3011 - Is it permissible to sell pure silk?

the question

In Question number 164 on the ruling of selling wine to non-muslims Sheikh has quoted to be said: "Verily when Allah forbids something, He forbids its price." I have a service which anyone can subscribe by sending email to: XXXX in the body of the message subscribe ahad This service sends one hadith a day, english translation, from Sahih Al-Bukhari. Here's what they have sent me: Bukhari Vol 8; no. 11 Narrated by Ibn Umar (Radhiallaho Anho): My father, seeing a silken cloak being sold, said, "O Allah's Apostle! Buy this and wear it on Fridays and when the foreign delegates pay a visit to you." He said, "This is worn only by that person who will have no share in the Hereafter." Later a few silken cloaks were given to the Prophet (Sallahllaahu 'alaihi wasallam) as a gift, and he sent one of those cloaks to Umar. Umar said (to the Prophet), "How can I wear it while you have said about it what you said?" The Prophet (Sallallaahu 'alaihi wasallam) said, "I did not give it to you to wear but to sell or to give to someone else to wear." So Umar sent it to his (pagan) brother who was from the inhabitants of Mecca before he (Umar's brohter) embraced Islam. From the hadith quoted above it seems like it is permissible to sell it or to give it to non-Muslims.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

We constantly advise people, when reading texts that appear to present a problem, to examine all versions and isnaads of these ahaadeeth, and to refer to the words of scholars and commentators, because they have the knowledge and understanding that can dispel the confusion. In the following discussion we will quote several versions of the hadeeth as reported by al-Bukhaari (may Allah have mercy on him), then we will give a summary from the commentary on the hadeeth by al-Haafiz Ahmad ibn ‘Ali ibn Hajar al-‘Asqallaani (may Allah have mercy on him) from his book Fath

al-Baari Sharh Saheeh al-Bukhaari, and from the commentary of Imam al-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) on the same hadeeth in Saheeh Muslim.

‘Abd-Allah ibn ‘Umar reported that ‘Umar ibn al-Khattaab saw a hullah siyara’ [a type of two-piece garment] at the door of the mosque and said, “O Messenger of Allah, why don’t you buy this and wear it on Fridays and when the delegations come to you?” The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “This is only worn by one who has no share in the Hereafter.” Then the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was brought a number of garments [hullahs] of the same type. He gave one of them to ‘Umar ibn al-Khattaab (may Allah be pleased with him) and ‘Umar said, “O Messenger of Allah, are you giving it to me to wear it when you said what you said about the hullah of ‘Utaarid (the vendor of the first hullah)?” The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “I am not giving it to you to wear it.” So ‘Umar ibn al-Khattaab (may Allah be pleased with him) gave it to a brother of his in Makkah who was a mushrik.” (Saheeh al-Bukhaari, 837).

According to another report: “[The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:] Sell it and benefit from its price.” Al-Bukhaari, 896.

According to another report: “I did not send it to you for you to wear it, for it is worn only by one who has no share in the Hereafter. I sent it to you so that you could benefit from it – i.e., by selling it.” Al-Bukhaari, 1962.

According to another report: “Umar said: ‘How can I wear it when you said what you said about it?’ He said, ‘I did not give it to you for you to wear it; sell it or give it to someone else.’ So ‘Umar sent it to a brother of his among the people of Makkah, before he [the brother] became Muslim.” Al-Bukhaari, 2426.

According to another report: “He said: ‘Sell it and spend the money on your own needs.’” Al-Bukhaari, 2826.

According to another report: “He said: ‘I sent it to you so that you could make some money from it.’” Al-Bukhaari, 5617.

Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“Concerning the phrase, ‘Why don’t you buy it and wear it?’ – it is as if ‘Umar wanted the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to buy it and wished that he would do so. ‘This is only worn’ – according to the report of Jareer ibn Haazim, he said, ‘silk is only worn’. ‘One who has no share’ – Maalik added in his report, ‘in the Hereafter.’ This could mean the one who has no share in the Hereafter, i.e., of silk clothes.

‘He gave it to him’ – it is apparent from the rest of the hadeeth that he did not give it to him to wear, or it could mean that he gave him something that could be used for clothing. [The verb used, kasaa, has the sense of covering or clothing]. According to the report of Maalik, ‘Then the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was brought a number of similar hullahs, and he gave one to ‘Umar.’ In another report, ‘Later on some hullahs (of the same type) were brought to the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and he sent one to ‘Umar and one to Usaamah ibn Zayd, and gave one to ‘Ali ibn Abi Taalib.’

