

Can Sacrificing One Animal Suffice For An Entire Household?

Darulifta Ahlesunnat

(Dawateislami)

Question

What do the scholars of Islam and the Muftis of Shari'ah say regarding the following matter: I have seen a blessed Hadith on a social media post. Sayyiduna Ata Bin Yasaar رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ has said: I asked Sayyiduna Abu Ayyub Ansari رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, 'How were sacrifices performed during the era of Allah's Messenger

صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ?' He said, 'In the era of the Holy Prophet

صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ, a man would sacrifice a goat from himself and on behalf of his household, and all his family members would eat some of it and distribute some to others. Then people started to boast (i.e., started to do more than one sacrifice just to show off and outrank others) and you can see what the condition is like now.' (Sunan Ibn-e-Majah, Hadith, 3147)

After the Hadith, the following note was also mentioned: In Islam, the word 'Household' means: a married couple and their children. If there is more than one married couple in the house, every couple will be considered as a different household. And there is only a single sacrifice or a single share (of big animals like cows, etc.) upon each household.

Please guide about the Hadith and the note mentioned after that in the light of Shari'ah.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْجَوَابُ بِعَوْنِ الْمَلِكِ الْوَهَّابِ اللَّهُمَّ هِدَايَةَ الْحَقِّ وَالصَّوَابِ

Sacrificing a single goat or taking just a single share of a sacrificial animal on behalf of many individuals for whom the sacrifice is Wajib is not correct. When sacrifice becomes Wajib for multiple individuals, it is compulsory for each one of them to sacrifice a goat or perform the sacrifice of a share of a big sacrificial animal (cow, camel etc.) separately because there cannot be more than one share in the sacrifice of a nanny goat or a billy goat; therefore, one sacrifice can be performed by one particular individual. Likewise, one share of a big animal can only suffice for a single person, one share of a big animal cannot suffice for multiple individuals for their Wajib. Therefore, when the sacrifice becomes Wajib for different members of a house or a family and they perform just a single sacrifice or make the sacrifice of just a single share, the sacrifice of none of the members will be fulfilled.

As far as the meaning of the Hadith is concerned, either this Hadith has been abrogated or the sacrifice discussed in this Hadith does not refer to Wajib but rather it refers to the Nafil. In this case, the Hadith would be interpreted in the following way: Those Sahabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ for whom the sacrifice would not have become Wajib because they did not possess the minimum threshold (Nisab), would perform Nafil sacrifice of a single goat exclusively on their own behalf and would eat that meat and would feed it to their family too.

The blessed Hadith mentioned is regarding Nafil sacrifice as Imam Muhammad رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ elaborates this Hadith in the following manner:

”كان الرجل يكون محتاجا فيذبح الشاة الواحدة يُضَيُّ بها عن نفسه فياكل ويطعم اهله ، فاما شاة واحدة تذبح عن اثنين او ثلاثة اضحية فهذه لا يجزئ ولا

يجوز شاة الاعن واحد وهو قول ابي حنيفة والعامه من فقهاءنا“

Translation: (In those days) a person would not own a Nisab and he would sacrifice a goat on behalf of himself and would eat it himself and feed his family members as well. However, slaughtering a single goat on behalf of two or three individuals as Wajib sacrifice is not sufficient. Sacrificing one goat (as Wajib) is permissible only for one person. And this is the saying of Imam-e-A'zam and the majority of Islamic jurists رَحْمَةُ اللهِ. (*Al-Mauta-lil-Imam Muhammad, p. 282, published in Karachi*)

A single sacrifice is not permissible on behalf of an entire household. Therefore, Shaykh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlvi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ has written regarding the Hadith mentioned in the question: **There is another Hadith narrated, that says, ‘A single goat from the entire household will suffice’ but the ruling on it is the same mentioned earlier that this is abrogated too.** (*Ashi'a-tul-Lam'aat (Translated), vol. 2, p. 693, published by Fareed book Stall, Lahore*)

One goat's sacrifice can only suffice for one individual. The (writer of the) book *Mirqat Sharh Mishkat* holds the same opinion as it says,

”الغنم الواحد لا يكفي عن اثنين فصاعدا“

Translation: One goat does not suffice for two and more than two people. (*Mirqat-tul-Masabih, vol. 3, p. 561, published in Multan*)

Banaya Sharah Hidayah upholds the same, as it says,

”واعلم ان الشاة لا تجزئ الاعن واحد -- وقد روى عن ابن عمر رضي الله عنه انه قال الشاة عن واحد، ملخصاً“

Translation: And know that one goat will suffice for only one person. And the same has been narrated by Sayyiduna Ibn-e-Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ as he has stated, **“One goat is permissible only from one person.”** (*Al-Banaya Ma Al-Hidayah, vol. 14, p. 353, Multan*)

A big animal can have seven shares in total and one share can be sacrificed on behalf of only one individual. And if one share is sacrificed on behalf of more than one individual, each individual will share in less than one and it is impermissible. Hence, the sacrifice from none will be valid. Therefore, it has been mentioned in *Tanveer-ul-Absaar* and *Al-Durr Al-Mukhtar*,

”تجب شاة او سبع بدنة هي الابل والبقر -- ولولا اقدمهم اقل من سبع لم يجز عن واحد، ملخصاً“

Translation: One goat or one Badanah (i.e. one-seventh share) of a camel or a cow is Wajib (as the sacrifice) and if any of the participants (in a big animal's sacrifice) holds a share less than one-seventh, it will render the sacrifice of all the participants invalid. (*Tanveer Al-Absaar and Al-Durr Al-Mukhtar, vol. 9, pp. 521-525, published in Multan*)

It has also been mentioned in *Khulasa-tul-Fatawa*,

”لو كانت الشراكة في البدنة او البقرة ثمانية لم يجزهم، ولو كانوا اقل من ثمانية الا ان نصيب واحد منهم اقل من السبع لا يجوز ايضا“

Translation: If eight people share in the sacrifice of a cow or a camel, it will not be permissible. And if they are less than eight but one of them has a share less than one-seventh, it will not be permissible either. (*Khulasa-tul-Fatawa, vol. 4, p. 315, published in Quetta*)

Sayyidi A'la Hazrat رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ has written, "One sacrifice cannot suffice for all (i.e., more than one person), nor is it Wajib for anyone other than Sahib-e-Nisab (i.e., the one who owns minimum threshold). If any one of his adult children is Sahib-e-Nisab, that child of his must sacrifice separately." (*Fatawa Razawiyyah, vol. 20, p. 369, published by Raza Foundation, Lahore*)

وَاللّٰهُ اَعْلَمُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ وَرَسُوْلُهُ اَعْلَمُ صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَاٰلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

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