
Protection of Other Religious Sanctities for Interfaith Harmony in The Light of Sirah of Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

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Abstract

The protection of religious sanctities is a fundamental aspect of interfaith harmony and societal cohesion. This paper explores the principles and practices related to the protection of other religious sanctities as exemplified in the Sirah (biography) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). By analyzing the Prophet's interactions with non-Muslim communities and his approach to their places of worship and religious symbols, this study highlights how his actions and teachings underscore the importance of respecting and safeguarding the sanctities of all faiths. The research draws on primary sources such as Hadith and Sirah literature and contextualizes these within broader Islamic ethical frameworks. It argues that the Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) model of respect and protection for other religious sanctities offers a timeless guide for fostering mutual respect and coexistence in a diverse world. This investigation not only contributes to a deeper understanding of Islamic teachings on interfaith relations but also offers valuable insights for contemporary dialogue and conflict resolution among different religious communities.

Keywords: Religious Sanctities, Sirah, Interfaith relations, Communities

Introduction:

The protection of religious sanctities is a cornerstone for establishing and maintaining interfaith harmony and societal cohesion, particularly in today's increasingly diverse and pluralistic world. Respecting the beliefs, symbols, and places of worship of different faiths is not only a

matter of ethical obligation but also crucial for fostering peaceful coexistence among communities. In Islamic teachings, the life and practices of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) offer a profound model of how such respect and protection can be realized in practice. His Sirah (biography) demonstrates a consistent commitment to safeguarding the religious rights and sanctities of non-Muslim communities, which is pivotal in Islamic history for promoting tolerance and understanding.

This paper seeks to explore the principles and practices of protecting other religious sanctities as exemplified by the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and to draw lessons from his interactions with non-Muslim communities. Through a detailed analysis of his approach toward non-Muslim places of worship, religious symbols, and practices, this study aims to shed light on the ways in which the Prophet's actions laid the foundation for interfaith harmony. By examining primary sources such as Hadith and Sirah literature, alongside Islamic legal and ethical frameworks, the research emphasizes how the Prophet's example serves as a timeless guide for interfaith dialogue, mutual respect, and conflict resolution.

The relevance of this study extends beyond historical interest, offering valuable insights for contemporary efforts to promote peaceful relations among different religious communities. In an era where religious misunderstandings and conflicts are prevalent, the lessons drawn from the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) on respecting the sanctities of other faiths provide a foundation for fostering mutual understanding and cooperation. This paper argues that his model presents a viable approach for addressing modern interfaith challenges and strengthening the bonds between religious groups in today's globalized society.

Protection of Sanctities:

According to Islamic tradition, Prophet Ibrahim (PBUH) grew up in a society that worshipped idols. He, however, rejected this polytheistic belief and came to believe in the oneness of God. His journey towards monotheism is a central theme in the Qur'an.

The following verses indicate his wish to worship the Almighty Allah after examining the great creatures like, Star, Moon and Sun.

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ أَرَزَرْتَنِي أَصْنَمَا إِلَهَةً إِنِّي أَرَاكَ وَقَوْمَكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ - وَكَذَلِكَ نُرِيَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مَلَكُوتَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلِيَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُوقِنِينَ - فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ اللَّيْلُ رَأَى كَوْكَبًا قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَا أُحِبُّ الْإِفْلِينَ - فَلَمَّا رَأَى الْقَمَرَ بَازِعًا قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَئِن لَّمْ يَهْدِنِي رَبِّي لَأَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الضَّالِّينَ - فَلَمَّا رَأَى الشَّمْسَ بَازِعَةً قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي فَلَمَّا أَفَلَتْ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ - إِنِّي وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ¹

When Ibrahim (PBUH) addressed his father Aazar, questioning the worship of idols as gods, he expressed his awareness of their evident error.

Allah then revealed to Ibrahim the majesty of the heavens and the earth to strengthen his faith. As night fell, Ibrahim observed a star and momentarily considered it his Lord, but upon its disappearance, he rejected it. Similarly, when he saw the moon, he briefly deemed it his Lord, yet when it faded, he acknowledged that only Allah guides him from astray. Subsequently, upon witnessing the rising sun, he perceived its greatness momentarily as his Lord before recognizing Allah as the true Creator. Ibrahim declared his disavowal of associating anything with Allah and affirmed his unwavering devotion solely to the Creator of the heavens and the earth.

