218843 - Is it permissible to pray for blessing if you see something you like in a disbeliever?

the question

Can we say “Ma sha Allah” if we see a talent or a good deed on the part of a person who is not Muslim?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Causing harm to someone by means of the evil eye or envy (hasad) is a kind of transgression against the afflicted person. It is not permissible to transgress against anyone whose life and property are protected by Islamic law, and it is prescribed to offer supplication asking that the evil eye be warded off from him.

Ibn Majah (3509) narrated that one of the Sahabah saw another man bathing and admired his skin, thus afflicting him with his eye. The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Why would any one of you kill his brother? If he sees something that he likes in his brother, then let him pray for blessing for him.” Classed as sahih by Shaykh al-Albani (may Allah have mercy on him) in *Sahih Sunan Ibn Majah*. For more information on what the Muslim should say if he sees something that he likes or admires, please see the answer to question no. 130786 .

Mention of the brother in the hadith, where the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) says, “If he sees something that he likes in his brother” does not mean that the disbeliever whose life and wealth are protected by Islamic law is not included in this ruling. If a disbeliever is not in a state of war with the Muslims, his blood, life and wealth are protected, so it is not permissible to transgress against him. Al-San‘ani (may Allah have mercy on him) said – regarding the words of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), “Reviling a Muslim is evildoing” – if the

person is a mu‘ahad [a non-Muslim living under Muslim rule], then that is harming him, and it is forbidden to harm him… But if he is a *harbi* [a non-Muslim whose people are at war with the Muslims], it is permissible to revile him, because he has no protection."(*Subul al-Salaam* 2/663).

Based on that, the disbeliever whose people are at war with the Muslims has no protection, but for the disbeliever whose people are not at war with the Muslims, it is not permissible to transgress against him.

Moreover, it is permissible for a Muslim to do ruqyah for a disbeliever if he has been harmed or is unwell, so it is more appropriate that it be permissible to ward off harm for him before it happens, by praying for blessing for whatever one likes or admires in the disbeliever.

For more information on the issue of it being permissible for a Muslim to do ruqyah for a disbeliever, please see the answer to question no. 6714 .

But here we must note an important matter, which is that envy (*hasad*) is a blameworthy characteristic according to the religion of Allah, even if it is envy of a disbeliever. The first one who is harmed by envy is the envier himself, and envy is not something that Islam teaches to its followers or encourages them to behave in such a manner, even with disbelievers.

It was narrated that ‘A‘ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: Some Jewish people came to the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and said: *Al-sam ‘alayka* (death be upon you), O Abu’l-Qasim.

He said: “*Wa ‘alaykum* (and also upon you).”

‘A‘ishah said: I said: Rather may death and shame be upon you.

The Messenger of Allah (S) said: “O ‘A‘ishah, do not be harsh.”

According to one report, he said: “Enough, O ‘A‘ishah, for Allah does not like harshness and harsh words.”

She said: Did you not hear what they said?

He said: “Did I not respond to what they said? I said: *Wa ‘alaykum* (and also upon you).”

Narrated by al-Bukhari (6038) and Muslim (2165).

The relevant part of the hadith is that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) did not want ‘A‘ishah to be harsh and speak harsh words, even if that was in retaliation to those Jews. Undoubtedly envy is like harsh words in that regard; in fact it is worse, as is obvious. However, the fact that the Muslim is not allowed to envy someone else or afflict him with his evil eye is one thing, and his praying for blessing for him and offering supplication for him is something else.

What appears to us to be the case – and Allah knows best – is that even if the Muslim is not allowed to envy disbelievers or harm them with his evil eye, it is not required of him to pray for blessing for him and offer supplication for him.

And Allah knows best.