

*Legal Rulings of the Scholars Concerning **Participating** With the Disbelievers In Their **Eid** Festivals/Celebrations; **Congratulating** and **Imitating** them On Such Occasions.*

Question: Some Muslims Participate with the Christians in their *Eids* (Festivals/Celebrations/Holiday Observances). What is your advice to them?

Answer: It is not permissible for a Muslim to participate with the Christians or Jews or any other disbelievers in their Holiday Observances. In fact, it is obligatory to avoid them. This is because anyone who imitates a people is (considered to be) one of them. And the Messenger of Allah (salla-llahu alaihi wa sallam) has warned us from imitating them or conforming to their behavior patterns. Therefore, the believers - men or women - must be cautioned from these things.

Additionally, it is not permissible for the believers to assist or aid them in their celebrations or observances in any way whatsoever, since these celebrations/festivals conflict with the Islamic Laws. Hence, *participation* in these observances is not allowed, nor *cooperation* with those who observe them, nor *assisting* them in any way - even by offering tea or coffee or anything else, such as the utensils (for eating or drinking), or other than that.

This is because of the saying of Allah, the One Free From All Imperfections, the Most High: ***Help one another in virtue, righteousness and piety; but do not help one another in sin and transgression. And fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Severe in punishment.*** Hence, *participation* with the disbelievers in their holiday observances is a manner of *helping one another in sin and transgression*.

Shaykh Abdul-Aziz ibn Baaz (Rahimahu-llah)

[Taken from *Majmoo' al-Fataawaa* 2/925]

Question: What is the Legal Ruling Concerning Congratulating the Disbelievers on **Christmas**?

Answer: Congratulating/greeting the disbelievers for **Christmas** or any other of their religious holidays is forbidden by agreement (of the scholars), as it has been reported by Ibn al-Qayyim (Rahimahu-llah) in his book ***Ahkaam Ahl adh-Dhimmah***, where he said: As for offering congratulations related to the religious ceremonies, rites or practices of *al-Kufr* (disbelief) – that are particular to the disbelievers – it is forbidden by agreement (of the scholars). Such as congratulating them on their holidays or their fasting, saying: May you have a Blessed *Eid*; or saying: Congratulations on this Holiday, or sayings similar to this.

Even if the one who says this escapes from (falling into) disbelief; it is at least a forbidden act, and it is similar to congratulating them when they prostrate (or perform an act of worship) to the Cross. In fact, this is a more severe sin in front of Allah, and more hateful, than congratulating upon drinking alcohol, killing someone or committing an unlawful sexual act or whatever is similar to it.

Many of those who have no respect for the *Deen* fall into such acts, while not knowing how ugly is this action of his. Hence, whoever congratulates someone for committing a sin (*ma'siyah*) or an innovation (*bid'ah*) or an act of disbelief (*kufr*) – such a person has subjected himself to the anger and hatred of Allah. [End of Quote]

The reason why congratulating or greeting the disbelievers on the occasion of their religious *Eids* (celebrations or festivals) is considered to be so server – as mentioned by Ibn al-Qayyim – is because it suggests agreement [on the part of the one who congratulates them] with the ceremonies, rites or practices of ***kufr*** (disbelief) which they are engaged in; and that he is happy or pleased with these practices *for them*, even though he may not be pleased with this ***kufr*** *for himself*.

Nonetheless, it is forbidden for a Muslim to be pleased with the ceremonies or practices of *kufr*, or to congratulate someone on such occasions, since Allah, the Most High, is not pleased with such. Allah, the Most High, says: ***If you disbelieve, then verily Allah is not in need of you; He is not pleased with disbelief for His servants. And if you are thankful (by being believers), He is pleased therewith for you...***[Zumar 39:7] He, the Most High, also says: ***This day, I have perfected your religion for you, and completed My Favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion...***[al-Maa'idah 5:3] Hence, congratulating them on such occasions is **Haraam** (forbidden) no matter if you are working with this person on the same job or not.

Question: How are we to reply to them if they greet us with *Christmas Greetings*?

Answer: If they greet us on the occasion of their *Eid* (holiday observances) - then we are not to reply to such greetings, since these are not our *Eids*, and because these are *Eids* which Allah, the Most High, is not pleased with since they are either innovations (*mubtadi'ah*) in their religion, or legislated observances (*mashroo'ah*) which have been abrogated and cancelled by the religion of Islam with which Allah missioned Muhammad (salla-llahu alaiyhi wa sallam) to the whole of the creation. Allah, the Most High, says: ***And whoever desires a religion, other than Islam, it will never be accepted from him, and in the Hereafter he will be of the losers.***

Question: Is it permissible to attend the parties which they hold on such occasions?

Answer: A Muslim's acceptance of their invitation [to attend such celebrations] is not lawful, since to do so is much worse than simply congratulating them on such occasions, due to what this entails of participating - or sharing with them - in their observances.

Question: Is it permissible to imitate them in these things?

Answer: It is forbidden for the Muslims to imitate the disbelievers by holding *parties* on these occasions, exchanging *gifts*, distributing *sweets*, cooking *food* or *stopping work* and whatever is similar to this. This is based upon the saying of the Prophet (salla-llahu alaiyhi wa sallam): ***Whoever imitates a people, then he is one of them.***

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah [in his book - *Iqtidaa' as-Siraat al-Mustaqeem Mukhaalifah Ashaab al-Jaheem* (Following the Straight Path - Opposing the People of the Hell-Fire)] said: *Imitating them (the disbelievers) in some of their holiday celebrations/festivals definitely brings happiness to their hearts concerning the falsehood which they are following; and it might even give them hope or encouragement to take advantage of the opportunity and humiliate the weak (Muslims).* [End of Quote].

Question: Is a person considered sinful if they do any of the above mentioned acts unintentionally; i.e. he/she only did it out of politeness (*mujaamalah*), shyness (*hayaa'*), or so as not to cause any embarrassment (*ihraaj*) or for any other reason?

Answer: Whoever does any of these things is considered sinful - no matter whether he did so out of politeness (*mujaamalah*), friendliness (*tawaddud*), shyness (*hayaa'*) or for any other reason - since this is considered to be *al-Mudaahanah fi Deeni-llah* (**hypocrisy**) and it is one of the causes of strengthening the spirits of the disbelievers and their pride in their religion. And Allah Alone is the One Whom we ask to give the Muslims strength and might in their *Deen*, grant them steadfastness in practicing it, and victory over their enemies. Verily, He is *Qawee* (Strong) *Azeez* (Mighty).

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Saalih ibn Uthaymeen (Hafizahu-llah)

[Translation: Abu Muhammad. 12/23/99 Taken from *Majmoo' al-Fataawaa* 3/44]