125720 - Can You Give Sadaqah to Siblings?

the question

Is it permissible for me to give the sadaqah of my wealth to my sisters who are students? Is it permissible for me to contribute with them to household expenses on the basis that it is the sadaqah of my wealth?

Summary of answer

There is nothing wrong with giving Sadaqah to your sisters and contributing it to household expenses. It is also permissible to give zakah to brothers and sisters if they have debts. It is permissible to give zakah to students of Shari`ah.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Giving sadaqah and zakah to family members

If what is meant is voluntary sadaqah , there is nothing wrong with giving it to your sisters and contributing it to household expenses, because sadaqah is broad in scope.

But if what is meant is obligatory charity, i.e., zakah , then the matter is subject to further discussion.

It is permissible to give charity to your brothers and sisters, if they are poor and you are not obliged to spend on them because you will not inherit from them, or because you cannot afford to spend on their maintenance.

It is also permissible to give zakah to them if they have debts, whether you are obliged to spend on them or not, because paying off debts is not obligatory for the one who is obliged to spend on

another person’s maintenance.

Shaykh Muhammad Salih al-‘Uthaymin (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked about giving zakah to one’s brother and sister.

He replied:

“If giving zakah to him means that your duty towards him will be waived, such as if it is obligatory for you to spend on his maintenance, but you give him zakah so that you save your money and do not spend on him, then this is not permissible, because zakah cannot be paid to protect wealth.

But if it does not mean that your duty towards him will be waived, such as if it is not obligatory for you to spend on his maintenance, because you will not inherit from him, or because you cannot afford to spend on him as well as your own family, or you are giving him money to pay off a debt that he owes but cannot pay off, then it is permissible for you to give your zakah to him, rather it is preferable for you to give it to him rather than anyone else, because giving to him is both an act of charity and upholding the ties of kinship.” (Majmu’ Fatawa Ibn ‘Uthaymin, 18/422, 423)

Giving zakah to students

- It is permissible to give zakah to students of Shari`ah who are devoting all their time to that, because this study is a kind of jihad, so it comes under the heading of “in Allah’s cause” or for the sake of Allah.
- As for students of worldly sciences and branches of knowledge , that does not come under the heading of “in Allah’s cause” or for the sake of Allah, but they may be given zakah because of poverty or need, for example if a student does not have enough money to cover the expenses of study on which his finding the work or job that he needs depends. He may also be given zakah to pay off his debts, such as if he owes money to the university; in that case he may be given enough to pay off his debts.

Giving zakah towards household expenses

It is not permissible to give zakah towards household expenses.

But if we assume that your husband is poor and is entitled to zakah, then you may give your zakah to him then he may spend it as he sees fit, and if he spends it on the household there is nothing wrong with that.

And Allah knows best.