81778 - Should he work in a grocery store that sells lottery tickets or in a place that sells alcohol and pork?!

the question

I live in America. I have been looking for a halal work for two months. But the Arabs who live in the same city are selling either wine or pork. I cannot move to another city as my wife is a university student here. Is working in a restaurant that sells pork haram in my case? I found a job in another city about 20 miles far in a shop that sells lottery tickets. But thus I will have to return to my home after midnight, leaving my wife and daughter alone. Also in the winter here the temperature can be under zero and it becomes foggy and it snows everywhere, which makes it dangerous to drive. So is working in a shop that sells lottery tickets haram? What is better to do in my case? To work in the city where I live in a grocery that sells pork, or to work in the other city in a shop that sells lottery tickets?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

I do not think that you want us to decide for you between two serious major sins, the sin of gambling in the lottery which Allaah has forbidden in verses that will be recited until the Day of Judgement, in which He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“O you who believe! Intoxicants (all kinds of alcoholic drinks), and gambling, and Al-Ansaab (stone altars for sacrifices to idols etc) and Al-Azlaam (arrows for seeking luck or decision) are an abomination of Shaytaan’s (Satan’s) handiwork. So avoid (strictly all) that (abomination) in order that you may be successful

Shaytaan (Satan) wants only to excite enmity and hatred between you with intoxicants (alcoholic drinks) and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allaah and from As-Salaah (the prayer). So, will you not then abstain?”

[al-Maa'idah 5:90-91],

and the sin of selling pork and alcohol which Allaah has also forbidden.

Is this what the Muslim accepts, to be given the choice between major sins? Is this the life that he is striving to attain and enjoy?

I do not think, as you are a Muslim who is proud of his Islam and strong in faith, that you will be happy to sell something so evil that has corrupted the world and filled it with oppression, evil and corruption. Alcohol is the mother of all evils, and gambling is consuming people's wealth unlawfully, and pork has been definitively forbidden by Allaah. In fact the prohibition of these things is one of the most prominent symbols of Islam, so the Muslim should not stoop to such a level that he sells things that will anger the Lord, may He be glorified and exalted.

Yes, it is not permissible under any circumstances whatsoever for a Muslim to sell evil things to people, even to non-Muslims, because by doing that he is participating in the spread of sin and cooperating in disobedience to Allaah and going against His commands.

On our website there are many fatwas which discuss this issue and affirm that it is haraam for a Muslim to participate in selling haraam things, even to non-Muslims. See the answers to questions no. 1830 and 40651.

You can make an agreement – if you have no choice but to remain in that country – with the owner of the grocery store that you will not sell lottery tickets, and you will only sell permissible things in the store.

What is this situation in which you have ended up, that you are thinking of doing haraam jobs? The situation of many Muslims in that land is no more than the natural result of settling among the kuffaar and in a kaafir land, far from the Muslim world, because the kaafir society is not regulated by guidelines and no attention is paid to the commands and prohibitions of Allaah, whereas Muslim societies adhere to a large extent – praise be to Allaah – to the limits set by Allaah. Hence we advise you to study the fatwas published on our website about the rulings on settling in kaafir

countries. Please see the answer to questions no. 13363 and 27211.

Remember that fearing Allaah is the best thing that a man can do in this world and the Hereafter. In this world it will bring provision to a person as Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And if the people of the towns had believed and had the Taqwa (piety), certainly, We should have opened for them blessings from the heaven and the earth, but they belied (the Messengers). So We took them (with punishment) for what they used to earn (polytheism and crimes)”

[al-A’raaf 7:96]

“And whosoever fears Allaah 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. And whosoever puts his trust in Allaah, then He will suffice him. Verily, Allaah will accomplish his purpose. Indeed Allaah has set a measure for all things”

[al-Talaaq 65:2-3]

And in the Hereafter it will be expiation for sin, as Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“and whosoever fears Allaah and keeps his duty to Him, He will expiate from him his sins, and will enlarge his reward”

[al-Talaaq 65:5].

The days of this world are limited and this life will soon end. No man knows whether the angels will take his soul today or tomorrow, so how about the one whose soul is taken whilst he is working to sell haraam things, and he does not listen to advice or pay attention to any reminder?

We think that you are one of those who fear the wrath and punishment of Allaah, and you are not happy with your situation. Patience is the key to relief, so strive to look for good, halaal work, and review the matter of your staying in that country. We ask Allaah to guide you to what is true and

good.

And Allaah knows best.