**Zakat - The Fourth Pillar of Islam**

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* Zakat - The Fourth Pillar of Islam

[Zakat](https://www.islamicfinder.org/iqra/zakat-calculation-and-its-significance/), also known as almsgiving, is the fourth pillar upon which the faith of Islam rests upon. It is not just encouraged in Islam, it is mandatory upon all Muslims to give in the way of Allah (SWT) and help the needy. Zakat is the act of taking a portion of the wealth that Allah (SWT) has given you and giving it to those who are not as fortunate.

In all sense and purposes, Zakah is a ‘purification’ of wealth; it cleanses the person’s wealth, instills empathy, generosity, and love in the heart of the giver and protects the individual from becoming stingy and miserly. The religion of Islam is based on helping your fellow brothers and sisters and giving back to society rather than hogging your wealth just for yourself. [Giving charity](https://www.islamicfinder.org/iqra/zakat-how-it-all-began/) is an integral part of being a good Muslim.

It is important to note that Zakat is different from voluntary almsgiving (Sadaqah) because Zakat is mandatory for every able Muslim whereas Sadaqah is given on a completely voluntary basis.

Allah (SWT) has laid great emphasis on Zakaat in His book, [The Holy Quran](https://www.islamicfinder.org/quran/), mentioning it 70 times, which only goes to show the importance of giving Zakat in the eyes of Allah (SWT) and helping the needy. If one considers [Salah](https://www.islamicfinder.org/prayer-times/) to be a form of worship that is carried out physically, Zakat is a form of worship, which is carried out through financial means.

***“And We made them leaders, guiding (men) by Our Command, and We sent them inspiration to do good deeds, to establish regular prayers, and to practice regular charity; and they constantly served Us (and Us only).” (***[***Surah Anbiya:73***](https://www.islamicfinder.org/quran/surah-al-anbiyaa/73/)***)***

Zakat is giving away 2.5% of your wealth and assets to the poor. It is obligatory on every Muslim who owns the nisaab (the minimum amount) for at least a year. The amount of Zakat (see: [Zakat Calculator](https://www.islamicfinder.org/zakat-calculator/)) varies on the different types of valuables owned by the person e.g. gold, silver, cash, property, livestock etc. It is to be paid every year after one year’s procession.

Giving [Zakat brings in endless rewards](https://www.islamicfinder.org/iqra/will-you-be-rewarded-for-paying-zakat/) and blessings from Allah (SWT), not only this world but the Hereafter as well. It is a reminder that all wealth comes from Allah (SWT) and belongs to Allah (SWT) and we are merely receivers of His gift. A portion of everyone’s wealth is a portion that has been pre-ordained by Allah (SWT) to give to the poor. The fact is, Allah (SWT) does not need Zakat, He is not dependent on anything. In turn, we are the ones who need Allah’s (SWT) provisions and blessings.

The purpose of Zakat is to maintain an equilibrium in society and distributing the wealth taken from the rich and using it to help the poor and easing their life in this world. Hence, it is our moral duty as Muslims to give as much as we can to those who need it and help as much as we can!

**Zakat: How it all began?**

**Zakat, one of the five pillars of Islam.**

*Knowledge*

*Mohammad Ahmed Shiwani*

*Friday May 18, 2018*

Paying [Zakat](https://www.islamicfinder.org/ramadan/#zakat) constitutes one of the five pillars of Islam; it is often considered one of the most important forms of charity and, from an economic point of view, Zakat has been proved to be the ideal way through which economic equality can be maintained in society. Like all the different Islamic practices that Muslims are required to engage in, Zakat also has a specific history that is embedded in the time of the Holy Prophet (SAW). To understand the gravity of the immense practice, therefore, it is important that we understand the historical circumstances that it emerged in.

History shows that many prophets before Prophet Muhammad (SAW) were also commanded by Allah (SWT) to obey the principles of Zakah. It also shows that ideas about Zakat were gradually introduced into society during the time of the Holy Prophet (SAW). Initially, Zakat was made to be an optional practice whereby the Sahaba (RA) were told that they could pay Zakat to please Allah (SWT). Later, however, Zakat was established as mandatory and Muslims had to pay it if they owned wealth that exceeded a certain amount.

During the time of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), Zakat was collected and distributed by the state, hence state individuals would collect Zakat during the time that it was due and would then distribute it amongst those who were eligible for it. The Holy Prophet (SAW) repeatedly mentioned the [immense blessings of Zakat](https://www.islamicfinder.org/iqra/will-you-be-rewarded-for-paying-zakat/) to his Sahaba (RA) and the Sahaba (RA) would go to great lengths to ensure that they obeyed one of the five main tenets of being a Muslim.

*The Prophet (ﷺ) said: A man giving a dirham as sadaqah (charity) during his life is better than giving one hundred dirhams as sadaqah (charity) at the moment of his death. (Abi Dawud 2866)*

The entire concept of Zakat is essentially that it is used as a mechanism for the rich to show their gratefulness to Allah (SWT) whilst also showing concern for those who are not privileged enough, financially. Perhaps one of the most iconic [incidents regarding Zakat](https://www.islamicfinder.org/iqra/will-you-be-rewarded-for-paying-zakat/) is when, during the rule of the Ottoman Sultan, Mehmed II, Muslims would spend hours and travel miles trying to find someone to give Zakat to. In the end, they would usually hang their Zakat on a tree and hope for someone to collect it from there, owing to the impeccable income distribution that the Sahaba (RA) achieved by following the guidance of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). This perhaps goes to show how Islam is not just about a set of rituals, but is also about an entire way of life that premises itself in developing the economic, social, and political facets of society so that the Muslim Ummah may prosper and benefit from the teachings of the [Holy Quran](https://www.islamicfinder.org/quran/).

