

'Id ul Fitr And 'Id ul Adha

Students' Notes

Meaning of 'id ul Fitr / 'id ul adha?

1. Literally speaking 'id means feast, festival or holiday.
2. Fitr means separation or breaking.
3. As such, 'id-ul Fitr means the feast of the breaking and here it implies the breaking of the fast of the month of Ramadhan, the 9th Islamic month. As for 'id ul adha, it is the feast of sacrifice during the month of Dhul Hijja.
4. When the holy prophet (s.a.w) entered Madina, there were two days ('id-ul Fitr and 'Id-ul Adha) which were moments of amusement and joy. So the prophet (s.a.w) declared them as feast for Muslims.

Celebration of id ul Fitr / Adha ?

Firstly, it starts as from the sighting of the moon on the last day of Ramadhan by Swalaatul Maghrib. According to the prophet (s.a.w) that night is considered as full of blessings and the Swalaat Fajr must be done in Jama'ah. The prophet (s) said that the one who spends that night in ibaadah his heart will not die on the Day when hearts will die.¹

Furthermore, it is recommended to take a bath (Ghusl), wear good (or new) clothes according to the Islamic practice. For those who don't have the means to buy new clothes, good and clean clothes will be enough for the day. Tahaarat, that is purity, is very important in the lives of Muslims, not only for that day, but throughout their life time. The prophet (s) would dress in the state of humility.²

More to the point, the prophet (s) said that it is incumbent upon each Muslim young and old to pay the Zakaat ul Fitr before going to the Swalaat ul 'id.³ This is done to ensure that those who are poor, needy or destitute will have the means to buy cloth or food on that day. They also have the rights to celebrate the 'Id and it is a means to think of others.

Again, it is also said that the prophet (s) would never proceed on that day unless he had eaten some dates in odd number.⁴ It is a Sunnah of the prophet (s) to eat something sweet like a date before proceeding to the swalaat ul 'id ul fitr. However, as for the day of 'id ul adha, it is recommended to eat from the meat of the slaughtered animal.

Added to the above, the Swalaatul 'Id can be offered either in open field or Masjid (depending on population). It is said that a spear was planted on the musalla in front of the prophet as a indication for the prayer place.⁵ This was a little distance from the mosque of the prophet (s). It is done after sunrise and can't be offered before sunrise. On that day, the prophet (s) would bring his daughters and his wives out with him.⁶

¹ Ibn Majah 1854

² Nasa'i 1508

³ Bukhariy 1509, 1512

⁴ Bukhariy 953

⁵ Bukhariy 972, 973

⁶ Ibn Majah 1369

Next, there is no Azan and no Iqaamah before the Namaaz 'Id and it is done in 2 Rakaat (units) of Swalaat Waajib with 6 additional Takbeer or 12 according to other schools of thought. It is said that the Adhaan of 'id was never pronounced during the time of the prophet (s). It concerns both 'id.⁷ It is also said that there is no Iqaamah.⁸ It is said that the prophet (s) would recite surah Qaaf (50) and then surah Inshiqaaq (84).⁹

Furthermore, in the 1st Rakaat there are 3 Takbeer before Qiraat and for the 2nd Rakaat there are 3 Takbeer before Ruku'. It is mentioned in hadith that Abu Musah said that he uttered Takbir 4 times as he did at funerals and Huzaifah said that he is correct.¹⁰ This means 3 additional Takbir with the one going to ruku'. According to others there are 7 in the first Rakaat and 5 in the second Rakaat. It is said in hadith that the prophet (s) said the Takbir 7 in the first raka'ah and then 5 times in the second raka'ah before reciting the Qur'an apart from the Takbir of Ruku'.¹¹

More to the point, after the Swalaat there is a khutbah which is read for the occasion. It is said that the prophet would deliver the sermon after offering the prayer on that day.¹² The main topic will be on id and how it is important to stay in good terms with relatives and families and also not to forget the poor and destitute. It is said that the prophet (s) would go towards the women after the swalaat and would advise, order and ask them to give alms.¹³

In addition, there is the du'a which can be made in any language. Special mentions are made for the Ummah and the country without forgetting our worldwide brothers. It is mentioned in hadith that the prophet (s) went towards the graveyards of Al Baqi on the day of 'id to ask du'a for the past muslims.¹⁴ It is our responsibility to think of those who have already passed away as our invocations / du'a are beneficial to them.

