87788 - Is it permissible to work in newspaper distribution in America?

the question

I am a Muslim Arab university student in the United States. I am married and am working temporarily in the distribution centre of a local daily newspaper until I graduate and return to my country, because my family and I need the money urgently and there are few opportunities for halaal work in this country. Is it permissible to work in newspaper distribution?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

The basic principle indicated by the evidence is that it is not permissible to help in anything that is haraam, by selling, carrying, distributing and so on, because Allaah 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 Allaah. Verily, Allaah is Severe in punishment”

[al-Maa'idah 5:2]

And there is evidence which shows that it is obligatory to denounce evil, and the one who remains silent or approves of it is criticized, so how about the one who helps with it!

Hence a number of scholars stated that it is haraam to sell anything that helps one to commit sin. Ibn Qudaamah said: To sum up, selling juice to one who it is thought will use it to make alcohol is haraam. Then he said: The same ruling applies to everything that is intended for haraam purposes, such as selling weapons to those who are at war with the Muslims, or will use them for banditry or to create turmoil, or selling slave women to be used as singing girls, or to be hired out for that purpose, or renting one's house to be used for selling alcohol or to be used as a church or

Zoroastrian temple, and so on. This is haraam, and the contract is invalid. End quote from al-Mughni (4/154).

It says in al-Mawsoo'ah al-Fiqhiyyah (9/213): The majority are of the view that everything that is intended for haraam purposes, and everything that will be used for sin, is haraam. It is forbidden to sell anything which it is known that the purchaser intends to use it for something that is not permissible. End quote.

Secondly:

It is well known that the newspapers in that country contain some permissible things, such as news or articles or scientific information, but they also contain many haraam things, such as indecent pictures and advertisements for brothels, nightclubs, alcohol and gambling etc. These haraam things are many and they are the purpose for which many people buy those newspapers and so on, so it is not permissible to help in distributing them.

You should remember that whoever gives up something for the sake of Allaah, Allaah will compensate him with something better than that. So seek halaal provision and you will find it by Allaah's leave.

See also the answer to question no. 89737.

May Allaah help us and you to do that which He loves and which pleases Him.

And Allaah knows best.