

Preparing Food for the Bereaved Family

Q: Janaa'iz-112: It is common in our parts for the relatives and neighbours of a bereaved family to arrange food for the bereaved family. Is this permissible and not an act of Bid'ah? If permissible, please provide substantiation and also specify who may partake if this food.

Answer: When a person passes away. it is Mustahab for the relatives and neighbours of a bereaved family to arrange food for the bereaved family for the day. They may then sit with the bereaved family and insist that they eat since they would be unable to prepare food due to their grief and preoccupation with the burial proceedings. In fact, Rasulullaah SAW. Instructed this.

Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Ja'far RADI. reports that when the family of Hadhrat Ja'far RADI. heard the news of his martyrdom, Rasulullaah SAW. instructed the Sahabah RADI. saying, "Prepare food for the family of Ja'far RADI. because such news has come to them that will preoccupy them.

Commenting on this narration, the book Lam'aat states that the Hadith makes it evident that it is Mustahab for the relatives and neighbours of a bereaved family to arrange food for the bereaved family. The Ulema however differ on who may eat from the food. Hadhrat Abu Qaasim RAH. says that it is there is no harm in any person

eating from there who is involved in the funeral preparations.

The commentary Mirqaat adds that the food should be enough to suffice for them for the day and the night of the funeral and that the people should insist that they eat? because they may feel too embarrassed to do so or too grieved.

All of the above proves that it really is Mustahab for the relatives and neighbours of a bereaved family to arrange food for the bereaved family for the day. This should however be done only to please Allaah and not as a customary practice. In his Masaa'il Arba'een (Pg.48). Hadhrat Shah Muhammad Is'haaq Muhaddith Dehlawi RAH. has also stated all of the above. And Allaah knows best what is most correct.

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