165402 - Ruling on taking assistance from organizations that help students with their studies

the question

If the law of the land allows you to do some things that in fact are a form of deception and cheating, is the money that comes through these things halaal? For example, the law in the land where I am living allows university students to take assistance from various organizations so that they can use that money to do some assignments connected to their studies. Is it permissible for the Muslim in this case to get some of that assistance, i.e., is it halaal for him to take this money?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

It does not seem to us that in the system mentioned there is any form of cheating and deceit; rather we do not think that the law of any country could allow cheating and deceit... Rather cheating and deceit occur when one goes against certain conditions set out by the system to control access to these funds or tries to cheat the law and take what one is not entitled to.

However we do not approve of a Muslim seeking help any organization when he does not really need it, because in this case his hand will be the lower one (the hand that takes). It was narrated that Hakeem ibn Hizaam said: I asked the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and he gave to me, then I asked him and he gave to me, then I asked him and he gave to me, then he said: “O Hakeem, this wealth is green and sweet (i.e., attractive); whoever takes it without asking for it, it will be blessed for him, but whoever takes it with longing, it will not be blessed for him and he will be like the one who eats and is not satisfied. And the upper hand is better than the lower hand.”

Narrated by al-Bukhaari (1403) and Muslim (1035).

If sharee‘ah does not like the Muslim’s hand to be the lower hand (the one that takes), even if the upper hand (the one that gives) is the hand of a Muslim, then how about if the upper hand is the hand of a kaafir?

The prohibition on asking for help from these organizations is even more emphatic if obtaining it is done by means of something haraam, such as lying and deceit about the information given by the one who is seeking this help, or if taking it will lead to some harm that affects his religious or worldly affairs.

Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azeez ibn Baaz (may Allah have mercy on him)said: “There is nothing wrong with them taking help and assistance from the kaafir state if that will not result in failing to do an obligatory duty or doing something haraam. They do not have the right to take assistance except in the official manner dictated by the state, and they do not have the right to tell lies in order to get it.

End quote from Fataawa ash-Shaykh Ibn Baaz, 28/239

See also questions no. 6357, 7959 and 52810.

And Allah knows best.