70319 - Should he shave his beard for the sake of work ?

the question

I am a young man with a beard and I am trying to fear Allah and do my duty to Him as much as I can. I graduated from the college of engineering a few years ago, then I started to look for work, but job opportunities in my country are very few, and even where they exist the financial income is very little.

Allah helped me to find a job in a foreign petroleum company which does not require shaving the beard, and there are workers and technicians with beards there, praise be to Allah. But the nature of my job will be in the petroleum fields themselves, and it is when known that during drilling there may be an emission of a poisonous gas called H2S, which requires wearing a gas mask which will not adhere firmly to the face because of the hair of the beard. I checked that out for myself by asking other foreign companies over the internet, and they replied that there is no gas mask that will work over a beard.

What is your opinion? I repeat that the company does not forbid beards at all, and this applies only in the petroleum fields in order to protect lives.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

The command to let the beard grow is narrated in many saheeh ahadith which were narrated from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), which indicates that it is obligatory to let the beard grow and it is haram to shave it. See question no. 1189.

Secondly:

It is part of the tolerant nature of Islam that it permits one to do something that is haram and to omit obligatory duties if there is a valid excuse for doing so, as in cases of necessity and urgent need – such as eating dead meat when forced to do so, or a woman being treating a male doctor when necessary. The matter is subject to shar'i guidelines and should not go any further than is necessary.

Thirdly:

The Muslim must strive to meet his needs without committing haram actions as much as possible. If he cannot do that except by committing a haram action, it is permissible for him to do it in that case.

Based on the above, you should strive to do the following:

1 – Look for a gas mask that can be worn with a beard. Some companies have made gas masks for religiously-committed Jews with beards who work for airline companies.

2 – Look for another job which does not require you to commit any haram actions, even if that job is in another country.

3 – Try to create your own work by doing business and the like.

If you cannot do any of these things, then there is no sin on you, in sha Allah, if you shave your beard, so long as you shorten it only as much as is necessary; if you can manage to simply shorten it, then it not permissible for you to shave it off, and so on. Undoubtedly if a person fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him as much as he can, Allah will suffice him and grant him a way out, as Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"And whosoever fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty).

3. And He will provide him from (sources) he never could imagine" [al-Talaaq 65:2-3]