



(Part No : 6, Page No: 268)

Offering Salah in Churches

Fatwa no. (9118):

Q: Muslims in many states of America do not find suitable places to offer the Jumu'ah (Friday) Prayer, except some inexpensive-rented spaces or free of charge churches. Some students had a discussion about the validity of offering Salah (Prayer) in churches, on the basis of what was narrated from Ibn `Umar about prohibiting offering Salah in churches, Jewish temples, graves and places where animals are slaughtered for other than Allah. According to this opinion, some Muslims have refrained from attending the Jumu'ah Prayer. Please advise concerning the correct ruling, so that we can settle the disputes among the Muslims in this society. May Allah reward you.

A: If there is any place available to offer Salah other than churches, it is impermissible to offer Salah there, as they are the places where non-Muslims perform acts of 'Ibadah (worship) to other than Allah, and as they contain statues and pictures. If not, it may be permitted in cases of necessity. `Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "We shall not enter your churches, as they contain statues and pictures." Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) used to offer Salah in churches, except those which had statues and pictures.

(Part No : 6, Page No: 269)

May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and Companions!

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