175232 - He lived in a hotel and his faith grew weak and he became careless about prayer

the question

I am a young man, twenty-three years old, and I am studying for a Masters in Business Administration (MBA). I was in the habit of offering the five daily prayers regularly, but since I moved to live in a public hotel, because of my studies, I have found myself in a bad state and my level of faith has dropped. I no longer offer the prayers as I used to, and I feel regret because of that, but I am not able to improve. I also saw my father in a dream, as if he had died and departed this life, and I think that that was because of my giving up prayer. Hence I have decided to go back to praying as soon as possible, but I need advice to motivate me to do that and help me to raise my level of faith.

The other problem that is faced by young student Muslim men like me, here in India, is the issue of jobs. Most of those who graduate in a specialty like mine go to work in riba-based banks or for some large companies that are usually of Jewish origin. What should be done in such situations? Thank you for your great efforts on this website; I have been following it for two years and have benefited greatly from it.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

Prayer is the greatest pillar of Islam after the Shahaadatayn (twin declaration of faith). It is the foundation of faith on which Islam is built, so you must pay a great deal of attention to it, and it should be more important to you than study or work, and even food and drink, because it gives life to your heart and rectifies all your affairs, and it is the first thing for which you will be brought to account.

Things that will help you to offer the prayer include the following:

1. Understanding that neglecting it is an act of disbelief that puts a person beyond the bounds of Islam. See question no. 5208.
2. Understanding that delaying it until its time is over is a grave major sin, because Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): “But there came after them successors who neglected prayer and pursued desires; so they are going to meet evil” [Maryam 19:59].

Ibn Mas‘ood said that Ghayy [translated here as “evil”] is a valley in Hell that is very deep and has a foul taste.

In fact what was narrated from a number of the Sahaabah is that the one who neglects a single prayer deliberately, until its time has ended, is a disbeliever.

Ibn Hazm (may Allah have mercy on him) said: We narrated from ‘Umar ibn al-Khattaab (may Allah be pleased with him), Mu‘aadh ibn Jabal, Ibn Mas‘ood and a number of the Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them), and from Ibn al-Mubaarak, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, and Ishaaq ibn Raahawayh (may Allah have mercy on them), and from a total of seventeen of the Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them), that the one who deliberately and knowingly neglects an obligatory prayers until the time for it ends is a disbeliever and apostate. This is also the view of ‘Abdullah ibn Maajishon, the companion of Maalik, and was stated by ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Habeeb al-Andalusi and others.

End quote from al-Fasl fi’l-Milal wa’l-Ahwaa’ wa’n-Nihal (3/128).

This is a serious matter that makes the heart tremble, because a believer would not accept for himself to disbelieve and apostatize– Allah forbid; indeed, he does not accept for himself to commit a major sin, or enter a valley in Hell.

1. You should strengthen your faith by doing righteous deeds, such as naafil (supererogatory) prayers, giving charity, reading Qur’an and regularly reciting adhkaar, whilst also avoiding evil deeds, such as looking at or listening to that which Allah has forbidden.

2. You should be keen to offer prayers in congregation.
3. You should find righteous friends who will help you to obey Allah and deter you from disobeying Him.

Secondly:

The means of earning a halaal provision are many, praise be to Allah, so do not let yourself be distracted by that. Rather work hard in your studies, and have faith that Allah, may He be exalted, will help and guide His righteous slave and grant him provision from where he does not expect it, and will give him from His bounty that is never exhausted, as Allah, may He be glorified, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And whoever fears Allah - He will make for him a way out

And will provide for him from where he does not expect. And whoever relies upon Allah - then He is sufficient for him. Indeed, Allah will accomplish His purpose. Allah has already set for everything a [decreed] extent”

[at-Talaaq 65:2-3]

“Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do”

[an-Nahl 16:97]

“Satan threatens you with poverty and orders you to immorality, while Allah promises you forgiveness from Him and bounty. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing”

[al-Baqarah 2:268].

You might find a post in a company or institution that is run by righteous Muslims who do not deal with riba, or you might find work outside your country, or something else that Allah, may He be exalted, may grant to you.

We ask Allah, may He be exalted, to guide you and protect you.

And Allah knows best.