

60459 - Is it permissible for him to lie to his parents in order to go out and seek (Islamic) knowledge?

the question

Allah has favoured me by islam. And I love to seek knowledge, but my parents stopped me, they are strongly against seeking Islamic knowledge. I had then to travel and seek knowledge in another city without their permission. When they ask me after I come home late, I lie to them. I spend a full day every week away from home, they think that I am studying with friends, but I am not, I lie to them a lot.

My questions are:

Is it permissible for me to lie to them, although I know that lying is a great sin and crime, but it is the only way for me to continue seeking knowledge?

What shall I do if they know what I was hiding? They will, for sure, stop me seeking islamic knowledge, shall I obey them then or continue what I am doing? They may tell me to leave home if I do not stop, I am a medical student, I cannot do anything else outside to spend on myself, what shall I do?.

Detailed answer

Firstly:

Seeking shar'i (Islamic) knowledge is one of the greatest means of drawing closer to Allaah, and is a sign that Allaah is guiding and loves His slave, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "When Allaah wills good for a person, He causes him to understand the religion." Narrated by al-Bukhaari (71) and Muslim (1037).

This knowledge may be divided into fard 'ayn (individual obligation) and fard kifaayah (communal obligation). That which is an individual obligation is that which the Muslim needs to

know in order for his ‘aqeedah (belief), worship and interactions with others to be sound.

Everything other than that is naafil or supererogatory for the individual, but it is a communal obligation for the ummah as a whole.

The scholars of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas were asked: Is studying shar’i knowledge obligatory?

They replied: Shar’i knowledge falls into two categories. There is that which is obligatory for every Muslim, male and female, to know, which is knowledge of the basics of faith, the pillars of Islam, the rulings on prayer, how to do wudoo’ and purify oneself from janaabah and so on. It is in this sense that the famous hadeeth, “Seeking knowledge is a duty on every Muslim” is to be understood.

The second category is fard kifaayah (a communal obligation), which is learning all aspects of Islamic knowledge, the details of various cases and the evidence for them. If some people undertake this, the rest of the ummah is absolved of sin. End quote.

Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa’imah (12/90).

Secondly:

The basic principle concerning lying is that it is haraam and it is only permissible in specific cases that have been explained in sharee’ah, in order to attain major benefits or ward off harm. For more information on these cases please see the answer to question no. [47564](#).

Thirdly:

Going out to seek knowledge without one’s parents’ permission or against their wishes is something that is subject to further discussion.

1 – If acquiring the knowledge is an individual obligation, then it is not essential to have one’s parents’ permission, and if they try to stop you then you do not have to obey them with regard to that. But lying is a serious matter, and equivocation or ambiguity is a safe way to avoid a lie. Al-Bukhaari (may Allaah have mercy on him) said in his Saheeh: Chapter: Equivocation or

ambiguity is a safe way to avoid a lie. Ishaaq said: I heard Anas (say): A son of Abu Talhah died, and he said: How is the boy? Umm Sulaym said: He has calmed down, and I hope that he has found relief. And he thought that she was telling the truth.

Equivocation or ambiguity is the opposite of clarity. What is meant is saying one thing and meaning something else, or deliberate ambiguity; it is a way out of lying.

Al-Haafiz said: The point of quoting what Umm Sulaym said, He has calmed down, and I hope that he has found relief., is that Abu Talhah understood from that that the sick child had recovered, because she said “calmed down” in the sense of quietening down, and gave the impression that he had fallen asleep. When a sick person falls asleep, it may be a sign that the sickness has gone or is reduced. But what she actually meant was that the child had died. This is reflected in her words, “I hope that he has found relief”. He understood that the child had found relief by recovering whereas she meant that he had found relief from the problems of this world and the pain of sickness. She was telling the truth as far as what she meant is concerned, but what she told Abu Talhah was something other than what he understood. So the narrator said: He thought that she was telling the truth, i.e., based on what he understood. End quote from Fath al-Baari (10/594).

Ibn Qutaybah (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: An example of equivocation is what Ibraaheem al-Khaleel (peace be upon him) said concerning his wife, “She is my sister,” meaning that the believers are brothers and sisters of one another. End quote from Ta’weel Mukhtalif al-Hadeeth, p. 35.

If you are asked why you are late, for example, you can say that you were studying with a friend, and they will think that you mean you were studying medicine, when in fact you mean that you were studying Islam. Or you can say that you were with a classmate, meaning a fellow student of Islam, or that you passed by your friend, meaning on your way back from the Islamic class. This ambiguity is only to be used when necessary and you should not do it a great deal when there is no need for it, because that may lead to lying, loss of respect and loss of trust in what a person says.

The scholars of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas were asked: It is essential to have parents' permission for seeking knowledge that is obligatory, or not?

They replied: Seeking knowledge on which the validity of your faith and performance of obligatory duties depend does not require parents' permission, but when it comes to knowledge that is a communal obligation, then parents' permission should be sought. End quote.

Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa'imah (12/78).

2 – If the parents do not let you attend religious study circles because they dislike your seeking Islamic knowledge, then you should not ask their permission and you are not obliged to obey them in that case. Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: ... But if he knows that his parents dislike him seeking Islamic knowledge, then he should not obey them, and he should not ask them for permission if he goes out, because their motive is dislike of Islamic knowledge. See his comments in full in the answer to question no. [11558](#).

3 – If going out to seek knowledge requires travel and being absent from them when they need you to help them and so on, then you must ask their permission. But if seeking knowledge is in the same city where you live, and they do not need you during the period when you are outside the home, then their permission is not essential.

Al-Khallaal narrated that a man asked Ahmad (may Allaah have mercy on him): I am seeking knowledge, but my mother has told me not to do that; she wants me to work in trade. He said to me: Be kind to her and say something pleasing to her, but do not stop seeking knowledge.

Ibn Muflih said in al-Adaab al-Shar'iyyah (1/646): The author of al-Nuzum said: Do not obey them in forsaking a confirmed naafil action such as seeking knowledge that will not harm them. End quote.

Fourthly:

You should note that there are many ways of acquiring knowledge, especially nowadays when tapes, CDs and books are widely available. For example:

1-You can make use of books, tapes and information available on the internet.

2-You can make use of the programs on some satellite channels such as beneficial lessons which are presented on the educational Majd channel.

3-You can read books and ask knowledgeable people via the internet or through other means, about things you are confused about.

See also the answer to question no. [20191](#) for more information on how to seek knowledge.

We ask Allaah to help and guide you.

And Allaah knows best.