

## How to Benefit the Deceased in the Afterlife

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “When a person dies, all his deeds come to an end except three:

1. *Sadaqah jaariyah* (ongoing charity, e.g. endowment)
2. Beneficial knowledge (which he has left behind and others benefit from it)
3. A righteous child who will pray for him.”

*(Reported by al-Tirmidhi, no 1376; he said this is a saheeh hasan hadeeth)*

### Prayers

Based on this, the most important thing that the living can do for the dead is pray for them. Ask for forgiveness and mercy for them, and for paradise and salvation from the hell fire. Prayers for forgiveness offered by both sons and daughters of the deceased bring great benefits, as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “A man’s status will be raised in Paradise and he will ask, ‘How did I get here?’ He will be told, ‘By your son’s du’aa’s (prayers) for forgiveness for you.” (Reported by Ibn Maajah, no 3660; see also Saheeh al-Jaami’, 1617)

### Charity

Another thing that may reach the deceased is *sadaqah* (charity) given on his/her behalf, because ‘Aa’ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) reported that a man said to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): “My mother has passed away, and if she could have spoken, she would have given something in charity. Will she receive a reward if I give something on her behalf?” He said, “Yes.” (Reported by al-Bukhaari, Fath, 1388)

### Hajj, Umrah, or Fasting

Other deeds that may also benefit the deceased are Hajj and ‘Umrah on their behalf, provided the living person has first performed Hajj and ‘Umrah on his or her own behalf already.

Adullaah ibn Buraydah reported that his father (may Allah be pleased with him) said: “While I was sitting with the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), a woman came to him and said: ‘I gave my mother a slave-woman in charity, and now my mother has died.’ He said: ‘You have got your reward, and your right of inheritance has brought your gift back to you.’ She said, ‘O Messenger of Allah, she still had one month to fast – can I fast it on her behalf?’ He said, ‘Fast it on her behalf.’ She said, ‘She never went to Hajj – can I perform Hajj on her behalf?’ He said, ‘Perform Hajj on her behalf.’” (Reported by Muslim, may Allah have mercy on him, in his Saheeh, no. 1149)

### Fulfill Vows of the Deceased

Ibn ‘Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him and his father) reported that a woman came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and said: “My mother made a vow to perform Hajj but she died before she could do it. Can I perform Hajj on her behalf?” He said, “Yes, perform Hajj on her behalf. Don’t you think that if your mother owed a debt you would pay it off?” She said, “Yes.” He said, “Then pay off what is owed to Allah, for Allah is more deserving of having vows fulfilled.” (al-Bukhaari, al-Fath, 7315)

## **Share in a Sacrificial Animal**

Another thing that may benefit the deceased is if his relative devotes a share to him of a sacrifice he offers. When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) offered a sacrifice, he said: “In the name of Allah, O Allah, on behalf of Muhammad and the family of Muhammad” (reported by Muslim, no. 1967) – and the family of Muhammad included both the living and the dead.