

'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar narrated that

1

God's Messenger (peace be upon him) made Zakat al-Fiṭr at the end of Ramadan obligatory on people:

2

one ṣā' of dates, or one ṣā' of barley

3

for every Muslim, whether a free person or slave, male or female, young or old.

4

He ordered that it should be paid before people go out to join the [Eid] Prayer.⁽¹⁾

1 Related by al-Bukhari, 1507; Muslim, 984.

From the Qur'an

- ﴿He does not desire that you be afflicted with hardship. You are, however, required to complete the necessary number of days and to extol and glorify God for having guided you aright.﴾ (2: 185)
- ﴿Take a portion of their money as charity, so that you may cleanse and purify them thereby.﴾ (9: 103)
- ﴿[Believers are those] who give a due share of their possessions (24) to the one who asks [for help] and the one who is deprived.﴾ (69: 24-25).

The Narrator

Abu 'Abd al-Rahmān 'Abdullāh ibn 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ibn Nufayl belonged to the 'Adiy branch of the Quraysh. He embraced Islam when he was young. He migrated to Madinah with his father when he was still a child below the age of puberty. At the time of the Battle of Uḥud, he was too young to fight. His first military effort was the Encounter of the Moat, i.e. al-Khandaq. He also participated in the pledge under the tree. Zaynab bint Maz'ūn, who was 'Uthmān ibn Maz'ūn's sister, was his mother and the mother of his sister, Ḥafṣah the Mother of Believers. He narrated much useful information from the Prophet, and also from his father 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, Abu Bakr, 'Uthmān, 'Alī, Bilāl, Ṣuhayb and other companions of the Prophet. He issued many fatwas and narrated a large number of hadiths. He died in Year 74 AH 694 CE.

Summary

The Prophet (peace be upon him) explains that Zakat al-Fiṭr is payable for every Muslim male or female, free or slave, young or old. For each one, its quantity is one ṣā' of food. It must be paid out before the Eid Prayer.



Message and Meaning



The Prophet (peace be upon him) made Zakat al-Fiṭr, which is due at the end of Ramadan, a duty on all Muslims. Needless to say, a duty stated by the Prophet is the same as if it is stated by God, as He says: 'Whoever obeys God's Messenger obeys God'. (4: 80) It is a personal duty on all Muslims, according to the consensus of the majority of scholars.⁽¹⁾ The Prophet made it a reparative measure for any omission, forgetfulness or error that might have occurred during the fasting month of Ramadan. Its other purpose is the provision of plentiful food for the poor and needy, so that they do not have to beg on the Day of Eid. They will thus be able to participate fully in the happy occasion of Eid. Ibn 'Abbās said: 'God's Messenger (peace be upon him) established the duty of Zakat al-Fiṭr as purification from idle talk and unbecoming behaviour on the part of the fasting person and as food for the needy'.⁽²⁾



The amount of Zakat al-Fiṭr is one *ṣā'* of dates, barley, rice, or some other type of staple food, as Abu Sa'īd al-Khudrī explains: 'We used to pay Zakat al-Fiṭr one *ṣā'* of food, or barley, or dates, or dried milk, or raisins.'⁽³⁾ The *ṣā'* was a volume measure equal to the fill of the two cupped hands of an average man four times. It is estimated in weight at around 2.17 kilograms.

This and other hadiths indicate that the duty of Zakat al-Fiṭr requires paying it in kind not value. This was the practice of the Prophet and his companions. However, it is acceptable to give it in money which is used to buy food.



It is a binding duty on all Muslims: male and female, young and old. During the time of slavery, it was a duty on slaves as well, but the master paid it.

It is binding on everyone who owns what is in excess of his own and his family's food for the day and night of Eid. Thus, a man must pay it for himself, his wife, family, children and slaves.

It becomes a duty at sunset on the last day of the month of Ramadan. Thus, if a child is born before sunset on that day, his father must include that child in his Zakat al-Fiṭr. The same applies to one who goes through his marriage contract before sunset. He pays it for his wife. If either event takes place after sunset, then no Zakat al-Fiṭr is required for either child or wife. This is the same as the case of one who dies after his annual zakat becomes due. It must be taken out of his estate and paid to its beneficiaries.

