

Criterion for knowing undesired or forbidden names

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

Question: What is the criterion for knowing the undesired or forbidden names? And is it possible that you mention some of the prohibited names that people use nowadays or in our era? And may Allaah reward you with the blessings.

Answer: All praise is due to Allaah, the Lord of the Worlds. Peace and blessing be upon whom Allaah sent as a mercy to the Worlds, upon his Family, his Companions and his Brothers till the Day of Resurrection.

Prohibited names can be regulated as follows: "Each appellation involving a detestable meaning, or a purification for it, or a name which is a source of pessimism and bad omen when it is negated. Also, a name which denotes an insult, or a name that is specific to Allaah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ and cannot be attributed to none other than Him عَزَّ وَجَلَّ. This also includes any name that means "a slave" of anyone other than Allaah".

Examples for hideous names: Shaytaan (Satan), Shihaab (meteor), Dhaalim (oppressor), Himaar (donkey), Kalb or Kulayb (dog). And among that, what was reported in the hadeeth of Muslim that the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ changed the name of a woman called 'Aasiya (unsubdued) and said: "You are Jameela (beautiful)".¹

Examples for the loathsome names: Naahid (a woman with swollen breast)², Ghaada (a soft, sweat and delicate woman).³

As for the example of praised names (meaning purification): Azzedeen, Badredeen, Mohyiddeen, Naasereddeen, Islaam, 'Eemaan, Taqwaa. It is reported in the Saheehayn (the two authentic books, meaning : Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim) that the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ changed the name of Barrah to Zaynab"⁴, and that was Zaynab bint Jahsh رضي الله عنها.

Example of names when negated become pessimistic: Najeeth, Baraka, Aflah, Yasaar, and Rabaah, to illustrate: "**Do not call your son Rabaah, or Yasaar, or Aflah, or Naafi**"⁵.

And it is forbidden to call a person with what he dislikes even if it is a defect in himself such as blind or leprous, or mangy; but it is permissible to refer to him with such a defect with a view to identifying him to the one who does not know him unless with that defect.

¹ Reported by Muslim (2139), from the hadeeth of Ibn 'Omar رضي الله عنه.

² See: "Al-Mu'jam Al-Waseet" (2/957).

³ The previous source: (02/667). See also: "Fath Al-Baaree" by Ibn Hajar (10/ 576).

⁴ Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim

⁵ Reported by Muslim (2163), from the hadeeth of Samurata Ibn Jundub رضي الله عنه.

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And it is forbidden to name with what is reserved only to Allaah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ like Al-Quddoos (The All-Holy), Ar-Rahmaan (The Most Gracious), Al-Muhammin (The Lord of Supreme Sway), and Al-Khaaliq (The Creator). In addition to these names, "Shaahin Shaah" meaning king of kings, and "Qaadi Al-Qudaat" (judge of judges) as he said صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in the hadeeth of Aboo Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ: **"The odious man for Allaah on the Day of Resurrection; indeed, the bad and the odious one for Him is a man who was called the king of kings. In fact, there is no king but Allaah."**⁶

In connection with this, An-Nawawee رَحِمَهُ اللهُ said in "Sharh Muslim": "Know that the appellation with this name is forbidden and also the appellation with Allaah's names which are specific to Him such as Ar-Rahmaan (The Most Gracious), Al-Quddoos (The All-Holy), Al-Muhammin (The Lord of Supreme Sway), Khaaliq Al-Khalq (The Creator of all creation), and others"⁷ added to Shaahin Shaah and Qaadi Al-Qudaat.

And for the names that means "a slave" of other than Allaah: 'Abd Az-Zuhayr, 'Abd Al-'Uzzaa, 'Abd An-Nabi, 'Abd Al-ka'ba and 'Abd Ar-Rasool. Also it is not permissible to name with the master of people, the master of Arabs, the master of scholars and the master of judges, because it contains purification and lie.

It should be noted that the addressee in that case are the parents who name their kids with names that contain such meanings including praising and so on.

If it is a proper name that does not carry purification, it does not matter to name with such as Tayib, Saalih, 'Alee, and other names which have a nice meaning wishing to be realised in the person named.

The perfect knowledge belongs to Allaah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ. Our last prayer is all praise is due to Allaah, the Lord of the Worlds. Peace and blessing be upon our Prophet, his Family, his Companions and Brothers till the Day of Resurrection.

Algiers on Rabee' Al-Awwal the 9th, 1428 H. Corresponding to March the 28th, 2007 G

⁶ Agreed upon: Reported by Al-Bukhaaree (6205) and Muslim (2143), from the hadeeth of Aboo Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.

⁷ See: "Sharh Muslim" by An-Nawawee (14/122).