‘Sell it and spend the money on your own needs’ – means benefit from its price, or it could mean trade it or exchange it, or some more general meaning.

(Note): the reason why this hadeeth was included in Baab al-Hareer li’l-nisa’ (Chapter on silk for women) is because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said to ‘Umar, ‘sell it or use it for clothing.’ Silk is forbidden for men, and there is no difference between ‘Umar and other men in that regard, so the permission to give it to someone else to wear applies only if it is given to a woman. The fact that ‘Umar gave it to his brother should not be a source of confusion to those who believe that the minor issues of sharee’ah apply to kaafirs too, as ‘Umar gave it to his brother to sell it or to give it to a woman to wear.

In some versions of the hadeeth… Ibn ‘Umar said: ‘The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw ‘Utaarid wearing a silk garment and he disliked that for him, then he gave ‘Umar a similar garment…’ and ‘… [he said,] “I did not give it to you to wear it, I gave it to you to give to women to wear.”’ This is an indication that it is permissible for women to wear pure

silk.

Imaam Muslim (may Allah have mercy on him) reported in his Saheeh that Jaabir ibn ‘Abd-Allah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: ‘The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) one day wore a coat of silk brocade that had been given to him, but soon afterwards he took it off and sent it to ‘Umar ibn al-Khattaab. It was said to him, “But you took it off so quickly, O Messenger of Allah.” He said, “Jibreel forbade me to wear it.” Then ‘Umar came to him, weeping, and said, “O Messenger of Allah, you disliked something and gave it to me. What is wrong with me?” He said, “I did not give it to you to wear it, I gave it to you to sell it.” So he sold it for two thousand dirhams.’ (Reported by Muslim, 3861).”

Al-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said in his commentary on Saheeh Muslim:

“In the hadeeth of ‘Umar about this hullah there is evidence that silk is forbidden for men and permitted for women, that it is permissible to give it, that its price is permitted, and that a Muslim is permitted to give a kaafir clothes and other things.

‘So ‘Umar gave it to a mushrik brother of his in Makkah’ – this is how it was reported by al-Bukhaari and Muslim. According to a report narrated by al-Bukhaari in some chapter, ‘‘Umar sent it to a brother of his among the people of Makkah, before he [the brother] became Muslim’ – this indicates that he (the brother) subsequently became Muslim… This also indicates that it is permissible to maintain family ties with kaafirs and to treat them well, and that it is permissible to give gifts to kaafirs. The permission to give silk clothes to men does not mean that they should wear them. Some may misinterpret this to mean that kaafir men are permitted to wear silk, but this is incorrect. The hadeeth describes giving a gift to a kaafir, but does not give them permission to wear silk. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) sent silk garments to ‘Umar, ‘Ali and Usaamah (may Allah be pleased with them), but this does not mean that they were permitted to wear silk; he stated quite clearly that he was giving it to them so that they could benefit from it in some way other than by wearing it. The correct opinion, which is that of the majority of scholars, is that the minor issues of sharee’ah apply equally to kaafirs, so they are forbidden to wear silk just as Muslims are. And Allah knows best.

Al-Bukhaari (may Allah have mercy on him) reported another hadeeth on the same issue from al-Miswar ibn Makhramah, who said that his father Makhramah said to him: ‘O my son, I have heard that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has received some coats and he is sharing them out, so let us go to him.’ So we went and found the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in his house. [My father] said to me, ‘O my son, call the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) for me.’ I felt too embarrassed, so I said, ‘Should I call the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) for you?’ He said, ‘O my son, he is not arrogant.’ So I called him, and he came out carrying a coat of silk brocade with gold buttons. He said, ‘O Makhramah, we kept this for you,’ and he gave it to him. (Reported by al-Bukhaari, Kitaab al-Libaas, Baab al-Muzarrar bi’l-Dhahab).

Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said in his commentary on the hadeeth:

“ ‘He came out carrying a coat of silk brocade with gold buttons’ – it is possible that this happened before silk was prohibited, but after silk and gold were prohibited for men, this report can no longer be used as evidence by those who want to permit these things. It is also possible that this happened after these things were prohibited, in which case the garment was given so that the recipient could benefit from it either by selling it or by giving it to women to wear.”

In brief, then, the answer to the matter raised in the question is that so long as a silk garment has some legitimate use, such as clothing for women, then it is permissible to sell it and take the money paid for it. And Allah knows best. May Allah bless our Prophet Muhammad.