Then the Prophet Ibrahim (PBUH), realizing the futility of idol worship, decided to challenge the prevailing beliefs of his society. He went to the temple where the idols were kept and, in a symbolic act of defiance, broke the idols, except for the largest one. He placed the axe on the shoulder of the biggest idol, implying that it was the culprit. The Holy Quran says:

وَتَاللَّهِ لَأَكِيدَنَّ أَصْنَامَكُمْ بَعْدَ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا مُدْبِرِينَ . فَجَعَلَهُمْ جُدَادًا إِلَّا كَبِيرًا لَهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ يَرْجِعُونَ . قَالُوا مَنْ فَعَلَ هَذَا بِآلِهَتِنَا إِنَّهُ لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ . قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا فَتَى يَدُكُرُهُمْ يُقَالُ لَهُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ . قَالُوا فَأْتُوا بِهِ عَلَى أَعْيُنِ النَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَشْهَدُونَ . قَالُوا أَأَنْتَ فَعَلْتَ هَذَا بِآلِهَتِنَا يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ . قَالَ بَلْ فَعَلَهُ كَبِيرُهُمْ هَذَا فَاسْأَلُوهُمْ إِنْ كَانُوا يَنْطَلِقُونَ²

By Allah, I swear that I will devise a plan against your idols after you have turned away." With determination, Ibrahim proceeded to shatter all the idols, leaving only the largest intact. When questioned about the destruction, the people speculated about the culprit, with some mentioning Ibrahim. Urged to bring him forward, they confronted Ibrahim, asking if he was responsible. Ibrahim deflected blame, attributing the act to the largest idol. He challenged them to ask the idols themselves if they could speak.

When the people discovered what Ibrahim (PBUH) had done, they were enraged. They confronted him, and in response, Ibrahim challenged their beliefs, asking them why they worshipped objects that could not benefit or harm them. Ibrahim's (PBUH) action led to his trial. He was thrown into a fire by his own people, but by God's miraculous intervention, he emerged unharmed. This event is known as the "miracle of the fire", and it is a testament to the power and protection of God. The Holy Quran says:

فَرَجَعُوا إِلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ فَقَالُوا إِنَّكُمْ أَنْتُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ . ثُمَّ نَكِسُوا عَلَىٰ رُءُوسِهِمْ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمْ مَا هَؤُلَاءِ يَنْطَلِقُونَ . قَالَ أَفَتَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُكُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَضُرُّكُمْ . أَفَبِ لَكُمْ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ . قَالُوا حَرِّقُوهُ وَانصُرُوا آلِهَتَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ فَاعِلِينَ . فَلَمَّا يَا نَارُ كُونِي بَرْدًا وَسَلَامًا عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ³

So, they turned to one another and said, "In fact, you yourselves are the wrongdoers" Then, hanging their heads they reversed their position (and replied to Ibrahim,) "You already knew that they do not speak. "He said, "Do you then worship, beside Allah, what does neither benefit you in the least nor harm you? Fie upon you and upon what you worship other than Allah. Do you then not understand?" They said, "(O people) burn him and

help your gods, if you are to act. "We said, "O fire, be cold and safe for Ibrahim - His unwavering belief in the oneness of God, even in the face of severe opposition, earned him the title of "Khalilullah" (Friend of God) in Islamic tradition. His legacy is celebrated as an example of faith, courage, and submission to God's will.

Now the question arises that why the Jinn's made images for Soloman (PBUH) as the Holy Quran indicates in the following words:

يَعْمَلُونَ لَهُ مَا يَشَاءُ مِنْ مَحَارِبَ وَتَمَاثِيلَ وَجِفَانٍ كَالْجَوَابِ وَقُدُورٍ رَاسِيَاتٍ⁴

They used to make for him whatever he wished of castles, images, basins as (large as) tanks, and big cookware fixed (in their places).

The answer to this misconception made by some ignorant individuals is that the Prophet Solomon (PBUH) had idols crafted by the jinn for him, as mentioned in the verse. However, this practice was part of the laws in force before our current legal framework. It has been abrogated by the final Prophet's (peace be upon him) legislation. Additionally, the statues attributed to Solomon were not objects of worship, but rather decorative images. Our religion instructs us not to use images for adornment as it will be mentioned ahead⁵.

