8870 - Can a woman who owns jewellery be given anything from zakaah?

the question

A woman has asked for zakaah. She has no source of income, but she has some gold with which she adorns herself. Is it permissible to give her anything from the zakaah? Or should she be told to sell her gold?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

If a woman owns jewellery, that does not make her rich if she does not own anything else, even if the jewellery is made of gold or silver and its value is equivalent to the nisaab of zakaah. She is still poor and is thus entitled to take zakaah. This was the view stated by the Shaafa'is and Hanbalis.

The Shaafa'i faqeeh al-Ramli said: "If a woman's jewellery befits her and she needs it to adorn herself regularly, this does not mean that she is not poor." (Nihaayat al-Muhtaaj li'l-Ramli, 6/150). In other words, she is still poor and is entitled to take zakaah because she is regarded as poor.

In Kashf al-Qinaa', which discusses Hanbali fiqh, it says: "… or if she has jewellery which she needs to wear, this does not prevent her from taking zakaah." (Kashf al-Qinaa', 1/587). In other words, she is still poor and is entitled to take zakaah, despite the fact that she owns jewellery, because she needs it to adorn herself. Therefore the description of being poor still applies to her.

And Allaah knows best.