



Fatwa no. 4636

Q: I want to describe to you something that people have adopted as a recent custom. Since around 1390 A.H. approximately, people have become accustomed to arranging wedding ceremonies, during which they take the bride and the bridegroom home in a procession and then take many photos of them and their families. These photos are then distributed among the relatives

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and friends as gifts. Weddings are now seen as incomplete without this custom, except by less than one percent of the population, although it is refuted by sound reason. What is the religious opinion on this? Please advise us - and may Allah advise you - through broadcasts, in newspapers, or "Da`wah (calling to Islam) Magazine." However, if you answer me through the magazine, please cite irrefutable evidence, whether of its prohibition or permissibility. May Allah protect you.

A: What you mentioned regarding taking photos of the bride, the bridegroom, and their families during wedding ceremonies is Haram (prohibited) and is one of the bad wedding customs. This is so, because taking pictures of beings with a soul is absolutely Haram and a major sin. The basic ruling concerning making pictures of beings with souls, such as human beings and animals, is that it is Haram, whether the pictures are three-dimensional; drawings on paper, material, walls, or anywhere else; or photographs, is based on a Sahih (authentic) Hadith related from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). He prohibited it, cursed those who do so and then threatened them with a painful torment. As pictures can be a means to Shirk (associating others in worship with Allah) he did this to safeguard people from standing before them, submitting to them, trying to draw near to them, and extolling them in a manner that befits only Allah (may He be Exalted). It was also prevented as it amounts to imitating Allah's Creation; and due to the Fitnah (temptation) that some pictures, such as those of actresses, semi-naked women, beauty queens, and the like contain.

Among the Hadith that show that taking pictures is prohibited and indicate that it is a major sin is the Hadith reported on the authority of [Ibn `Umar](#) (may Allah be pleased with them both), who said that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said,

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("Those who make these pictures will be punished on the Day of Resurrection and it will be said to them, 'Give life to what you created.'")(Recorded by [Al-Bukhary and Muslim](#)) There is also the Hadith narrated by [`Abdullah ibn Mas`ud](#) (may Allah be pleased with him) who said that he heard the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) say, **("The people who will receive the severest punishment on the Day of Resurrection will be those who made pictures.")**(Recorded by [Al-Bukhary and Muslim](#)) There is also the Hadith reported by [Abu Hurayrah](#) (may Allah be pleased with him) who said that he heard the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) saying, **("Allah (may He be Exalted) said: 'Who is**

worse than someone who tries to create a creation like Mine? Let them create an atom, a grain of wheat, or a grain of barley.") (Reported by Al-Bukhary and Muslim) And the Hadith reported by `A'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) who said, ("The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) came to me after a journey, and I had screened my alcove with a curtain on which there were pictures. When the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) saw it, the color of his face changed [due to anger. Trans.] and he said, 'O `A'ishah! The people who will receive the severest punishment on the Day of Resurrection will be those who imitate Allah's Creation.' So we tore it up and we made a cushion or two cushions from it.") (Recorded by Al-Bukhary and Muslim) (The alcove that was screened by the curtain was an arched opening in the wall.) There is also a Hadith narrated by Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both) who said that he heard the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) saying, ("Anyone who makes pictures in this world will be assigned to breathe a soul into them on the Day of Resurrection, but will not be able to breathe.") (Recorded by Al-Bukhary and Muslim) There is yet another Hadith reported by Ibn `Abbas that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, ("Every artist will be in the Fire. Every picture that they made will be given a soul and will torment them in Hell.")

Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both) added, ("If you must do it, make pictures of trees and that which has no soul.") (Recorded by Al-Bukhary and Muslim) And there is another Hadith reported by Abu Juhayfah who said about the Prophet (peace be upon him) that (He cursed those who accept Riba (usury), those who give it, and he cursed the artists.") (Recorded by Imam Al-Bukhary in his Sahih [Book of Authentic Hadith])

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The general meaning of these Hadith is that making pictures of anything that has a soul is absolutely prohibited. However, it is permissible to make pictures of objects without a soul, such as trees, the sea, mountains, and the like, as mentioned by Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them both), and it is not known that any of the Sahabah (Companions) refuted what he said. This is understood from the following phrase that was mentioned in the Hadith of the threat to ("Give life to what you created") And also these words in the Hadith: ("Will be assigned to breathe a soul into them on the Day of Resurrection, but will not be able to breathe.")

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

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