

# CHARITY

## الصدقة

### Objectives >>>

#### Students should:

- Understand the importance of giving wealth as charity in Islam
- Understand that the wealth we have really belongs to Allah (SWT)
- Know that some types of charity are obligatory
- Know that some types of charity are recommended
- Know that the most applicable types of obligatory charity today is
  - Zakātul fitrah
  - Khums
- Briefly discuss Zakatul Fitr and when it should be paid
- Briefly discuss the basic rules of khums

## JURISPRUDENCE

## LEVEL 3

### Charity

In this lesson, we will be discussing what types of charity we have and why they are important in Islam.

We all know that giving charity means giving wealth to others who are more in need than us for the sake of pleasing Allah (SWT). Giving charity is a very important part of Islam because we must take care of all our brothers and sisters by sharing the wealth that Allah (SWT) has given us. Allah (SWT) has commanded us Muslims to spend generously in His way in many verses of the Holy Qur'an such as the one below:

“Those who spend (in the cause of Allah) privately or publicly, by night and day, have their reward with their Lord. And (on the Day of Resurrection) they shall neither fear nor grieve.” (2:274)

Such charity does not have to be in the form of money, and can be in the form of food, material or property. It can also be spending our time and skills in the way of Allah (SWT) in order to serve the poor and needy. The best example of this is our beloved Imam Ali (as), who dug many, many water wells and gave them to the poor families.



Figure 1: The opening of a water well for the poor in Africa.

## IS IT REALLY OUR MONEY?

Sometimes we may think to ourselves that the money in our pockets is our money and that we do not want to share it with anyone. We are forgetting that the money does not really belong to us and it is merely a blessing from Allah (SWT), who has trusted us with this wealth in order to examine us. Allah (SWT) is the Provider and the Sustainer for all of us. Everything in the heavens and the Earth belong to him, including the money in our pockets. Therefore, we are only taking care of the money that Allah (SWT) has trusted us with and we must spend it in His way, and have no right to hold on to it when we do not need it.



## RECOMMENDED CHARITY

In Islam, we have some recommended types of charity, and this is generally called *ṣadaqah*. This is when we donate some of our wealth voluntarily to people who are in need. It includes for acts such as sponsoring an orphan overseas, sending money for the homeless and those suffering from hunger, or giving spare clothes to a clothing collection centre for those in need.

A beautiful story of such *ṣadaqah* is the one about the wedding dress of Lady Fāṭimah (as). On the night before her wedding, a poor woman asked her for some clothes. She only had two dresses, one being a new wedding dress which her father the Holy Prophet (saw) had bought her, and another an old dress she had worn for a long time. She immediately gave the dress which she loved more, being the wedding dress, to the poor woman, and wore the old dress herself.

## OBLIGATORY CHARITY

In Islam, some types of charity are obligatory and we *must* make sure that we pay them. There are two particular types of obligatory charity that apply to us today:

- **Khums:** A type of charity where one must pay 1/5<sup>th</sup> of the money they have spare at the end of each year. For example, if you worked in a fruit shop and saved up \$100 after 1 year, you must pay \$20 of that as khums.

Note: if we pay our khums then Allah (SWT) will reward us and make our wealth grow. However, if we do not pay our khums, there are terrible consequences. First and most importantly, our wealth becomes *ḥarām* which means that the money that we have is Islamically unlawful. Blessing is taken away from the money and the things we buy with that money are considered like stolen things.

- **Zakātul Fiṭr:** this charity is paid on the day of 'Īd. Each person must pay as charity enough money to feed a poor person an average meal. Usually, the head of the family (e.g. your father) would pay this on your behalf.

## GETTING INVOLVED IN CHARITY

It is very important for us to get involved in giving charity actively. There are two main ways we can do this:

- Save up part of our wealth and give it to the poor
- Help with fundraising projects that our centres, schools or families may be involved in. This is a great way of using our time, and we would be helping very many needy people.

## Review Questions

### Q1. Which types of charity are obligatory?

- a. Khums & *Ṣadaqah*
- b. Khums & Zakātul Fiṭr
- c. No charity is obligatory

### Q2. The money that we have:

- a. Completely belongs to others.
- b. Completely belongs to us.
- c. Belongs to Allah (SWT) and is given to us as a trust

### Q3. Khums is:

- a) 1/5<sup>th</sup> of our money.
- b) 1/5<sup>th</sup> of our spare money at the end of the year
- c) Recommended but not obligatory