

97014 - Should he attend the university graduation ceremony that is sponsored by Buddhists?

the question

I am of a Muslim minority. There is a party for us to receive our university degrees. I have two questions regarding this matter:

- 1- What is the ruling on attending such a party, knowing that the Buddhist priests pray, according to their religious rituals, to bless the party?
- 2- If the party starts before Dhuhr and ends after 'asr, is it permissible for us to pray them together at the time of 'asr? Or it is not permissible to attend that party in the first place?.

Detailed answer

We ask Allaah to bless your graduation and to benefit the Muslims through you.

The occasion of the students' graduation is a moment of joy for the student on his graduation and for his family on their son's success. That is one of the blessings of Allaah to His slaves, and is part of His great bounty and kindness.

What is required is to give thanks for this blessing and to pay attention to Allaah's rights in this matter, by adhering to His sacred limits and laws. But unfortunately we see many wrongs and sins that occur in students' graduation ceremonies, and they have even become something regular and unavoidable in graduation ceremonies. That includes the following:

- 1 - Celebrating with music, and usually they bring a large band, and it is major part of most ceremonies.

The ruling on listening to music in Islamic sharee'ah is that it is haraam, and some scholars narrated that there is consensus on this point. This has been discussed in the answer to question no. [5000](#).

2 - Mixing of male and female students, and their sitting together in one place and entering and leaving in one line, and men mixing with women who are present, among whom are those who are wearing makeup and perfume, and those whom shyness does not prevent from expressing their joy in ways that are not appropriate, such as shouting, making gestures and movements, clapping, whistling, shaking hands with men, and other wrong actions that accompany haraam mixing.

3 -With regard to wearing the "graduation suit" that is well known nowadays, with the black cloak and mortarboard, this is clothing that belongs specifically to the kuffaar, then it came to us. Some scholars have said that it is taken from the clothing of monks and bishops at some era of history, hence they ruled that it is haraam to wear it.

Shaykh Bakr Abu Zayd (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

The graduate comes wearing a black cloak or gown and this is a church tradition. The people of knowledge and faith should differ from them in this regard. End quote.

Al-Majmoo'ah al-'Ilmiyyah (Risaalah al-Ta'aalum, p. 85)

The scholars of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas said:

It is haraam for the Muslims to imitate the kuffaar in the clothing that is uniquely theirs, whether the kaafirs in question are Jews,

Christians or anything else, because of the general meaning of the evidence in the Qur'aan and Sunnah that forbids imitating them. For example, it is proven that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Whoever imitates a people is one of them." Narrated by Imam Ahmad, Abu Dawood and others. And the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, when he saw 'Abd-Allaah ibn 'Amr wearing two garments dyed with safflower: "These are among the garments of the kuffaar; do not wear them." Narrated by Muslim in his Saheeh. And it is proven in Saheeh Muslim that 'Umar (may Allaah be pleased with him) wrote a letter to his governor in Azerbaijan, 'Utbah ibn Farqad (may Allaah be pleased with him) in which he said: "Beware of luxury and the clothing of the people of shirk and wearing silk."

Based on that, it is not permissible to wear what is known as the "gown" when graduating from a school, institute or college, because it is the clothing of the Christians, and the Muslim should be proud of his religion and his following his Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), and he should not pay any attention to the customs of those with whom Allaah is angry and who have gone astray such as the Jews, Christians and others. End quote.

Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa'imah
(24/26, 27)

The scholars of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas were also asked:

In the American universities there is a tradition: when the students graduate they wear so-called graduation clothes, which is a gown that resembles the Arabic abayah, and a head cover of a certain shape. It is said that this is the clothes that their monks used to wear in the past. Is

it permissible, when a Muslim student takes part in this celebration, to wear these clothes?

They replied:

It is not permissible for the student to wear these clothes if they are garments that belong only to them, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Whoever imitates a people is one of them” and the prohibition is more emphatic if it is proven to be one of the symbols of their monks. End quote.

Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa’imah
(24/98).

4 – One of the greatest evils that may be noticed in these celebrations is missing the prayers, because the ceremony goes on for several hours, during which some of the times for prayer come, but you do not see any of the people or the students or people in charge of the ceremony respecting Allaah’s rights or doing their duties, and they do not pay any attention to the adhaan or calls or reminders; they forget the rights of Allaah and are preoccupied with this passing world and a little of its pleasures. They are blind to the words of Allaah (interpretation of the meaning): “Then, there has succeeded them a posterity who have given up As-Salaah (the prayers) [i.e. made their Salaah (prayers) to be lost, either by not offering them or by not offering them perfectly or by not offering them in their proper fixed times] and have followed lusts. So they will be thrown in Hell” [Maryam 19:59].

Ibn Mas’ood said: “Giving up” does not mean that they forsook it altogether, rather they delayed it beyond its proper time.

Ibn Hajar al-Haytami (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

The seventy-seventh major sin is deliberately delaying prayer beyond its time, or doing it too early with no excuse. End quote.

Al-Zawaajir ‘an Iqtiraab al-Kabaa’ir
(1/220,221)

The presence of Buddhists at these ceremonies and their performing some of their religious rituals to bless – or so they claim! – the ceremony is another evil. What blessing can come from associating others with Allaah and disbelieving in Him? It is not permissible for you to attend in a place where others are associated with Allaah unless you are forced to do so. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And it has already been revealed to you in the Book (this Qur’aan) that when you hear the Verses of Allaah being denied and mocked at, then sit not with them, until they engage in a talk other than that; (but if you stayed with them) certainly in that case you would be like them. Surely, Allaah will collect the hypocrites and disbelievers all together in Hell”

[al-Nisa’ 4:140].

Based on that, attending this celebration is haraam, and if it is haraam it cannot serve as an excuse to join Zuhr and ‘Asr prayers.

And Allaah knows best.