

Eid – a Joyous Day, a day of Celebration

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Eidul-Fitr is the day of celebration to thank the Almighty for granting us the opportunity to benefit from the month of Ramadan. It is also the celebration of our performance of the various acts (fasting, praying, etc) commanded by the Almighty.

“Eidul-Fitr is the day of boons and blessings for all fasting Muslims, as they are promised great reward by Almighty Allah for good observance of Fasting. By the end of Ramadan, Muslims express their gratitude to Allah Who has enabled them to observe Fasting and, at the same time, granted them abundant provision during this blessed month. `Eidul-Fitr, therefore, is a day of joy, acts of worship, thanksgiving to Allah, cooperation, solidarity, brotherhood, unity, and spiritual provision.” (Islamonline¹).

Narrated Anas: The Prophet (Peace and Blessings Upon Him (PBUH)) said, “When Eid arrives, the Almighty addresses the angels: ‘They (Muslims) have fulfilled My Fardh. They have emerged to make dua. I take oath by My Splendour, by My Grandeur, by My Grace and by My Loftiness that I will most certainly accept their petition.’”(Mishkat).

The South African scholar Mufti Ebrahim Desai states²: “Eid-ul-Fitr is an expression of a person to show his happiness upon his achievements in Ramadan. This out-pouring of happiness is to encourage a person to show gratitude to Allah for his bounties – the bounty of having experienced Ramadan and having had the opportunity to better himself spiritually – and the bounties of food and drink on the day of Eid. It is hoped that due to this celebration, a person will continue upon his achievements of Ramadan.”

Sheikh Sayyed Ad-Darsh, former Chairman of the UK Shari`ah Council states³: "The joy is our `Eid, it is our feast. During the month of Ramadan, Allah has put us to test. At the end of the month there is a great sense of achievement, of coming closer to the Almighty. It is the joy of spiritual fulfillment. It is a time for celebration, not to indulge in insulting or abusing others or detracting from the achievements of the month of Ramadan; it's a day of real happiness and joy.

"When Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, entered the house of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, on the day of `Eid, he found two young girls playing music and singing. Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, asked them: "Doing this in the house of the Prophet, how come?" But the Prophet, peace and blessing be upon him, told Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, to leave them, for `Eid is a day of merriment and joy.

"It is important for us to let our young and neighbours understand that our religion is not boring and just a matter of don'ts. We must show that Islam is the way of moderation, of tolerance, of beauty, sharing and laughter in the appropriate occasion."

Eid is celebrated after either sighting the new crescent or observing 30 days of Ramadan. The Prophet (PBUH) said: Fast on seeing it (the new moon) and break on seeing it (the new moon), but if the sky is cloudy for you, then complete the number (of thirty)." (Muslim).

Eid ul-Fitr is the first of two celebrations in Islam. The second celebration is called Eid ul-Adha and falls on the 10th day of Dhul Hajj, which is the 12th month and occurs during the Hajj (pilgrimage). Sheikh M. S. Al-Munajjid, a prominent Saudi Islamic lecturer and author states⁴: "The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, says: "Every nation has its festival, and this is your festival." Here, he referred to the fact that these two `Eids are exclusively for the Muslims.

"The Muslims have no festivals apart from `Eidul-Fitr and `Eidul-Adha. Anas, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, came to Al-Madinah, the people of Madinah used to have two festivals. On those two days they had carnivals and festivity. The Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, asked the Ansaar (the Muslims of Madinah) about it. They replied that before Islam they used to have carnivals on those two joyous days. The Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, told them: 'Instead of those two days, Allah has appointed two other days which are better, the days of Eidul-Fitr and Eidul-Adha.'" (Reported by Abu Dawud, 1134)."

The air of festivity and celebration can be felt on the night of Eid as soon as it is confirmed that the moon has been sighted. The air of anticipation and festivity is the greatest when the moon is being sought on the night of the 30th of Ramadan (the 30th of Ramadan commences after the Magrib prayer on the day of the 29th fast). It is not uncommon for Muslims to seek the moon, which is a recommended act of the Prophet (PBUH).

This is a very special day and one that we need to share with family and friends. But more important than that, is to explain to our children the importance of Eid.

A Thought About The Eid Celebration

Below is an article by Michelle Al-Nasr, a Muslim revert, who describes her experiences of Eid and compares this to festivities she took part in prior to becoming a Muslim. This article highlights the very special spirit of brotherhood that exists on the day of Eid.

"As I left for the Eid Prayer on the early morning of Eid Al-Fitr, my husband and I begin making the Eid Takbeers through all of the traffic and the stop lights. I was feeling quite content, it was after all, Eid. But not only Eid, I had been to many other Eid prayers before...this one was somehow different for me.

"Since I have converted to Islam almost seven years ago, it has taken me quite sometime to begin to comprehend the greatness of this religion and to study it a little more in-depth. It has taken some time to understand why and how we do certain things as Muslims. Also, it has taken some time for this holiday to have a deep meaning for me as well as time for me to grow as a Muslim. I began thinking about another reason why this Eid was different for me. I realise now that it was also very special because I was going to the Eid prayer where I knew almost everyone there, almost as though they were my close family (and for many converts to Islam that means a great deal).

"As my husband and I arrived at the place of the prayer and we looked to see a good friend of my husband's directing the traffic. We parked and I walked towards the prayer area, it was such a peaceful morning. I entered the prayer area, and I was greeted by a couple of sisters that I know to be kind-hearted and Masha'Allah, pious Muslimahs. They were directing the other sisters towards the Qibla and directing them to remove their shoes from the court area as they passed through the big doors of the

gymnasium. My job was handing out the Takbeer sheet to all those entering. As I stood by the entrance door, saying, "As-salaamu Alaykum, Eid Mubarak and Taqabballahu Mina wa Minkum (Peace be upon you, Happy Eid and May Allah accept your good deeds and mine)", everyone was smiling and joyful. Some sisters grabbed me with delight hugging me and others shaking my hand enthusiastically. SubhanAllah, I couldn't help but feel so strong in my Eemaan as I was on this last Eid day. A feeling of trust, and a feeling of closeness that you cannot experience in any other way.

"I had been a Christian before, and had been to the Christian celebrations and through all the hoopla surrounding it, not a shred of a similar feeling ever existed as on the Eid. A thought of the hadith of the Prophet (pbuh) where he had told the us, after seeing the people of Madinah had two holidays they celebrated before Eid, he said, **"Allah has given you better than those (feasts): The Eid Al-Udhaa and the Eid Al-Fitr"** [Ahmad, Abu Dawoud & Nasaa'ee]

"SubhanAllah it is so true. Even with all the sparkle and pizzazz that the non-Muslims surround their holidays with, it still cannot compare to the feeling of the Eid. A feeling of true kinship with your fellow brothers and sisters in Islam, and true feeling of peacefulness. Masha'Allah, it is something to ponder over, and we must always keep in mind what a great blessing it really is that Allah has bestowed on us all the Greatest of Mercies...that He (SWT) made us Muslims. Amy Allah (SWT) keep us all on the Siratul Mustaqeem (The Straight Path) and bless us all with a strong Eemaan, amen."

¹ Islamonline fatwa: *Eidul-Fitr: A Day of Joy and Thanksgiving* dated 23 November 2003

² In response to a question on Imam Online.

³ Islamonline fatwa: *Eidul-Fitr: A Day of Joy and Thanksgiving* dated 23 November 2003

⁴ Islamonline fatwa: *'Eid: Etiquette & Rulings* dated 29 January 2004