

Almsgiving (Zakat) in Islam

Almsgiving is the third “Pillar” of Islam. It follows the second pillar of Performing the Salah (Prayer) and precedes the fourth pillar of Fasting during Ramadan.

Almsgiving is called Zakat, the Arabic word for almsgiving. “Zakat” derives from the Arabic words “to increase” and “to grow.” Among its main meanings are “purification” and “betterment.” Zakat is a religious duty for all Muslims who meet the necessary criteria (of wealth) to help the needy.

Zakat is to give alms to the poor, among other groups. Muslims are urged to donate a fixed percentage of their property to charity yearly. Islam does not classify Zakat as a simple good deed; it is an essential part of Islam.

Many Muslims, from the mightiest rulers to modest merchants and average individuals, give money to help the less fortunate by establishing soup kitchens, hospitals, schools, libraries, mosques, and similar institutions. One of the most common forms of charity in medieval Islamic cities was establishing a public drinking fountain, where fresh, drinkable water was distributed freely to all passers-by. Such a drinking fountain was commonly known as a “Sabil” or “Waqf,” derived from the common Arabic

expression “fi Sabil-Allah,” literally meaning “in the path of Allah (God),” signifying acts done for God’s sake or charitably.

The primary recipients of this generosity are divided into eight categories, among which are the poor, the vulnerable, and the deserving (the needy), as their divinely established right.

Zakat differs from other forms of charity because it is compulsory. It must be paid from the money one owns once the condition of Zakat is satisfied. Most of the time, Zakat is paid out of the assets owned by the person, although many scholars have shown that it can be paid in the form of money. The Quran says, “Charities are for the poor, and the destitute, and those who administer them, and for reconciling hearts, and for freeing slaves, and for those in debt, and in the path of Allah, and for the homeless — a mandate from Allah. Allah is All-Knowing, Most Wise.” [Quran 9: 60]. This verse identifies the eight categories allowed to receive money from Zakat.

The Quran also says, “O you who believe! Let neither your possessions nor your children divert you from Allah’s remembrance. Whoever does that—these are the losers (9) And donate from what We have provided



Guest Column

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for you—before death approaches one of you, and he says, “My Lord, if only You would postpone me for a short while, so that I may be charitable, and be of the righteous.” “[Quran 63: 9-10] An interesting verse indeed! It suggests that if given the chance to prolong one’s life, one of the first deeds they would engage in is charity. This underscores the immense value and rewards associated with charity. After all, money holds significant value, and parting with it is not an easy decision for many.

Zakat (almsgiving) does not come at the discretion of its payers. The Quran and the Hadith (Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) tradition) outline the various kinds of property for which Zakat payments are directly due, along with their minimum amounts and rates of payment. The Quran encourages Muslims to pay Zakat, stating, “And perform the prayer, and give the purifying alms. Whatever good you forward for yourselves, you will find it with Allah.. Allah is See-

ing of everything you do.” [Quran 2: 110]

But how is Zakat paid or calculated? Zakat (almsgiving) is paid once a certain amount of money (it has to be equal to or more than this certain amount) is saved for a full year (let’s call it the Capital). If one keeps this Capital in a bank or at home, unchanged or increasing, for a full year, then 2.5% has to be paid as Zakat on that original Capital. It is also important to mention that Islam does not allow interest.

If the individual is a farmer, then Zakat depends on how one irrigates their land. If one pays money each time they irrigate their land, for fuel, or for workers to buy machinery and other irrigation equipment, then only 2.5% of the crops (large or small amount) are to be given to charity (one of the eight categories). If one irrigates their land solely depending on rain, then 10% is to be paid off the crops. If a mixture of the two methods is used, then 5% is required. As we see, the calculation method is so specific and depends on how much one relies on God’s blessings.

Zakat directly alleviates the poor and needy of worldly hardship, improving their life conditions while upholding their human dignity. Zakat is not intended to serve as a

stopgap measure of short-term or one-time relief. Instead, it is meant to institutionalize and anchor a communal enterprise that systematically eliminates poverty and servitude on earth. Zakat also functions as the primary socio-financial institution of the global Muslim community. It aims to annually recalibrate the just human balance in society, foster harmony between relatives and neighbors, and strengthen shared unity and equitable social cohesion.

Islam has encouraged people to pay charity and stressed the importance of charity in the lives of believers. It serves as a form of solidarity and community care, emphasizing the responsibility of each individual within the community. Wealthy individuals are urged to understand their society and its needs, ensuring they are aware of who requires assistance and financial support. Charity is also seen as a means to foster love and affinity within society. The impoverished are less likely to harbor resentment towards the wealthy, knowing they have a right to support if needed. Additionally, charity is encouraged even after Zakat is paid. Islam promotes all forms of giving for the sake of God, the Almighty. Quran sums up the

Quranic view of charity and almsgiving (another name for Zakat is the poor due): Righteousness is not in turning your faces towards the east or the west. Rather, the righteous are those who believe in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Books (the original books revealed before the Quran), and the prophets; who give charity out of their cherished wealth to relatives, orphans, the poor, “needy” travelers, beggars, and for freeing captives; who establish prayer, pay alms-tax, and keep the pledges they make; and who are patient in times of suffering, adversity, and in the heat of battle. It is they who are true in faith, and it is they who are mindful of Allah. [Quran 2: 177] Among those who deserve a share of Zakat are non-Muslims in the society. They are considered brothers and sisters.

To sum it up: Islam encourages its followers (the Muslims) to donate a fixed portion of their income to community members in need. Many rulers and wealthy Muslims have built mosques, drinking fountains, hospitals, schools, and other institutions as a religious duty and to secure the blessings associated with charity..

