

Can 'Umrah Be Performed on Behalf of a Living Person?

Darulifta Ahlesunnat (Dawateislami)

Question

What do the noble scholars and jurists of Islamic law say about the following: Can 'Umrah be performed on behalf of a living person?

Answer

Performing 'umrah on behalf of someone is essentially conveying the reward of 'umrah to them. Just like the reward of good deeds can be conveyed to the deceased, it can also be conveyed to the living. Conveying reward is not specific to the deceased. Therefore, just like 'umrah can be performed on behalf of a deceased with the intention of conveying its reward to them, 'umrah can also be performed on behalf of a living person.

It is proven from the Prophet ﷺ himself that the reward of good deeds can be conveyed to the living and the deceased. There is a ḥadīth which states that the Noble Prophet ﷺ performed qurbānī on behalf of the entire Muhammadan ummah, and the Muhammadan ummah includes both the living and the deceased. Read the following ḥadīth:

The ḥadīth is narrated in Sahīh Muslim:

عن عائشة: أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أمر بكبش أقرن، يطأ في سواد، ويبرك في سواد، وينظر في سواد، فأتي به ليضحى به، فقال لها: يا عائشة، هلمي المدينة. ثم قال: اشحذنيها بحجر، ففعلت ثم أخذها وأخذ الكبش فأضجعه ثم ذبحه ثم قال: باسم الله، اللهم تقبل من محمد، وآل محمد، ومن أمة محمد. ثم ضحى به

Translation: It is narrated from 'Ā'ishah رضي الله تعالى عنها that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ commanded that a horned sheep which walks in black, sits in black, and sees in black be brought. It was brought before him to be slaughtered. Then, He ﷺ said to 'Ā'ishah رضي الله تعالى عنها: "Bring a knife". Then he said: "Sharpen it with a stone". (She states) "I did so". Then He took the knife and took the sheep and laid it down. Then he intended to slaughter it and said: "In the name of Allāh, Oh Allāh! Accept this from Muhammad and the lineage of Muhammad, and the ummah of Muhammad ﷺ."

He then slaughtered it. (Sahīh Muslim, Vol. 03, p. 1557, Ḥadīth No. 1967, Publ. Dār Iḥya' al-Turās, Beirut)

It is similarly mentioned in another ḥadīth that Abū-Hurairah رضي الله عنه said to those traveling for Ḥajj: Which one of you can guarantee me that he will offer two or four rak'āt in Masjid 'Ishār and convey its reward to me? Read the following ḥadīth:

It is narrated in Sunan Abī Dāwūd:

إبراهيم بن صالح بن درهم، قال: سمعت أبي يقول: انطلقنا حاجين فإذا رجل، فقال لنا: إلى جنبكم قرية يقال لها: الأبله؟ قلنا: نعم، قال: من يضمن لي منكم أن يصلي في مسجد العشار ركعتين أو أربعاً، ويقول: هذه لأبي هريرة؟ سمعت خليلي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: "إن الله يبعث من مسجد العشار يوم القيامة شهداء، لا يقوم مع شهداء بدر غيرهم"

Translation: Ibrāhīm Bin Sāliḥ Bin Dirham stated: I heard my father saying: When we set off with the intention of Ḥajj, we met a person. He asked us, "Is there a village near you called al-'Ubullah?" We said: Yes. He said: "Which one of you guarantees me that he will pray two or four rak'āt in Masjid al-'Ishār and then say: 'this is for Abu-Hurairah?'" I heard my beloved, the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ saying: "Indeed Allāh will resurrect the martyrs from Masjid al-'Ishār on the day of judgement. No one other than them will stand with the martyrs of Badr." (Sunan Abī Dāwūd, Vol. 06, p. 366-367, Ḥadīth No. 4308, Publ. Dār al-Risālah al-'Ālamīyah)
It is stated in al-Baḥr al-Rā'iq:

من صام أو صلى أو تصدق وجعل ثوابه لغيره من الأموات والأحياء جاز ويصل ثوابها إليهم عند أهل السنة والجماعة كذافي البدائع وبهذا علم أنه لا فرق بين أن يكون المجعول له ميتاً أو حياً

(Al-Baḥr al-Rā'iq, Vol. 03, p. 63, Publ. Dār al-Kitāb al-'Islāmi, Beirut)

When conveying the reward of good deeds, it is better to direct it to all Muslims males and females, which will obviously include the living and the deceased. Thus, it is stated in Radd al-Muḥtār:

في زكاة التاترخانية عن المحيط: الأفضل لمن يتصدق نفلاً أن ينوي لجميع المؤمنين والمؤمنات لأنها تصل إليهم ولا ينقص من أجره شيء
(Radd al-Muḥtār 'Alā al-Durr al-Mukhtār, Vol. 03, p. 180, Publ. Dār al-Ma'rifah, Beirut)
Muftī Amjad 'Alī A'zamī رحمه الله عليه states in Fatāwā Amjadiyah:

ایصال ثواب مستحب ہے۔ اور جو کچھ نیک کام کیا ہو اور اس کا ثواب کسی کو پہنچانا چاہتا ہو تو یہ دعا کرے کہ الہی اسے قبول فرما اور اس کا ثواب فلاں فلاں کو پہنچا۔ بلکہ بہتر یہ ہے کہ جمیع مومنین و مومنات کو پہنچائے۔ امید کہ سب کو پورا پورا ثواب ملے اور اس کے ثواب میں کوئی کمی نہ ہو بلکہ سب کے مجموعے کے برابر ملے۔

Translation: Conveying rewards is Mustahab. Whoever performs a good deed and wants to convey its reward to someone, he should make the following supplication: "Oh my lord! Accept this and convey its reward to so and so person." It is better that he conveys the reward to all Muslim men and women. It is hoped that the entire reward will reach everyone, and the reward of the one who conveyed it will not be decreased; instead, he will receive the reward equal to the total of everyone. (Fatāwā Amjadiyah, Vol. 01, p. 336, Publ. Maktabah Razawiyah, Karachi)

وَاللّٰهُ اَعْلَمُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ وَرَسُوْلُهُ اَعْلَمُ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى عَلَيْهِ وَاٰلِهٖ وَسَلَّمَ

(Allah Almighty knows best and His Messenger ﷺ knows best.)

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