

# What Is Meant By: Sadaqah Increases One's Life?

Darulifta Ahlesunnat (Dawateislami)

## Question

What do the noble scholars and jurists of Islamic law say about the following: Does sadaqah increase one's Life? If so, what does this mean?

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
الْجَوَابُ بِعَوْنِ الْمَلِكِ الْوَهَّابِ اللَّهُمَّ هِدَايَةَ الْحَقِّ وَالصَّوَابِ

“Yes!” Sadaqah increases one's life, and this is mentioned in the blessed Hadith. But there are different opinions on how it increases life. One opinion is that ‘increase in life’ means that there will be blessings in his life in such a way that Allah will grant him the opportunity to avoid useless activities and carry out good deeds as well as acts which will be beneficial in the hereafter. Some say that ‘blessing in life’ means an actual increase in lifespan. This means that the following is written about this person in Loh Mahfooz (preserved tablet): if he gives sadaqah, his lifespan will be 60 years, and if he doesn't give sadaqah, his lifespan will be 40 years. Another opinion is that after his passing, his remembrance will remain, as if he never passed away and is still alive, because people will continue to benefit from his knowledge, sadaqah jariyah, and pious children. It is mentioned in a Hadith recorded in Al-Mu'jam Al-Kabeer that The Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

إن صدقة المسلم تزيد في العمر، وتمنع ميتة السوء

Translation: Indeed, sadaqah increases the life of a Muslim and prevents a bad death. (Al-Mu'jam Al-Kabeer Lil-Tabarani, Vol. 17, p. 22, Publ. Cairo)

It is stated in Mirqat Al-Mafateeh Sharh Mishkat Al-Masabeeh:

ولا يزيد في العمر إلا البر هو الإحسان والطاعة. قيل: يزداد حقيقة. قال تعالى: ﴿وَمَا يُعْمَرُ مِنْ مُّعَمَّرٍ وَلَا يُنْقَضُ مِنْ عُمرَةٍ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ﴾ (فاطر: 11) وقال: ﴿يُمَحِّوْا اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيُثَبِّتُ ۚ وَعِنْدَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ﴾ (الرعد: 39). و ذكر في الكشف أنه لا يطول عمر إنسان ولا يقصر إلا في كتاب - وصورته: أن يكتب في اللوح إن لم يحج فلان أو يغز فعمره أربعون سنة، وإن حج وغزا فعمره ستون سنة، فإذا جمع بينهما فبلغ الستين فقد عمر، وإذا أفرد أحدهما فلم يتجاوز به الأربعين فقد نقص من عمره الذي هو الغاية وهو الستون، وذكر نحوه في معالم التنزيل،

وقيل: معناه أنه إذا بر لا يضيع عمره فكأنه زاد، وقيل: قدر أعمال البر سببا ل طول العمر، كما قدر الدعاء سببا لرد البلاء، فالدعاء للوالدين وبقية الأرحام يزيد في العمر، إما بمعنى أنه يبارك له في عمره فييسر له في الزمن القليل من الأعمال الصالحة ما لا يتيسر لغيره من العمل الكثير، فالزيادة مجازية؛ لأنه يستحيل في الآجال الزيادة الحقيقية. قال الطيبي: اعلم أن الله تعالى إذا علم أن زيدا يموت سنة خمس مائة استحال أن يموت قبلها أو بعدها، فاستحال أن تكون الآجال التي عليها علم الله تزيد أو تنقص، فتعين تأويل الزيادة أنها بالنسبة إلى ملك الموت أو غيره ممن وكل بقبض الأرواح، وأمره بالقبض بعد آجال محدودة، فإنه تعالى بعد أن يأمره بذلك أو يثبت في اللوح المحفوظ ينقص منه أو يزيد على ما سبق علمه في كل شيء وهو بمعنى قوله تعالى: ﴿يَبْحُوثُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيُثَبِّتُ ۖ وَعِنْدَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ﴾ (الرعد: 39) وعلى ما ذكر يحمل قوله عز وجل: ﴿ثُمَّ قَضَىٰ أَجَلًا ۖ وَأَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى عِنْدَهُ﴾ (الأنعام: 2) فالإشارة بالأجل الأول إلى ما في اللوح المحفوظ، وما عند ملك الموت و أعوانه، وبالأجل الثاني إلى ما في قوله تعالى: ﴿وَعِنْدَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ﴾ (الرعد: 39) وقوله تعالى: ﴿إِذَا جَاءَ أَجْلُهُمْ فَلَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ سَاعَةً ۖ وَلَا يَسْتَقْدِرُونَ﴾ (يونس: 49) والحاصل أن القضاء المعلق يتغير، وأما القضاء المبرم فلا يبدل ولا يغير- (رواه الترمذي): وكذا ابن ماجه عن سلمان، وابن حبان، والحاكم وقال: صحيح الإسناد عن ثوبان، وفي روايتهما: "لا يرد القدر إلا الدعاء، ولا يزيد في العمر إلا البر، وإن الرجل ليحرم الرزق بالذنب يذنبه