Now let's know the history and starting point of the images and idols of holy figures like prophets and saints with detail. Allama Qurtubi says: There are five sons of Adam with names:

وَدُّ، سُوعًا، يَغُوثُ، يَعُوقُ، نَسْرُ

And they were worshipers, and one of them died, the remaining mourned for him. Satan said: I will make a similar picture for you. If you look at it, you will remember him. They said: yes, please do that. So, he made it in the mosque from scratch and lead. Then another died, so he photographed him until they all died, so he photographed them. And things decreased as they decrease today until they left the worship of God Almighty after a while. Satan said to them: Why do you not worship anything? They said: What do we worship? He said: Your gods and the gods of your fathers, don't you see in your prayer place? So, they worshiped it instead of God, until God sent Noah and invited them toward Almighty Allah. So, they responded that they can't give up these five idols. The actual hadith is as follow:

قَالَ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ كَعْبٍ: كَانَ لِأَدَمَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ خَمْسُ بَنِينَ: وُدُّ وَسُوعًا وَيَغُوثُ وَيَعُوقُ وَنَسْرُ، وَكَانُوا عِبَادًا

فَمَاتَ وَاحِدٌ مِنْهُمْ فَخَزَنُوا عَلَيْهِ، فَقَالَ الشَّيْطَانُ: أَنَا أَصَوِّرُ لَكُمْ مِثْلَهُ إِذَا نَظَرْتُمْ إِلَيْهِ ذَكَرْتُمُوهُ⁶

So, Satan doesn't invite to polytheism directly, but he convinces gradually toward it. Today someone will reverently hang the picture of these personalities in the house, tomorrow when he dies, his children and then their children god forbid will start worshiping him. And it is a rule that when the

end of something is prohibited then its beginning is forbidden which as well is called “سد الذرائع” conventionally.

According to Safi: One report, recorded by the biographer Ibn Ishaq, Muhammad personally spared two images, one of Jesus Christ and the other of Mary. According to the historian al-Waqidi, Muhammad indicated that these two icons were not to be destroyed by protectively putting his hands over them.

Analysis: Safi says that according to a narration reported by Ibn Ishaq, while breaking the idols in the Kaaba, the Holy Prophet left two idols of Jesus and Mary. He didn't quote the reference of it- I searched in Seerat ibn ishaq but didn't find it. He then cites a tradition of Waqidi according to which Muhammad protected these idols by placing his hands on them. I also searched the sources but could find it again. Instead, Waqidi narrates a tradition in which Umar is ordered by Muhammad to break all the idols. There is an open contradiction in the traditions of Waqidi. Because according to this, first Umar is told to break every idol except the idol of Muhammad Ibrahim. When Umar does the same, he says break the idol of Ibrahim too. The actual text is as follow:

وَأَمْرُهُ أَنْ يَتَقَدَّمَ فَيَفْتَحَ الْبَيْتَ، فَلَا يَدْعُ فِيهِ صُورَةً إِلَّا مَحَاهَا، وَلَا تَمَثَّلًا، إِلَّا صُورَةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ... فَتَرَكَ عُمَرُ صُورَةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، فَلَمَّا دَخَلَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ رَأَى صُورَةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، فَقَالَ: يَا عُمَرُ، أَلَمْ أَمُرْكَ أَلَّا تَدْعُ فِيهَا صُورَةً إِلَّا مَحَوْتَهَا؟ فَقَالَ عُمَرُ: كَانَتْ صُورَةُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ. قَالَ: فَامْحُهَا⁷

Translation: "The Holy prophet commanded his companion that he should enter and open the Kaaba, and he did not leave in it any image without erasing it, and no idol except the image of Ibrahim... So, Umar left the image of Ibrahim. When the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, entered, he saw the image of Ibrahim, peace be upon him, and said, 'O Umar, didn't I command you to not leave any image in it except to erase it?' Umar said, 'It was the image of Ibrahim.' He said, 'Then erase it. '"

Now the word “تمثال” should be defined: so that we can know about its actual meanings

