

158232 - Ruling on watching movies and serials that portray the Prophets and the Sahabaah

the question

There are movies that portray the Prophets for the purpose of teaching children; is it permissible to let our children watch cartoon movies about the Prophets or those movies that portray Bilaal or Maryam, such as ar-Risaalah (The Message) or as-Sayyidah Maryam? I use these movies to teach children because they get confused about the stories of various Prophets and I also teach them how the Prophets put a great deal of effort into conveying their messages.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

The contemporary scholars are unanimously agreed that it is haraam to depict the Prophets (peace be upon them) in general and our Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) in particular.

Fatwas stating that this is haraam have been issued by the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and a statement to this effect was made by the Islamic Fiqh Council that met in Makkah al-Mukarramah.

There is no doubt that depicting the Prophets is a kind of disrespect towards them, because people have a great deal of respect towards them and hold them in high esteem, but depicting them detracts from that respect, especially if they are depicted in cartoons.

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What Allah has told us of their stories in the Qur'an is sufficient. "Indeed in their stories, there is a lesson for men of understanding. It (the Qur'an) is not a forged statement but a confirmation of Allah's existing Books (the Taurat (Torah), the Injeel (Gospel) and other Scriptures of Allah) and a detailed explanation of everything and a guide and a Mercy for the people who believe" [Yoosuf 12:111].

It says in a statement of the Islamic Fiqh Council: ... Depicting him, whether it is an animated drawing or otherwise, whether it is a three-dimensional image or not – all of that is haraam and is not permissible according to Islam.

It is not permissible to do that or approve of it for any purpose or aim whatsoever, because it leads to very serious consequences.

Those who are in positions of authority and those who are in charge of media and publications should prevent any depiction of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), whether three-dimensional or otherwise, in stories, reports, theatrical plays, children's books, movies, TV shows and so on. That must be denounced and any such productions should be destroyed.

The ruling that applies to the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), also applies to all of the Messengers and Prophets (blessings and peace of Allah be upon them); what is haraam in the case of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) is also haraam in their case.

End quote from Statements of the Islamic Fiqh Council, 8

th session, 6th statement.

Based on the above, it is haraam to watch such movies, whether they are portrayed by real actors or in cartoons.

Secondly:

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It is not permissible to depict the Sahaabah at all, according to the correct scholarly opinion.

A fatwa to that effect was issued by the Council of Senior Scholars in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and a statement to that effect was issued by the Islamic Fiqh Council of the Muslim World League.

In that regard there is no differentiation between the senior Sahaabah and those of lesser standing, or between the Rightly Guided Caliphs and others, because that detracts from their status and the high esteem in which they are held.

They had the honour of accompanying the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), striving in jihad with him, defending the faith, being sincere towards Allah and His Messenger and His religion, and conveying this religion and knowledge to us, which dictates that they should be held in high esteem and greatly respected.

Undoubtedly portraying them will detract from the high esteem in which they are held by people, and viewers may begin to think of them in the image of the actors who play their roles. [?]

This is in addition to what many of these serials and movies contain of distortion and fabrication of events according to what is dictated by the medium.

In a fatwa of the Standing Committee (1/712) it says: Portraying the Sahaabah or one of them is forbidden, because it is disrespectful towards them, lowers the esteem in which they are held and exposes them to criticism, even if it is thought that this serves a purpose, because the negative consequences to which it leads outweigh any benefits, and anything of which the negative consequences outweigh the positive is definitely forbidden. A statement was issued by the Council of Senior Scholars stating that this is forbidden. End quote.

To further emphasize this point, we shall quote the statement of the Council of Senior Scholars on which all its members were unanimously agreed, the text of which follows:

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1. Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, praised the Sahaabah and affirmed their high status. Presenting the life story of any one of them in the form of a play or movie is contrary to Allah's praise of them and detracts from the high status and honour that Allah, may He be exalted, granted them.
2. Depicting any one of them may expose them to mockery and belittling by people who for the most part are not righteous and are far removed from piety and Islamic conduct in their public lives, in addition to the fact that those who produce such plays and serials do it for the purpose of material gain.

No matter how careful they are, they will still include lies and backbiting. Moreover, depicting the Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them) will make people lose respect for them and begin to look down on them; their trust in the companions of the Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon them) will be shaken and the esteem in which Muslim viewers hold them will decrease. This may lead Muslims to doubt their religion and will open the door to arguing about the Companions of Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him). Some of the actors would inevitably have to play the parts of Abu Jahl and his ilk, which means that they would utter words reviling Bilaal and reviling the Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and what he brought of Islam, and this is undoubtedly wrong. It will also be taken as a means of confusing the Muslims about their religion, the Book of their Lord and the Sunnah of their Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him).

3. What is said about serving interests – such as highlighting noble characteristics and good manners, whilst making sure that facts are presented accurately on the basis of authentic reports of the seerah, and not compromising any of that in any way, in order to convey the right message and teach lessons – is mere assumption and hope. Anyone who knows how actors are and what they aim for will realize that this kind of acting is contrary to the reality of these actors and others who work in that field, and how they really live and behave.

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4. One of the established principles in Islam is that anything that leads to purely negative consequences, or of which the negative consequences outweigh the good, is haraam. Even if we assume that there is some benefit in acting the roles of the Sahaabah, its negative consequences outweigh the positive. Therefore in order to protect the public interests of the Muslims and block the means (that may lead to evil), and to protect the dignity of the Companions of Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon them), this must be prevented.

End quote from Abhaath Hay'at Kibaar al-'Ulama', 3/328

See also the answer to question no. [14488](#)