

The Sunan Regarding Zakaatul-Fitr

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Source: Fasting In Ramadaan (eng) p98-104 [summarised]

Its Ruling

Zakaatul-Fitr is obligatory (fard) as shown by the hadeeth of Ibn Umar (Radiya 'Llahu 'anhumaa):

“Allaah’s Messenger (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) obligated Zakaatul-Fitr [for Ramadaan upon the people]”¹

Whom Is It Obligatory Upon?

It is obligatory upon every Muslim, the young and the old, the male and the female, and the free and the slave, due to the hadeeth of 'Abdullaah Ibn 'Umar, (Radiya 'Llahu 'anhumaa):

“Allaah’s Messenger (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) made Zakaatul-Fitr of a saa’² of dates, or a saa’ of barley, obligatory upon the slave and the free, the male and the female, and the young and the old of the Muslims.”³

Some of them [scholars] hold it to be an obligation which has to be carried out on behalf of the unborn child, however we do not know of any proof for this – nor is he described as a young one in the language or in practice.

What Is Acceptable As Zakaatul-Fitr:

Zakaatul-Fitr may be given in the form of a saa’ of barley, or a saa’ of dates, or a saa’ of dried curds, or a saa’ of raisins, or rye, due to the hadeeth of Aboo Sa’eed al-Khudree, (Radiya 'Llahu 'anhu):

“We used to give Zakaatul-Fitr as a saa’ of grain (ta’aam) or a saa’ of barley, or a saa’ of dates, or a saa’ of dried curds, or a saa’ of raisins.”⁴

The hadeeth of Ibn 'Umar (Radiya 'Llahu 'anhumaa), who said: He (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) said:

“Sadaqatul-Fitr was made obligatory as a saa’ of barley, or a saa’ of dates, or a saa’ of rye.”⁵

Its Quantity:

The Muslim should give one saa’ of the aforementioned types of food stuffs. There is difference regarding wheat, so some say: half a saa’ of it should be given, and it is what is correct due to his (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) saying:

“Give a saa’ of wheat or wheat-grain for two people; or a saa’ of dates, or a saa’ of barley for every free person and slave, and young and old.”⁶

¹ Reported by al-Bukhaaree (3/291) and Muslim (no. 984) the addition is his.

² **Editor’s Note:** One saa' is equal to four mudd, and one mudd is equal to the amount held by cupping the two hands together. It is a measure by volume and not by weight.

³ Reported by al-Bukhaaree (3/291) and Muslim (no. 984)

⁴ Reported by al-Bukhaaree (3/294) and Muslim (no. 985)

⁵ Reported by Ibn Khuzaimah (4/80) and al-Haakim (1/408-410)

The saa' referred to here is the saa' of the people of al-Madeenah as shown by the hadeeth of Ibn 'Umar, (Radiya 'Llahu 'anhumaa):

"Weighing is according to the weights of the people of Makkah, and measures are according to the measure of the people of al-Madeenah."⁷

On Whose Behalf Should A Man Give It?

The Muslim gives it for himself and for those whom he takes care of: young or old, male or female, free or slave – due to the hadeeth of Ibn 'Umar, (Radiya 'Llahu 'anhumaa):

"Allaah's Messenger ordered Sadaqatul-Fitr on behalf of the young and the old, and the free and the slave – whom you provide for."⁸

To Whom Should It Be Given?

It may not be given except to those who have the right to it, and they are the poor as occurs in the hadeeth of Ibn 'Abbaas, (Radiya 'Llahu 'anhumaa):

"Allaah's Messenger (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) obligated Zakaatul-Fitr as purification for the fasting person from loose talk and indecent speech, and to feed to poor."⁹

It is from the Sunnah that there should be a person with whom it is gathered just as the Prophet (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) entrusted Aboo Hurairah, (Radiya 'Llahu 'anhu), who said:

"Allaah's Messenger (Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) entrusted me to look after the zakaah of Ramadaan."¹⁰

When Is It To Be Given:

It is to be given before the people go out for the 'Eid prayer.¹¹ It is not permissible to delay it until after the prayer, nor to give it in advance, except by a day or two. As is reported from the practice of Ibn 'Umar, (Radiya 'Llahu 'anhu), since the narrator of a hadeeth will be the one who best knows its meaning.¹² If it is delayed until after the prayer then it will count only as charity, due to the hadeeth of Ibn 'Abbaas, (Radiya 'Llahu 'anhu):

⁶ Reported by Ahmad (5/432) from Tha'labah ibn Su'air. Its narrators are all reliable, and it has a witnessing narration reported by ad-Daraqutnee (2/151) from Jaabir with a saheeh isnaad.

⁷ Reported by Aboo Daawood (no. 2340), an-Nasaa'ee (7/281) and al-Baihaqee (6/31) from Ibn 'Umar with a saheeh isnaad

⁸ Reported by ad-Daraqutnee (2/141) and al-Baihaqee (4/161) from Ibn 'Umar with a weak isnaad. It is reported by al-Baihaqee (4/161) through a different chain which is broken, from 'Alee. It is reported through another chain as the saying of Ibn 'Umar by Ibn Abee Shaibah in al-Musannaf (4/37) with a saheeh isnaad. So it is hasan due to their chains.

⁹ Reported by Aboo Daawood, an-Nasaa'ee and Ibn Maajah. The hadeeth is hasan

¹⁰ Reported by al-Bukhaaree (4/396)

¹¹ See Salaatul-'Eidan Fis-Sunnatil-Muthahharah of Shaykh 'Alee Hasan 'Abdul-Hameed

¹² **Editor's Note:** It is reported by Ibn Khuzaimah (4/83) by way of 'Abdul-Waarith from Ayyoob: I said: "When did Ibn Umar used to give the saa'?" He said: "When the collectors had finished." I said: "When did the collectors finish?" He said: "A day or two days before the day of Fitr."

"...and whoever gives it after the prayer, then it is merely a sadaqah." ¹³

Its Wisdom:

It has been prescribed by the Wise Legislator as a purification for those who fasted, from loose and indecent talk, and to feed the poor Muslims so that they have enough provision for that day – as is shown by the previous hadeeth of Ibn 'Abbaas, (Radiya 'Llahu 'anhumaa).

¹³ Reported by Aboo Daawood, an-Nasaa'ee and Ibn Maajah. It is hasan