

# The Fitnah of Taking Pictures with a Camera and Cell Phone

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All praises to Allah Ta'ala, Who sent His Rasool with guidance and the Deen (religion) of Haq (truth) to make it triumph over all religions, although those who associate others with Allah dislike it. May Allah shower His Peace and Blessings upon him (the Rasool) and upon his family, companions and followers.

Among the things in which all and sundry have fallen prey to and have become crazy about, is taking pictures with the cell phone, which is in the hand or pocket of men and women, young and old.

Thus, it is possible for them to take pictures of everyone, every scene and situation, whether a public scene or private, beneficial or non-beneficial.

Sometimes a picture is taken of some people's personal and private things. Sometimes, it is not permissible to take pictures on account of the harm that ensues in the wake of taking the picture, leaving aside the ruling of picture taking (pictography).

There are a host of evils and wrongs which ensue in the wake of pictography with the cell phone. From among them are the following:

1. *Opposing the Nusoos* (clear-cut verdicts) of the Hadith which show the prohibition of picture-taking, and which sounds a severe warning (against it) and cursing the picture takers. The justification of the (erroneous) interpreters and the following of vain desires are the origin of every evil which has befallen the Ummah, from ancient to modern times. If the justifier is a Mujtahid in Ilm (knowledge), he is *ma'zoor* (excused), but the one who follows his vain desires is sinful and unexcused. The minimum (ruling) in regard to this pictography which many people have fallen prey to and which has been halaalized on the basis of some vagaries is that it is *Mushtabah* (doubtful). But, Rasulullah Sallallahu alaihi wasallam has stated:

**“Whoever abstains from doubtful matters has verily exonerated himself in his Deen and his honour. And those involved in doubtful things will fall into Haraam.”**

2. The taking of a picture of the one who is displeased (of his picture being taken). This is violating his *Haq* (right). The evil increases by spreading (circulating /posting) it (the picture taken of a person who was unhappy of it). Sometimes the picture of a female is taken. Taking and spreading (posting/broadcasting) her picture is not permissible even if she approves of it. Many a time it brings about *Talaaq* on her in the case of her being married. It causes disinclination to her (in the hearts of respectable people) in the case of her being unmarried. Together with that is the evil of looking at her form/shape for those upon whom this is not lawful among strange men. Among it (the evils of pictography) is taking the pictures of people’s private life without their consent. For example: their meetings, house, furniture, pictures of their children, etc.
3. Taking pictures of female gatherings, for example: weddings etc. and circulating these pictures. This enables the prying and *Faasiqeen* to view what is not lawful and to become aware of it.
4. The pictures of some evil scenes, for example: mixed gatherings and parties compounded by immorality and dancing by mixed crowds of men and women, and then to circulate them and exposing the people of *Baatil* under the pretext of condemning the wrong act. This enables the heart to become pleased by seeing those evil scenes and enjoying it. If it has to be condemned, and this it is necessary, then it is *Waajib* to safe keep those pictures as evidence against the accused when he rejects the words of the truthful witness. Or when he intends to deceive. As far as a public condemnation is concerned, it should be by word.
5. Futile pictures. That is, pictures in which there is no benefit in Deen and dunya. The sole motive is *hawa* (vain desire); love for picture taking and idleness. Also included are taking pictures of men at wedding functions, etc. Taking pictures of the bridegroom and those with him when they enter and exit. Among futile pictures are the pictures of bayaans in the Musajid and of Hifz classes and hallucinating that this serves as endorsement. The statement of an honest or trustable person is more reliable than a picture.
6. Keeping pictures for remembrance, as they (those involved in this) claim. The worst is the picture taking of husband and wife, and keeping their pictures for this purpose. Verily, keeping pictures prevents the Angels from entering the home. Thus, Nabi Sallallahu alaihi wasallam:

**“The Mala’ikah do not enter a house in which there is a dog or a picture.”**

Excluded from this are pictures which cannot be effaced, such as the pictures on money.

We present to you, O Muslim, some Ahaadith regarding the *Tahreem* (prohibition) of taking pictures:

- It is reported from Hazrat Abu Hurairah (Radhiyallahu anhu) that Nabi (Sallallahu alaihi wasallam) said: *“Allah Ta’ala said: ‘Who can be a greater oppressor than the one goes and creates like Me? Let them create an atom or a grain of wheat or a grain of barely.’”* (Bukhaari and Muslim)
- In Saheehain (Bukhaari and Muslim) it is reported from Hadhrat Aisha (Radhiyallahu anha) that Nabi (Sallallahu alaihi wasallam) said, *“The severest punishment on the Day of Qiyaamah will be meted out to those who imitate the Creation of Allah Ta’ala (i.e. making and taking pictures etc.)”*
- Hadhrat Ibn Abbas (Radhiyallahu anhu) reports: *“I heard Rasulullah (Sallallahu alaihi wasallam) saying: ‘Every picture-maker (photographer etc.) will be in Jahannam. A body will be created for every picture he made (drew, snapped, captured, posted etc.) which will torment him in Jahannam.’”* (Bukhaari and Muslim)
- Hadhrat Ibn Abbas (Radhiyallahu anhu) reports that Nabi (Sallallahu alaihi wasallam) said: *“The one who draws (snaps, captures, posts, etc.) a picture in this world will be made to give life to it (the picture) on the Day of Qiyaamah, whereas he will not be able to blow life (in it).”* (Bukhaari and Muslim)

Hence, it devolves upon the Muslim to fear Allah Ta’ala, take precaution for the safety of his/her Deen and that he/she warn the people who follow (their) vain desires not to be deceived (of what is right from wrong) on the basis of what the majority of people do. The abundance of *baatil* (wrong) does not mitigate it.

**“Say, ‘Evil and good are not even, although the abundance of evil might impress you.’ So fear Allah, O intelligent ones, so that you may be successful.”** (Qur’aan)

We ask Allah Ta’ala for *Baseerat* (foresight) in Deen and a good intention in the quest for the Haq (truth).

May Allah Ta’ala shower His Peace and Blessings upon Muhammad, his family and all of his companions.

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