The hadith makes clear that Zakat al-Fiṭr is not applicable to a non-Muslim, because its purpose is spiritual purification for Muslims.

1 Al-Nawawī, *al-Majmū' Sharḥ al-Muhadhdhab*, Vol. 6, p. 104.

2 Related by Abu Dāwūd, 1609; Ibn Mājah, 1827.

3 Related by al-Bukhari, 1506; Muslim, 985.



The Prophet (peace be upon him) commanded that Zakat al-Fiṭr should be taken out before people left home to join the Eid Prayer. He then added the concession that it could be paid out one or two days before the end of Ramadan.⁽¹⁾ If it is delayed beyond that time, it becomes unacceptable, and the person who delays it is accountable for his misdeed. This is based on Ibn ‘Abbās’s hadith: ‘God’s Messenger (peace be upon him) established the duty of Zakat al-Fiṭr as purification from idle talk and unbecoming behaviour on the part of the fasting person and as food for the needy. Whoever pays it before the [Eid] Prayer, it is counted as acceptable zakat. If it is paid after the Eid Prayer, it is a mere act of charity’.⁽²⁾

The Prophet (peace be upon him) limited the beneficiaries of Zakat al-Fiṭr to the poor and needy. It may not be paid to any of the other beneficiaries of zakat.



1 Ibn ‘Umar said: ‘They used to pay Zakat al-Fiṭr one or two days before Eid’. Related by al-Bukhari, 1511.

2 Related by Abu Dāwūd, 1609; Ibn Mājah, 1827.

Implementation

1

God has established Zakat al-Fiṭr to compensate for any short fall that occurs during the fasting month of Ramadan, such as idle talk or minor sins. Thus, paying it makes the fasting perfect and a Muslim earns his reward in full. Therefore, whoever wants to have the full reward of his fasting the month of Ramadan must pay his Zakat al-Fiṭr.

2

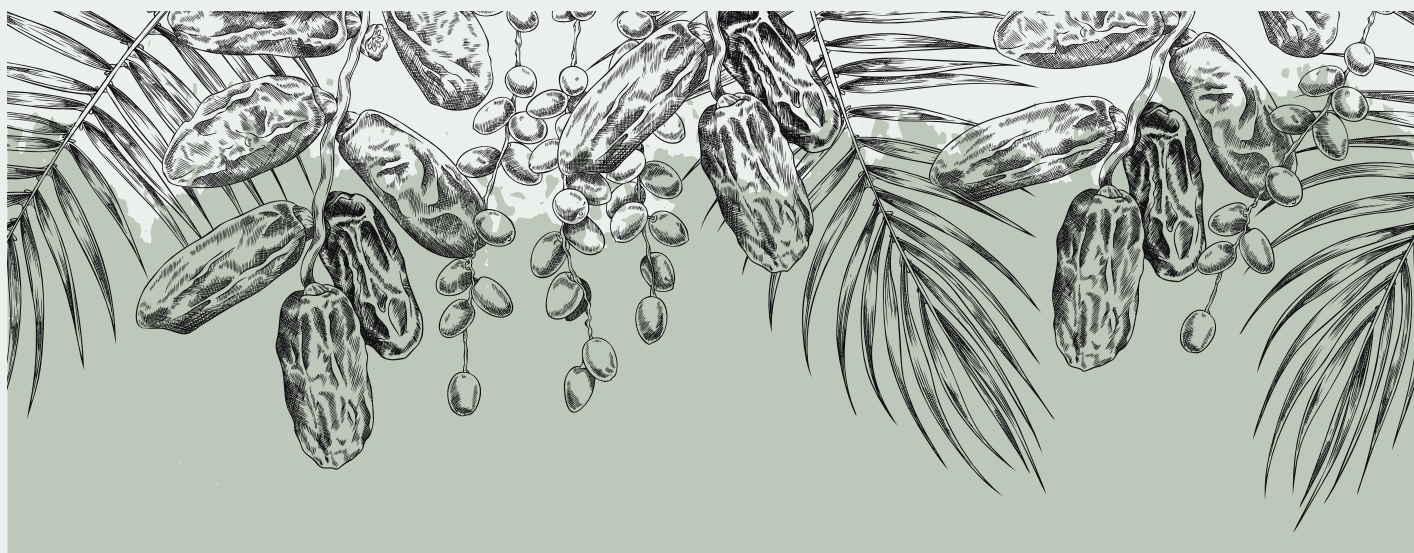
The Prophet (peace be upon him) made Zakat al-Fiṭr the means to make the poor self-sufficient on the Day of Eid, so that the festive occasion of the Eid is shared by all Muslims. Therefore, every Muslim should be keen to pay it, to earn his reward and to ensure that those around him are also happy.

