

When you feel miserly – Give Charity

Explained by Shaykh Uthaymeen

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ جَاءَ رَجُلٌ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَيُّ الصَّدَقَةِ أَكْبَرُ أَجْرًا قَالَ " أَنْ تَصَدَّقَ وَأَنْتَ صَحِيحٌ شَحِيحٌ تَخْشَى الْفَقْرَ وَتَأْمَلُ الْبَقَاءَ وَلَا تُؤْمَلُ حَتَّى إِذَا بَلَغَتِ الْحُلُقُومَ قُلْتَ لِفُلَانٍ كَذَا وَقَدْ كَانَ لِفُلَانٍ

Narrated from Abu Huraira may Allah be pleased with him, he said: A man went to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and said: O Messenger of Allah, which charity has the greatest reward? He replied: That you give charity while you are healthy, miserly and you fear poverty, hoping to live a long life. But do not delay until the soul reaches the throat and then say 'this wealth is for so and so', because at this point it is already going to so and so. (Al-Bukhari 1330; Muslim, 1713)

Explanation: The author (Imam Al-Nawawi may Allah have mercy on him) placed this Hadith in the chapter "Hastening to do Good Deeds" (Riyadhus Salihin). This man asked the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم "Which charity is the best?" He did not intend by his question the type or quantity of charity; rather he only intended the time frame in which it is better to give charity during this time opposed to other times.

He replied to him saying: 'That you give charity while you are healthy and miserly'. Meaning; while your body is healthy and your soul is miserly. This is because when the person is healthy he is miserly with his wealth because he hopes to live a long life and he fears poverty. But when he is sick, this world becomes cheap in his eyes and has no value. Consequently it is easy for him to give charity.

He said: 'That you give charity while you are healthy, and miserly fearing poverty, hoping to live a long life'. This means, because you are healthy you hope to live a long life because the healthy person sees death as being distant from him; although death could come and surprise him. While the sick person sees death as something near.

His statement: 'And you fear poverty'. This is because of your hope for a long life, as the person fears poverty if he expects to live for a long time, because his wealth will deplete. Therefore this is the best time to give charity, when you are healthy and miserly.

'But do not delay', meaning; do not avoid giving charity. 'But do not delay until the soul reaches the throat and then say 'this wealth is for so and so'. This is when death comes to you and your soul reaches your throat and you know that you are about to leave this world so you say: 'This is for so and so'. Meaning this charity is for so and so.

'Because at this point it is already going to so and so.' Meaning, when you die your wealth will automatically go to someone else; it will go to those who inherit from you. When the person dies his ownership ends and he no longer owns anything.

This Hadith shows that it is incumbent upon the person to rush to give charity before death comes to him. And if he gives charity at the time of his death, it is less virtuous than if he were to give while he is healthy and miserly.

Taken from the Explanation of Riyadhus Salihin by Shaykh Uthaymeen may Allah have mercy upon him.

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