



Zakāh is one of the five fundamentals of Islām. The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Islam is founded on five pillars: bearing witness that there is no deity except Allāh, and that Muḥammad is His Servant and Messenger; establishment of ṣalāh; paying zakāh; performance of ḥajj; and fasting the month of Ramaḍān.” (Al-Bukhārī)

After Īmān, ṣalāh is the most important act of worship which is to be performed physically, and zakāh is the main act of worship which is to be performed monetarily. Ṣalāh and zakāh have been mentioned together on many instances in the Glorious Qur’ān, to cite just some examples, Allāh ﷻ says:

“And establish regular ṣalāh and pay regular zakāh, and bow down with those who bow down.” (2:43)

“In fact, the mosques of Allāh are built only by those who believe in Allāh and the Last Day, and those who establish ṣalāh and pay zakāh and who fear none but Allāh. So, it is hoped that they are to be among those on the right path.” (9:18)

Such verses of the Qur’ān substantiate that zakāh is the most important fundamental after ṣalāh. Those who fulfil this duty have been promised abundant reward in this world and

the Hereafter; and those who evade zakāh have been sternly warned in the Qur’ān and aḥādīth of the consequences.

Benefits of Giving Zakāh

The following are some of the many benefits mentioned in the Qur’ān and aḥādīth for the one who gives zakāh:

1. Pleasure of Allāh ﷻ.
2. Increase in wealth.
3. Protection from losses.
4. Forgiveness and blessing from Allāh ﷻ.
5. Safety from calamities.
6. Protection from the Wrath of Allāh ﷻ and from a bad death.
7. Shelter on the Day of Judgement.
8. Security from seventy misfortunes.
9. Safety from the fire of Jahannam.
10. Safety from grief.

Consequences of Not Paying Zakāh in this World

When Allāh ﷻ sends a calamity to punish people for their sins, no power on earth can prevent the onslaught. Men may form thousands of plans, but something decreed by the Lord of the universe must come to pass. Nowadays, the calamities of famine, flood, etc. have become a great problem for the whole world. If we wish to seek relief from such sufferings and cure the malady, we shall have to follow the remedy

revealed to us by Allāh ﷻ. Rasūlullāh ﷺ has warned us over fourteen hundred years ago, against all those evil practices which bring calamities and afflictions in this world.

These warnings were given long ago and now the world has witnessed their truth through experience. Today, the predictions are coming true. If only people had acted according to the rulings prescribed by Rasūlullāh ﷺ, who was undoubtedly the wisest of all wise men. It is beyond the scope of this article to discuss how specific evils cause specific afflictions, but I will bring to the attention of the readers the aḥādīth related to the subject matter - non payment of zakāh.

Non Payment of Zakāh – A Cause of Famine

Buraydah ؓ relates that Rasūlullāh said, *“The nation that withholds zakāh (i.e. does not pay it), Allāh afflicts famine on them.” (Aṭ-Ṭabrānī)*

Ibn ‘Umar ؓ relates that Rasūlullāh ﷺ once said, *“O Muhājirūn! There are five (dreadful) sins; if you fall into these – and I take refuge in Allāh from the evil of these sins lest you fall into them – (you will face horrible disasters)...”* The Prophet ﷺ thereafter enlisted a number of sins and their punishments, amongst which he said, *“Thirdly, if people stop paying zakāh, rain will be withheld from them, and were it not for the animals, no rain would fall on them.” (Ibn Mājah, Al-Bazzār, Al-Bayhaqī)* A similar ḥadīth

is also reported by Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ.

Non Payment of Zakāh – A Cause of Windstorms, Earthquakes, etc.

‘Alī ؓ and Abū Hurayrah ؓ report that Rasūlullāh ﷺ prophesied fifteen actions which his Ummah will perpetrate, and from amongst these he mentioned, *“When zakāh is looked upon as a penalty (i.e. people will pay zakāh with a heavy heart, as though it is a penalty), then look for violent windstorms, earthquakes, men being swallowed by the earth, metamorphosis, stones raining down from the skies, and calamities following one another in rapid succession, like beads of rosary falling one after the other when its string is cut.” (At-Tirmidhī)*

Destruction of Property

‘Umar ؓ narrates that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, *“Wealth is generally lost on the land and the sea because zakāh is not paid on it.” (At-Targhib)*

‘Ā’ishah ؓ narrates that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, *“Zakāh will destroy wealth in which it is.” (Al-Bazzār, Al-Bayhaqī)*

The destruction of wealth upon which zakāh is obligatory will be by way of Allāh ﷻ destroying the wealth in which the amount due for zakāh lies, or by removing the barakah from it.

Consequences in the Hereafter

“As for those who hoard gold and silver and do not spend it in the way of Allāh,

give them news of a painful punishment. On the day it (i.e. the wealth) will be heated up in the fire of Jahannam, then their foreheads and their sides and their backs shall be branded with it and (it will be said to them), 'This is what you had accumulated for yourselves. So, taste what you have been accumulating.'" (9:34-35)

The majority of the Ṣaḥābah ؓ and 'Ulamā are agreed that the severe punishment mentioned in the verse is for those who do not pay zakāh. May Allāh ﷻ protect us from such severe punishments. Āmīn.

