

## **Zakat**

Zakat is the third pillar of Islam. It is a very important pillar and comes after Shahada and Salah. Zakat is mandatory charity that is given by Muslims to the poor. Zakat means to purify. It is given by people who have enough wealth.

Zakat can be given at any time of the year but most Muslims like to give it during Ramadhan. The reason they give in Ramadhan is because the rewards are great during this blessed month. The amount to be given is two and half percent of the money you own. It is given to the poor and needy people who take Zakat.

Zakat teaches us to be generous and to share our wealth. It helps us to be good human beings. It helps to give the poor people a chance to buy food to eat, clothes to wear and even money for education and medical needs.

Muslims also give Zakat al-Fitr which is given in the month of Ramadhan and is given before Eid Salah. It is given to the poor so that they can enjoy the Eid day. This is a small amount; in Canada we pay \$10 a person.

Muslims also give sadaqah which is voluntary charity. It is given to the poor to help them, such as a loaf of bread or milk. We do this for the sake of Allah (S.W.T) and should not tell others when we are giving. We should be humble when giving and thank Allah (S.W.T) for giving us so we can share.

Even good deeds such as smiling, kind words, being gentle and calm, helping the elders and children, and taking care of animals is sadaqah. Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) took great care of the poor and gave away everything that he had. He was most kind and gentle to everyone. We should try to be like him.

Another kind of Sadaqah is Sadaqah Jariya, which is charity that continues, like building a school or masjid or a well.

Allah (S.W.T) encourages us to pay Zakat which is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an many times. Paying Zakat helps us to purify our wealth. It teaches us to be kind and to spread goodness. When we pay Zakat, Allah (S.W.T) is pleased with us.

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