

## **The Significance of Eid**

By: Imam Ali Siddiqui

### **Meaning**

The root word for Eid is 'aa-da meaning he or it returned. Literally it means "*the time of return of joy and of grief*". Therefore it signifies a festival. The word Eid appeared in Sura al-Maida, Table Spread, chapter 5 meaning *a solemn festival*.

The Disciples of Isa (as) requested him to pray to his Lord to send down a Table Spread with festive food to eat of it, satisfy their hear, and may be Witnesses to the miracles (Q 5:115-6). Isa (as) prayed to Allah: "O Our Lord! Send us a Table Spread with festive food, that there may be for us, for the first and last of us - *Eid, a solemn festival* and a Sign from You; and provide for our sustenance, for You are the Best Sustainer." (Q 5:117)

Eid ul-Adha is celebrated on the tenth day of Dhu al-hijah, the 12th and the last month of the Islamic calendar. It is also very joyous day; it is a feast of self-sacrifice, commitment and obedience to Allah. It commemorates the great act of obedience to Allah by the Prophet Ibrahim (as) in showing his willingness to sacrifice his son Ismael (as). Allah accepted his sacrifice and replaced Prophet Ismael (as) with a lamb. The five days long rituals of Hajj are also done during this month culminating on 9th of Dhu al-hijah. Many rituals of Hajj are enactment of the struggle of the family Ibrahim (as) specially his second wife Hajirah (as) and her son Prophet Ismael (as).

### **THE SUNNAH OF EID:**

Keeping with the tradition of Prophet Muhammad (saw), Muslims are encouraged to prepare themselves for the occasion of Eid. Below is a list of things Muslims should do in preparation for Eid:

1. Wake up early.
2. Offer Salat al-Fajr.
3. Prepare for personal cleanliness take care of details of clothing, etc.
4. Take a Ghusl (bath) after Fajr.
5. Brush your teeth.
6. Dress up, putting on best clothes available, whether new or cleaned old ones.
7. Use perfume (men only).
8. On Eid ul-Adha, eat breakfast after Salaat or after sacrifice if you are doing a sacrifice.
9. Go to prayer ground early.
10. Offer Salat al-Eid in congregation in an open place except when whether is not permitting like rain, snow, etc.
11. Use two separate routes to and from the prayer ground.
12. Recite the following Takbir on the way to Salaat and until the beginning of Salat al-Eid. On Eid ul-Adha, Takbir starts from Maghrib on the 9th Dhu al-hijah and last until the Asr on the 12th Dhu al-hijah: Allahu-Akbar, Allahu-Akbar. La ilaha illa-lah. Allahu-Akbar, Allahu-Akbar. Wa-lilahi al-hamd. (Allah is greater. Allah is greater. There is no god but Allah. Allah is greater. Allah is greater. And all praises are for Allah).

### **Who Should Observe Eid Prayer**

On the Eid day, every believing man, woman and child must go to the prayer ground and participate in this joyous occasion.

### **How Salat al-Eid is Performed**

Salat al-Eid is wajib (strongly recommended, just short of obligatory). It consists of two Rukat (units) with six or thirteen additional Takbirs. It must be offered in congregation. The Salat is followed by the Khutbah. The Khutbah is part of the worship and listening to it is Sunnah. During the Khutbah, the Imam must remind the community about its responsibilities and obligations towards Allah, fellow Muslims and the fellow human beings. The Imam must encourage the Muslims to do good and ward off evil. The Muslim community must also be directed to the state of the community and the Ummah at large and the feelings of sacrifice and struggle for Allah should be aroused in the community.

At the conclusion of the Salaat the Muslims should convey greetings to each other, give reasonable gifts

to the youngsters and visit each other at their homes. Muslims should also take this opportunity to invite their non-Muslims neighbors, co-workers, classmates and business acquaintances to Eid festivities to expose them to Islam and Muslim culture.

### **Sacrifice and Eid ul-Adha**

Those who have enough wealth to pay Zakaat must offer the sacrifice for Allah. It is the tradition of Prophet Ibrahim (as) and a strongly recommended Sunnah. A lamb, sheep, goat, cow, buffalo, or camel can be offered as the sacrifice. There are seven shares in a cow, buffalo and camel. The sacrifice should be accomplished by slaughtering the animal after Salaat-al-Eid. The sacrifice also called Udhiyah or Qurbani last for three days from 10th Dhu al-hijah until the sunset of 12th Dhu al-hijah. The meat should be divided into three shares: one for the family the second for relatives and friend and the third share is for the poor and the needy.

### **Acronyms**

as– Aly-his-salaam; Peace be upon him. Used after the names of the Prophets and Messengers of Allah.

ra –Radia-Allahu ‘an-hu; May Allah be pleased with him/her. Used after the names of the companions and family of the Prophet Muhammad (saw)

saw – sallal-la-hu aly-he wa-sal-lum; Peace be upon him. Used after the name of the Prophet Muhammad

### **About the author:**

Imam Ali Siddiqui with 37 years of service, is a Friday Khatib, Islamic teacher, Muslim Chaplain, youth advisor, family counselor, educator, poet and writer with a vision who has been involved in the teaching Islam, history, comparative religion, contemporary issues to Muslims and non-Muslims. He is actively involved in the community service including spiritual/educational development, service to the sick and the incarcerated; and the interfaith work. Imam Siddiqui’s work has been successfully building bridges between communities. [siddiqui@aol.com](mailto:siddiqui@aol.com).