"And let not those who hoard wealth, which Allāh has bestowed them with from His grace, think that it is better for them. No, it is worse for them. That which they hoard will be made into a collar (in the form of a snake and put around their necks) on the Day of Qiyāmah. To Allāh belongs the inheritance of the heavens and the earth. Allah is All-Aware of what you do." (3:180)

Imām Ar-Rāzī ؒ writes in his tafsīr, "This verse does not apply to the cases of nafl (optional) spending. It applies to cases of failure in obligatory spending." This is substantiated by a ḥadīth in Al-Bukhārī that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "The person on whom Allāh bestowed wealth, and he does not give zakāh on it, then on the Day of Judgement, his wealth will be transformed for him

into a large bald snake with two black spots over its eyes; it will wind round his neck on the Day of Judgement, then grab (him) with both his jaws and say, 'I am your treasure.'" Then Rasūlullāh ﷺ recited the above verse.

Abū Hurayrah ؓ reports that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "If anyone possessing gold and silver does not pay what is due, then on the Day of Judgement his gold and silver will be made into sheets and will be heated in the fire of Jahannam. His side, forehead and back will then be branded with (the heated sheets), again and again, on that day, the duration of which will be fifty thousand years." (Muslim)

Once, Rasūlullāh ﷺ saw gold bangles on the hands of two women. He inquired if they had given zakāh for the bangles. They replied, "No." Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, "Do you wish that on the Day of Judgement you be made to put on bangles of fire?" They replied, "No." He said, "Give zakāh on them." (Aḥmad)

The following facts are clear from the aforementioned discussion:

- Zakāh is farḍ.
- The significance of zakāh is very great.
- Failure to pay zakāh will bring calamity and misfortune in this world and the Hereafter.

Allāh, the All-Merciful has bestowed upon us many favours: He has given us health and wealth, luxury and comfort, friends and

children, life and wife. Every penny that we earn is from the Grace of Allāh. He has given us everything and asks for only 2.5% to be spent in His way upon those who are not capable of providing for themselves. Remember, 2.5% at the end of the each Islamic year from the excess wealth (i.e. which remains after spending) is basically nothing. If we pay zakāh in full and abstain from greed, extravagance, etc. there will not remain a single destitute among the Muslims. Rasūlullāh ﷺ's ḥadīth is clear evidence for this claim. He said, "In the wealth of rich Muslims, the amount which is sufficient for the poor among the Muslims has been made obligatory. The hardships of the poor among the Muslims regarding food and clothing are because of the deeds of the wealthy (i.e. their refusal to pay zakāh). Beware! Allāh will demand a stern reckoning from them and mete out a painful punishment." (Aṭ-Ṭabrānī)

Bear in mind that anything we leave behind is not ours. If we want to protect our hard-earned money and save it for use at a time when we shall need it badly, let us spend it in the way of Allāh ﷻ and deposit it in the bank of the Hereafter.

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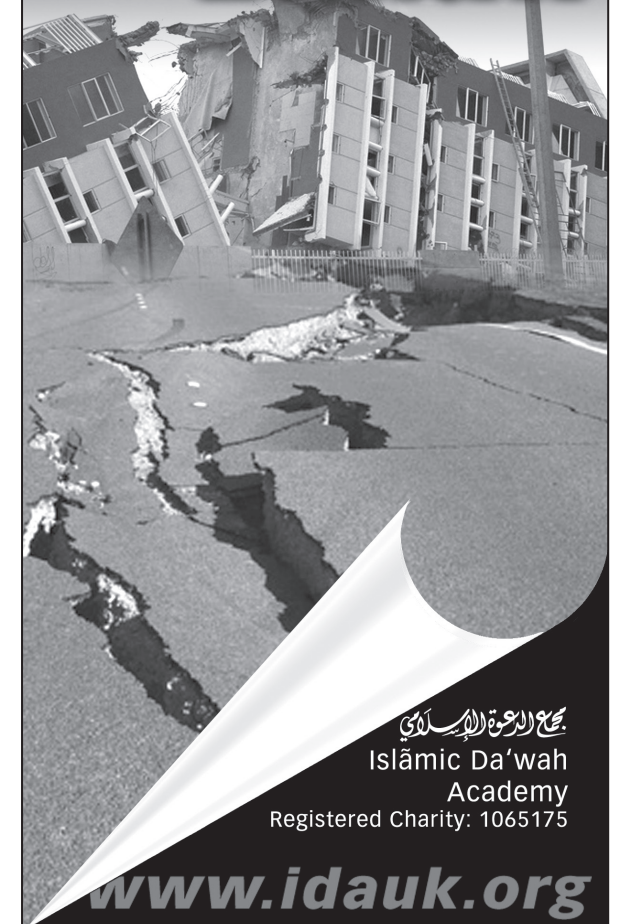
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Consequences of Withholding Zakāh



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