselves from involving themselves in photography completely.

Their occupation involves computer work, going through various sites and despite there being photographs and video clips everywhere on the sites that their occupation calls for them to review, research and extract information from, yet they have managed to find ways to save themselves of this fitnah.

Bhai Shaheen Vawda had also Masha Allah burnt his wedding photo album and all the photographic material of animate objects. Besides, working in the Information Technology field [IT] field, he works on the computer daily. Having followed this discourse regarding the harms of photography he undertook to produce ways and means to evade being exposed to having to look at images while working on the computer, realizing, and understanding that there are very many people whose occupation involves working on a computer on a day-to-day basis. I request that Bhai Shaheen address our gathering with his experience and method of evading having to be exposed to images while working on computers.

Bhai Shaheen Vawda's Commitment and Resolution

“Firstly, we must make shukr for Hadhrat for stressing on for about nine weeks now on the matter of photography and it is not a trivial matter. I said to Hadhrat after a few weeks, Hadhrat kept on speaking about the sin and he mentioned that there are three sins that Allah ﷻ will not forgive. One is if someone kills a Nabi, or was killed by a Nabi, and this grave sin is equated to picture making. That in itself, for me when I thought about it, I said to myself that should the gravity of the sin be equated to that level and right under our noses every day, as we surf the internet because we are bound to do research, and we have to do banking, we sometimes need to buy a ticket online, and the like, but in doing so, we are subject to having to look at inappropriate pictures that come up. Whether it is an ad, or an image of people of different genders that continue to pop up.

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This got me thinking of ways to find a means to evade having to be exposed to these images whenever we use a computer. Just as the sin, as Hadhrat said, we have become immune to it. It does not affect us anymore. This led me to do some research on the internet and I did find a solution which I would like to share.

Once one is logged onto the computer and if one is using a browser like Chrome, Microsoft Edge, Firefox and the like, there is a setting that one can toggle to turn off the images, and then one can also download an adware blocker which will block all the ads as well.

Alhamdulillah! I was able to evade having to see images to the extent of in the region of round 90%; however, with some additional tweaking I am reaching a stage that is much closer to 100% where all images are evaded.

One can create a toggle switch on the browser with a bookmark which gives an option that directs one to certain sites like the Khanqah, Daarul Uloom or other Islamic sites which don't portray images. One can turn on the toggle switch as one would want to see the images of a kitab, or one would want to download a book in PDF format.

However, I would want to add, for the benefit of the listeners, if you go into a banking site or similar, you can turn off the pictures. This is the solution I found on the computer. With the mobile it is slightly more difficult because the browser apps on mobile phones do not allow you to turn off the images. Only one browser, Firefox, when downloaded has a setting which has the facility to turn off images.

Hence, when using your mobile, my suggestion is to use the Firefox browser app. However, should you want to go into Khanqah, Daarul Uloom, and other Islamic sites where you want to view kitabs, books, and the like, you can use the Chrome browser app. This is what we need to start thinking about immediately by

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bringing in these remedial solutions so that we become more aware, and Allah ﷻ bears witness to the fact that we are trying to do that which is right.

The other benefit I came to learn of is the fact that I became more conscious regarding being occupied on the mobile phone. Whenever I decided to go to any site, I was limiting my time. Most smartphones have a tracking device installed by which it gives the user a report of the time that you had spent on either a daily, weekly, or monthly basis on the mobile. What I found in way of another benefit was that the time I had spent on the internet had decreased substantially as well. This shows that we just troll the internet trying to find things, but we in fact waste our time.

May Allah ﷻ grant us all the taufeeq [the fortune] to adopt the advises imparted by Hadhrat, be they with or without proof, be they in a sketched form or digitized pixelated images, irrespective of means or methods. Hadhrat has given us the direction and we have made niyyat to become Hadhrat's mureeds and we must accept it and it will settle into our hearts. Insha Allah, Aameen."

Bhai Abdul Ahad from Sri Lanka's Commitment and Resolution

Brother Abdul Ahad our particularly good friend from Sri Lanka had written to me. Unfortunately, I could not have it printed, but I will just read it out. This is not at all our way or manner of wanting to do things, but it holds useful content. Hence, the following is what he had written,

"My Sheikh has been speaking on the importance of avoiding photos for the past several weeks. I have been discussing the important points mentioned to me by my Sheikh with some friends, and they all appreciate very much that our Sheikh is speaking on the subject at a time when unfortunately, most 'Ulema are silent on the matter. I personally do not use a smartphone, but I do use WhatsApp on my computer and that too, out of necessity. A matter that has been bothering me for

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some time, is that some people have photographs as their profile pictures, and this gets displayed on my screen when I contact them.