The magnanimity of Zakat and its importance to Muslim politics is perhaps best exemplified by the following quote from Hazrat Umar (RA), who said:

*“Even if a dog dies hungry on the banks of the River Euphrates, Umar will be responsible for dereliction of duty”.*

This goes to show how important Zakat is to Muslims, since it comprises of a vital component through which the Muslim state is to be run. In essence, Zakat plays a crucial role in Islam as a deen (a total way of life) since it works to redistribute wealth and allow Muslims to take care of the most vulnerable in their societies.

Zakat is a very divine concept that is now one of the most important components of being a Muslim. All Muslims must offer [Zakat](https://www.islamicfinder.org/iqra/zakat-calculation-and-its-significance/)if they own wealth beyond a certain amount and the benefits of the act are uncountable. Zakat allows Muslims to forego the idea that material acquisitions are the end-goal of life, it allows them to be more empathetic to the issues faced by their Muslim brothers and sisters, and it provides them with the ability to thank Allah (SWT) for His immense mercy and blessings.

**Will you be rewarded for paying Zakat?**

**Learn about the benefits of paying Zakat.**

*Knowledge*

*Mohammad Ahmed Shiwani*

*Friday May 18, 2018*

Paying Zakat is one of the [five pillars of Islam](https://www.islamicfinder.org/knowledge/5-pillars-of-islam/), given that one has wealth that exceeds a certain amount. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) and his caliphs (RA) went to great lengths to ensure that Muslims during that time offered their Zakat- there is a reason it is deemed one of the five essential deeds that a Muslim must engage in. On the face of it, [Zakat](https://www.islamicfinder.org/knowledge/5-pillars-of-islam/zakat/) is an act that entails losing money and getting less wealthy. What is true, however, is that there is perhaps no better way to multiply your wealth than to pay Zakat. Here’s how:

**Allah (SWT) Has not only promised to repay our Zakat manifold, but Has also promised Jannah with it!**

*"Who is he that will lend to Allah a goodly loan, then (Allah) will increase it manifold to his credit (in repaying), and he will have (besides) a good reward (i.e. Paradise)." (*[*Surah Al Hadid : 11*](https://www.islamicfinder.org/quran/surah-al-hadid/11/)*)*

Believe us yet? When the Almighty (SWT) promises to pay back the Zakat that you have offered and when He offers to pay it back manifold (without defining the parameters of multiplication), any smart businessman would tell you to take up on the offer as soon as possible!

Even if He (SWT) weren’t to return our Zakat, if the promise for Zakat is Paradise, it is perhaps the best deal in the history of the world. If we are offered all the blessings of the world for eternity in return for miniscule material possessions, what is stopping us from availing the offer?

**It boosts the economy!**

Zakat is essentially an economic method of wealth distribution, which means that it is a way through which the wealth of the economy is more evenly distributed. When wealth is taken from the rich and given to the poor, it increases their ability to contribute to the economy by way of consumption, which in turn increases the ability of the economy to invest in growth and development.

Sounds confusing, doesn’t it? Basically, one of the long-term, tangible benefits of paying Zakah, just like the benefits of paying taxes, is that it allows for the economy to develop more evenly which means that each industry and social group benefits from the development. This is better than developing unevenly, which can cause unemployment in the long-run. Zakat, therefore, is a means of boosting the economy, which automatically also boosts your living standards and quality of life.

**Zakat gives you something much more than money: Lots and lots of thawab!**

There are numerous Ahadith and [Quranic verses](https://www.islamicfinder.org/quran/) that promise heaps and heaps of reward in this world and the hereafter for paying Zakat. As Muslims, our biggest mistake is often prioritizing the perishables of this world over the eternal benefits of the next. Thawab is essential to attaining Jannah in the hereafter; since paying Zakat is an easy task that is of little burden, it is perhaps one of the best routes to Jannah.

As mentioned previously, there is a reason Zakat is deemed one of the five most essential actions that a Muslim must engage in. Not only is it a sure-shot way of increasing one’s wealth in this world, but it is also the perfect route to eternal peace and luxury.

If you want to pay Zakat but don't know where to give it, you can donate to [HCI (Human Concern International)](https://www.humanconcern.org/) which hosts different campaigns to help Muslims all over the world in battling poverty.

<https://www.humanconcern.org/>

[*Ramadan Kareem*](https://www.islamicfinder.org/iqra/tag/ramadan-kareem/)

[*zakat al fitr calculator*](https://www.islamicfinder.org/iqra/tag/zakat-al-fitr-calculator/)

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**Getting started**

Zakat is one of the Pillar of Islam and a way to purify your wealth for the will of Allah (SWT). It is payable on assets owned over one lunar year. It is calculated as 2.5% of the total wealth.
The collected amount is paid first to zakat collectors, and then to poor Muslims, to new converts to Islam, to Islamic clergy, and others.

To start calculating your zakat this year, click on the button below.

Base Nisab on value of

    

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**Learn about the benefits of paying Zakat.**

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How to calculate missed zakah ?

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Avatar

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