التِّمَثَالُ - بالكسر: الصورة / اسم للشيء المصنوع مُشَبَّهًا بِخَلْقٍ مِنْ خَلْقِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى 8-

According to another tradition of Allama Waqidi, the Holy prophet put his on the idol of Maryam and order to break all the idols except the idol of Ibrahim. The actual text is as follows: So, the traditions of Waqidi are contradicting and conflicting with each other regarding breaking and not breaking the idols of Abraham. As far as the idol of Mary is concerned, there is no description of its breaking and not breaking. There is only the fact that Muhammad put his hand on it. So, the ambiguity remains about this-As far as the idol of Jesus is mentioned by Safi with reference to Martin Lings, I did not find it in any book of Sīrah or hadith. However, Lings has quoted the

reference in foot note that there are other accounts about not breaking the idol of Mary and Jesus. And he did not give the reference as well.

لَمَّا دَخَلَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَرَأَى فِيهَا صُورَةَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَعَظِيمَةً... ثُمَّ رَأَى صُورَةَ مَرْيَمَ، فَوَضَعَ يَدَهُ عَلَيْهَا ثُمَّ قَالَ: امْسَحُوا مَا فِيهَا مِنَ الصُّورِ إِلَّا صُورَةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ⁹

Karen Armstrong says: Inside the Kabah, the walls had been decorated with pictures of the pagan deities, and Muhammad ordered them all to be obliterated, though, it is said, he allowed frescoes of Jesus and Mary to remain¹⁰.

On the contrary, there is not one, but several traditions indicate to erase all the idols as Allama Suhaili has written with reference to Ibn Hisham.

أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ دَخَلَ الْبَيْتَ يَوْمَ الْفَتْحِ فَرَأَى فِيهِ صُورَةَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَعَظِيمَةً فَرَأَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مُصَوَّرًا فِي يَدِهِ الْأَزْلَامُ يُسْتَقْسِمُ بِهَا، فَقَالَ قَاتِلْهُمْ اللَّهُ جَعَلُوا شَيْخَنَا يُسْتَقْسِمُ بِالْأَزْلَامِ مَا شَأْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَالْأَزْلَامِ {مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَلَكِنْ كَانَ حَنِيفًا مُسْلِمًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ} ثُمَّ أَمَرَ بِتِلْكَ الصُّورِ كُلِّهَا فَطُمَسَتْ¹¹

Another report says: And he did not point to an idol but that it fell to its face, and did not point to its back but that it fell to its face until no idol remained there. The words are as follows.

فَمَا أَشَارَ إِلَى صَنْمٍ مِنْهَا فِي وَجْهِهِ إِلَّا وَقَعَ لِقَفَاهُ وَلَا أَشَارَ إِلَى قَفَاهُ إِلَّا وَقَعَ لِيُوجْهِهِ حَتَّى مَا بَقِيَ مِنْهَا صَنْمٌ إِلَّا وَقَعَ¹²

Lings mentions in his book about the idol of Ibrahim and the idol of Jesus and Mary in the footnotes that the Holy prophet put his hand on it as a protective shield but does not give any refer, perhaps the source will be book of any orientalist.

According to Martin Lingz says: The Prophet turned away from the Kaaba towards the idols encircling it, numbering three hundred and sixty. Reciting verses from Revelation, he pointed at each idol with his staff, causing them to fall forward on their faces. Completing the circle, he prayed at the station of Abraham adjacent to the Kaaba. Inside, except for an icon of the Virgin Mary and Jesus, and a painting of an old man representing Abraham, the walls were adorned with images of pagan deities. Protecting the icon, the Prophet ordered all other paintings to be erased, except for those of Abraham. It is noted in a footnote that some accounts omit these exceptions. Hubal, the largest idol, was ordered to be broken and all idols to be burned. The Prophet commanded that anyone with idols in their homes must destroy them, spreading this decree throughout the city it¹³.

Similarly, breaking the idols of Abraham and Ishmael is also explained explicitly as Safiur Rahman Mubarakpuri says:

فَرَأَى فِيهَا الصُّورَ، وَرَأَى فِيهَا صُورَةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ - عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ - يُسْتَقْسِمَانِ بِالْأَزْلَامِ، فَقَالَ: قَاتِلْهُمُ اللَّهُ، وَاللَّهِ مَا اسْتَقْسَمَا بِهَا قَطُّ. وَرَأَى فِي الْكَعْبَةِ حَمَامَةً مِنْ عِيدَانِ، فَكَسَرَهَا بِيَدِهِ، وَأَمَرَ بِالصُّورِ فَمَحَيْتُ¹⁴.

