# 20996 - Can You Read Quran for the Dead?

**the question**

I have a mother who cannot read and I want to honour her. I often read Quran and dedicate the reward for that to her. When I heard that this is not permissible, I stopped doing it and I started to give money in charity on her behalf.

Now she is still alive; will the reward for money or other things given in charity reach her whether she is alive or dead, or will only du`a reach her because that is the only thing mentioned in the hadith, “When a person dies all his deeds come to an end except three: a righteous son who will pray [make du`a] for him…”? If a person makes a lot of du`a for his parents during prayer and at other times, standing and sitting, does this hadith mean that he is righteous and can hope for reward from Allah?

I hope that you can advise me, may Allah reward you with much good.

**Summary of answer**

It is better for the believer not to do that and not to read Quran for either the dead or the living or to offer prayer or fast voluntarily on their behalf because there is no evidence for any of these things.

**Detailed answer**

Praise be to Allah.

## Can you read the Quran for the dead or the living?

With regard to reading Quran , there is some difference of opinion among the scholars as to whether the reward from that will reach the deceased . According to the more correct of the two

opinions, it does not reach them, because there is no evidence to that effect. The Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did not do that for the Muslims who died, such as his daughters who died during his lifetime, neither did the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them all) do that either, as far as we know.

So it is better for the believer not to do that and not to read Quran for either the dead or the living, or to offer prayer or fast voluntarily on their behalf because there is no evidence for any of these things. The basic principle regarding acts of worship is to refrain from everything except that which is proven to be enjoined by Allah or by His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

## What benefits the dead?

With regard to charity, this may benefit both the living and the dead , according to the consensus of the Muslims. Similarly, du`a may benefit both the living and the dead according to the consensus of the Muslims. But the Hadith mentions that which has to do with the dead, because this is the point concerning which people are confused. Does it benefit them or not? Hence this Hadith was narrated from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): “When the son of Adam dies, all his deeds come to an end, except for three: ongoing charity , beneficial knowledge or a righteous son who will pray for him.” Because it is known that death puts a stop to all deeds, the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) explained that these [three deeds] do not stop.

With regard to the living, there is no doubt that he will benefit from charity given by himself or by others, and he will benefit from du`a . If a person makes du`a for his parents whilst they are still alive, they will benefit from his du`a. They will also benefit from charity given on their behalf whilst they are still alive.

## Can you make Hajj on behalf of the dead of the living?

The same applies to making Hajj on their behalf if they are unable to go themselves because of old

age or incurable sickness. This will also benefit them. Hence it was narrated from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that a woman said to him, “O Messenger of Allah, the obligation to perform Hajj has come when my father is an old man and is unable to ride. Can I perform Hajj on his behalf?” He said, “Perform Hajj on his behalf.”

Another man came and said, “O Messenger of Allah, my father is an old man and he cannot perform Hajj or travel. Can I perform Hajj or `Umrah on his behalf ?” He said, “Perform Hajj and `Umrah on behalf of your father.”

This indicates that it is permissible to perform Hajj on behalf of the dead or on behalf of one who is living but is unable to do it because he or she is too old. Charity, du`a and Hajj or ‘Umrah on behalf of the dead or one who is incapable will all benefit the person, according to all the scholars.

## Can you fast on behalf of the dead?

Similarly, it is obligatory to fast on behalf of the deceased if he had missed any obligatory fasts, whether they were fasts in fulfillment of a vow, or as an expiation, or any missed fasts of Ramadan, because of the general meaning of the Hadith, “Whoever dies and was obliged to fast, let his next of kin fast on his behalf.” (Sahih – Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

And there are other similar Hadiths. But whoever delayed the fast of Ramadan for a valid excuse such as sickness or traveling, then he died before he could make up the missed fasts, it is not obligatory to make up the fasts or to feed poor people on his behalf, because he had a valid excuse.

You are doing well, in sha Allah, by honouring your mother by giving in charity on her behalf and making du`a for her. Especially if the son is righteous, this makes the du`a more likely to be answered. Hence the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “… or a righteous son who will pray for him,” because the righteous son is more likely to have his du`a answered than a son who is not righteous, even though everyone is required to make du`a for his parents. But if the son is righteous then his du`a for his parents is more likely to be answered.

And Allah knows best.