14102 - Working in an alcohol factory

the question

An inquirer from Gambia is asking, what is the ruling on a Muslim who sells alcohol or drugs, can we call him a Muslim or not? What is the ruling on a Muslim who works in an alcohol factory, does he have to give up his job if he cannot find any other job?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Selling alcohol and other intoxicants is a grave evil, and working in alcohol factories is haraam and is an evil, 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”
[al-Maa'idah 5:2]

Undoubtedly selling alcohol, drugs and cigarettes constitutes cooperating in sin and transgression, and working in alcohol factories also constitutes cooperating in sin and transgression. And Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“O you who believe! Intoxicants (all kinds of alcoholic drinks), and gambling, and Al Ansaab [stone altars for sacrifices to idols, etc.], and Al Azlaam (arrows for seeking luck or decision) are an abomination of Shaytaan’s (Satan’s) handiwork. So avoid (strictly all) that (abomination) in order that you may be successful.

Shaytaan (Satan) wants only to excite enmity and hatred between you with intoxicants (alcoholic drinks) and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allaah and from As Salaah (the prayer). So, will you not then abstain?”

[al-Maa’idah 5:90]

It was narrated in a saheeh report that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) cursed alcohol, the one who drinks it, the one who pours it, the one who extracts the juice, the one for whom it is extracted, the one who carries it, the one to whom it is carried, the one who sells it, the one who buys it and the one who consumes its price.

And it was also narrated in a saheeh report that he (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “Allaah has made a covenant that whoever dies drinking alcohol, He will give him to drink of the mud of khibaal.” He was asked, “O Messenger of Allaah, what is the mud of khibaal?” He said, “The juice of the people of Hell” or “the sweat of the people of Hell.”

With regard to the ruling, the one who does this is a sinner and an evildoer by so doing; he is lacking in faith and on the Day of Resurrection he will be subject to the will of Allaah. If He wills, He will forgive him and if He wills, He will punish him, if he dies before he repents. This is according to the Ahl al-Sunnah wa’l-Jamaa’ah, because Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Verily, Allaah forgives not that partners should be set up with Him (in worship), but He forgives except that (anything else) to whom He wills”

[al-Nisaa’ 4:48]

This ruling applies if he does not regard that as being permissible. If he does regard it as being permissible then he is a kaafir by doing so, and if he dies he should not be washed or the funeral (janaazah) prayer offered for him, according to all the scholars, because by doing that he is disbelieving in Allaah and His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him).

The same ruling applies to one who regards as permissible zina (adultery), sodomy, riba (usury) and other things which are unanimously agreed to be haraam, such as disobeying one’s parents, severing ties of kinship or killing a soul unlawfully.

But if a person does that or some of that knowing that it is haraam, and knowing that he is disobeying Allaah, then he is not a kaafir; rather he is an evildoer who will be subject to the will of Allaah in the Hereafter if he does not repent before he dies, as stated above concerning the ruling

on one who drinks alcohol. And Allaah is the Source of strength.