After that, Safi says that there are two types of idols, one that is worshiped, and the other that is not worshiped. In his own words:

As had been the case with Judaism, Islamic teachings did not approve of graven images in places of worship. Yet Muhammad's action demonstrates that he and his followers could and did distinguish between idols devoted to polytheistic deities and icons of previous revelations, such as Christianity. Throughout the centuries, Muslim artists have honored Muhammad's decision by not creating icons or images that bear the likeness of the human form in places of worship, though beautiful and reverent miniatures depicting the prophets and saints have been a part of the Islamic arts¹⁵.

Analysis: It is forbidden to place carved or graven images in a place of worship, and the reason might be that prostrating in front of this image creates the suspicion of polytheism. Although the prohibition is not confined to place of worship, but the Holy prophet tore the cloth that contained the graven images made by Aisha for her shelf. As that the place of worship is not specific, but one can worship anywhere. So a person can prostrate in front of shelf as well. The text of hadith is as below:

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا: «أَنَّهَا كَانَتْ اتَّخَذَتْ عَلَى سَهْوَةٍ لَهَا سِتْرًا فِيهِ تَمَائِيلٌ، فَهَتَكَهُ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ»¹⁶.

The word “تَمَائِيل” is plural of “تمثال” which means portraying a thing having soul from the creation of God-

In the same way, Muhammad also ordered Ali to erase the image, as Hazrat Ali says:

عن أبي الهيثاج الأَسَدِيِّ، قَالَ: قَالَ لِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ: أَلَا أَبْعَثُكَ عَلَى مَا بَعَثَنِي عَلَيْهِ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ؟ «أَنْ لَا تَدْعَ تَمْتَالًا إِلَّا طَمَسْتَهُ وَلَا قَبْرًا مُشْرِفًا إِلَّا سَوَّيْتَهُ»¹⁷

Similarly, Hazrat Aisha says that Muhammad (peace be upon him) did not allow any kind of pictures in the house, but used to tear them down. The Hadith is as follow:

أَنَّ عَائِشَةَ، رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا حَدَّثَتْهُ: أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَمْ يَكُنْ يَتْرُكُ فِي بَيْتِهِ شَيْئًا فِيهِ تَصَالِبٌ إِلَّا نَقَضَهُ¹⁸

In this hadith, it is mentioned not to leave it in the whole house, not only reserved with the place of worship

However, one more thing should be kept in mind here that only girls are allowed to play with such dolls etc. which are made of cloth or any living things. As a few girls were playing with Aisha, the Holy prophet entered and asked, "What kind of cloth horses are these that have arms?" So, Aisha replied, "Didn't Solomon's horses have arms?" Muhammad smiled. The hadith is narrated by Ibn Habban.

عائشة أنها قالت: دخل علي صلى الله عليه وسلم وأنا ألعب باللعب، فرفع الستر، وقال: ما هذا يا

عائشة؟ فقلت: لعب يا رسول الله قال: "ما هذا الذي أرى بينهن" قلت: فرس يا رسول الله، قال: "فرس من رقاع له

جناح"؟ قالت: فقلت: ألم يكن لسليمان بن داود خيل لها أجنحة؟ فضحك رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم¹⁹

The scholars explain the hadith further. This hadith is base for the permissibility of taking pictures of little girls and dolls in order to girls play with them. This is an exceptional case from the common prohibition of taking pictures. The reason and philosophy behind this is in order to train the girls from a young age to take charge of their homes and children. That is why scholars permitted selling toys to girls as well as it is discussed by ibn hajar Al-asqalani.

واستدل بهذا الحديث على جواز اتخاذ صور البنات واللعب من أجل لعب البنات بهن وخص ذلك من عموم النهي عن اتخاذ الصور وبه جزم عياض ونقله عن الجمهور وأنهم أجازوا بيع اللعب للبنات لتدريبهن من صغرهم على أمر بيوتهن وأولادهن²⁰

At the end of this paragraph, Safi says that having small images of holy figures is a part of Islamic history and is correct-According to Safi. Though beautiful and reverent miniatures depicting the prophets and saints have been a part of the Islamic arts.

