
Distributing Zakaat-ul-Fitr before its appointed time

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Question: Is it permissible to distribute the Zakaat-ul-Fitr a few days or a week before its appointed time?

Answer: Shaykh al-Albaanee (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ)¹: This is not permissible because it goes against the wisdom that the Divine Legislator has intended from the distributing of the Zakaat-ul-Fitr. Thus, He wants the poor to be given sufficient means to prevent them from begging on the Day of 'Eed. So if it is distributed before the day of 'Eed by a week's length or more than that, there is no doubt that its objective will vanish as a result of this action. This is because the poor person will benefit from the charity that he receives on these days. But when the Day of 'Eed comes, it is likely that he will again be needy and poor.

And this is especially since the reason behind the ruling on this matter has been mentioned in the texts as **"a purification for the one who fasted."** And this cannot be except at the end of the month of fasting. So the goal of the Divine Legislator is not to suffice the poor person from begging during the month of Ramadaan, but rather to suffice him from begging and asking on the Day of 'Eed.

Furthermore, it is possible, with some tolerance, to allow the person giving charity to give his Zakaat a day or two before ('Eed) due to present-day circumstances and the remoteness of the areas (he wishes to send his Zakaat to). Concerning this, there are authentic narrations on some of the Companions stating that they used to be lenient (with the Zakaat by accepting it) a day or two in advance.

¹ (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah have mercy on him