

355508 - Ruling on giving a poor person a prepaid coupon for a meal from a restaurant as expiation for breaking an oath (kafaarat yameen)

the question

I know that giving expiation in the form of cash instead of food is not permissible, but I found that one of the charity organisations cooperates with a restaurant, by giving prepaid coupons to the poor and needy to provide them with a meal from this restaurant. Is this permissible?

Detailed answer

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Firstly:

Giving expiation for breaking an oath (kafaarat yameen) through a proxy

There is nothing wrong with appointing a charity or someone else as one's proxy to give the expiation.

Ibn Qudaamah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: With regard to acts of worship, those that have to do with wealth, such as zakaah, charity, giving in fulfilment of vows and giving as expiation, it is permissible to appoint a proxy to accept them and distribute them, and it is permissible for the one who is giving it to appoint a proxy to give it to the one who is entitled to it. It is permissible to say to someone else: Give the zakaah of my wealth from your wealth, because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) sent his workers to collect and distribute zakaah. And he said to Mu'aadh, when he sent him to

Yemen: "Teach them that they must give charity, to be taken from their rich ones and given to their poor ones. If they obey you in that, then beware of taking the best of their wealth, and fear the supplication of the one who has been wronged, for there is no barrier between it and Allah." Agreed upon.

End quote from *al-Mughni* (5/53).

Secondly:

Giving the poor person a coupon for a meal from a restaurant

There is nothing wrong with the charity giving the poor person a prepaid coupon for a meal from a restaurant, because the coupon is not cash; rather it is a voucher for what it represents, which in this case is food. By buying the coupons, the charity has bought meals and delayed distribution of them until the poor person comes to collect them.

In the answer to question no. 233733, we noted that it is permissible to give expiation by providing ready-made meals from a restaurant.

The Permanent Committee were asked about someone who gave fifty riyals to the owner of a restaurant in order to feed ten poor persons, as the owner of the restaurant said that feeding one person would cost five riyals, but the ten people would not all come the same time. What is the ruling on that?

In his answer, he said:... If the owner of the restaurant whom the one who is offering expiation for breaking his vow appointed as his proxy does the needful and feeds ten poor persons, that is acceptable, praise be to Allah.

But it must be understood that it is essential when offering expiation for breaking an oath (*kafaarat yameen*) to feed ten poor persons, and it is not acceptable to feed one person ten times, or to feed two people five times, because Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, stated that ten poor persons must be fed, in the verse in which He, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): *{Allah will not impose blame upon you for what is meaningless in your oaths, but He will impose blame upon you for [breaking] what you*

intended of oaths. So its expiation is the feeding of ten needy people from the average of that which you feed your [own] families or clothing them or the freeing of a slave. But whoever cannot find [or afford it] - then a fast of three days [is required]. That is the expiation for oaths when you have sworn. But guard your oaths. Thus does Allah make clear to you His verses that you may be grateful} [al-Maa'idah 5:89].

And Allah is the source of strength. May Allah send blessings and peace upon our Prophet Muhammad and his family companions.

Abu Bakr Zayd, 'Abd al-'Azeez Aal ash-Shaykh, Saalih al-Fawzaan, 'Abdullah ibn Ghadyaan, 'Abd al-'Azeez ibn 'Abdillah ibn Baaz.

End quote from *Fataawa al-Lajnah ad-Daa'imah* (23/121).

And Allah knows best.