

145565 - Those to whom zakat al-fitr may be given

the question

Can zakat al-fitr be given to people other than the poor and needy, among the eight categories of people mentioned in the Quran (to whom zakah may be given)?

Detailed answer

There is a difference of scholarly opinion concerning this matter. The Shaafa'is are of the view that the categories of people to whom zakat al-fitr may be given are the same as those to whom zakah on one's wealth may be given.

The Maalikis are of the view that zakat al-fitr is only for the poor and needy. This view was also favoured by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah and Ibn al-Qayyim; among contemporary scholars it was favoured by Shaykh Ibn Baaz. (May Allah have mercy on them all)

It says in Haashiyat ad-Dasooqi (1/506): Zakat al-fitr may be given to any poor, free Muslim except a Haashimi (descendant of Banu Haashim), but it may not be given to one who works in collecting it, those whose hearts are to be softened towards Islam, for freeing slaves, or to a debtor, mujaahid, or a wayfarer to help him get home; rather it is prescribed specifically for the poor. End quote.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: This opinion has the strongest evidence.

End quote from Majmoo' Fatawa Shaykh al-Islam, 25/71

Ibn al-Qayyim said in Zaad al-Ma'aad (2/22): It was the teaching of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) to single out the poor for receipt of this charity; he did not share it out among the eight categories (of those who are entitled to zakah), and he did not issue instructions to that effect, and his Companions and those who came after them did not do that either. Rather one of the two opinions in our view is that it is not permissible to give it to anyone

except the poor in particular. This view is stronger than the view that it must be divided among the eight categories.

Shaykh Ibn Baaz (may Allah have mercy on him) said: It is to be given to the poor and needy, because of the proven report from Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) enjoined zakat al-fitr as a purification for the fasting person from idle and obscene talk, and to feed the poor.

End quote from Majmoo‘ al-Fatawa, 14/202

And Allah knows best.