406458 - Will he bear the burden of his children’s and grandchildren’s sins if they go astray from Islam in a non-Muslim country?

the question

If I move to make my life in Japan, will i get the sins of my children & descendance if they divert to islam?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Living in the land of the disbelievers is fraught with risks, because there is such a great deal of temptation, and the danger for children and grandchildren is greater. They may be compelled to commit objectionable actions in the schools and elsewhere, and the father may not have any control over his son or daughter, so he will not be able to deter them from unlawful relationships or unlawful actions. Thus the child will grow up committing sin, and that may lead to him giving up Islam altogether. The reality in those countries bears witness to that.

Parents are responsible for raising their children and protecting them from the causes that lead to deviation.

Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

{O you who believe, guard yourselves and your families against a fire …} [at-Tahrim 66:6].

Mujahid and others among the early generations said: Advise your families to fear Allah and discipline them. Qatadah said: Instruct them to obey Allah and forbid them to disobey Him.

Al-Bukhari (2554) and Muslim (1829) narrated from ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Each of

you is in a position of responsibility and each of you is answerable for those under his care. The ruler of the people is in a position of responsibility and is answerable for those under his care. A man is in a position of responsibility over his household and is answerable for those under his care. A woman is in a position of responsibility over her husband's house and children and is answerable for those under her care. The slave is in a position of responsibility over his master's wealth and is answerable for it. Indeed, each of you is in a position of responsibility and each of you is answerable for those under his care."

Countries vary in the extent of evil that is present in them and the possibility of the children being corrupted or not. The ages of the children also make a difference; protecting younger children is easier than protecting adolescents and older children.

What may be said about parents' being responsible for their children going astray is that if the parents take measures to keep their children on the right path and avoid things that may lead to their being corrupted, then they will not be questioned about anything else.

Applying that to the matter under discussion here means that it is not permissible for the parents to move with their children from a Muslim country, where it is most likely that they will be safe from temptation that could lead them away from their religion, especially the major temptations to which those who live in non-Muslim countries are exposed. It is not permissible for the parents to move with their children when they have an alternative to that, even if the standard of living is better and opportunities for higher earnings are available, and other worldly considerations.

But if they or their country is faced with some emergency which forces them to move to a non-Muslim country, and they can find no other alternative, then what the parents must do is choose a country in which there is a large number of Muslims and where they are able to practice Islam openly.

One of the guidelines on choosing a country in which to live is that there should be schools that are only for Muslims, where their children can study and be safe from seeing nakedness and other evils, and from having to study subjects that promote ideas of disbelief.

They should try to teach their children Arabic and Islam, to memorize the Holy Qur'an and attend Jumu'ah and prayers in congregation.

If there is a city like that, there is nothing wrong with the parents moving there, then if the child goes astray after that, there will be no sin on them; that would be comparable to a case in which a child drifts away from Islam when living in a Muslim country.

But if there are few Muslims in the country, and perhaps there are no mosques or it is not possible to go to the mosque except on Friday, and there are no Islamic schools, so the children have to study with the local people and learn their customs and see their evils, and study their curricula, then this is an environment which will lead to their going astray. In fact, the basic assumption is that children will go astray. Hence the one who takes his children to such a country is harming them, and is the cause of their becoming corrupted and doomed, and he is responsible for their going astray, let alone their disbelieving and apostatising – Allah forbid.

The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "There is no person whom Allah puts in charge of others and he fails to be sincere towards them, but he will not smell the fragrance of Paradise." Narrated by al-Bukhari (7150_ and Muslim (1442).

And he said: "Allah will question each person in a position of responsibility about what he was responsible for – whether he took care of it or neglected it – until He questions a man about the members of his household." Narrated by Ibn Hibban; classed as sahih by al-Albani in *Ghayat al-Muram*, no. 271.

So when the father is asked tomorrow about travelling to that land even though he thought it was likely that his children would be corrupted, how will he respond?

Will he say: O Lord, I was seeking wealth or cleanliness or luxury or freedom or a good education?

What are these things worth if the cost is losing one's faith?

Thus you will realize that the basic principle is that taking your children to non-Muslim countries is something that is restricted and is not allowed except when one has no other choice and one is

able to find a city in which there are the things we mentioned above, namely a large Muslim community with many mosques, schools and other organisations.

If the Muslim travels to that country because he has no choice, and settling there is permissible according to Islamic teachings, and he does the things mentioned above to the best of his ability to protect his children, but they still go astray, then there is no sin on him.

But if he travels there by his own choice, and he has no Islamically acceptable excuse for settling in that land, and one of his children goes astray, then he is responsible for that, because he is the one who took him towards that evil and made it easily accessible to him.

For more information, please see the answers to questions no. 52893 and 224475 .

We ask Allah to protect us and you, and the Muslims.

And Allah knows best.