Translation: A person's lifespan doesn't increase except through goodness and obedience. It is said: (Increasing of life means) His life actually increases. Allah Almighty states: 'And no elderly individual is granted life nor is any life lessened except that it is stated in a Book.' (Al-Fatir, Verse 11) He also states: 'Allah erases and preserves whatever He wills; and the written reality is only with Him.' (Al-Ra'd, Verse 39) It is stated in Al-Kashaaf: The life of a human only increases and decreases according to that which is written in Loh Mahfooz. The explanation of this is that it is written in the Loh Mahfooz, 'If this person doesn't perform Hajj or Jihad, his life span will be 40 years. If he performs Hajj and Jihad, his lifespan will be 60, and when he does both (Hajj and Jihad), his age is set to 60, and he will reach 60. But if he did only one of them (either Hajj or Jihad), his age will not exceed 40.' So, compared to his maximum age (which is 60), his life has decreased. It is similarly stated in Ma'alim Al-Tanzeel. It is said (another opinion): When one does a good deed, his life is not wasted, and it is as if his life is increased through the blessings of that deed. It is also said (another opinion): The amount

of good deeds becomes a cause for an increase in lifespan, just like the amount of supplications is a cause for the prevention of harm. Therefore, supplicating for the parents and other relatives increases one's lifespan, meaning that blessings are placed in his life, making it easier for him to carry out several good deeds in a short period, which others cannot in that same period. In this case, 'increase' is used metaphorically because it isn't possible for a lifespan to increase in reality.

Imam Al-Teebi states: Know that when it is in the knowledge of Allah that Zaid's lifespan is 500 years, it is impossible for him to die before or after, and the period which is in the knowledge of Allah cannot increase or decrease. Therefore, from this discussion, it is clear that the interpretation of 'increasing of life' is in reference to the angel of death or the other angels who are appointed to take the souls. They are commanded to take the soul after a specific period. Then, after Allah initially commanded them or preserved it in Loh Mahfooz, He increases or decreases everything according to His pre-eternal knowledge. This is exactly what is meant by his saying: 'Allah erases and preserves whatever He wills; and the written reality is only with Him.' (Al-Ra'd, Verse 39) And the following saying of Allah Almighty will be interpreted according to this: 'And then decided a duration and a specified time with Him.' (Al-An'am, Verse 2) The first 'اجل' (duration) in the verse refers to the time that is in the Loh Mahfooz, and that which the angel of death or his helpers know. And the second 'اجل' (time) in the verse is an indication to the verse: 'and the written reality is only with Him,' (Al-Ra'd, Verse 39) and towards the saying of Allah: 'So when their term will come to pass, they will neither defer it by a single moment nor hasten it.' (Yunus, Verse 49)

In summary, Qada' Mu'allaq changes, and Qada' Mubram cannot change (as narrated by Al-Tirmizi). Similarly, Ibn Majah narrated from Salman, and Ibn Hibban and Hakim narrated it and said that this is narrated from Soban with a Sahih sanad (chain of transmission). Both of these narrations have these words: Dua changes destiny, good deeds increase life, and he becomes deprived

of sustenance because of the sins he commits. (Mirqat Al-Mafateeh Sharh Mishkat Al-Masabeeh, Vol. 4, p. 1528, Publ. Dar Al-Fikr, Beirut)

It is stated in 'Umdah Al-Qari:

(أحدهما) أن هذه الزيادة بالبركة في العمر بسبب التوفيق في الطاعات وصيانتها عن الضياع وحاصله أنها بحسب الكيف لا الكم (والثاني) أن الزيادة على حقيقتها وذلك بالنسبة إلى علم الملك الموكل بالعمر وإلى ما يظهر له في اللوح المحفوظ بالمحو والإثبات فيه: ﴿يَمْحُوا اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيُثْبِتُ﴾ كما أن عمر فلان ستون سنة إلا أن يصل رحمه فإنه يزداد عليه عشرة وهو سبعون وقد علم الله عز وجل بما سيقع له من ذلك فبالنسبة إلى الله تعالى لا زيادة ولا نقصان ويقال له القضاء المبرم وإنما يتصور الزيادة بالنسبة إليهم ويسمى مثله بالقضاء المعلق ويقال المراد بقاء ذكره الجميل بعده فكأنه لم يميت وهو إما بالعلم الذي ينتفع به أو الصدقة الجارية أو الخلف الصالح

Translation: The first answer is: This increase is in the form of blessings that are attained by the ability to carry out acts of obedience and not wasting life. The means that 'increasing in life' is in terms of quality [كيف], not in terms of quantity [كم]. The second answer is that there is an actual increase in life. But this increase is in relation to the knowledge of the angel that is appointed for the lifespan of people, as well as in terms of erasing and writing that which is apparent in the Loh Mahfooz: 'Allah erases and preserves whatever He wills.' For example, a person's lifespan is 60 years. If he joins ties with his relatives, his age will increase by 10 years, making his lifespan 70 years. But Allah knows that this person will join ties and his age will be 70 years. Therefore, there was no increase or decrease in the knowledge of Allah, and this is known as Qada' Mubram. The increase is in the knowledge of the angel, which is called Qada' Mu'allaq. One opinion is that an increase means that he will be remembered in a good way after his passing, as if he never even passed away. This remembrance will be through the knowledge which people benefited from, through sadaqah jariyah, or through leaving a pious child. ('Umdah Al-Qari Sharh Sahih Al-Bukhari, Vol. 22, p. 91, Publ. Beirut)

وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

(Allah Almighty knows best and His Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ knows best.)

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