2296 - Travelling to kaafir countries for the purpose of teaching and da’wah

the question

The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “I have nothing to do with every Muslim who settles among the mushrikeen.” (Reported by al-Tirmidhi, no. 1604; Abu Dawood, no. 2645. Classed as Hasan by al-Albaani. See also Saheeh al-Jaami’, no. 1461). Nowadays we see hundreds of thousands of Muslims settling among the mushrikeen. Some good people have gone to set up Islamic institutions there, for the purpose of teaching the children of the Muslims, primarily, and also to call people to Allaah. If a teacher is asked to go and settle there in order to teach and call people to Allaah, is it permissible for him to respond?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Undoubtedly settling among the mushrikeen is harmful, for one is exposing oneself to temptation and evil. But if his settling there will do more good, such as calling people to the religion of Allaah or teaching the Muslim children the correct ‘Aqeedah, then there is nothing wrong with it, because the good outweighs the evil that may be expected. The hadeeth “I have nothing to do with every Muslim who settles among the mushrikeen” may be interpreted as referring to those who cannot practise their religion openly in the place where they settle, and those who are able to practise their religion openly are not included in this hadeeth. But it is better to say that if a person’s settling there is more beneficial to Islam and the Muslims, then it is OK.