652 - Ruling on men wearing jewellery that is plated with18k gold

the question

In the Name of Allah, Asalamu alaikum:

What is the legal ruling of men wearing jewelery that is 18k gold "electroplated" such as watches, belts, rings, etc.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Wearing gold is haraam for men.

‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abbaas reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw a gold ring on a man’s hand. He took it off and threw it aside, saying, "Would any of you take a burning coal and hold it in his hand?" When the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had gone away, someone said to the man, "Take your ring and benefit from it (i.e., sell it)." He said, "No, by Allah, I will not take it after the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has thrown it away." (reported by Muslim, no. 2090).

‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr ibn al’Aas reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Whoever of my ummah wears gold and dies wearing it, Allah will deny him the gold of Paradise. Whoever of my ummah wears silk and dies wearing it, Allah will deny him the silk of Paradise." (Reported by Imam Ahmad).

This prohibition applies to men only, not to women, as ‘Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) took a piece of silk in his right hand and a piece of gold in his left, and said: "These are forbidden for the males of my ummah." (reported by An-Nasa'i and Abu Dawud).

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) also said: "Wearing silk and gold is permitted for the women of my ummah and prohibited for the males." (Reported by Imam Ahmad)

Gold is permitted for women because of their delicate and gentle nature, and their need for adornment. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning): "(Do they then like for Allah) a creature who is brought up in adornments (wearing gold and silk ornaments, i.e., women), and in dispute cannot make herself clear?" [al-Zukhruf 43:18]

As for men, it is a sign of instability and an unmasculine nature to adorn oneself with gold. Islaam wants the differences between the sexes to be marked clearly, and their distinct characteristics to stand out, because when they resemble one another, much corruption results therefrom. The prohibition of gold for men includes pure gold, gold alloys, cut pieces, joined pieces, gold inlay, etc. As for gold-plating and gilding, some scholars are of the opinion that such articles are forbidden for men if it is possible to extract gold from them (by peeling or shaving off, for example); if no gold can be extracted from it, then such items are permitted. Some scholars say that it is not permitted to wear an item which is wholly or mostly gold-plated, but if only a little part of it is gold-plated (like the hands of a watch, or the numerals, or the tiny points denoting numbers), then it is permitted to wear it. They say that the issue is its appearance, not its value: if the gold-plating is very obvious and covers everything, it is not permitted, because many people will not make the distinction between gold-plate and real gold, and some may follow this person’s example and begin to wear pure gold.

And Allah knows best.