112902 - Can Muslims Work for Companies that Deliver Documents and Parcels?

the question

I worked in a Riba-based bank for 17 years, and Allah, may He be Exalted, has helped me to keep away from Riba, and I have noticed a great change in my life. But lawful provision is very difficult to find nowadays. I have not been able to find work for 2.5 years, and I have a family of five to support.

Now can I apply for a job in an international company that delivers documents and parcels, working in customer service?

The problem is that this company is not allowed to transport alcohol at all within the borders of the country in which I live, but if someone wants to transport wine bottles – for example – to another country, the company will transport them, and the company may also receive parcels from overseas that may contain these unlawful things.

Of course the nature of my work would be solving problems that may arise during the transportation process, until the parcel reaches the customer.

My question is, should I go ahead and apply for the job, or should I forget about applying? Please note that the basic activity of the company – as I mentioned – is transporting various kinds of documents and parcels from one place to another.

Summary of answer

Working for a company that transports documents and parcels is permissible, but if the company specialises in transporting unlawful things, such as delivering documents for Riba-based banks, or transporting alcohol, movies or music, then working for it becomes unlawful.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Working for a company that delivers documents and parcels

Working for a company that transports documents and parcels is permissible in and of itself, but if the company specialises in transporting unlawful things , such as delivering documents for Riba-based banks, or transporting alcohol, movies or music, then working for it becomes unlawful in and of itself.

If the company mixes both lawful and unlawful matters, then the ruling depends on which forms the majority of its work. It is also necessary to avoid being involved directly in any unlawful activities.

Based on that, you may go ahead with your application for a job in that company having to do with work in which you will be supervising and solving problems. Whatever is unlawful, do not do it, but with regard to permissible documents and parcels, you may do it.

If the job is based on this condition and within these limitations, it is permissible for you to work there, otherwise you will be sinning to the extent that you deal directly with unlawful activities, such as transporting and receiving alcohol, or transporting and receiving movies and music, and transporting and receiving documents having to do with Riba and insurance.

The same applies to anything unlawful that is sent or received by this company, where you have any role to play in sending or receiving it.

Is transporting alcohol permissible?

Undoubtedly transporting alcohol is one of the unlawful matters that come under the heading of cooperating in sin and transgression, and the one who does it is subject to the curse that is mentioned in the authentic Sunnah. This prohibition applies to everything that Allah, may He be

Exalted, has prohibited.

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

There is a man who cannot find work except in a factory that produces alcohol, or a depot where it is stored, or in a shops or stores that sell and distribute it. What is the situation of the money that he earns and spends on his dependents, who are numerous?

They replied:

“It is not permissible for a Muslim to work in a factory that produces alcohol, or a depot that stores it, or in any kind of work that has to do with alcohol. The money he earns for that is unlawful, and he has to look for work in which his earnings will be lawful, and to repent to Allah, may He be Glorified, for what he has done in the past, because Allah, may He be Exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwa (virtue, righteousness and piety); but do not help one another in sin and transgression. And fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Severe in punishment.” [Al-Ma’idah 5:2]

And because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) cursed alcohol, the one who drinks it, the one who pours it, the one who presses (the grapes, etc.), the one for whom it is pressed, the one who carries it, the one to whom it is carried, the one who sells it, the one who buys it, and the one who consumes its price. (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).” (Shaykh `Abd Al-`Aziz ibn Baz, Shaykh `Abd Ar-Razzaq `Afeefi, Shaykh `Abdullah ibn Ghadyan, Shaykh `Abdullah ibn Qa`ud, Fatawa Al-Lajnah Ad-Da’imah, 14/114)

Serving alcohol to non-Muslims

With regard to this ruling, it makes no difference whether the person to whom it is delivered is a non-Muslim or a Muslim.

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

There are some teachers who ask the students for some unlawful drinks. Is taking it to the teacher, who is a non-Muslim, unlawful or not?

They replied:

“It is not permissible for a Muslim to offer alcohol to one who will drink it , because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) cursed the one who carries it and the one to whom it is carried, and because this comes under the heading of cooperating in sin and transgression , which Allah, may He be Exalted, forbade in the verse in which He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Help you one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwa (virtue, righteousness and piety); but do not help one another in sin and transgression.” [Al-Ma’idah 5:2]” (Shaykh `Abd Al-`Aziz ibn Baz, Shaykh `Abdullah ibn Ghadyan, Shaykh Salih Al-Fawzan, Shaykh `Abd Al-`Aziz Al Ash-Shaykh, Shaykh Bakr Abu Zayd, Fatawa Al-Lajnah Ad-Da’imah, 22/97)

We advise you to look for lawful work, and to keep away from anything unlawful. We think that it will be difficult for you to avoid unlawful things in that company, and we hope that Allah, may He be Exalted, will honour you by His grace with work that is better than it. Allah, may He be Exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And whosoever fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty). And He will provide him from (sources) he never could imagine. And whosoever puts his trust in Allah, then He will suffice him. Verily, Allah will accomplish his purpose. Indeed Allah has set a measure for all things.” [At-Talaq 65:2-3]

It is narrated in an authentic report from our Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) that he said: “Whoever gives up something for the sake of Allah, Allah will compensate him with something better than it.” (Classed as authentic by Al-Albani (may Allah have mercy on him) in Hijab Al-Mar’ah Al-Muslimah, p. 49)

And Allah knows best.