

Best deeds on behalf of the deceased

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[http://www.ibnothaimeen.com/all/noor/article_8020.shtml]

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

Question: The questioner says he has a brother who was in an accident and died afterwards. Is it permissible for us to sacrifice the Udheeyah on his behalf, or to perform Hajj to the sacred house on his behalf?

Shaykh al-Uthaymeen (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ)¹: The most correct statement from the scholars is that it is permissible for the person to worship Allaah the Exalted with an act of obedience, with the intention that it is for a deceased person from the Muslims; whether the deceased person is a relative of his or even if he is not a relative. This is the most correct statement concerning this matter. It can be charity, or Hajj, or fasting, or prayer or other than that. It is permissible for a person to donate righteous actions to a deceased person from the Muslims.

But this is not from the best of the desired actions. Rather it is better to supplicate for them instead of giving charity on their behalf or sacrificing Udheeyah or performing Hajj or their behalf. This is because Du'aa is what the Messenger of Allaah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)² directed us to do. It has been authenticated that he said:

“When a person dies his actions are cut off except for three; an ongoing charity, beneficial knowledge, or a righteous child to supplicate for him.”³

Thus he mentioned a righteous child who supplicates for him and he did not say; or a righteous child who gives charity on his behalf, or performs Hajj on his behalf, or similar righteous actions; despite the hadith being in the context of actions. So when the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) refrained from mentioning other actions for the deceased along with Du'aa, it becomes known that Du'aa is what is preferred and desired.

For this reason I advise my Muslim brothers to be diligent upon supplicating for their deceased, instead of doing good deeds on their behalf. And they should perform good deeds for themselves; because the living is in need of good deeds. And surely there is no one who dies except that he will be regretful. If he was a righteous person he will regret not

¹ (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah the Most High have mercy on him

² (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) (sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him

³ Reported by al-Tirmidhee, no 1376; he said this is a Saheeh hasan hadeeth, Saheeh Muslim 1631

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doing more good deeds. And if he was a sinner he will regret not seeking forgiveness. Allaah (سبحانه)⁴ said:

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ رَبِّ ارْجِعُونِ لَعَلِّي أَعْمَلُ صَالِحًا فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ

[Until death comes to one of them, he says: "O my Lord send me back, perhaps I may do good deeds which I left off.]⁵

And Allaah (سبحانه) said:

وَأَنْفِقُوا مِنْ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ فَيَقُولَ رَبِّ لَوْلَا أَخَّرْتَنِي إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ فَأَصَّدَّقَ وَأَكُنْ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ وَلَنْ يُؤَخَّرَ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِذَا جَاءَ أَجَلُهَا وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

[And spend [in the way of Allaah] from what We have provided you before death approaches one of you and he says, "My Lord, if only You would delay me for a brief term so I would give charity and be among the righteous." And Allaah grants respite to none when his appointed time (death) comes. And Allaah is All-Aware of what you do.]⁶

Therefore you—whom are alive—are in need of righteous actions, thus make your actions for yourself and make Du'aa for your deceased, to include your fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, and other than them from the Muslims. This is what the Sunnah of the Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) directs us to.

But nevertheless, if a person gives charity on behalf of the deceased; or fasted or prayed, intending the reward to be for the deceased, then there is no problem with that, if he donates good deeds to them.

⁴ (سبحانه) (Subhanahu) The Exalted

⁵ سورة المؤمنون - Soorah al-Mu'minoon [23:99-100]

⁶ سورة المنافقون - Soorah al-Munafiqoon [63:10-11]