

Ruling on Travelling for fun (tourism)

[English]

حكم السفر للسياحة
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Will I earn any reward if I take my family to a Muslim country for fun and relaxation?.

Praise be to Allah.

It is permissible to travel to Muslim countries that are ruled by sharee'ah if they are free of evils and immorality. If the people of a country are Muslim but it is not ruled by sharee'ah, then we should not travel there for fun. It is even more haraam to go to countries whose people are kaafirs, and it is not permissible to travel to these countries except in case of need, such as a sick person who travels for treatment or with a sound purpose such as going for business or da'wah.

Shaykh Saalih al-Fawzaan (may Allah preserve him) was asked about the ruling on travelling to a country whose religion is something other than Islam, whether it is Christian or has no religion. Is there any difference between travelling for fun or travelling for medical treatment or study and so on?

He replied:

It is not permissible to travel to the lands of kufr, because this poses a threat to one's 'aqeedah and morals and because it involves mixing with the kuffaar and living among them. But if there is a need for travelling to their countries, such as seeking medical treatment for one who is sick that is not available anywhere else, or travelling for the purpose of study that is not available in a Muslim country, or travelling for business, these are valid purposes for which it is permissible to travel to kaafir countries, so long as one is able to adhere to Islamic practices and establish Islam in their lands. That should also be done only to the extent that it is necessary, then you should go back to the Muslim lands.

Travelling for the sake of tourism is not permissible, because the Muslim has no need for that and it does not serve any interest that matches or outweighs the harm and danger that it poses to his religious commitment and 'aqeedah.

He was also asked:

What is the ruling on travelling to Islamic lands in which there are a great deal of evils and major sins, such as zina and alcohol, and the like?

He replied:

What is meant by Islamic lands is those which are ruled according to Islamic sharee'ah, not the lands in which there are Muslims but they are not ruled according to sharee'ah. These are not Islamic. If there is corruption and evil in the lands that are Islamic in the former sense, then we should not travel to them, lest we be affected by the evil that exists there. As for the other type of lands - i.e., non-Islamic (not governed by sharee'ah), we have explained the ruling on travelling to them in the first question.

And he was asked:

What is your advice to fathers who send their children abroad during the summer to study English or for tourism? What is your advice to those who travel abroad?

He replied:

My advice to those fathers is that they should fear Allah with regard to their children, for they are a trust concerning which they will be asked on the Day of Resurrection. It is not permissible for them to put their children at risk by sending them to the lands of kufr and corruption, lest they go astray. As for learning English - if it is really necessary - they can be taught it in their own country, without travelling to a kaafir country. Even more serious than that is sending them for the sake of tourism. Travelling for this purpose is haraam as stated in the first answer.

My advice to those who travel abroad for whom it is Islamically permissible to travel, is that they should fear Allah and adhere to their religion, practising it openly, feeling proud of it, calling people to it and conveying it to the people. They should be a good example, representing the Muslims well. And they should not stay in the kaafir land any longer than is necessary. And Allah knows best.

Al-Muntaqa, 2/253-255

Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked about families travelling abroad, i.e., to other Muslim countries, knowing that there are passports involved and they look at the pictures of the women, and a man may ask a woman to uncover her face in order to prove her identity. Is that permissible other than in cases of necessity?

He replied:

Firstly:

We do not think that anyone should travel abroad except in cases of necessity or for a valid purpose, because travelling abroad causes a great deal of

unnecessary expense, so it is a waste of money and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) forbade wasting money.

Secondly:

This travelling may distract them from doing things that they could be doing in their own country, such as upholding the ties of kinship, seeking knowledge, etc. Undoubtedly being distracted from something beneficial is to be regarded as a loss.

Thirdly:

The land to which they travel may be a land that has been influenced greatly by colonialism with regard to morality and ideas, which may affect his morals and way of thinking. This is the worst thing that is to be feared from travelling abroad.

Hence I say to this questioner and to others: Praise be to Allah, we have summer resorts in our country and there is no need to go abroad; that is also cheaper and benefits our fellow-citizens.

Liqā' al-Baab il-Maftooh, question no. 810.

And Allah knows best.