Since this is on a computer, I used to move the WhatsApp window in such a way that the part with the photograph is hidden. Unfortunately, on a smartphone this would never have been possible. However, in spite of this, I used to feel awkward even greeting [conveying salaams] to such people, since generally it is not correct to make salaam to a person while he is committing a sin.

Alhamdulillah! A few days ago, I found a method to replace all profile pictures with any picture of my choice. This way, irrespective of whether a person has set a profile picture or not, and no matter what that person's profile picture is, what gets displayed on my screen is the picture of my choice. Which by the way is that of a Khanqah topi. I have attached it with this email.

I have now done this for all my contacts, and there are two benefits in this. Firstly, haraam photographs are not displayed on my screen. Secondly, I no longer know what the other person's actual profile picture looks like. In this way I am able to have a good opinion about them, since even if they have a haraam photograph as a profile picture, I am no longer aware of it. This has assisted me greatly and given me many benefits.

May Allah ﷻ give us the proper understanding of our deen."

Now, is Digitized Authorized?

From all the proofs submitted above, and to have to ask a question of this nature would have anybody stumped. To re-iterate, the short answer to the question is a question back to the asker of the question, "Are the proofs above give not enough?" In that case, that case the answer is, "Yes!" Photographs, pictures, images, sketches, camera photographs, as well as 'digital pixelated images' are all

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haraam. Keeping photographs is haraam, albums or files of photographs is haraam.

Conclusion

We have been discussing this topic for a few weeks now and we are in the process of 'wrapping up'; however, due to necessity, firstly, I cannot help but re-iterate that it is an extremely great gunah, and this hasn't settled into our minds yet, and secondly, it is so common that all of us are involved in it. We see pictures and images constantly, even if we do not take the pictures, but we are exposed to images and pictures. We see them all the time, yet we do not think of making taubah and istighfar. This, the aspect of being conscious and aware of making istighfar is of extremely immense importance. Our task is to try to avoid watching images, pictures, photographs, and the like as much as possible.

It is admittedly virtually impossible to do so in the environment that has been created during these modern times, yet our stance should be that of avoidance, and the least we can do is make taubah and istighfar for all our misgivings and transgressions.

Alhamdulillah! By Allah ﷻ's Fadhl, we are getting extremely positive feedback, and many of our friends, as well as women and girls who attend these discourses and pass on the message via Shari'at compliant means, all across the spectrum had made, and are making taubah from indulging in the scourge of photography, producing images of animate objects and the like. With regard to our past, Allah ﷻ says,

إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَٰئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

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Except however, shall be they who repent and attain to faith and do righteous deeds: for it is they whose bad deeds Allah will transform into good ones.

[Surah Al-Furqan: 25: Verse:70]

Those who make taubah, they bring Iman, and they do righteous deeds, all the wrong that they had done are converted into good deed by Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى**.

Therefore, if one makes taubah for all these actions, for all the photographs and images that we had taken, the files and albums we have kept these photographs and images in, our exchange of these photographs and images, our uploading of clips to YouTube, TikTok, WhatsApp and the like, Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** will, and is converting those actions into good deeds.

As I have just said that many, many of those following these discourses and passing them on around the various parts of the world, may Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** accept the repentance of each one of them, including me, and may Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** make the reality of the effects of gunahs come into our lives. Also, as explained in a previous discourse, we are living during times where photography has reached pandemic proportions, that it has become almost impossible to save oneself no matter how hard one tries, one is prone to default somewhere or the other.

Taking photographs as well as looking at photographs is haraam. We will always be subject to looking at images and photographs in some way or another, we all get involved somewhere or the other, it must be borne in mind that it is a major haraam act.

Alhamdulillah! There are ways by which we can minimize the sudden involuntary glance as much as possible, and whatever little errors we do fall into, as our eyes do fall on things that inevitably occur. What is meant by minimizing the sudden involuntary glance as much as possible? It is meant by keeping in mind constantly that we must develop a stance by which we have no niyyat, and not take any enjoyment in looking at photographs, be they of any gender.

