146803 - Should he stay in a western country in order to get his Master’s degree?

the question

I am currently studying for my Bachelor's degree in a non-Muslim country and I will get it, in sha Allah, in the middle of 2011. I have the opportunity to stay for one more year (until the middle of 2012) in order to get my Master’s too. I will tell you about the pros and cons of waiting for another year in order to get my Master’s.

Pros:

- Making my father happy (by getting my Master’s)
- The study will be virtually free of cost (whereas I do not know what my expenses would be in another country)
- Getting a better salary in any future job if I get a Master’s
- I will be able to stay with my father in this country, because it is likely that they will settle here so that my younger sister can get her degree too.

Cons:

- Living for another year in a non-Muslim country
- Not working and supporting my family for another year (despite the fact that I could work with a Bachelor’s degree). Even if I stopped studying in this country after I get my Bachelor’s (in sha Allah), there is no guarantee that I will get a job in my field in a Muslim country (and getting a job in a Muslim country is the only way that could help me to move there and get a resident visa), because many jobs in Muslim countries require years of experience which I could never get if I only have a Bachelor's degree.

I would appreciate your advice very much based on what is more pleasing to Allah with regard to this matter. May Allah reward you with good.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

It is permissible to stay in kaafir countries based on certain conditions, the most important of which are: that the person who stays there has enough religious commitment to protect him from desires and has enough knowledge and insight to protect him from doubts and specious arguments that he may face, is able to practice his religion openly, and he and his family are safe. For more details concerning that, please see the answer to questions no. 13363 and 27211.

If these conditions are fulfilled, there is nothing wrong with your staying there in order to complete your Bachelor's and then your Master's.

In that case, you should strengthen your connection with the Muslims in that land and strive to go to one of the Islamic centres to offer prayers, attend lectures and strengthen your faith, for the Shaytaan is closer to one who is on his own, and he is further away from two.

If you can take part with some of the members of the Islamic centre in calling people to Allah and organising lectures and lessons, this is better.

We ask Allah to guide you, help you and enable you to obey Him.

And Allah knows best.