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The Fifth Question of Fatwa no. 2450

Q5: What is the ruling on performing Sujud (prostration) on graves and slaughtering sacrificial animals on them?

A: Prostrating on graves and slaughtering animals on them is a pagan act of idolatry that was practiced in Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic time of ignorance) and an act of major Shirk (associating others in worship with Allah), as both of them are acts of `Ibadah (worship) and `Ibadah must only be for Allah Alone. Anyone who performs it for other than Allah is Mushrik (one who associates others with Allah in worship). Allah (may He be Exalted) says: ﴿ Say (O Muhammad, peace be upon him): "Verily, my Salah (prayer), my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allah, the Lord of the `Alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists). ﴾ He has no partner. And of this I have been commanded, and I am the first of the Muslims. ﴾ He (may He be Exalted) also says: ﴿ Verily, We have granted you (O Muhammad, peace be upon him) Al-Kawthar (a river in Paradise). ﴾ Therefore turn in prayer to your Lord and sacrifice (to Him only). ﴾ There are other Ayahs (Qur'anic verses) also that say that prostrating and slaughtering are acts of `Ibadah and performing them for other than Allah is major Shirk. There is no doubt that visiting graves to perform Sujud and sacrifice glorifies and reveres them. It was reported by Muslim, in a long Hadith in the chapter of "Prohibiting the slaughtering of animals for other than Allah (may He be Exalted) and cursing those who do so," on the authority of `Aly ibn Abu Talib (may Allah be pleased with him), who said, "The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) told me four things: ﴿ Allah cursed those who sacrificed for other than Allah; Allah cursed those who curse their parents; Allah cursed those who shelter an innovator (in religion); and Allah cursed those who change landmarks. ﴾ It was reported by Abu Dawud in his Sunan (Hadith compilations classified by jurisprudential themes), on the authority of Thabit ibn Al-Dahhak (may Allah be pleased with him), who said,

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﴿ "A man vowed to sacrifice camels on Buwanah (a hill behind Yanbu `). So he asked the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) to about it. He (peace be upon him) asked, 'Does the place contain any idols that were worshipped in Jahiliyyah? They said, 'No.' He asked, 'Were any of their festivals held there?' They replied, 'No.' The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, 'Fulfill your vow, as a vow to perform an act of disobedience to Allah must not be fulfilled nor must one over which a human being has no control.'" ﴾ This shows that anyone who slaughters sacrificial animals for other than Allah will be cursed. It also shows that it is Haram (prohibited) to slaughter sacrificial animals in a place where other than Allah, such as an idol or grave, is glorified or in a place where the people of Jahiliyyah used to customarily assemble, even if the act is done for the Sake of Allah. ﴿

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

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