

Islam Question & Answer

General Supervisor:
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36387 - For how many people is the udhiyah sufficient?

the question

We are eight people – myself, my wife and my children. Is one udhiyah (sacrificial animal) sufficient for us, or should there be one animal for each person?

If one is sufficient for us, then is it permissible for my neighbour and I to share in one udhiyah?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allaah.

One sheep is sufficient as udhiyah for one man and his family and whoever he wants among the Muslims, because of the hadeeth of 'Aa'ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) who said that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) ordered that a ram with black legs, black belly and black (circles) round the eyes should be brought to him, so that he could sacrifice it. He said to 'Aa'ishah: "Give me the knife," and she did that. He took it, then he took the ram, placed it on the ground and then slaughtered it (i.e., prepared to slaughter it), saying: "In the name of Allaah, O Allaah, accept (this sacrifice) on behalf of Muhammad and the family of Muhammad and the ummah of Muhammad." Then he sacrificed it.

Narrated by Muslim.

It was narrated that Abu Ayyoob al-Ansaari (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: "At the time of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), a man would sacrifice a sheep on behalf of himself and his household, and they would eat some and give some to others." Narrated by Ibn Maajah and by al-Tirmidhi, who classed it as saheeh. Also classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Tirmidhi, 1216.

If a man sacrifices a single sheep or goat on behalf of himself and his family, that will suffice for

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everyone he intended of his family, whether living or deceased. If he did not intend anything specific then it includes all those who are included in this word (family or household) either customarily or linguistically. Customarily it refers to all those whom he supports of wives, children and relatives; linguistically it includes all those who are related to him of his own children and the descendents of his father, grandfather and great-grandfather.

One-seventh of a camel or cow is equivalent to one sheep; if a man sacrifices one-seventh of a camel or cow on behalf of himself and his family, that is sufficient, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said that one-seventh of a camel or cow takes the place of a sheep in the case of the hadiy (sacrifice offered during Hajj), so that applies also to the udhiyah because there is no difference between the udhiyah and the hadiy in this regard.

Secondly:

If two or more people buy a sheep and sacrifice it, that is not sufficient, because no such thing has been narrated in the Qur'aan and Sunnah. Similarly if eight or more people share one camel or one cow, that is not sufficient (but it is permissible for seven people to share a camel or cow), because acts of worship are as prescribed in the Qur'aan and Sunnah and are not subject to personal opinion; it is not permissible to go beyond the set limits with regard to how much is to be done or the way in which it is to be done. This does not have to do with including others in the reward, because it was narrated that there is no limit to the number of people on whose behalf the sacrifice may be offered.