Analysis: When it has been proven from hadiths that it is forbidden to make and keep a picture, while it should be in the form of a statue, or made by drawing it on cloth (graven) or made by drawing it on paper as miniature. As the basic reason for prohibition of the image is claiming the similarity of creation of Allah. which is called typically in Arabic "مضاهاة خلق الله".

Therefore, when the base is found in all these, then there is no difference in depicting the image of the living being, between the small and large, depicted on cloth, paper or clay and stone, directly by hand or taken with a camera, in its prohibition. However, there is some academic discussion among scholars about the pic which is taken by camera while remained in screen and not shifted outward yet. Some say that it is like reflection of mirror until it remains in screen, so it is allowed, while others say it is also prohibited.

Anne meri schemel criticizes to have the statue or image of any prophet or Muhammad in the following words:

In a religion that prohibits the depiction of living beings, especially of revered figures, the creation of legitimate images of the Prophet was naturally prohibited. Medieval Christians, misunderstanding Islam and conflating it with ancient paganism, erroneously referred to "golden images or statues of Mahomet" in their poetry and epics. However, representations of the Prophet can be found in miniature paintings within Turkish, Persian, and even Indian traditions. While early fourteenth-century portrayals often depicted him unveiled, later depictions typically veiled his face. Present-day Muslim fundamentalists and much of the intelligentsia vehemently oppose such depictions as heretical. Nonetheless, Muslims found alternative ways to honor and visualize the Prophet –the so called *hilya*.²¹

Selling of Idols:

Making sculptures and idols is not permissible and selling them is also forbidden and prohibited. Just as Muhammad (peace be upon him) declared the selling of idols, pork, carrion, and alcohol as forbidden. The tradition is as following:

عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ عَامَ الْفَتْحِ وَهُوَ بِمَكَّةَ: «إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ حَرَّمَ بَيْعَ الْخَمْرِ، وَالْمَيْتَةِ، وَالْخِنْزِيرِ، وَالْأَصْنَامِ»²²

Its explanation has been done by Allama Ibn Qayyim with detail:

وَأَمَّا تَحْرِيمُ بَيْعِ الْأَصْنَامِ، فَيُسْتَفَادُ مِنْهُ تَحْرِيمُ بَيْعِ كُلِّ آلَةٍ مُتَّخَذَةٍ لِلشِّرْكَ عَلَى أَيِّ وَجْهِ كَانَتْ، وَمِنْ أَيِّ نَوْعٍ كَانَتْ صَنْعًا أَوْ وَثَنًا أَوْ صَلِيْبًا، وَكَذَلِكَ الْكُتُبُ الْمُشْتَمِلَةُ عَلَى الشِّرْكِ، وَعِبَادَةُ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ، فَهَذِهِ كُلُّهَا يَجِبُ إِزَالَتُهَا وَإِعْدَامُهَا، وَبَيْعُهَا ذَرْبَةٌ إِلَى اقْتِنَائِهَا وَاتِّخَاذِهَا، فَهِيَ أَوْلَى بِتَحْرِيمِ الْبَيْعِ مِنْ كُلِّ مَا عَدَاهَا، فَإِنَّ مَفْسَدَةَ بَيْعِهَا بِحَسَبِ مَفْسَدَتِهَا فِي نَفْسِهَا، وَالنَّبِيُّ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - لَمْ يُؤَخِّرْ ذِكْرَهَا لِخَفَةِ أَمْرِهَا، وَلَكِنَّهُ تَدْرَجَ مِنَ الْأَسْهَلِ إِلَى مَا هُوَ أَغْلَظُ مِنْهُ... ثُمَّ ذَكَرَ بَعْدَ تَحْرِيمِ بَيْعِ الْأَصْنَامِ، وَهُوَ أَعْظَمُ تَحْرِيمًا وَإِثْمًا، وَأَشَدُّ مُنَاقَاةً لِلْإِسْلَامِ مِنْ بَيْعِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْتَةِ وَالْخِنْزِيرِ.²³

As for the prohibition of selling of idols is concerned, it entails the prohibition of selling any instrument or tool made for polytheistic purposes, regardless of its form, whether it is an idol, an object of worship, or a cross. Likewise, books that contain polytheism and the worship of other than Allah, all of these must be removed and destroyed. Selling them serves to acquire and adopt them, and therefore, it is more deserving of prohibition than anything else. The harm caused by selling them is proportionate to their harm in themselves. The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not delay mentioning them due to their insignificance, but rather, he proceeded gradually from what was easier to what was more severe.

