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Fatwa no. 9634

Q: Imam Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) mentioned in his book: "Al-Jawab Al-Kafy liman Sa'ala `an Al-Dawa' Al-Shafi' (An Appropriate Response to those Inquiring about Healing Treatments)" that passion for the physical form and what leads to it greatly harms `Aqidat-ul-Tawhid (faith in the Oneness of Allah) in the soul of a believer.

What is meaning of this "passion for the physical form"? Does it include pictures and statues of beautiful women that are hung on walls or erected on the street so that people can stand in front of them and love them as they love Allah or feel passionately about them to the point of infatuation? Or is the meaning of these physical forms the beautiful images that circulate in a person's mind of those they love and adore? If this is the case, what is the ruling on a man who throws himself onto his bed, closes his eyes, and imagines a naked woman and doing with her what a man does to his wife to relieve the natural urges and desires inside him?

Is this the type of passion for the physical form that can lead to Shirk (associating others in worship with Allah) that will not be forgiven - and we take refuge in Allah from this? If that is so, can we say that it is not permissible for a husband to imagine his wife being naked, or is this also included as a passion for the physical form, even though the man has the right to see all of his wife in real life and he loves every part of her?

This is the problem that I wanted to present to Your Eminence, hoping by Allah (may He be Praised and Exalted) that you will send me a quick reply, because I am very confused by this matter, especially as it is related to `Aqidah (creed). May Allah reward you the best.

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A: The meaning of the passion for the physical form here is when someone loves it in a manner that resembles or even exceeds their love of Allah. This is supported by what Ibn Al-Qayyim said; he said that maybe the one who is enamored will say that being with their lover is more beloved to them than their belief in the Oneness of their Lord; as an evil lover once said:

They are sipping from my lips

Another evil poet said that being with his lover was more inviting to him than the Mercy of his Lord - and we take refuge in You, O Allah, from that disgrace and that condition! A poet once said:

**To my heart, being with you is sweeter,
Than having the Mercy of the Majestic Creator.**

Undoubtedly, this passion is one of the worst forms of Shirk, and connected with it are other immoral acts, such as Zina (illegal sexual intercourse outside marriage) and homosexuality. There is no difference whether these photos are hung on walls or in the street, or printed in newspapers and magazines. Nor does it matter whether they are alive or drawings, and also included in this are the images people conjure up of beautiful women they are not married to do with them what will relieve their sexual desire.

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

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