

Working in air transport company in presence of evil things

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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

Question: The first question: the workers in an air transport company, whether they are among those who serve in the plane or the pilot who leads the travellers, all who may drink wine or other prohibited things as it is known in the air services, or are among those who prepare that such as the engineer working in maintaining planes, are they among those who help one another in sin?

The second question: the same content of the first question, but it concerns a man working with a ship crew. Some of them drink wine, and though he admonishes them, they do not respond to his admonishment. So, is this man considered among those about Allaah سبحانه و تعالى says:

(كَانُوا لَا يَتَنَاهَوْنَ عَنْ مُنْكَرٍ فَعَلُوهُ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ)

[They used not to forbid one another from Al-Munkar (wrong, evil-doing, sins, polytheism, disbelief) which they committed. Vile indeed was what they used to do]¹;

this is in fact the malediction incurred by the disbelievers among the sons of Israel. In this case, this man admonishes them and still deals with them, as he serves the crew.

Is he also considered among those about Allaah سبحانه و تعالى says:

(وَلَا تَرْكَبُوا إِلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا فَتَمَسَّكُمُ النَّارُ وَمَا لَكُم مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ أَوْلِيَاءَ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصَرُونَ)

[And incline not toward those who do wrong, lest the Fire should touch you, and you have no protectors other than Allaah, nor you would then be helped]²

Is he among those who follow their passions? In addition, if some wine is carried on this ship, who will incur malediction? Please give us an explanation.

Shaykh Aboo `Abd-al-Mu`iz `Alee Farkous al-Qoobee (May Allaah the Most High preserve him):

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.

¹ Soorah al-Maa'idah (The Table Spread) [5:79]

² Soorah Hood [11:113]

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Know that as long as the Muslim is able to accomplish his duties and bear the consequences of his acts, he is allowed to gain his sustenance through the work that is given to him if he can do it, on condition that the work should not inflict harm to Muslims, bring injustice such as usury or include prohibitions such as working in a club, which contains forbidden acts such as dancing, gambling, wine selling and other interdictions; whether the worker does it himself or takes part in doing it materially or artistically, practically or verbally; if he does this, he will be – then – considered to be helping and taking part in sin as it is mentioned [in the rule], “Whatever leads to the establishment of a prohibition is itself prohibited”, though the degree of sin differs from one person to another commensurate to their participation.

For this reason, when the Sharee’ah forbids fornication, it forbids all that may lead to it i.e. all the means, introductions and motives that drive to it such as shocking pictures, immoral way of dressing, blameworthy mixing (between men and women), insecure and sinful seclusion (between men and women), immoral singing that stimulates desires and others. Also, the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ cursed those who take part in usury with the one who practice it i.e. the scribe and the two witnesses, and cursed those who are involved in bribery i.e. the briber, the venal and the intermediary. In the same context, malediction is stated against the one who extract wine, the one asking for its extraction, the drinker, the one who carries it, the one to whom it is carried, the server, the seller, the one who takes its price, the buyer, the one to whom it is bought; everyone of those mentioned incurs malediction commensurate to their involvement, because every participation in sin is a sin; Allaah تعالى said:

(وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ)

[Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwaa (virtue, righteousness and piety); but do not help one another in sin and transgression]³

All this if there is not a dire necessity that pushes one to do that thing. If there is a real necessity or need, scholars say that it is permissible to resort to it, on condition that this necessity or need be determined in a proper way, i.e. when one misses his main needs such as food, dress and cure that prevent his perish; without even searching and seeking for pleasure nor transgressing the limits of necessity, while disliking that work and searching another one until Allaah bestows upon him licit sustenance and dispenses him with evil forbidden gain.

Having said that, it seems to me that, as a rule, working in a sea or in an air transport company is permissible; only there are some adventitious prohibitions to this rule (the state of original permissibility). In fact, the prohibition does not annul the allowed, and the branch does not annul the rule.

³ Soorah al-Maa'idah (The Table Spread) [5:2]

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Therefore, one can work in the two said companies but far from where the prohibitions are committed, even if he is not satisfied with the situation as a whole; he should advise these people to refrain from committing prohibitions and interdictions, which are perpetrated openly, and this according to the degrees of reprobation, lest he should fall in what they committed. In addition, he should abandon people of sins and perversion and keep away from them lest he inclines to them, except in case of necessity and need, according to the two verses stated in the question;

Al-Qurtubee said concerning the saying of Allaah تعالى:

(وَلَا تَرْكَنُوا إِلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا فَتَمَسَّكُمُ النَّارُ)

[And incline not toward those who do wrong, lest the Fire should touch you]⁴

“...and it (the verse) indicates that it is obligatory to abandon people of disbelief and sin among people of heresies and others, because befriending them constitutes a kind of disbelief or sin, as friendship could not be founded except on love. In fact, a wise man said:

Inquire not about the man but inquire about his friend

Indeed, every man imitates and copies his friend

...however, frequenting an unjust man out of fear of his injustice makes an exception in case of constraint”⁵.

This is my answer globally to the tree questions as their contents are similar. Our last prayer is all praise is due to Allaah, the Lord of the Worlds.

⁴ Soorah Hood [11:113]

⁵ See: “Al-Djaami` Li Ahkaam Al-Qur’aan” (9/72), edition Dar El-Kutub Al-`Ilmyya”