



“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.”

Celebrating Eid

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Published by: The Lambat Trust

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AUSTRALIA

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First edition 1996 (South Africa and Zimbabwe)

Second edition 2005

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This booklet is not a substitute for theological advice. The objective is to explain the importance of Eid. You should seek the advice of an appropriately qualified person.

Allah knows best.

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Acknowledgements

- Imam Yusuf Patel, Jamiatul-Ulama, Mpumalanga, South Africa, for the review of the first edition.
- My wife Farida, for her ongoing reviews of the various manuscripts.

The author, reviewers and publisher wish readers Eid Mubarak.

May the Almighty accept and reward you for your deeds performed during the month of Ramadan – Isha Allah.

Eid – A Day of Celebration!

1. Eid – A Joyous Day

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.

2. Rulings of Eid

Sheikh M. S. Al-Munajjid, a prominent Saudi Islamic lecturer and author outlines the rulings pertaining to Eid⁵:

"1. Fasting: It is *Haram* to fast on the days of `Eid because of the *Hadith* of Abu Sa`Eid Al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him, in which he said that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, forbade fasting on the day of *Fitr* and the day of *Adha*. (Reported by Muslim, 827)

2. Offering `Eid Prayers: Some of the scholars say that `Eid Prayers are *Wajib* (obligatory) – this is the view of the Hanafi scholars and of Sheikh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah. Some scholars say that `Eid Prayer is *Fard Kifaya* (a communal duty, binding on the Muslims as a group, and it is fulfilled if a sufficient number of people perform it, thereby absolving the rest of sin). This is the view of the Hanbalis. A third group say that `Eid Prayer is Sunnah Mu'akkadah. This is the view of the Malikis and Shafi`is.

3. Offering Supererogatory Prayers: There are no Supererogatory Prayers to be offered either before or after the `Eid Prayer, as Ibn `Abbas reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, used to come out on the day of `Eid and pray two *Rak`ahs*, with nothing before or after them. This is the case if the Prayer is offered in an open area. If, however, the people pray the `Eid Prayer in a mosque, then they should pray two *Rak`ahs* for *Tahiyat Al-Masjid*.

4. Women attending the `Eid Prayers: According to the Sunna of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, everyone is urged to attend `Eid Prayer, and to co-operate with one another in righteousness and piety. The menstruating woman should not forsake the remembrance of Allah or places of goodness such as gatherings for the purpose of seeking knowledge and remembering Allah – apart from mosques. Women, undoubtedly, should not go out without the Hijab."

3. Etiquette of `Eid

Sheikh M. S. Al-Munajjid, a prominent Saudi Islamic lecturer and author outlines the etiquettes pertaining to Eid⁶:

"1. *Ghusl* (taking a bath): One of the good manners of `Eid is to take bath before going out to the Prayer. It was reported that Sa`id Ibn Jubayr said: "Three things are Sunnah on `Eid: to walk (to the prayer-place), to take a bath, and to eat before coming out (if it's `Eidul-Fitr)."

2. Eating before coming out: One should not come out to the prayer-place on `Eidul-Fitr before eating some dates, because of the *Hadith* narrated by Al-Bukhari from Anas ibn Malik who said: "The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, would not go out in the morning of `Eidul-Fitr until he had eaten some dates... and he would eat an odd number." On `Eidul-Adha, on the other hand, it is *Mustahab* (recommended) not to eat until after the Prayer, when one should eat from the meat of one's sacrifice.

3. *Takbir* on the day of `Eid: This is one of the greatest Sunnahs of this day. Al-Daraqutni and others reported that when Ibn `Umar came out on `Eidul-Fitr and `Eidul-Adha, he would strive hard in making *Takbir* until he reached the prayer-place, then he would continue making *Takbir* until the Imam came.

