Is There Any Benefit of Conveying Rewards to a Stranger?

Darulifta Ahlesunnat (Dawateislami)

(Translated Fatwa)

Question

What do the noble scholars and jurists of Islamic law say about the following: If a person performs ʾĪsāl-e-sawāb (conveyance of reward) every day to a Muslim by mentioning them by name, even though that Muslim had never known the person performing the ʾĪsāl-e-sawāb during their lifetime and they had passed away long ago, will the reward reach them and serve as a means of their forgiveness? Furthermore, will the one who sends the reward also gain any benefit?

Answer

بِسْمِ اللّٰہِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

اَلْجَوَابُ بِعَوْنِ الْمَلِکِ الْوَھَّابِ اَللّٰھُمَّ ھِدَایَۃَ الْحَقِّ وَالصَّوَابِ

The benefits of ʾĪsāl-e-sawāb are not limited to knowing each other. Rather, ʾĪsāl-e-sawāb should be done to every Muslim, regardless of whether one knows them or not. When ʾĪsāl-e-sawāb is performed, the reward reaches the person while the reward of the person conveying is not reduced. It is clear from the aḥādith and juristic texts that the deceased gaining benefit from ʾĪsāl-e-sawāb and the person conveying the reward gaining reward are not limited to knowing each other. Rather, it is a general and far-reaching benefit that extends to all Muslims.

(1) It is proven from the ḥadīth that the one who visits the cemetery, recites surah al-Ikhlās eleven times, and conveys its reward to the deceased buried in that cemetery will earn reward equal to the number of deceased people in that graveyard.

(2) It is stated in a ḥadīth that if a person goes to a cemetery and recites sūrah al-Fātiḥah, sūrah al-Ikhlās, and sūrah al-Takāthur (الھٰکم التکاثر) and then says: “O Allāh Almighty! I convey the reward of whatever I have recited to the Muslim men and women of this cemetery", by virtue of this, all the deceased will intercede for the one who conveyed the reward.

(3) It is stated in a ḥadīth that if one goes to a cemetery, recites sūrah Yāsīn, and conveys the reward to all those buried in the cemetery, Allāh Almighty reduces the punishment of those buried in the graves and the reciter earns reward equal to the number of deceased buried in the cemetery.

In these three narrations, the virtue of doing ʾĪsāl-e-sawāb to all Muslim men and women buried in the graveyard has been mentioned. It is obvious that no one recognizes every deceased buried in a graveyard. Despite this, the blessed aḥādīth prove that all the deceased benefit from it, the reciter receives reward equal to the

number of deceased people present in the cemetery, and that the deceased will intercede for him.

Let us analyze the blessed aḥādith:

ʿAllāmah Mahmūd Bin Aḥmad ʿAynī رحمة الله تعالى عليه narrated in *ʿUmdah al-Qārī Sharḥ Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*:

روى أبو بكر النجار في كتاب (السنن) عن علي بن أبي طالب، رضي الله تعالى عنه، أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: (من مر بين المقابر فقرأ: قل هو الله أحد، أحد عشر مرة، ثم وهب أجرها للأموات أعطي من الأجر بعدد الأموات)

Translation: Imām Abū Bakr al-Najjār has narrated in the book *Al-Sunan* from ʿAlī Bin Abī Tālib رضي الله تعالى عنه that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: The one who passes by a cemetery and recites sūrah al-Ikhlās eleven times and then conveys its reward to the deceased will be given reward equal to the number of deceased people.

(ʿUmdah al-Qārī, Vol. 03, p. 118, Publ. Dār al-Fikr, Beirut)

ʿAllāmah Abdul-Raḥmān Bin Abī Bakr Jalāl-Uddīn Suyūtī Shāfiʿī رحمة الله تعالى عليه states in *Sharḥ al-Sudūr Bi-Sharḥ Ḥāl al-Mawtā Wal-Qubūr* and ʿAllāmah ʿAlī Qārī رحمة الله تعالى عليه states in *Mirqāt al-Mafātīḥ Sharḥ Mishkāt al-Masābīḥ*:

وأخرج أبو القاسم بن علي الزنجاني في فوائده عن أبي هريرة قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من دخل المقابر ثم قرأ فاتحة الكتاب و{قل هو الله أحد} و{ألهاكم التكاثر} ثم اللهم إني جعلت ثواب ما قرأت من كلامك لأهل المقابر من المؤمنين والمؤمنات كانوا شفعاء له إلى الله تعالى ـــ وأخرج عبد العزيز صاحب الخلال بسنده عن أنس: أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: «من دخل المقابر فقرأ سورة يس خفف الله عنهم، وكان له بعدد من فيها حسنات»

