46453 - He is suffering because of his Muslim colleagues' laziness in studying; should he work with non-Muslims?

the question

I am a student in a school in the west. Praise be to Allaah I spend most of my time with Muslims, but I am suffering because of my own laziness and the laziness of the Muslims here. Hence I have started to prefer working with non-Muslims here in the field of study only. Is that regarded as taking the kuffaar as close friends? What are the conditions of working with them in this case?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Among the most important influences on a person's attitude and nature, and also on his religious commitment, is the atmosphere surrounding him, including the people with whom he interacts, the place where he lives and the places he frequents. These all affect a person's feelings and form the values in which he believes; his attitude will be coloured by the various influences around him. The most dangerous situation is when this process happens without his realizing it, or paying attention to it. Hence they say that (human) nature is a thief, it takes from what is around it by stealth, without a person realizing.

Because of what we have mentioned above, Islam has defined the atmosphere in which a person should strive to live, by choosing good friends and living in a Muslim environment. It also warns against settling among the mushrikeen or taking them as friends. [See the questions on al-Wala' wa'l-Bara' (Loyalty and friendship vs. disavowal and enmity) in the section on 'Aqeedah (basic tenets of faith)]. See also questions no. 38284, 26118 and 23325.

This applies when a person is able to do that and has some control over the situation at times of ease. But in cases of necessity when a person has no other choice and has no control over the matter, then we should speak about doing whatever he can in his best interests, and warding off

whatever he can of harm. See question no. 13363.

With regard to your question: before you think about working with non-Muslims, why don't you think about how to ward off laziness from yourself and your Muslim brothers?

Why don't you try – with your brothers – to give a good impression of what a Muslim should be – serious and hardworking?

What I fear is that this conduct will reinforce the image of laziness, neglect and weakness that is often presented of Muslims. By Allaah, this is an old problem of which 'Umar (may Allaah be pleased with him) complained when he said: "O Allaah, to You do I complain of the strength of the evildoer and the incapability of the trustworthy one." See question no. 43270.

But if it is the matter of choosing between working hard with the kuffaar or sleeping among the Muslims, then you should work and strive hard, and strive hard to adhere to your religion and morals which you have learned from your religion; be more keen in protecting your religious commitment than you would be in protecting your wealth and your life. And pay attention to the following:

1- Do not take women as study companions, because you know about their attitudes and you know what will result from keeping company with them and mixing with them. Moreover you know that such relationships are forbidden in Islam.

2- Try to spend as little time as possible among them.

3- Limit these relationships to that which is required for work and study.

4- Try to give a good impression of Muslims and their religion and attitude. Link everything good in you to what your religion enjoins upon you.

5- Remember that your adherence to your religion is something that will make others respect you. Who knows? Perhaps some of them will be influenced by you and if Allaah guides a single man by means of you, that will be better for you than this world and everything in it.

And Allaah is the Source of strength.