



MADRASAH
URWAH
BIN AZ ZUBAYR

Zakāt and Farming

in the South African Context

Q & A

Part One





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Introduction:

This series is an attempt to promote literacy surrounding the sacred rulings of Zakāt within the South African Muslim context.

Our focus will be on the Zakāt of agriculture, farming, and animals, though there will be an overlap with other Zakāt rulings as well.

This publication will follow a Q&A format.



Question:

Has Zakāt been mentioned in the Qur'ān?

Answer:

Allah ﷺ says in the Holy Qur'ān:

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَإِاعْتُوْا الْزَّكُوْةَ وَأَقْرِضُوْا اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا
وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوْا لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوْهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ هُوَ خَيْرًا وَأَعْظَمَ أَجْرًا

And establish Salāh, and pay Zakāt, and advance to Allah a goodly loan. And whatever good you will send ahead for your own-selves, you will find it with Allah much better in condition, and much greater in reward.

[Sūrah al-Muzammil: 20]

Allah ﷺ also says:

وَالَّذِيْنَ يَكْنِزُوْنَ الْذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يُنْفِقُوْنَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ
بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ

As for those who accumulate gold and silver and do not spend it in the way of Allah, give them the 'good' news of a painful punishment.

[Sūrah al-Tawbah: 34]



Question:

Has Zakāt been mentioned in the Ḥadīth?

Answer:

There are many Ahādīth which speak of the legislation of Zakāt, the virtue of giving Zakāt, and the warnings against not discharging it.

We will suffice on reproducing one Ḥadīth.

Rasūlullah ﷺ is reported to have said:

بُنِيَّ الإِسْلَامُ عَلَىٰ خَمْسٍ: شَهَادَةُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ،
وَإِقَامُ الصَّلَاةِ، وَإِيتَاءُ الزَّكَاةِ، وَالْحِجَّةِ، وَصَوْمُ رَمَضَانَ

Islām has been built on five [pillars]: testifying that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, establishing Ṣalāh prayer, paying Zakāt, performing Hajj, and fasting in Ramaḍān.

[Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī]



Question:

What is the wisdom in giving Zakāt?

Answer:

Hereunder are some of the many wisdoms of giving Zakāt:

1. It purifies the wealth.
2. It assists in removing the love and greed of wealth from the heart.
3. It functions as a social security for all.
4. It is a preventative measure against hoarding.

Question:

Who is Zakāt compulsory upon?

Answer:

Discharging Zakāt is compulsory on a sane and mature Muslim when his wealth equals to or exceeds the Nisāb amount, and his wealth is maintained for one *lunar* year, without depleting to R0.

If one's wealth is completely lost at any point, a new cycle will begin once he reaches Nisāb again.

Any items purchased for trade will be subject to Zakāt and must be accounted for in the calculation.



Question:

What is Nisāb?

Answer:

Nisāb refers to the required amount of money or assets that makes a person liable to discharge Zakāt. The standard Nisāb of Zakāt is Two Hundred Dirhams (silver coins) equivalent to 612.35 grams of silver or Twenty Mithqals of Gold equivalent to 87.479 grams of gold or any currency that equals the value of this amount of gold and silver.

Question:

When discussing Zakāt and agriculture the term ‘Ushr is used. What does ‘Ushr mean?

Answer:

‘Ushr refers to the 5% or 10% that is given as Zakāt on the produce of a land that is deemed ‘Ushri land.

Question:

If a land is not deemed ‘Ushri land, does that mean there is no ‘Ushr on those lands?

Answer:

Your understanding is correct. Lands that are not deemed ‘Ushri will not be liable to pay ‘Ushr.



Question:

Is 'Ushr compulsory on produce grown in South Africa? Are the lands of South Africa deemed 'Ushri lands?

Answer:

Land that falls under the jurisdiction of a non-Muslim government and has never at any stage been ruled by a Muslim government is not considered 'Ushri land.

Accordingly, 'Ushr is not compulsory on the produce grown in South Africa, even if a Muslim has purchased the land and is considered to be its lawful owner.

Question:

Since we are not liable to pay 'Ushr, what are we, as South African farmers, liable for in terms of Zakāt?

Answer:

If a farmer sells the produce of his land, he will add the money received to his other wealth and assets when calculating his Zakāt. Further, he may also be liable for Zakāt on his livestock. These rulings pertaining to Zakāt on livestock will be discussed in the next publication.



Question:

I bought land with the intention of reselling it. Do I pay Zakāt on this land?

Answer:

If you purchased the land with the intention of re-selling, it would be considered as stock in trade; hence you are obligated to pay Zakāt on the current market value of the land if it reaches the amount of Nisāb at the time of your Nisāb due date.

Question:

I purchased some land with the intention of personal use, do I have to pay Zakāt on this land?

Answer:

If you purchased the land with the intention of personal use, you are not obligated to pay Zakāt on the land.

Question:

I recently bought a land for cultivation. Do I pay Zakāt on the land and the crop?

Answer:

There is no Zakāt on land itself. However, if the owner sells the produce, he will pay Zakāt on the money received.



Part two will discuss:

Who can Zakāt be given to?

Who can receive Zakāt?

When is Zakāt liable on livestock?

and more...

Questions Answered By : Muftī Usaamah Dadipatel

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