After mentioning the prohibition of selling idols, which is the greatest prohibition and sin, and the most contrary to Islam, he mentioned the prohibition of selling wine, carrion, and pork.

Allama Arzaqi explains the accident with detail and describes background:

{ لَمَّا فَتَحَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَكَّةَ بَثَّ السَّرَايَا، فَبَعَثَ خَالِدَ بْنَ الْوَلِيدِ إِلَى الْعُرَى، وَبَعَثَ إِلَى ذِي الْكُفَّيْنِ صَنَمِ عَمْرٍو بْنِ حَمْحَمَةَ الطُّفَيْلِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو الدَّوْبِيِّ، فَجَعَلَ يُحْرِقُهُ بِالنَّارِ... وَبَعَثَ سَعِيدَ بْنَ عُبَيْدِ الْأَشْجَلِيَّ إِلَى مَنَاةَ بِالْمَشَلِّ فَهَدَمَهَا، وَبَعَثَ عَمْرٍو بْنَ الْعَاصِي إِلَى سُوَاعِ صَنَمِ هُدَيْلِ فَهَدَمَهُ. وَكَانَ عَمْرٍو يَقُولُ: انْتَهَيْتُ إِلَيْهِ وَعِنْدَهُ السَّادِنُ، فَقَالَ: مَا تُرِيدُ؟ قُلْتُ: هَدَمَ سُوَاعِ. قَالَ: وَمَا لَكَ وَلَهُ؟ قُلْتُ: أَمَرَني رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. قَالَ: لَا تَقْدِرُ عَلَى هَدْمِهِ. قُلْتُ: لِمَ؟ قَالَ: يَمْتَنِعُ. قَالَ عَمْرٍو: حَتَّى الْآنَ أَنْتَ فِي الْبَاطِلِ، وَيَحُكُّ، وَهَلْ يَسْمَعُ وَيُبْصِرُ؟ قَالَ عَمْرٍو: فَدَنَوْتُ مِنْهُ فَكَسَرْتُهُ، وَأَمَرْتُ أَصْحَابِي فَهَدَمُوا بَيْتَ خِرَانَتِهِ، وَلَمْ يَجِدُوا فِيهِ شَيْئًا،²⁴

Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ishaq narrates:

{ لَمَّا افْتَتَحَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَكَّةَ أَشَارَ إِلَى الْأَصْنَامِ فَخَرَّتْ لَوَجْهِهَا²⁵

Anne Meri Schemel says: The Ka 'ba was completely divested of all idols and icons and remained from that time onward the center of the Muslim cultus, without image and effigy ²⁶

Findings:

1. Giving insults to false deities is a separate matter and harming them physically or expressing their faults is a separate matter.
2. Using abusive language to the deities of false religions is prohibited according to the teachings of the Quran, because it leads to make abuse the real deity (Almighty Allah).
3. Expressing flaws of false deities verbally or demonstrating their helplessness practically to establish their unworthiness of divine status is an Abrahamic tradition (Sunnah). In the first case, the aim is to humiliate the addressee, while in the second case, the aim is to force the addressee to ponder and contemplate deeply.
4. The idols were broken and removed from the Kaaba or the Sacred House of Allah because fundamentally it is the house of God. Placing idols there was unjust, as they do not deserve to be placed there.
5. As far as places other than the Kaaba the breaking of idols is concerned, it depends on situation. In regions where most of the population is Muslim, and the rulers are also Muslim, and there is no fear of spreading disorder, they can break these idols. However, in places where Muslims are in the minority, and they are oppressed, and there is a fear of spreading disorder, then they should not break them.
6. Nowadays, different countries around the world quickly become aware of and affected by each other's situations. Therefore, if in one place due to the breaking of idols, the threat of Muslim's places of worship being targeted in another country, then Muslims should avoid this action as it depends on situation.

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