Furthermore, for id ul adha there will be the slaughtering of the animal and the sharing of meat into 3 portions, namely for the family members, the poor and for our own use). It is said that the one who has slaughtered an animal before the Swalaat of id, should slaughter again after the Swalaat.¹⁵ It is mentioned that the prophet (s) would slaughter a male sheep after the khutbah with his own hand by saying 'Bismillaahi Wallaahou Akbar'¹⁶ or 'Bismillaahi Allaahou Akbar'. It is said that the prophet (s) would advise to eat from the flesh that we have sacrificed.¹⁷

Next, there will be greetings by the Muslims. It is recommended to forget all our quarrels and differences on that day as it is a blessed day in Islam. There can be family union or gathering for the feast. This is usually done around a meal for lunch or dinner. It is said that the prophet (s) would only eat after the Swalaat of 'id ul adha.¹⁸ At this level it varies from one family to another. It is mentioned in hadith that on the day of 'id, the companions of the prophet (s) were ordered to come out and even to bring out the virgin girls from their houses and the menstruating women so that they might stand behind the men and say

⁷ Bukhariy 958

⁸ Ibn Majah 1333

⁹ Al Muwatta 438

¹⁰ Abu Dawood 1153

¹¹ Ibn Majah 1336

¹² Bukhariy 955

¹³ Bukhariy 975

¹⁴ Bukhariy 976

¹⁵ Bukhariy 954

¹⁶ Tirmidhi 1521

¹⁷ Tirmidhi 771

¹⁸ Tirmidhi 542

Takbir along with them and invoke Allah along with them and hope for the blessings of that day and for purification from sins.¹⁹ it is also mentioned that the prophet (s) would return home through a different route / way.²⁰

Moreover, it is an opportunity for parents and relatives to distribute gifts as a means of happiness. This is to show to our young generations that ‘id is our feast not other unislamic concepts. It is ordered by the prophet (s) that on the days of id ul fitr and id ul adha, no one must keep fast. It is not permissible.²¹) Amusement can be conducted as long as there must be no show off. No haram eating and drinking is allowed on that day. It is good to note that though it is a feast, our obligatory swalaat must not be neglected. It is narrated that the prophet (s) made hazrat Aisha (r) stand behind him with her cheek touching his and he would tell 2 girls to continue singing the songs of Bu’ath (story of Aws and Khazraj tribes) till she got tired. And the prophet (s) would ask her if she was satisfied.²² They were beating the duff and the prophet said that it is a day of ‘id.²³

Furthermore, it is the habit of Muslims to fast 6 days after the month of Ramadwaan. The 6 days can be continuous or on different days but within the month of Shawwal. It is also mentioned that whoever fasts 6 days after the ‘id ul fitr will have completed the year and for whoever does a good deed will have the reward of ten like it.²⁴

Religious significance of Id-ud-Doha / Id ul Fitr.

Each feast in Islam has its importance and significance.

Firstly, Id ul Adha being celebrated in the month of Dhul Hijjah is a celebration of the achievement of a Muslim who has completed the rites of Hajj (or one whole month of Ramadhan in Ibaadah). It is a blessed moment in the life of a Muslim accomplishing the 5th pillar of Islam (or the 3rd pillar). Whether it be for ‘id ul fitr or ‘id ul adha, it is a great sacrifice and achievement for Muslims throughout the world. Nonetheless, it can be seen that many people, whether after the month of Ramadhan or the Hajj, keep on with their sins or immoral attitudes. We need to improve much in this sense.

Secondly, it is also a day of thanksgiving when Muslims offer gratitude to Allah for helping them fulfil their spiritual obligation. It is also extended to our gratitude towards our parents and families. The more we show our thanks and gratitude to human being, Allah will give us more. Being grateful to Allah is part of the teachings of the prophet (s) especially on days where Allah has bestowed His favours. Despite all the teachings of Islam upon thankfulness, generally speaking, we are not enough thankful to Allah and human beings, lacking gratitude and good manners.

