8423 - How to Distribute `Aqiqah Meat

the question

I want to know what is a'aqqeqa (the qurbani which has to be done after the birth of a son) two goats or sheep. and the meat--how is it distributed ? Does it have three (3) shares as for Eid-Qurbani or is it all for the family ?

Summary of answer

`Aqiqah meat can be distributed in various ways.

-Some scholars compare it to Ud-hiyah (Qurbani), recommending it be divided into three parts—one for the family, one for gifts, and one for charity.
-Other scholars suggest there are no strict rules, allowing families to eat, gift, or donate the meat as they see fit.
-The purpose of `Aqiqah is to express gratitude to Allah and protect the child from harm.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Is `Aqiqah Similar to Ud-hiyah?

Some of the scholars said that the `Aqiqah is like the Ud-hiyah (Qurbani) and is subject to the same rulings.

They said that it should be shared out in the same manner as the Ud-hiyah, and that the conditions for the sheep to be sacrificed for the `Aqiqah are the same as those in the case of Ud-hiyah. They said that it should not be blemished, lame, obviously sick or extremely weak.

Different Scholarly Opinions on `Aqiqah Distribution

Ibn Qudamah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The way it is to be eaten (by the owner), given as gifts and given in charity is the same, i.e., the way in which the `Aqiqah is to be (shared out) is the same as the way in which the Ud-hiyah is (shared out). This is the view of Ash-Shafi`i.

Ibn Sirin (may Allah have mercy on him) said: Do whatever you want with the meat.

Ibn Jurayj (may Allah have mercy on him) said: It should be cooked in salt and water, and given to neighbours and friends, but nothing of it should be given in charity.

Ahmad (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked about this, and he quoted the view of Ibn Sirin, which indicates that this was also his view. He was asked whether one could eat it, and he said, I did not say that he should eat all of it and not give any of it in charity.

The more correct view is to liken it by analogy to Ud-hiyah because it is a sacrifice which is prescribed in the Shari`ah, but it is not obligatory, so it is like Ud-hiyah, and because it is like it in terms of the attributes, age, value and conditions [of the animal] , so it is like it in terms of the manner in which it is disposed of. (End quote from Al-Mughni, 9/366)

Ash-Shawkani (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Do the same conditions apply (to `Aqiqah) as to Ud-hiyah? Ash-Shafi`'i has two views, and he quoted evidence to show that this is not the case, and that is the correct view. (End quote from Nayl Al-Awtar, 5/231)

And he mentioned differences between `Aqiqah and Ud-hiyah which indicate that they are not alike in all regards.

Purpose of `Aqiqah

So there is no mention in the Sunnah of a specific way of dividing (the meat of the `Aqiqah). The purpose is to draw closer to Allah by means of the shedding of this blood, in thanksgiving for the blessing of the newborn child, and to loosen the bonds of the Shaytan over the child and to remove him from him, as is indicated in the Hadith, “Every child is ransomed by his `Aqiqah.”

What Can Be Done with `Aqiqah Meat?

With regard to the ruling on the meat , you may do whatever you like with it. If you wish, you and your family can eat it, or you can give it in charity, or you can eat some and give some. This is the view of Ibn Sirin and of Imam Ahmad, may Allah have mercy on him.

And Allah knows best.