

Providing food for the family of the deceased

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allaah the most Kind the most Merciful

Question: Is it correct to assist the family of the deceased in preparing food during the time of mourning—we call this cooperation—such as the neighbours, uncles or relatives?

Shaykh bin Baaz (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ)¹: The Sunnah is to send them prepared food; as the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)² did when the news of Ja'far ibn Aboo Taalib (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ)³ reached him. He was killed in the Battle of Mu'tah in Sham. When the news reached him, he ordered his family (عليه الصلاة والسلام)⁴ to send food to the family of Ja'far. He said:

فَإِنَّهُ قَدْ أَتَاهُمْ مَا يَشْغَلُهُمْ

There has come to them that which will preoccupy them.

Therefore if the neighbours or relatives give prepared food to the family of the deceased during the days of mourning because they are too busy to prepare food due to the calamity; this is from the Sunnah. As for assisting them with cash or other than that, there is no problem with this if they are poor. If the family of the deceased is poor and their brothers help them with cash or other than that because their provider or breadwinner has died; this is good; helping them because they are needy.

As for the family preparing food for the people due to the death, then this is an action from pre-Islaamic times and it is not permissible. The family of the deceased does not prepare food for the people, except if they have guest and they wish to host them, then there is no problem with this, because they prepared the food due to the guest not due to the death. So there is no problem with this.

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 (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) (rad iyallaahu `anhu) May Allaah the Most High be pleased with him

⁴ (عليه الصلاة والسلام) (alayhi as-Salaat wa Salaam) Upon him prayer and peace