4. Congratulating one another: People may exchange congratulations and good greetings on `Eid, no matter what form the words take. For example they may say to one another, "*Taqabbal Allahu minnaa wa minkum* (may Allah accept from us and from you our good deeds!)". Jubayr ibn Nufayr said: "At the time of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, when people met one another on the day of `Eid, they would say, '*Taqabbal Allahu minnaa wa minka*.'" (Reported by Ibn Hajar)

5. Wearing one's best clothes for `Eid: Jabir, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, had a *Jubbah* (cloak) that he would wear on `Eid and on Fridays." Al-Bayhaqi reported that Ibn `Umar used to wear his best clothes on `Eid, so men should wear the best clothes they have when they go out for `Eid.

6. Changing route on returning from Prayer-place: Jabir Ibn `Abdullah, may Allah be pleased with him, reported that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, used to change his routes on the day of `Eid. (Reported by Al-Bukhari)."

4. The Eid Prayer

Time of Eid prayer:

The time of the Eid prayers is any time after sunrise and before noon. The prayer should be performed as early as possible.

Abdullah bin Busr said: We used to finish the Eid prayer (in the lifetime of the Prophet) at the time of *Tasbeeh* (Duha or *Ishraq* prayer) that is, after sunrise. (Bukhari, volume 2, page 44).

No Adhan or Iqamah required:

Narrated Ibn Juraij: Ata told me that Ibn Abbas and Jabir bin Abdullah, had said, "There was no Adhan or the prayer of Eidul-Fitr and Eidul-Adha." (Bukhari, volume 2, Hadith number 78).

Who should go to the prayer ground & offer Eid Prayer:

"Umm Atiyah (ra) reported: "The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) commanded us to bring

out on Eid-al-Fitr and Eid-al-Adha, young women, hijab-observing adult women and the menstruating women. The menstruating women stayed out of actual Salaat but participated in good deeds and Duaa (supplication). I (Umm Atiyah) said to the Holy Prophet (saw): Oh! Messenger of Allah, one does not have an outer garment. He replied: Let her sister cover her with her garment." (Muslim).⁷

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

Structure of Eid prayer:

Eid prayer consists of two Rakaat (units) with six or thirteen additional Takbirs. It must be offered in congregation. The prayer is followed by the Khutbah. Ibn Abbass (ra) reported: " I participated in the Eid-ul-Fitr prayer with the Messenger of Allah (saw), Abu Bakr (ra), Umar (ra) and Uthman (ra), and all of them held Eid prayer before Khutbah, and then the Prophet Muhammad (saw) delivered the Khutbah (sermon)." (Muslim).

"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."⁸

Offering of prayer before or after the Eid prayer:

Narrated Ibn Abbas: The Prophet (S.A.W.) went out and offered a two rakaat prayer on the Day of Eidul-Fitr and did not offer any other prayer before or after it and at that time Bilal was accompanying him. (Bukhari, volume 2, Hadith number 104).

Missing Eid prayer:

Whoever missed the Eid prayer should pray two rakaats.... (Bukhari, volume 2, page 55).

5. What to do 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-lilahill 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 states⁹: "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 trend 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).

6. 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!

7. 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.”

8. Qualities of Eid

The Islamic scholar Hammudah Abdalati states in his book *Islam In Focus*:

“The Islamic Eids are unique - there is no similar in any other religion or any other sociopolitical system. Besides their highly spiritual and moral characteristics, they have matchless qualities:

- a) Each Eid is the wholesome celebration of a remarkable achievement of the individual Muslim in the service of God. Eidul-Fitr comes after a month of fasting, ibadaat and charity. Eidul-Adha comes after the completion of Hajj to Mecca.
- b) Each Eid is a “Thanksgiving Day” where the Muslims assemble in a brotherly and joyful atmosphere to offer their gratitude to the Almighty for helping them to fulfill their spiritual obligations prior to the Eid. This form of thanksgiving is not confined to spiritual devotion and verbal expressions. It goes far beyond that to manifest itself in a shape of social and humanitarian spirit. The Muslims who have completed the fasting of Ramadan express their thanks to the Almighty by means of distributing Alms (fitrah) among the poor and needy on Eidul-Fitr. Similarly Muslims on Eidul-Adha offer their sacrifices by slaughtering obligations to be distributed among the poor and needy. The distribution of alms and obligations constitutes a major part of the respective Eid. This Islamic form of thanksgiving is a wholesome combination of

spiritual devotion and humanitarian benevolence, a combination which cannot be found except in Islam.

