

## Why Sphinx was not demolished when Muslims entered Egypt

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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

**Question:** May Allaah grant you good O noble Shaykh. What was the position of the Companions during the time of Umar (رضي الله عنهم)<sup>1</sup>, concerning the statues and monuments present in Egypt during this present time?

**Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan** (حفظه الله)<sup>2</sup>: Initially these objects were not worshipped, they were merely ruins, the tombs of the Pharaohs; they were not idols. These tombs of the Pharaohs were built upon their graves. Thus this was a matter of construction over the tombs, they were not worshipped.

Also removing them is very difficult. The Companions (رضي الله عنهم) did not have the ability to remove the Sphinx, it is a mountain; they did not have the ability to do this.

Also there are those who say during the era of the Companions (رضي الله عنهم) it was buried and covered with sand, and it was not visible.

Smashing statues is clear in the Book of Allaah (سبحانه)<sup>3</sup>. Ibraaheem (عليه السلام)<sup>4</sup> smashed the idols and the Messenger of Allaah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)<sup>5</sup>—when he conquered Makkah — smashed the idols which were inside the Ka'bah and those outside of Makkah.

Destroying idols is obligatory upon the Muslims if they have the ability, if they are able to do this. Also this issue is not restricted to statues, it also relates to the structures over graves; the shrines which are now being worshipped instead of Allaah. They come first, and they are destroyed. This is based upon the statement of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ):

لَا تَدَعُ قَبْرًا مُشْرِفًا إِلَّا سَوَّيْتَهُ

“Do not leave any grave elevated without levelling it.”<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> (رضي الله عنهم) (rad iyallahu 'anhum) May Allaah the Most High be pleased with them

<sup>2</sup> (حفظه الله) May Allaah the Most High preserve him

<sup>3</sup> (سبحانه) (Subhanahu) The Exalted

<sup>4</sup> (عليه السلام) ('alaihi-salaam) Peace be upon him

<sup>5</sup> (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him

<sup>6</sup> Collected by Tirmidhee 1049

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Thus do not limit it to only destroying statues, rather statues are destroyed and graves are destroyed also. Remove the structures which have lamps and writings on them and make the graves ordinary such that they do not draw attention. As for destroying the statues while the shrines remain, this is inadequate and does not meet the required objective. This does not meet the required goal.