130263 - Is it permissible to pray in a room in which there are images of animate beings?

the question

We use a classroom to pray in. Recently they have put up posters with guidelines regarding hazardous materials, and the images include images of humans. Is it permissible to pray in this room?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

The basic principle is that men should pray in congregation in the mosque, but if there is the fear that some employees may mess about and take too long to come back to work on the grounds that they are going to pray, or the work will be affected, then in that case there is nothing wrong with praying in the workplace.

Please see the answers to questions no. 72895 and 74978 .

Secondly:

It is not permissible to pray in places in which there are images of animate beings, except in the case of necessity, because of the report narrated by al-Bukhari (3322) and Muslim (2106) from Abu Talhah (may Allah be pleased with him) from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), who said: “The angels do not enter a house in which there is a dog or an image.”

The scholars of the Permanent Committee for Ifta’ were asked:

Is it permissible for a Muslim to pray in a room of which the walls are covered with images of

animals, humans and so on?

Is it permissible for a Muslim to pray in a garment on which there are images of animals?

They replied:

Making images of animate beings is haram, and putting images of animate beings on walls and the like is also haram. Praying in a place in which there are such images is not permissible, except in the case of necessity. Similarly, praying in garments on which there are images of animals is not permissible, but if a person does that, his prayer is valid, although that is haram. It is soundly narrated from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) that when he saw a curtain in 'A'ishah's house on which there were images [of animate beings], he got angry and tore it down, and he said: "The makers of these images will be punished on the Day of Resurrection, and it will be said: Give life to what you have created.""(*Fatawa al-Lajnah ad-Da'imah* 1/705).

They were also asked:

We have been working in government departments for several years. They allocated to us one of the distribution halls in the building in which we work, where we pray in congregation during working hours. A while ago, on the front wall in the direction of the qiblah, they put up some large pictures of famous people. We are greatly troubled by the presence of these pictures in front of us when we pray. What do you think about the placing of pictures in the place that has been allocated for the Muslims to pray in for some time? Should we continue to pray there when these pictures are there?

They replied:

The prayer is valid, and there is no blame on them for that, in sha Allah, if they have no option but to pray in the place mentioned because there is no mosque nearby. But they must try their best to persuade the people in charge to remove the pictures from that place, or give them another place to pray in which there are no pictures or images. That is because praying in a place in which there are pictures or images in front of the worshippers is resembling the idol worshippers, and there are

many hadiths which indicate that it is not allowed to resemble the enemies of Allah, and it is enjoined to differ from them. Moreover, putting images of animate beings on walls is something that is not permissible; rather it is one of the means that lead to drifting away and associating others with Allah (shirk), especially if they are images of people who are held in high esteem."(*Fatawa al-Lajnah ad-Da'imah* 6/250-251).

Based on that, the prayer offered in this classroom is valid, but you must try hard to get these pictures removed, or at least obliterate the features of the faces, after which there will be no need to remove them.

If you are not able to do that, then try to find another place to pray that is free of such pictures and images. But if it is not possible to do that, then there is no blame on you if you pray in this classroom, because you have no choice but to pray there. But it is still important to advise the people in charge to remove these pictures.

And Allah knows best.