3

The Prophet (peace be upon him) made Zakat al-Fiṭr an act expressing gratitude to God, the Exalted, for enabling us to fast and attend to our worship during Ramadan. Therefore, every Muslim should hasten to thank God for His blessings and favours, as also for enabling him to attend to acts of worship many people fail to do.

4

Zakat al-Fiṭr is a small amount that does not burden a Muslim. No one should ignore or begrudge it.



5

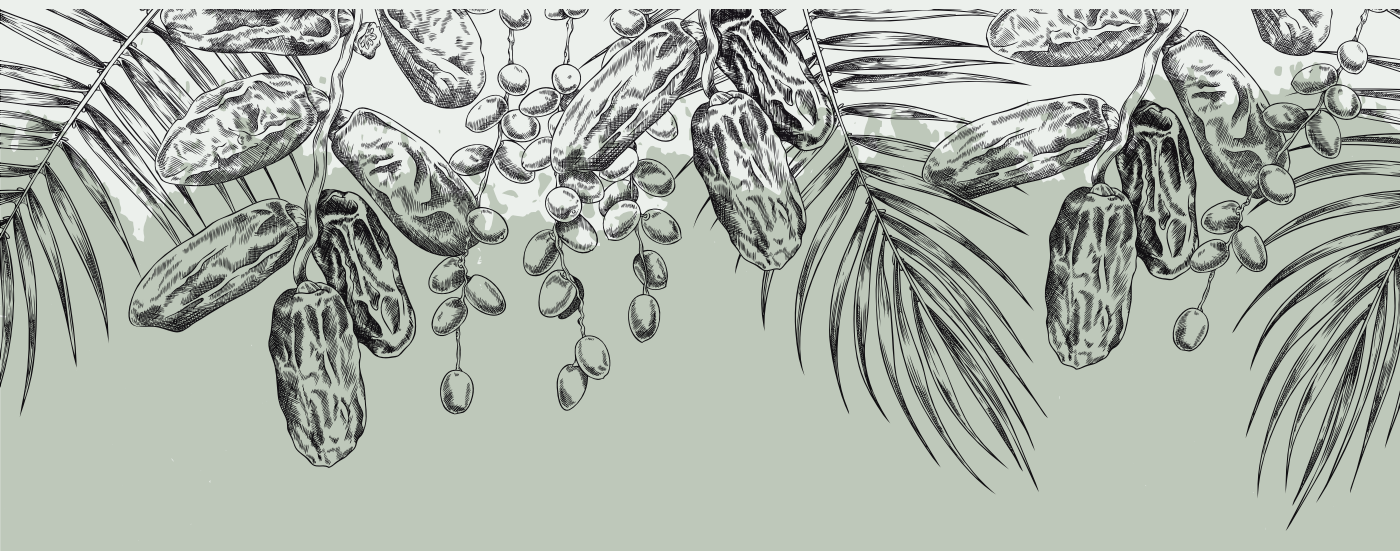
Although the various types of zakat and *ṣadaqah* are small in amount, but they are offered directly to God. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: ‘Whenever a person gives a *ṣadaqah* [i.e. charity] from good earnings – and God accepts nothing except what is good – God, the Lord of Grace will take it in His right hand. Even if it is as little as one date, it will grow in the Lord of Grace’s palm until it becomes larger than a mountain, just like any of you rears his weaned cow or weaned camel’.⁽¹⁾

6

Zakat al-Fiṭr is a duty binding on every Muslim who is alive during Ramadan until sunset on the last day of the month. Every Muslim must pay it for himself and his dependants.

7

It is not right for a Muslim to delay paying Zakat al-Fiṭr until people have left home to attend the Eid Prayer. It is far better to pay it early, before he is distracted by other duties and liable to miss its time. It is invalid when its time is gone.



1 Related by al-Bukhari, 1410; Muslim, 1014.

