9348 - Is Working for a Company that Deals with Insurance Prohibited?

the question

I work for a shipping company that ships packages all over the world. I was told by my supervisor that I will be required to ask the customer if they want to add insurance which is 35 cents on every hundred dollars to protect their package and I have to push a button on the computer and it's done in seconds. My question is will this make my job haram because of the insurance? Is this interest? Will I be cursed by Allah for this?

Summary of answer

It is not permissible for a Muslim to work for a company that deals in interest and other prohibited transactions. The prohibition includes all the employees who work in the company, even the doorkeepers and security guards.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Is working in shipping permissible in Islam?

Working in shipping is halal if the products being shipped are things that are permissible according to Shari`ah and are not prohibited things such as alcohol, pork or anything that it is forbidden to eat, drink, wear, etc.

Is commercial insurance allowed in Islam?

The commercial insurance which insurance companies deal in is prohibited. One of the reasons for it being prohibited is the fact that it involves interest and gambling, both of which are prohibited according to the texts of the Quran and Sunnah, and the consensus (Ijma') of the Muslim scholars.

Shaykh `Abd Al-`Aziz ibn Baz (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Insurance on one's life and property is prohibited according to Shari`ah and is not permitted, because it involves ambiguity and interest. Allah has forbidden all interest-based transactions and all transactions that involve ambiguity, out of mercy towards this Ummah and to protect it from that which may harm it. Allah Says (interpretation of the meaning):

{Allah has permitted trading and forbidden Interest.} [Al-Baqarah 2:275]

It was narrated in an authentic Hadith that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) forbade transactions involving ambiguity. And Allah is the Source of strength. (End quote from *Fatawa Islamiyyah*, 3:5)

Why Riba and gambling make insurance prohibited

Allah describes interest as a very serious issue, and warns against it, as He Says (interpretation of the meaning):

{O you who believe! Fear Allah and give up what remains (due to you) from Riba (from now onward) if you are (really) believers. And if you do not do it, then take a notice of war from Allah and His Messenger.} [Al-Baqarah 2:278-279]

Muslim (1598) narrated that Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) cursed the one who consumes interest, the one who pays it, the one who writes it down and the two who witness it. He said, "They are all the same."

An-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

This clearly shows that it is prohibited to write down the contract between the two parties or to witness it. It also shows that it is prohibited to help others to commit falsehood.

Your pushing the button to proceed with the insurance is like writing it down, so it is included in the Hadith quoted above.

Is working in the insurance industry prohibited in Islam?

It is not permissible for a Muslim to work for a company that deals in interest and other prohibited transactions. The prohibition is not restricted to the one who writes down the details of the interest or the one who witnesses it, rather it includes all the employees who work in the company, even the doorkeepers and security guards, because this helps the company to do the prohibited transactions that they engage in. And Allah 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]

Seeking permissible employment: A religious obligation

The Muslim should look for lawful work, for consuming prohibited wealth is one of the things that prevent Du`a from being answered, and is one of the causes of entering Hell. Anybody that has been nourished on prohibited earnings, the Fire is more fitting for it.

If a Muslim gives up something prohibited in obedience to Allah, then Allah will replace it with something better than it, for whoever gives up something for the sake of Allah, Allah will compensate him with something better.

And Allah knows best.