

This Is The Zakat

The school of the Ahlul Bayt (as) (Shiism) is different from the other Islamic creeds who believe in the obligation of the *zakat* but not the *khums*. They see that *khums* is required only in the booties of war.

As for the Shia, they believe that *zakat* is obligatory and *khums* is obligatory too in all what a Muslim gains in a year. According to the Prophetic *Sunnah*, *zakat* is obligatory on the following things:

1. Gold and silver coins
2. Livestock – camels, cows, sheep, and goats
3. Four yields – wheat, barley, date, and raisin

If we ponder on these mentioned articles of *zakat*, we see that they do not satisfy the need of building an integral Islamic society that looks forward to development, in keeping its pace with modern times, getting rid of poverty and neediness, assuring of safety and good living, building of hospitals, universities, streets and highways, assuring of good abodes, enough salaries for unemployed people or those disabled by diseases, old age or any disability.

It is known among all nations that the wealthy class forms not more than twenty percent of a nation, the middle class that hardly satisfy their needs may form fifty percent, and thirty percent of people are poor and needy, who are in terrible need of any help.

If we rely only on the *zakat* in those afore mentioned items that the Prophet (S) had mentioned and with the defined value of 2.5%, it shall be not enough to satisfy the needs of people and the requirements of the age.

One, who has thousands of olive trees, shall say: '*zakat* is not obligatory on me, because the Messenger of Allah (S) has not mentioned olive among the yields included in *zakat*.' The same can be said about many other yields such as tons of fishes taken out of the sea by modern tools. One, who has thousands of poultry, does not have to pay *zakat* as well. One, who has many real estates, also does not have to pay *zakat*. If we suppose that all these people were convinced to pay the *zakat*, they shall not pay more

than 2.5% of their properties, which is a very little amount which neither fattens nor avails against hunger!

As for the *khums* that Allah the Almighty has imposed on Muslims when saying:

And know that whatever thing you gain, a fifth of it is for Allah and for the Messenger and for the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer. (Qur'an, 8:41)

We have talked about this verse in details in our book "*To be with the Truthful*". Whoever wants more details let him refer to this book. We do not want to convince people that the Umayyads misinterpreted and annulled this verse and limited its rulings to the booties of war only, rather we want to show what the Ahlul Bayt (as) did in this concern, and the Ahlul Bayt (the people of the house) are more aware of what there is in the house! They did according to the Holy Qur'an and the Prophet's *Sunnah* and said that Muslims must pay the fifth of whatever they gain within a year.

If we think deeply through a simple mathematical operation, we shall clearly see the great difference between the reality that Muslims live today and the theory that has not been applied except to a very small group of people, and in a disorderly way.

Let us take an example – a Muslim who has ten thousand dinars. If this Muslim follows the rulings of the Sunni, he shall pay the *zakat* from his wealth at a percentage of 2.5, which is two hundred and fifty dinars, but if he follows the rulings of the Shia, he shall pay the fifth of his ten thousand dinars, which is two thousand dinars. When this Muslim pays the *zakat* according to the Sunni, nine thousand and seven hundred and fifty dinars shall remain with him, but when he pays the fifth according to the Shia, eight thousand dinars shall remain with him.

On this basis, a poor Muslim among the Sunni gets two hundred and fifty dinars for his living of a year, whereas a poor Muslim among the Shia gets two thousand dinars a year. The difference between the two poor Muslims is too big.

If the *zakat* of the Sunni suffices for the living of one poor Muslim, the *zakat* of the Shia suffices for the livings of eight poor Muslims.

If we compare between a rich Muslim and a poor one among the Sunni, we shall find the following account; 9750 in opposite to 250, which is a very weak proportion, forming one of forty. It means that if the poor Muslim has one loaf of bread, the rich one has forty loaves.

In comparison between a rich Muslim and a poor one among the Shia, we shall find the following account; 8000 in opposite to 2000, which is a reasonable and acceptable proportion, forming one of four. It means that if the poor Muslim has one loaf of bread, the rich one has four loaves.

In another word, a poor Sunni Muslim has one share, whereas a rich Sunni Muslim has thirty-nine shares. The difference between the two is too immoderate, and this is what Allah has warned us of when

saying:

So that it may not be a thing taken by turns among the rich of you. (Qur'an, 59:7)

Indeed, in this case, the rich who form only twenty percent of the nation possesses ninety-five percent from the general wealth, and the rest of people possess five percent from that wealth. As for a Shia poor Muslim, he has one share from every four shares, and this difference, though it is big, is not so immoderate. The rich here possess seventy-five percent of the wealth, whereas the poor possess twenty-five percent of that wealth.^{[1](#)}

In addition to that, Islam encourages voluntary charities. In fact, Islam imposes on Muslims some other obligatory charities like the *zakat al-fitr* (after fasting in Ramadan), sacrifices in the Hajj, penances and some vows. Islam also gives a legal ruler the right to take from the rich and give to the poor in some necessary circumstances, or put it in the public treasury.

However, the reality is other than what Allah has mentioned in the Qur'an and what the Prophet (S) and his progeny did. You see that the wealth of the Muslim nation is in the hands of the rich who are very few, but they possess everything whereas the poor, who are the great majority, have nothing.

The communist blocs knew this phenomenon in the Muslim world; therefore, they attacked it very easily by attracting its learned youth in the colleges and universities, using the theory of the distribution of wealth among all individuals.

Most of the Muslim youth believed in communism and denied their religion and beliefs. They began blaming and criticizing their fathers and grandfathers. In fact, Islam met a very dangerous affliction from communism that destroyed it from inside at the hands of its own learned youth. These very Muslims fought against Islam when they got the reigns of authority, and then they affected their people too much.

If we were not safe from communism, we have to blame the first Muslims who distorted the rulings of Allah and caused the affairs of the Muslim nation to get to where Muslims are in now with their poverty, underdevelopment, ignorance and blind fanaticism. There is no power save in Allah, the Most High, the Most Powerful!

^{[1](#)} What confirms this fact is that many Sunni economists say that the proportion of 2.5% of the zakat is no longer sufficient to meet the increasing expenditure where the different needs of man have become much more than his needs in the past. In this concern, they think that they must not follow the very literality of the Qur'anic texts concerning the political and economic affairs!!! Refer to An Introduction to the Islamic Economics, by Dr. Abdul Aziz Fahmi, p. 163.

Instead of accusing the texts of being insufficient – and this is from the daring things that the Sunni are blamed for, where they claim that the Qur'an and the Prophet's Sunnah do not include all rulings, and so they (the Qur'an and the Sunnah) need other tools and analogy!!”

And if they had referred it to the Messenger and to those in authority among them, those among them who can search out the knowledge of it would have known it” – these are the Ahlul Bayt (as). So, the right solution is to add the khums to the zakat and not limit it to the booties of war only. In this way, Muslims shall be prosperous.

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