



27211 - Should he go back and live in a kaafir country?

the question

I have been advised by several muslims who are knowledgable in islam against living in a kaffir country (America). I am an American/Arab who has lived in America all my life but for a few months now was living in arabic country , however things are getting hard for me to continue living here (lack of income, housing etc) and am considering going back to America, also another strong reason is that the Health care system is better and free for my wife who is ill. Please give me as much a detailed answer from the hadith and quran as you can as I don't know for sure if I should strive to continue living here or go back to America regarding Islam.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The basic principle is that it is haraam to settle among the mushrikeen and in their land. If Allaah makes it easy for a person to move from such a country to a Muslim country, then he should not prefer that which is inferior [i.e., living in a non-Muslim country] to that which is better [living in a Muslim country] unless he has an excuse which permits him to go back.

We advise you, as others have, not to go and live in a kaafir country, unless you are forced to go there temporarily, such as seeking medical treatment that is not readily available in a Muslim country.

Note that whoever gives up a thing for the sake of Allaah, Allaah will compensate him with something better, and that with hardship comes ease, and that whosoever fears Allaah 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. You should also note that preserving one's capital is better than taking a risk in the hope of making a profit; the Muslim's capital is his religion, and he



should not risk it for the sake of some transient worldly gain.

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) issued a detailed fatwa concerning the issue of settling in a kaafir country, which we will quote here.

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen said:

Settling in a kaafir country poses a great danger to the Muslim's religious commitment, morals, behaviour and etiquette. We and others have seen how many of those who settled there went astray and came back different from when they went; they have come back as evildoers, and some have come back having apostatized from their religion and disbelieving in it and in all other religions – we seek refuge with Allaah – denying it completely and mocking the religion and its people, past and present. Hence we must take measures to guard against that and stipulate conditions which will prevent people from following this path which leads to doom and destruction.

There are two basic conditions which must be met before staying in kaafir countries:

The first condition is: that the person must be secure in his religious commitment, so that he has enough knowledge, faith and will power to ensure that he will adhere firmly to his religion and beware of deviating or going astray, and that he has an attitude of enmity and hatred of the kaafirs and will not befriend them and love them, for befriending them and loving them are things that contradicts faith. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“You (O Muhammad) will not find any people who believe in Allaah and the Last Day, making friendship with those who oppose Allaah and His Messenger (Muhammad), even though they were their fathers or their sons or their brothers or their kindred (people)”

[al-Mujaadilah 58:22]

And He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“O you who believe! Take not the Jews and the Christians as Awliyaa' (friends, protectors, helpers),



they are but Awliyaa' of each other. And if any amongst you takes them (as Awliyaa'), then surely, he is one of them. Verily, Allaah guides not those people who are the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers and unjust).

And you see those in whose hearts there is a disease (of hypocrisy), they hurry to their friendship, saying: 'We fear lest some misfortune of a disaster may befall us.' Perhaps Allaah may bring a victory or a decision according to His Will. Then they will become regretful for what they have been keeping as a secret in themselves"

[al-Maa'idah 5:51, 52]

And it was narrated in al-Saheeh that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Whoever loves a people is one of them" and that "A man will be with the one whom he loves."

Loving the enemies of Allaah is one of the most serious dangers for the Muslim, because loving them implies that one agrees with them and follows them, or at the very least that one does not denounce them, hence the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said, "Whoever loves a people is one of them."

The second condition is that he should be able to practise his religion openly, so that he can observe the rituals of Islam with no impediment. So he will not be prevented from establishing regular prayer, and praying Jumu'ah and offering prayers in congregation if there are others there with whom he can pray in congregation and pray Jumu'ah; and he will not be prevented from paying zakaah, fasting, performing Hajj and doing other rituals of Islam. If he will not be able to do that then it is not permissible to stay there because it becomes obligatory to migrate (hijrah) in that case.

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen said - explaining the categories of people who settle in non-Muslim lands:

The fourth category includes those who stay for an individual, permissible need, such as doing business or receiving medical treatment. It is permissible for them to stay as long as they need to.



The scholars (may Allaah have mercy on them) have stated that it is permissible to go to kaafir countries in order to do business, and they narrated that some of the Sahaabah (may Allaah be pleased with them) had done that.

The Shaykh said – at the end of the fatwa:

How can the believer be content to live in the land of the kuffaar where the rituals of kufr are proclaimed openly and rule belongs to someone other than Allaah and His Messenger, seeing that with his own eyes, hearing that with his own ears and approving of it, and even starting to feel that he belongs there and living there with his wife and children, and feeling as comfortable there as he does in the Muslim lands, even though he and his wife and children are in such great danger and their religious commitment and morals are in such peril?

Majmoo' Fataawa al-Shaykh Ibn 'Uthyameen, Fatwa no. 388.

See also the answer to question no. [27211](#).

And Allaah knows best.