106438 - Ruling on buying memorabilia of famous people for outrageous sums

the question

What is the ruling on what some people do when they spend too much money to buy the archeological remains of famous or great people, such as clothes or anything has been used by those famous people in their life? They spend large amounts of money on this, this can reach millions.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Undoubtedly this action is haraam for several reasons:

1-This is a kind of idolatry, because it leads to shirk and seeking blessing from these items, and being attached to their former owners instead of Allaah, may He be glorified and exalted. The former nations only fell into shirk because they venerated the relics of their leaders and righteous people, as happened to the people of Nooh and others.

2-Spending money to acquire these relics or memorabilia is one of the worst forms of extravagance, which Allaah has forbidden in His Book as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“But spend not wastefully (your wealth) in the manner of a spendthrift.

27. Verily, the spendthrifts are brothers of the Shayaateen (devils), and the Shaytaan (Devil-Satan) is ever ungrateful to his Lord”

[al-Isra’ 17:25, 26]

“and eat and drink but waste not by extravagance, certainly He (Allaah) likes not Al-Musrifoon (those who waste by extravagance)”

[al-A’raaf 7:31]

3-Islam enjoins controlling the fools and spendthrifts by preventing them from doing that. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning): “And give not unto the foolish your property which Allaah has made a means of support for you” [al-Nisa’ 4:51].

What the authorities should do is put a limit on such shameful extravagance, and spend this money for the sake of Allaah, may He be exalted, by sponsoring orphans, feeding the poor and needy, meeting the needs of the destitute and financing charitable projects. May Allaah help us all to do that which He loves and which pleases Him.

And Allaah is the Source of strength. May Allaah send blessings and peace upon our Prophet Muhammad and his family and companions. End quote.

Standing Committee for Academic Research and Issuing Fatwas