146368 - Zakah in the form of prizes for memorising Quran

the question

There is a charitable foundation that collects money (charity and zakah) and does charitable work, but it holds religious competitions, such as competitions in memorising Quran and Sunnah, in which the winner is given a cash prize so as to encourage him. This prize comes from zakah wealth; is that permissible or not?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

It is not permissible to spend zakah wealth on anything except those who are mentioned in the Holy Quran (interpretation of the meaning):

“As-Sadaqat (here it means Zakah) are only for the Fuqaraa’ (poor), and Al-Masakeen (the poor) and those employed to collect (the funds); and to attract the hearts of those who have been inclined (towards Islam); and to free the captives; and for those in debt; and for Allah’s Cause (i.e. for Mujahidoon — those fighting in a holy battle), and for the wayfarer (a traveller who is cut off from everything); a duty imposed by Allah. And Allah is All-Knower, All-Wise” [Al-Tawbah 9:60]

These eight are the categories to whom zakah may be given, and no one else.

Please see also the answers to questions no. 125481 and 21794.

With regard to giving some of the zakah wealth in the form of prizes, if the winner is one of those who are entitled to zakah, it is permissible to give the prize from zakah wealth, but if he is not one of those who are entitled to it, then it is not permissible.

Shaykh Ibn Jibreen (may Allah preserve him) was asked: Is it permissible to give zakah in the form of prizes during lectures to Muslims and non-Muslims?

He replied:

Zakah may be given to poor Muslims even if it is given as prizes. With regard to non-Muslims, it should not be given to them if it is known that they are stubbornly rejecting the truth; prizes may be given to them from other sources.

End quote from the Shaykh's website

Shaykh Salih al-Fawzan (may Allah preserve him) said: It is not permissible to give zakah to anyone other than the eight categories whether it is for bridges, public works, schools, mosques or any other charitable projects, because these projects may be financed through donations and waqfs set up for that purpose.

End quote from al-Muntaqa min Fatawa al-Fawzan

And Allah knows best.