

ZAKAT (OBLIGATORY CHARITY)

Allah ordained every Muslim who possesses a certain amount of property to pay the 'Zakat' (obligatory charity) annually out of their possessions.

One of the most important principles of Islam is that all things belong to Allah, and that wealth is therefore held by human beings in trust. The word zakat means both "purification" and "growth". Our possessions are purified by setting aside a portion for those in need, and, like the pruning of plants, this cutting back balances and encourages new growth.

Zakat represents the unbreakable bond between members of the community, whom prophet Mohammad described to be "like the organs of the body, if one suffers then all others rally in response."

"As-Sadaqa (here it means Zakat) are only for the poor, and the needy and those employed to collect (the funds), and to attract the hearts of those who have been inclined (towards Islam); and to free the captives, and for those in debt, and for Allah's Cause (those fighting in a holy battle), and for the wayfarer (a traveler who is cut off from everything); a duty imposed by Allah. And Allah is All-Knower, All-Wise" Quran 9:60

"And those who hoard up gold and silver, and spend them not in the Way of Allah, announce unto them a painful torment." Quran 9:34

Allah says: **"And whatsoever you spend of anything (in the cause of Allah), He will replace it. He is the Best of those who grants sustenance." Qur'an 34:39**

There are also many warnings against those who do not spend for the sake of Allah:

"And spend something (in charity) out of the substance which We have bestowed on you, before Death should come to any of you and he should say, "O my Lord! Why didst Thou not give me respite for a little while? I should then have given (largely) in charity, and I should have been one of the doers of good." But to no soul will Allah grant respite when the time appointed (for it) has come; and Allah is well-acquainted with (all) that ye do". Qur'an 63:11

The Muslim, who gives out Zakat, affirms the truth that nothing is dearer to him in life than the love of Allah and that he is fully prepared to sacrifice everything for Allah's sake. There is no burden of obligation on one who receives Zakat, and there must be a sense of thankfulness and gratitude on the part of the giver, since he has been enabled by the recipient to discharge his obligation that he owes to Allah and society.

Zakat is the amount of money that every adult, mentally stable, free, and financially able Muslim, male and female, has to pay to support specific categories people

Each Muslim calculates his or her own zakat individually. For most purposes this involves the payment each year of two and a half percent of one's capital.

A pious person may also give as much as he or she pleases as Sadaqa, and does so preferably in secret. Although this word can be translated as "voluntary charity" it has a wider meaning. The Prophet said, "Even meeting your brother with a cheerful face is charity".

The Prophet (peace be upon Him) said: "Charity is a necessity for every Muslim." Zakah has a deep humanitarian and social-political value; for example, it frees society from class warfare, from ill feelings and distrust and from corruption. Although Islam does not hinder private enterprise or condemn private possession, it does not tolerate selfishness and greediness. Islam adopts a moderate but positive and effective course between individual and society, between the citizen and the state, between capitalism and socialism, between materialism and spiritualism.

When is Zakat Due?

Passage of One Lunar Year: Zakat is obligatory after a time span of one lunar year passes with the money in the control of its owner. Then the owner needs to pay 2.5% (or 1/40) of the money as Zakat. (A lunar year is approximately 355 days).

Deduction of Debts: The owner should deduct any amount of money he or she borrowed from others; then pays Zakat for it.

For precise calculation of Zakat, contact the local Mosque nearest you to obtain a Zakat calculation Sheets.