

Write a comprehensive note on Zakat system of Islam and its spiritual, moral and social impacts.

## Zakat

Zakat stands as a timeless and powerful practice in Islam. Its spiritual significance lies in its ability to purify wealth, promote empathy and obedience to God. At the same time, it carries a profound social impact, leading to reduction of class differences and alleviating financial hardship.

### Meaning of Zakat:

The term Zakat is derived from the Arabic root "z-k-a" which means to "purify" or to "make pure". It is a form of almsgiving. It is mandatory for Muslims who meet certain criteria to give a portion of their wealth as Zakat to those in need. It is one of the five pillars in Islam and was made obligatory in 2AH.

### Difference between Zakat and Sadagah:

Zakat is obligatory whereas Sadagah is a voluntary form of charity.



## Importance of Zakat:

The act of giving Zakat purifies one's wealth and income. It reminds Muslims that their material possessions are blessings from Allah. By requiring those with excess wealth to give these a portion of it to those in need, it helps create a more equitable economic system.

## Surah Hajj Verse 22:

"They are those who, if established in the land by Us, would perform prayer, pay alms-tax, encourage what is good, and forbid what is evil. And with Allah rests the outcome of all affairs."

## Hadith Sahih Bukhari:

"Giving Zakat is more beloved to Allah than giving in charity during the entire year."

## Conditions for Zakat:

Zakat is obligatory for people who are:

- Muslim
  - Adult
  - Sane
  - Free: slaves are not obliged to pay Zakat.
  - Financially capable: An individual should first ensure
- Gossip!



that they have adequately provided for their family's needs, and should strive to be debt-free before paying Zakat.

Zakat cannot be given to:

- Descendants of the Prophet
- One's own spouse
- One's own parents and grandparents
- One's own children and grandchildren

Heads of Zakat:

• The Poor (Al-Fuqara): Those who are destitute, unable to meet their basic needs, and are living in poverty

• The Needy (Al-Masakin):

Those who may not be entirely destitute but are still in need of financial assistance to meet their basic needs.

• Those Who Collect Zakat: This refers to individuals who are responsible for collecting, distributing and administering Zakat funds.

• Reconciliation of Hearts: Zakat can be used to win hearts such as those who are converts to Islam. In earlier times, new converts were disowned by their families. Gossip!



- Freeing Slaves (Fir-Riqab): Zakat can be used to free slaves or captives.
- Those in Debt (Al-Gharimin): Individuals who are in debt and unable to repay their debts can receive Zakat to help settle their financial obligations.
- In the Path of Allah (Fi Sabilillah): Zakat can be used for charitable causes in path of Allah, such as defense of Muslim community.
- Travelers (Ibn as-Sabil): Travelers who are stranded or in need of financial assistance while on their journey can receive Zakat.

### Impacts:

#### Spiritual Impacts:

Purification of Wealth: Giving Zakat is an act of purifying one's wealth. It helps believers rid themselves of the negative impacts of greed and materialism.

#### Hadith Sahih Bukhari:

“Zakat purifies one's wealth.”

#### Trust in Divine Provision:

Zakat encourages believers to part with a portion of their wealth, trusting that Allah will provide for their needs. Gossip!



### Hadith Al-Tirmidhi:

"No wealth of a servant of Allah," is decreased because of charity.

### Gratitude and Contentment:

Giving Zakat can help individuals develop gratitude for the blessings they have and promotes contentment with their own circumstances. This can lead to inner peace.

### Obedience to God:

Zakat is a religious duty in Islam and fulfilling this obligation is considered an act of worship. By doing so, individuals demonstrate their obedience to God.

### Hadith Sahih Muslim:

"Zakat is a form of worship and the one who fulfills it will be rewarded."

### Social Impacts:

#### Reduction of Class Differences:

By redistributing wealth from the affluent to less fortunate, Zakat helps reduce income and wealth disparities.

### Hadith Sahih Bukhari:

"Zakat is a right that the poor have upon the rich"

### Control of Inflation:

Gossip!



Zakat can help control inflation. By directing money towards those in need, it can stabilize the economy and prevent rapid price hikes.

### Reduction in Social Crimes:

Poverty and economic inequality can contribute to social crimes. Zakat by addressing financial needs of the less fortunate can help reduce the desperation that at times drives people to engage in criminal activities.

### Strengthening the Community:

Zakat fosters a sense of unity and mutual responsibility within the Muslim community. This social cohesion and solidarity are essential elements of the Islamic faith.

In a modern world marked by economic disparities and materialism, Zakat reminds us of the responsibility we bear towards creating a more equitable and harmonious society.