

Can Zakat Be Given To Women Working In Homes?

Darulifta Ahlesunnat

(Dawateislami)

Question

What do the scholars of Islam say regarding the following matter: can zakat and general nafl ṣadaqah be given to women who do work around the house? If it can be given to them, must they be informed regarding it, or can it be given to them without informing them?

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْجَوَابُ بِعَوْنِ الْمَلِكِ الْوَهَّابِ اللَّهُمَّ هِدَايَةَ الْحَقِّ وَالصَّوَابِ

If a woman working within the home is a faqīr according to sharī‘ah, then zakat, ṣadaqāt wājibah (such as sadaqah fiṭr, nadhr or kaffārah) and nafl ṣadaqah can be given to her. If said woman is not a faqīr according to sharī‘ah, then zakat and ṣadaqāt wājibah cannot be given to her. She can still be given nafl ṣadaqah, however. Whether it is zakat or any other form of ṣadaqah, it can be given to the rightful person without informing them. The intention of the giver is sufficient.

Allah states in the Quran:

إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَاتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ

Translation from Kanz al-Īmān: Zakah is only for these people who are poor and the strictly needy.

In relation to a faqīr being a valid recipient of zakat, Tanwīr al-Abṣār ma‘a Durr al-Mukhtār says:

مصرف الزكوة والعشر -- هو فقير

Relating to this, Radd al-Muḥtār explains how a faqīr is rightful of ṣadaqāt wājibah:

وهو مصرف أيضاً صدقة الفطر والكفارة والنذر وغير ذلك من الصدقات الواجبة

It is not necessary to declare zakat to the recipient when giving, as written in Radd al-Muḥtār:

لا اعتبار للتسمية فلو سماها هبة او قرضاً تجزئ في الأصح

In regards to giving ṣadaqāt wājibah to a wealthy person, the Imam of Ahl al-Sunnah, Imam Aḥmad Razā Khān رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ explains, “It is haram for both a wealthy person to accept ṣadaqāt wājibah and for this to be given to him. If he is given this, it shall be considered invalid.”

Concerning the giving of zakat, etc., by giving it another name, Imam Aḥmad Razā Khān رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ says with reference to Al-Ḥadīqah al-Nadiyyah:

قال الفقهاء فيمن دفع الزكاة لفقير وسماها قرضاً صح لان العبرة بالمعنى لا باللفظ وكذلك الصدقة على الغني هبة والهبة على الفقير صدقة

Jurists declared that if one gives his zakat to a person by terming it a debt, it will be valid. This is because the meaning is taken into consideration, not the words. Likewise it is valid to give nafl sadaqah to a rich person by terming it a gift, or to give sadaqah to a faqir by calling it a gift (or to give a gift by terming it sadaqah).

وَاللّٰهُ اَعْلَمُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ وَرَسُوْلُهُ اَعْلَمُ صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَاٰلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

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