- c) Each Eid is a Day of Remembrance. Even in their most joyful times, Muslims make a fresh start of the day by a plural session of worship to God. They pray to Him and glorify His name to demonstrate their remembrance of His favours. Muslims also remember the deceased by prayer for their souls, the needy by extending a hand of help, the grieved by showing them sympathy and consolation, the sick by cheerful visits and utterances of good wishes, the absentees by cordial greetings and sincere considerations, etc. Thus the meaning of Remembrance on the Day transcends all limits and expands over far-reaching dimensions of human life.
- d) Each Eid is a Day of Victory. The individual who succeeds in securing his spiritual rights and growth receives the Eid with a victorious spirit. The individual who faithfully observes the duties, which are associated with the Eid, is a triumphant one. He proves that he holds a strong command over his desires, exercises self control and conducts a disciplined life. And once a person acquires these qualities he has achieved his greatest victory; because the person who knows how to control himself and discipline his desires is free from sin and wrong, fear, vice and indecency, jealousy and greed, humiliation and all other courses of enslavement. So, when he receives the Eid, which marks the achievement of this freedom, he is in fact celebrating his victory, and the Eid thus becomes a Day of Victory.
- e) Each Eid is a Harvest Day. All the good workers in the service of God, all the faithful believers reap the fruits of their good deeds on the Day, as God grants His mercy and blessings abundantly. The Islamic society, on the other hand, collects the due subscriptions to religious brotherhood and social responsibility, in which subscriptions are paid in the form of mutual love, sympathy and concern. Every member of the Islamic society will be reaping some fruits or collecting some revenue in one way or another. **God gives infinitely, especially to those who are sincerely concerned with the general welfare of their fellow believers.** Those beneficiaries who cannot give will receive, along with God's enormous grants, the contributions of their fellow benefactors. The haves and have-nots will all enjoy the providence of God in a most plural fashion, and the Day will indeed be a Good Harvest Day.
- f) Each Eid is a Day of Forgiveness. When the Muslims assemble in the congregation of the Day, they all whole-heartedly pray for forgiveness and strength of Faith. And God has assured those who approach Him with sincerity of His mercy and forgiveness. Consequently, a Muslim would find himself moving along with others responding to the spirit of the Day to purify his heart and soul. In this case, he would forgive those who might have wronged him; because he himself would be praying for God's forgiveness, and would do his best to acquire it. The spirit of this highly devotional assembly would teach him that if he forgives he will be forgiven. And when he forgives, the virtue of forgiveness will be mercifully exercised by God, and widely exchanged between Muslims. And that marks the Day as the Day of Forgiveness.
- g) Each Eid is a Day of Peace. When the Muslim establishes peace within his heart by obeying the law of God and leading a disciplinary life, he has certainly concluded a most inviolable treaty of peace with God. Once a person is at peace with God, he is at peace with himself and, consequently, with the rest of the universe. So when he celebrates the Eid in the right manner, he is actually celebrating the conclusion of a Peace Treaty between himself and God, and this marks the Eid as a Day of Peace.

“That is the proper meaning of an Islamic Eid: a Day of Peace and Thanksgiving, a Day of Forgiveness and moral victory, a Day of Good Harvest and remarkable

Achievements, and a Day of Festive Remembrance. An Islamic Eid is all this and is much more; because it is a Day of ISLAM, a Day of God.” (*Islam In Focus*, page 75).

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