59905 - His mother will be angry if he does not celebrate Mother’s Day

the question

I have a friend from one of the Arab countries, and in that country Mother’s Day is an official holiday, which he celebrates with his brothers and sisters because of their mother. Now he wants to stop doing that, but his mother will be angry because she has become accustomed to this thing and it has become a tradition in their country. He is afraid that his mother will be angry with him and will bear a grudge against him until she dies not pleased with him. He has tried to convince her that it is haraam and why, but she is not convinced because of the atmosphere in their country. What should he do? Please advise us, may Allah bless you.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Celebrating Mother’s Day is an innovated matter which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and his companions (may Allah be pleased with them) did not do. It is also an imitation of the kuffaar from whom we have been commanded to differ. Hence it is not permissible to celebrate it or to obey one's mother in that, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “There is no obedience if it involves sin; obedience is only in that which is right and proper.” Narrated by al-Bukhari, 7257; Muslim, 1840.

He should continue to honour her and treat her with kindness, and keep trying to convince her that this celebration is a newly invented innovation. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “The worst of matters are those which are newly-invented, and every innovation is a going-astray.” Narrated by Muslim, 867; al-Nasaa’i, 1578. Al-Nasaa’i’s report adds the words: “And every going astray will be in the Fire.”

The mother is entitled to respect and honour, and upholding of the ties of kinship throughout her

life, so what is the point of singling out a particular day to honour her?

Moreover, this innovation has come to us from societies in which disobedience towards parents is widespread, in which mothers and fathers can find no refuge except old people's homes, where they are left alone and no one visit them, and they spend their time in pain and sorrow. So they think that honouring their mothers for one day will erase the sin of their disobedience towards her during the rest of the year.

But we Muslims have been commanded to honour our parents and uphold the ties of kinship, and we have been forbidden to disobey our parents. In our religion mothers have been given something which has not been given to them in any other religion; the mother's rights take precedence over those of the father, as al-Bukhari (5514) and Muslim (4621) narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: A man came to the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and said: "O Messenger of Allah, who is most deserving of my good company?" He said: "Your mother." He said: "Then who?" He said: "Your mother." He said: "Then who?" He said: "Your mother." He said: "Then who?" He said: "Then your father."

Honouring one's mother does not come to an end even when she dies, for she is honoured in life and in death. That is done by offering the funeral prayer for her, praying for forgiveness for her, carrying out her last wishes and honouring her family and friends.

Let us adhere to this great religion and follow its etiquettes and rulings, for in it is sufficient guidance and mercy.

Shaykh 'Ali Mahfouz (may Allah have mercy on him) said, explaining how this celebration (Mother's Day) is an imitation of the kuffaar:

Explaining the seriousness of celebrating festivals other than the Islamic Eids, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated that some peoples or groups in his ummah would follow the People of the Book in some of their rituals and traditions, as is narrated in the hadeeth of Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri (may Allah be pleased with him), who said that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "They will follow the ways of those who came before them, handspan

by handspan, cubit by cubit, until even if they entered a lizard's hole they will follow them." We said: "O Messenger of Allah, (do you mean) the Jews and Christians?" He said: "Who else?" Narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim…

Love of imitation, even if it is something that exists in people's hearts, is forbidden in sharee'ah if the one who is being imitated differs from us in his beliefs and thinking, especially is what is being imitated is religious beliefs or acts of worship, or it is a ritual or tradition. When the Muslims became weak in this time, their imitation of their enemies became more widespread and many western traditions and customs became widespread, whether that has to do with consumer goods or attitudes and behaviour. One of these customs is the celebration of Mother's Day. End quote.

Shaykh Muhamamd ibn Saalih ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked about celebrating Mother's Day and he replied:

All celebrations which differ from the Eids prescribed in Islam are innovated festivals which were not known at the time of the righteous salaf, and may also have come from the non-Muslims, in which case as well as being an innovation (bid'ah) they are also an imitation of the enemies of Allah. The festivals which are prescribed in Islam are well known to the Muslims: they are Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha, and the weekly "Eid" of Jumu'ah. There is no other festival in Islam apart from these three. All the festivals that have been invented apart from these are to be rejected because they are innovations and are false according to the laws of Allah, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Whoever introduces anything into this matter of ours that is not part of it will have it rejected," i.e., it will be thrown back at him and will not be accepted by Allah. According to another version: "Whoever does any deed that is not part of this matter of ours will have it rejected."

Once this is clear, then it is not permissible to show any of the signs of festivity on the celebration mentioned in the question, namely Mother's Day. It is not permissible to show joy and happiness, or to offer gifts, and so on.

The Muslim should feel proud of his religion and adhere to the limits set by Allah and His

Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in this religion, which Allah has chosen for His slaves, and he should not add anything or take anything away. What the Muslim should also do is to not to follow every new idea that comes along, rather his character should be in accordance with the sharee'ah of Allah so that he will be a leader and example, not a follower, because the sharee'ah of Allah – praise be to Allah – is complete in all ways as Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion"

[al-Maa'idah 5:3]

A mother's right is greater than having just one day in the year to be honoured, rather the mother's right over her children is that they should take care of her and obey her, so long as it does not involve disobedience towards Allah, at all times and in all places.

Majmoo' Fatawa al-Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen, 2/301

See also question no. 10070.

And Allah knows best.