
In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

Recipients

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Scholars are unanimous in their view that the recipients of zakat-ul-fitr are the same as zakat.

Who qualifies to receive zakat?

The Quran specifies those who qualify to receive zakat.

The Quran states:

Alms are for the poor and the needy, and those employed to administer the (funds); for those whose hearts have been (recently) reconciled (to Truth); for those in bondage and in the debt; in the cause of Allah; and for the wayfarer; (thus is it) ordained by Allah, and Allah is Full of Knowledge and Wisdom. (9:60).

Whilst not specifically mentioning zakat, scholars interpret the above verse in the narrow context of zakat only. Charity other than zakat can be given to a broader spectrum as codified in the Sunnah (practice) of the Prophet (PBUH).

The Quran identifies the needy in the above verse as follows:

Only a Muslim qualifies to receive zakat

- a) **the poor and needy** (*Fuqaraa* and *Masakeen*). Scholars identify three types of poor and needy:
 - those who do not own any assets at all;
 - those who do not own any property or assets in excess of basic necessities (basic necessities include a house, furniture, clothing, etc.);
 - those who own property in excess of basic necessities but below the value of nisaab.
- b) **persons who are appointed for the collection of zakat** (*Al Aamileen*). These persons are not themselves needy but they are collecting on behalf of a fund from where allocations will be made to those who qualify.
- c) **persons** (*Muallafatul Quloob*) who have recently accepted Islam and are in need of basic necessities as they have either lost the support of their family and friends or are being persecuted by their former associates and require assistance. The intention is not to bribe new Muslims but help them feel the spirit of Islam by aiding them (if aid is required).
- d) **slaves** (*Ar-Riqaab*).
- e) **persons who are in debt** (*Gharimeen*) and do not possess any other wealth or goods with which they could repay what they owe. Some

scholars are of the opinion that a person will only qualify as a *Gharimeen* if the person's net wealth is below the nisaab. The person's basic necessities of life (house, furniture, etc.) will not be taken into account.

- f) persons who are struggling and striving in Allah's cause (*Fi-Sabeelillah*).
- g) a traveller (*Ibnus-sabeel*) who whilst wealthy at his residence is stranded and is in need of assistance, may be given zakat.

Some scholars are of the opinion that zakat should be given to each of the above eight. However, most scholars are of the view that you should make enquiries to ascertain who is the neediest and distribute your zakat accordingly. You can give all your zakat to any one or more of the categories above.

You are encouraged to give zakat to your family.

The Prophet (PBUH) said, "The one who gives zakat to kith and kin shall get double reward; one for fulfilling the rights of kith and kin, and the other for paying the zakat." (Bukhari). All the schools are of the opinion that you can give zakat to your kith and kin, you cannot give zakat to those whose maintenance you are responsible for. Sheikh Ahmad Kutty, a senior lecturer at the Islamic Institute of Toronto, Ontario, Canada, states¹: "General scholarly consensus is that one must not pay zakat to one's dependants, i.e. those he is obligated to take care of, if they cannot take care of themselves. One's parents and grandparents as well as children and grandchildren belong to this category. It is one's duty to take care of them, and this includes paying their legitimate debts as well."

¹ Can I Pay my Father's Debts from Zakah? – Islamonline – 12 October 2002