

What to do/pray on Eid day

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1. What to do/pray on the day of Eid

You should begin your day by attending the Fajr prayer at Mosque. Women who cannot attend the Mosque are encouraged to pray at home.

After the Fajr prayer, the family should read the Quran and assist in preparing for the Eid day. You should have a light breakfast and prepare to go for the Eid prayer by bathing (ghusal). You should attempt to go to the Eid prayer as early as possible to hear the various speeches. The Eid prayer is discussed in more detail in section 4 above. On your way to the Eid prayer you should recite the following:

Allaho-Akber, Allaho-Akber. La ila-ha ill-lal-lah. Allaho-Akber, Allaho-Akber. Wa-lillahill hamd.

(Allah is great, Allah is great. There is no god but Allah. Allah is great, Allah is great. And all praises are for Allah).

Immediately after the prayer you should convey Eid greetings to other members of the congregation.

After the Eid prayer, some persons visit the cemetery. This is a custom rather than a recommended practice of the Prophet (PBUH). In fact a number of scholars are of the opinion that it is preferable not to visit the cemetery on Eid day. Dr Ahmad Kutty, a senior lecturer at the Islamic Institute of Toronto, Ontario, Canada, in response to a question on this issue states¹: "Some of the Shafi'i scholars are of the opinion that it is permissible to visit the graves of our parents, relatives, and friends who have died. However, many scholars consider this practice undesirable, especially on the day of `Eid, which is supposed to be a day of celebration and joy. So, it may be a good idea to postpone visiting graves till the next day or to go before the `Eid day."

The fatwa desk of the North American website Islamonline states: "Therefore, we conclude that if people's visit of the graves after the `Eid prayer is intended to get admonition and remember those who passed away, there will be nothing wrong with it. However, if visiting the graves on the day of `Eid is for the sake of renewing sorrows and offering and accepting condolences on the grave or at a place prepared for this, then it is reprehensible to do so. This is because giving condolences after three days of burial is reprehensible or forbidden. Also, the day of `Eid is a day of joy, cheerfulness, and enjoyment, so we should not provoke sorrows on that day."

It is also a common practice to gather for "breakfast" after the Eid prayer.

In between prayer, lunch and dinner, it is common to visit family and friends and attend functions at various venues. The visits to family and friends are usually short in duration as there are a number of persons to visit. A common tradition is to visit the homes of families who have lost a member since the last Eid. In doing so you need to be careful not to offer condolences, etc as the Prophet (PBUH) clearly stated that mourning is only permitted for 3 days. The Prophet (PBUH) said: "It is not legal for a woman who believes in Allah and the Last Day to mourn for more than three days for any dead person except her husband, for whom she should mourn for four months and ten days." (Bukhari).

A number of scholars discourage the practice of visiting the homes of deceased persons on the basis that Eid is a day of celebration and not mourning.

2. Charity

Eid ul-Fitr is characterised by giving charity to the poor. Prior to the Eid prayer, Muslims are required to pay Zakatul Fitr to assist the poor to celebrate Eid. Charity should not end there. You should use this day to ensure that the poor also have good clothing and food to celebrate their day. Show that you are Muslim brothers!

¹ Islamonline fatwa dated 3 February 2004