

9943 - The amount of kafaarat al-yameen (expiation for unfulfilled oath) and the ruling on paying it in cash

the question

In the Holy Quran Allaah says,(interpretation of the meaning) " Allaah will not punish you for what is unintentional in your oaths, but He will punish you for your deliberate oaths, for its expiation (a deliberate oath) feed ten poor persons on a scale of the average of that with which you feed your own families, or clothe them, or manumit a slave. But whosoever cannot afford (that), then he should fast for three days ".(Al-Ma'idah 5 : 89).

From the above meaning I have some doubt on the following, so please clear me.

1. Feed ten persons means by giving food to each person equal to what I feed my whole family depend on me or equal to what I feed only one member of my family at one time or one day.
2. Is it permissible to give the cost of food by cash or not.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allaah.

What is meant by feeding (a poor person) is half a saa' of the staple food of the country, such as dates, wheat, etc. This is equivalent to approximately one and a half kilograms of rice. See Question # 9985.

With regard to giving the price of the food instead of the food itself, the correct view is that giving the price does not fulfil the conditions of the kafaarah (expiation). This is the view of the majority of scholars. Ibn Qudaamah said in al-Mughni: "The kafaarah is not achieved by paying the price of the food or clothing, because Allaah mentioned giving food, so the kafaarah is not achieved by anything else. Allaah gives us the choice of three things' if it were permissible to give the price,

Islam Question & Answer

General Supervisor:
Shaykh Muhammad Saalih al-Munajjid

the choice would not have been limited to these three..." (al-Mughni by Ibn Qudaamah, 11/256)

See Fataawa Islamiyyah, 3/464; Kitaab al-Aymaan wa'l-Nudhoor, Muhammad 'Abd al-Qadir, 87.

And Allaah knows best.