Translation: Abū al-Qāsim Bin ʿAlī al-Zanjānī has narrated in his *Fawāʾid* from Abū Hurairah رضي الله تعالى عنه that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: "Whoever enters a cemetery and recites al-Fātiḥah, sūrah al-Ikhlās (قل هو الله أحد) and sūrah al-Takāthur (ألهاكم التكاثر) and then says: 'O Allāh, I send the reward of what I have recited from your kālam to the Muslim men and women of the graveyard,' they will intercede for him before Allāh… Abdul-ʿAzīz, the author of *al-Khilāl*, has narrated through his chain of narration from Anas رضي الله تعالى عنه that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: Whoever enters a graveyard and recites sūrah Yāsīn, Allāh reduces the punishment of the people in the graves and the reciter is granted reward equal to the number of deceased people present there. (Sharḥ al-Sudūr, pp. 303-304, Publ. Dār al-Maʿrifah, Lebanon) (Mirqāt al-Mafātīḥ, Vol. 03, p. 1228, Publ. Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, Lebanon)

(4) It is explicitly stated in the books of fiqh that it is mustaḥab and preferred to intend the conveyance of reward to all Muslim men and women. In this case, the reward reaches everyone and the reward of the person conveying it is not reduced either. It is clear that to know every Muslim male and female is not possible, but despite this, the jurists have stated that the reward reaches everyone through making a general intention.

Let us analyze the texts from the books of fiqh:

It is stated in *Radd al-Muḥtār ʿAlā al-Durr al-Mukhtār*:

فی زکاۃ التاترخانیۃ عن المحیط: الأفضل لمن یتصدق نفلا أن ینوی **لجمیع المؤمنین والمؤمنات** لأنها تصل الیهم ولا ینقص من اجره شئ

Translation: It is mentioned in the chapter of zakāh in *al-Tātarkhāniyah* with reference to *al-Muḥīt*: It is better for the one who is giving nafl charity to intend to convey the reward to all the Muslim men and women because the reward will reach all of them and the reward of the person conveying the reward will not be reduced at all. (Radd al-Muḥtār ʿAlā al-Durr al-Mukhtār, Vol. 03, p. 180, Publ. Dār al-Maʿrifah, Beirut)

It is stated in *Al-Mawsūʿah al-Fiqhiyah al-Kuwaitiyah*:

ویستحب في الصدقة أن ینوي المتصدق ثوابها **لجمیع المؤمنین والمؤمنات**

Translation: When giving charity, it is mustaḥab for the donor to intend to convey the reward to all Muslim men and women. (Al-Mawsūʿah al-Fiqhiyah al-Kuwaitiyah, Vol. 26, p. 339, Publ. Dār al-Safwah, Egypt)

Muftī Amjad ʿAlī Aʿzamī رحمۃ اللہ تعالی علیہ 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 الٰہی 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 of reward is mustaḥab. If one wants to convey the reward of any good deeds they have performed, they should make duʿā in the following manner: "O Allāh, accept this and convey its reward to so-and-so person." It is better to send its reward to all Muslims men and women. It is hoped that everyone will receive the entire reward and the reward of that person will not be reduced; instead, he will receive a reward equal to the collective reward of everyone. (Fatāwā Amjadiyah, Vol. 01, p. 336, Publ. Maktabah al-Razawiyah, Karachi)

(5) The clearest and most evident proof is that benefit is conveyed to others through supplications in the same way that it is conveyed through ʾĪsāl-e-sawāb. The duʿā which Muslims throughout the world recite to benefit others is derived from the wording of Ḥazrat Ibrāhīm علیہ الصلوۃ والسلام. In this duʿā, supplication is made for all Muslims, whom we certainly do not know. Thus, it is stated in the Noble Qurʾān:

﴿رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لِیْ وَ لِوَالِدَیَّ وَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِیْنَ یَوْمَ یَقُوْمُ الْحِسَابُ﴾

Translation (Kanz al-ʿIrfān): O Lord of ours! Forgive me and my parents and all Muslims on the Day when accountability will take place. (Sūrah Ibrāhīm, Verse 41)

وَاللہُ اَعْلَمُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ وَرَسُوْلُہ اَعْلَم صَلَّی اللہُ تَعَالٰی عَلَیْہِ وَاٰلِہٖ وَسَلَّم

(Allah Almighty knows best and His Messenger صَلَّی اللہُ عَلَیْہِ وَاٰلِہٖ وَسَلَّم knows best.)

Answered By: Mufti Muhammad Qasim Attari
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feedback@daruliftaahlesunnat.net