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Zakatul-Fitr [Al-Fitrah]

Islam has taken care of every aspect of the human life concentrating on the subsistence aspect in particular. It has offered laws and enjoined taxes on the rich to solve the problem of the poor and liquidate poverty. *Zakatul Fitr* is one of these taxes. So, *Zakatul-Fitr* is a devotional financial tax, governed by certain mies and conditions as follows:

1. Paying it is *Wajib* on every sane[1] mature Muslim who can afford it. He is to pay it on behalf of himself and the members of his family: wife, children, parents, servants, etc.

2. *Zakatul-Fitr* is to be put aside for payment on the night preceding *Eidul-Fitr*, and can be paid any time up till the noon of the *Eid*.[2]

3. The amount of *Zakatul-Fitr* payable by every Muslim is nearly 3 kg[3] of the food common in the locality, such as: wheat, rice, dates, and the like. However, their value can also be paid in cash to the *Mustahiqqun* [those who deserve to receive it].

This charity is to be paid to one's local *Mustahiqqun*, unless there was a surplus, or there was no *Mustahiqq* in one's locality, or if there was extreme need in some other locality demanding that the *Zakat* should be transported to where it can achieve its economic and social objectives in solving the problem of poverty, and in pleasing the poor and the needy on this happy occasion of the Muslim life, the occasion of the *Eid* and of having completed this sacred *Sawm* duty.

How to Dispense Zakatul-Fitr.

In order to carry out the reformatory and subsistence aims of *Zakatul-Fitr* in the society, Islam as defined the way of dispensing it among the mustalJiqq people and establishments. These are:

1. The poor and the needy.

2. The collectors who levy the *Zakat* and distribute it.

3. The poor debtors who are unable to pay their debts because of their poverty.

4. *Ibnus-Sabil*, i.e.a traveller who has lost his money, and has been left with no means to take him back home, may be paid as much as he needs to return home.

5. It is also spent in the way of Allah, which covers all that pleases Allah, the Exalted, such as building mosques, schools, bridges, and for *Jihad* (war in defence of Islam), spreading Islamic culture, propagating Islam, enjoining the good deeds and forbidding the wrong deeds, and the like.

6. It is also given to the slaves who have come to an agreement with their masters so as to free them against a ransom. So the *Zakat* is used to help the slaves to emancipate themselves, since Islam is the religion of freedom and emancipation.

Discussion

Q1. Complete the following rules:
a. *Zakatul-Fitr* is *Wajib* on every.....

b. The time for putting the *Zakat* aside is.....till.....

c. The amount of *Zakatul-Fitr* is.....of food common in the locality, such as wheat.....

Q2. Who are the *Mustahiqqun* of *Zakatul-Fitr*?

1. The four sects say that Zakatul-Fitr is Wajib on every Muslim who can afford it, whether major [One who has reached puberty (legal age)] or minor, sane or insane. The guardians of the sane or the major will have lo pay Zakatul-Fitr to the Mustahiqq persons from the properties of those who are under their custody.
2. The Hanafis say that it will be due from the dawn of the Eid till the end of one's life. The Hanbalis say that it is Haram to delay its payment till after the Eid day and that it may be paid two days before the Eid. The Shafi'is say that it is due on the last part of Ramadan until the lirst part of Shawwal, i.e. at the sunset, or a little before it, on the last day of the month of Ramadan.
3. The Hanafis say that the quantity of Zakatul-Fitr is 1.5 kg.

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