Thirdly, it is a day of sacrifice and it reminds us of Ibrahim’s sacrifice of his son. He was willing and on the point to sacrifice his son for the pleasure of Allah. (Id ul Fitr – It reminds us of the sufferings of the poor, the hunger and the deprived). At the same time, it is a way to sacrifice what we have in terms of meat and money for the poor and needy to receive alms. Any sacrifice done in the path of Allah is rewarded. However, there are those who are selfish and don’t know the notion of sacrifice and thinking of the poor.

¹⁹ Bukhariy 971

²⁰ Bukhariy 986

²¹ Bukhariy 1995

²² Bukhariy 950

²³ Nasa’i 1593

²⁴ Ibn Majah 1786

Next, it is a day of festive remembrance beginning with a collective act of worship glorifying Allah's name followed by utterances of greetings and good wishes and praying for the souls of the deceased. It is a day to be dedicated to the worship of Allah and at the same time special mentions and remembrance of those who have already passed away. No doubt they will benefit from our invocations. However, let alone the act of asking du'a for the dead or visiting the graveyard, it can be noticed that many people, on that same day, skip or forget to perform swalaat.

Fifthly, it is a means for congregational prayers as occasions of creation of brotherhood where Muslims pray for forgiveness and strength of faith to purify the heart and soul. It is incumbent upon Muslims to forgive and forget as per the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith. On that specific day it is vital to clean the heart from all kinds of rancour against our brothers and sisters in Islam. Nonetheless, it can be noted that there are still cases of disputes, fights or any kind of mishap among members of the family. Backbiting is still yet to be avoided.

Furthermore, it is an occasion given to each one of us contributing in helping the needy, visiting elders and the sick. It enhances the remembrance of over many areas of human life. The day of 'Id helps us to renew the tie that we have with our elders, grandparents and their / our relatives. It is very important to stay together as a whole family and Ummah of the prophet (s). each member is important. However, as long as institutions like 'homes' for the old persons exist, there will still be ground for improvement for the Muslim society.

Added to the above, it is a day of peace. When a Muslim establishes peace in his heart by obeying Allah's law and leading a disciplined life he/she is at peace with Allah and the rest of the universe. There must be no fighting. The day of 'Id signifies peace of mind and heart within ourselves and towards other Muslims and non-Muslims in our society. As Islam propounds peace, it is important to stay on that path. However, we can see that in so many muslim and non-muslim countries, there are still cases of war and chaos where not only adults / men are suffering but children, infants and women.

In addition, it is a day of reward as it is on that day that Allah will reward us for all sacrifices during the month of Ramadhan (or for pilgrimage). Whatever we do good in the sight of Allah and the prophet (s) will be rewarded by Allah one day or the other. It is important to engage in Ibaadah and good deeds not only during the months of Ramadwaan and Dhul Hijja but throughout the whole of our lives. However, the condition being applied here is that Muslims have spent the month of Ramadwaan / the days of Hajj in Ibaadah not in frivolous activities where no benefit will then be derived.

Ninthly, it is a day for change. It is the right moment for anyone to change his attitudes and enter the fold of Islam completely by abstaining from sins. There is the need for each one of us to bring a positive change in our lives. That change must come from the heart and thus will be beneficial to the whole self. Positive resolutions must be undertaken in order to thread the path of the pious people. However, the main and important question still remains in the sense that to what extent have Muslims changed or have taken serious resolutions in their personal lives in the love of Allah and the prophet Muhammad (s).

Last but not least, it is a day appropriate to think of all the favours our Lord has bestowed upon us. It is important that we realise to what extent He loves us and what are we doing or can do to please Him. It is a constant reminder from the Qur'an that we must always ponder upon and reflect on the favours of Allah. The more we acknowledge the favours of Allah, the more beneficial will it be to us in both worlds. Nonetheless, Muslims don't reflect enough upon the favours Allah bestowed upon them. So many times, we are asked to 'ponder upon' / 'reflect' but it seems that not all Muslims realise these favours of Allah.