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For more information, please visit: www.icstillwater.org/islam

Tensions rise in Australia after a bishop and priest are wounded in a knife attack in a church

SYDNEY – A teenager has been accused of wounding a Christian bishop and a priest during a church service in the second high-profile knife attack to rock Sydney in recent days, leaving communities on edge, leaders calling for calm and a besieged church urging against retaliation.

The 16-year-old was overpowered by the shocked congregation at Christ the Good Shepherd Church after he allegedly stabbed Bishop Mar Mari Emmanuel and the Rev. Isaac Royel during

a service on Monday night that was being streamed online.

Police have not commented on reports that the boy’s fingers were severed by parishioners in the Orthodox Assyrian church in suburban Wakeley, but confirmed his hand injuries were “severe.”

Video of the attack spread quickly on social media and an angry mob converged on the church demanding vengeance. They hurled bricks, bottles and fence boards at police, who temporarily barricaded the boy

inside the church for his own safety. Many in the crowd chanted “an eye for an eye” and “bring him out.”

Several people including police officers required hospital treatment following the hourslong riot.

The church said in a statement on Tuesday it “denounced retaliation of any kind.” Police stood guard around mosques in parts of Sydney on Tuesday after reports that text messages were circulating urging the Assyrian Christian community to retaliate

against Muslims.

Sydney’s Lakemba Mosque, Australia’s largest, has hired additional private security for the next week after receiving fire bomb threats on Monday night.

Police and community leaders said public anxiety had been heightened by a lone assailant’s knife attack in a Sydney shopping mall on Saturday that killed five women and a male security guard who attempted to intervene. The 40-year-old assailant, Joel Cauchi, had a history of mental illness and trouble with

women and a fascination with knives. He was shot dead by police.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese urged the public not to take the law into their own hands.

“We understand the distress and concerns that are there in the community, particularly after the tragic event at Bondi Junction on Saturday,” Albanese told reporters, referring to the Westfield Bondi Junction shopping mall.

– AP

Worship at the church of your choice this week

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord,
continue to live your lives in him,
7 rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as
you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.



Colossians 2:6-7

Stillwater Bible

Proclaiming Christ, Training Believers

JB Bond, Senior Pastor

Sundays

Worship Service8:30 a.m.

G.R.O.W. Groups9:45 a.m.

Worship Service11:00 a.m.

Kids' Church11:20 a.m.

Tuesdays

Cornerstone @ The Union (RM 297).....7:30 p.m.

Wednesdays

Stillwater Bible Institute.....6:30 p.m.

Impact Youth6:30 p.m.

Bible Kids6:30 p.m.

7617 W. 6th Ave.

Stillwaterbible.org (405) 564-5794

Crosspointe

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Sunday AM Worship - 10:30

Sunday PM Family Service - 6:00

Wed PM Bible Study - 7:00

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Bible Study • 9:30am

Worship Service • 11:00am

WEDNESDAY ACTIVITIES

Begin at 6:00pm

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SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Worship.....8:30am & 11:10am

Sunday School10:00am

Closer Walk.....10 am Family Life Center

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS

BAPTIST CHURCH

4th & Knoblock • 372-2744

Sunday School

9 am

Worship Service

8 am & 10:30 am

GRACE BAPTIST

CHURCH

Independent Baptist

Expository Preaching

CHURCH SERVICES

Sunday10:30am

Thursday7:30pm

723 E. 17th

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524 S. Duncan • 405-372-5580

www.stillwaterfpc.org

Sunday Worship

9:45 a.m. - Sunday School

11:00 a.m. - in person, online

On KSPI radio AM 780 & FM 94.3

and the Stillwater FPC Facebook page

Sunnybrook

Christian Church

421 E. Richmond Rd • 377.0923

www.sunnybrookccc.org

SUNDAY SERVICE

9:45 am

11:15 am

SUNDAY SCHOOL

8:30 am

9:45 am

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SUNDAY

Meeting Times

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Worship.....10:30 AM

Bible Study.....5:00 PM

WEDNESDAY

Bible study.....7:00 PM

821 N. DUCK • 372-7439

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SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:45 AM

SUNDAY WORSHIP 11 AM + 6 PM

WEDNESDAY

YOUTH & ADULT BIBLE STUDY 6:30

Paul Henthorn - Pastor

Address - 1223 S. Perkins. Rd.

Phone: 405-372-2411

Email: southsidesillwater@gmail.com

The Islamic

Society of Stillwater

616 N. Washington St.

Friday (Weekly) Prayers

1:40 PM - 2:10 PM

For Daily Prayer Times

www.icstillwater.org

St. Francis Xavier

Catholic Church

711 N. Country Club Rd.

Sunday Mass

8:30 | 11:15 a.m.

en Espanol 1 p.m.

Tuesday Mass

12:10 | 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday Mass

12:10 p.m.

en Espanol 6 p.m.

Thursday Mass

12:10 | 5:30 p.m.

Friday Mass

12:10 p.m.

Saturday Mass

9 a.m.

Saturday Vigil Mass

5 p.m.

Confessions before every

12:10 Mass at 11:30 a.m.,

Wednesdays at 5 p.m. and

Saturdays from 9:45-11 a.m.

372-6886

www.sfxstillwater.org

Zion Lutheran

Church - LCMS

Sunday - 8:00, 10:30 AM

www.zionlutheranstw.org

John E. Wackler, Pastor

504 S. Knoblock • 372-3703