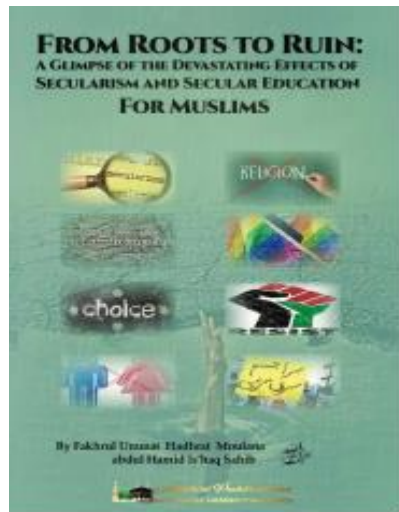
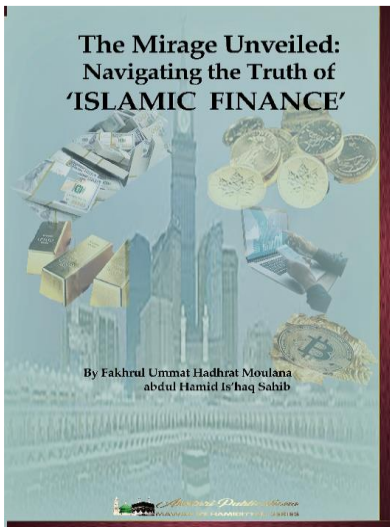
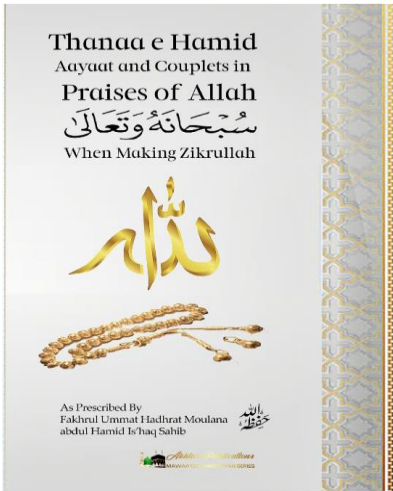
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Remember, looking at a photograph by a man of another man is not permissible just as it is not permissible for a woman to look at a photograph of another woman.

Also keep in mind that Allah ﷻ has kept the great door to taubah open for us. A disturbing fact of which we all must be aware, as it has been divulged quite a while ago, that astronomers have witnessed that from the planet Mars, the sun has risen from the west. Where the age-old norm was that the sun has always risen from the east. This is according to the astronomers, whereas the Qur'aan, Hadeeth and Nabi ﷺ had told us this more than 1 400 years ago, and this will be the first major sign of qiyaamat, when the sun will rise from the west. Scientist also concur that at some stage an occurrence on earth is also evident that for one day the sun will rise from the west and then it will return to its normal system again. However, when it does rise from the west, the doors of taubah will be closed. A person who makes taubah before that is extremely fortunate and we do not know when it is going to happen, but we are moving in that direction. Taubah does not just mean that we hit our fingers on our cheeks, and we say taubah, but really it means changing our lives. Even if we do not say the word taubah but we change and correct our lives, which is the essence of taubah.

When the world is going more towards sin, so much so to kufr, and somebody said even more serious than kufr, by which kufr is not even regarded as a sin, and people are proud to say that they are out of the fold of Islam. They have got nothing [na'oothubillaah] to do with Islam.

Our Future Publications



The Harms and Curses of Photography

A book compiled from weeks of heartfelt, sincere and intimate explanations of all things photographic and beyond. Fakhru'l Ummat, Hadhrat Moulana Shah Abdul Hamid Saheb Hafidhahullah takes pain in carrying across a message regarding an issue that is taken extremely lightly even by pious Muslims and puts to the fore a pandemic that is causing the decay of the core and fundamental beliefs today's Muslims. A book that is meant to be read from cover to cover and get one to introspect long and hard.

Through the centuries it was accepted that "tasweer" [images of all types] of animate objects, be they hand drawn or otherwise were considered to be haraam [totally impermissible]. However around about one hundred years ago, with the advent of the camera, 'Ulema using various terms and jargon, and with what was thought as 'well presented evidence' initially with success to prove that there was a difference between a "tasweer" and a photograph, they had mere succeeded with similar jargon then, as is used today as well. Many a great 'Alim had fallen for this ploy of presentation, yet all their theories, jargon and presentations were debunked. A thorough and complete series of responses from an extremely young, and very newly graduated Hadhrat Mufti Shafi Saheb Rahimahullaah, who himself was a tower of knowledge already at that age, submitted proofs from the Qur'aan and Hadeeth and took on the then champions of Deen, the stalwarts of Islamic theology, and extremely knowledgeable renown and respected scholars to concede and retract their views on the permissibility of photography.

Hadhrat Moulana Shah Abdul Hamid Saheb Hafidhahullaah takes the reader on a journey to the very roots of this abhorrent sin, historically covering mountain and valley, nook and cranny and goes into the crevices addressing each stage of the journey, 'from Shaitaan's sketch to the Devils's digitization', and explains in layperson's terms as well as in order of both, history and the unfolding of events with the development of ongoing inventions following each other, bringing for the Muslim a new trial to endure. Hadhrat Hafidhahullaah also covers the validity and permissions of having to have photographs taken for mandated legal purposes, why laypersons should not make their own rulings on halaal and haraam matters, especially during this scourge of digital imaging. Issues and precursors to haraam, and their grievous consequences despite being permissible, understanding the necessities that permit haraam, making haraam halaal and vice versa, some evils borne by all types of imaging of animate objects, and our pious predecessors, and their views with regard to animated images of any kind. A 'must have' for every Muslim home.