



THE TRUE ESSENCE OF EID~UL~FITR

In this day and age, many Muslims eagerly await the end of Ramadaan and the coming of Eid-ul-Fitr to gain their 'freedom' in order to go back to committing sin and disobeying Almighty Allah. Many people start on the day of Eid itself and engage in shameful and reprehensible behaviour in the name of celebration. We should remember that celebration does not mean committing sin, but rather it involves remembering Allah Ta'ala and being grateful to Allah Ta'ala for showering His Mercy and Bounties upon us. Let us look at the true essence and significance of Eid-ul-Fitr, and the way in which those pious servants close to Almighty Allah celebrated Eid.

Eid is a day of celebration for Muslims, a day of happiness. On this day, Muslims perform two rakaats of prayer, meet one another, shake hands and embrace and give charity to the poor and needy. Islam teaches protecting the poor, helping the helpless, and easing the pain and sufferings of orphans and the meek at every turn, and they should not be forgotten, especially on the day of Eid. That is why Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) ordered us to pay the Sadqa-e-Fitr before performing the Eid Salaah so that Muslims remember their poor brothers on this occasion and include them in their happiness.

It is reported on the authority of Hazrat Anas (Radiallahu Ta'ala Anh) that when Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) came to Madina Shareef, the people of Madina would celebrate two festivals. They were asked what these days were and they replied, "We used to celebrate on these days in the days of ignorance." Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, "Allah Ta'ala has granted you two better days than these days; Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha." [*Abu Dawood*]

Regarding Eid-ul-Fitr, Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) once said, "When the month of Ramadaan is over, and the night of Eid-ul-Fitr has arrived, that night is called the Night of Prize. Then, in the early morning of Eid-ul-Fitr Allah Ta'ala will send His angels forth to visit all the towns and cities on the earth below. Once they have made their descent, they will position themselves at the entrances to all the streets and alleys. There, in a voice that is audible to every being created by Allah Ta'ala, apart from the jinn and humankind, they will issue a proclamation saying, "O Community of Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam), come forth into the presence of a Noble and Generous Lord, who will grant you gifts in abundance and forgive your terrible sin!" Then when the believers have emerged and presented themselves at their place of prayer, Allah Ta'ala will say to His angels, "O My angels, what is the recompense of the hired labourer, once he has done his job?" The angels will reply, "Our Lord and our Master, You will pay him his wages in full!" So Allah Ta'ala will say, "I now call upon you to bear witness, O My angels, that I have conferred My acceptance and My forgiveness as the reward for their fasting and night vigil during the month of Ramadaan." Allah Ta'ala will then say, "O My servants put your requests to Me now, for this I swear by My Might and My Majesty, you will not ask Me this day, in this gathering of yours for anything connected with your life hereafter, without My granting it to you; nor for anything connected with your life in this lower world, without My attending to your need. By My Might and My Majesty, I will not put you to shame, nor will I expose you to disgrace amongst those who are faithfully committed to observing the laws (of Shariah). Now you may depart, knowing that you have been forgiven. You have won My approval, and I am well pleased with you." [*Ghunyaalit Taalibi Tareeqal Haq, Vol. 3*]

Subhaanallah! How Merciful is our Rabb, even though we are such wretched sinners.

Before the advent of Eid-ul-Fitr we need to ask ourselves, “Have we reflected on whether we have respected and honoured the month of Ramadaan as it should be respected and honoured? Have we worshipped in it as we should have?” The final night of Ramadaan is the night for collecting the rewards for all the goodness that was done throughout the month. If we are neglectful of Allah Ta’ala on this night, then our efforts of the whole month might be ruined and will go to waste. Therefore, read the following Hadith and try to spend the last night of Ramadaan remembering Allah Ta’ala and evaluating the deeds that have been performed during the month.

The excellence of remembering Allah Ta’ala on this night is reported in a Hadith in which Hazrat Abu Amamah (Radiallahu Ta’ala Anh) narrates that Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said, “The hearts of the people who stand in prayers on the night of Eid will not die on the day when all hearts will die.” In another narration, Hazrat Mu’az bin Jabal (Radiallahu Ta’ala Anh) reports that Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has stated, “Paradise is compulsory (Wajib) for one who stays up and worships on five nights – the nights of the 8th, 9th and 10th of Zul Hijjah, the night of Eid-ul-Fitr, and the 15th night of Shabaan.” We can therefore understand the significance of the night of Eid from these Ahadith and we should try as much as possible to busy ourselves in the remembrance of Allah Ta’ala, even if it is for a portion of the night.

If we study the lives of the Companions and our pious predecessors we will see that even though they used to worship extensively in the month of Ramadaan, they would still feel regret and sorrow on the day of Eid. They were constantly worried about the fact of whether or not they had fulfilled the rights of Ramadaan, just as it is reported about Hazrat Umar (Radiallahu Ta’ala Anh) that on the day of Eid, he sat in a corner and cried so much that his blessed beard became soaked. When people asked the reason for this, he replied, “How can a person who does not know if his fasts have been accepted celebrate Eid?” That Hazrat Umar (Radiallahu Ta’ala ‘Anh) about whom Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said that his good deeds are equivalent to the number of stars in the sky, is crying upon reflecting as to whether his fasts have been accepted or not, whether he has obeyed the orders of Almighty Allah properly and if Allah Ta’ala is pleased with them. Allahu Akbar! And yet sinners like us are absolutely carefree and cannot wait to engage ourselves into sin again!

It was on the day of Eid-ul-Fitr that a man once entered the presence of Hazrat Ali (Radiallahu Ta’ala Anh) and found him eating coarse brown bread. “Today is the day of Eid, yet here you are, eating coarse brown bread!” the man exclaimed. So Hazrat Ali (Radiallahu Ta’ala Anh) replied to the visitor, saying, “Today is the day of Eid for someone whose fast has been accepted, whose effort has been deemed worthy, and whose sin has been forgiven. Today is Eid for us, and tomorrow is Eid for us. Every day in which we do not disobey Allah Ta’ala is an Eid for us.”

Commenting on this incident, Huzoor Ghaus-e-Azam Hazrat Shaikh Sayyid Abdul Qadir Jilani (Radiallahu Ta’ala Anh) says that it is therefore important for every intelligent person to stop focusing on the external aspect, and not to let it capture his attention. His perspective on the day of Eid should be from the standpoint of contemplation and reflection.

Eid-ul-Fitr is not all about dressing up in fine new clothes, eating delicious treats and pursuing carnal pleasures and delights. In its outward celebration Eid-ul-Fitr is actually meant to symbolize the acceptance of acts of worshipful obedience; the remission of sins and mistakes; the conversion of bad deeds into good deeds; the glad tidings of promotion to higher spiritual degrees and the conferring of robes of honour, gifts and gracious favours. Eid should be celebrated, but together with celebrating it, Allah Ta’ala should also be remembered. Whether there is happiness or

sadness, He should never be forgotten; just as Rasoolullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has said, “The people who will be called towards Paradise first on the Day of Judgment are those who praised Allah Ta’ala during happiness and sadness.”

Lastly, on this joyous occasion we should try as much as possible to follow the beautiful Sunnah of our Beloved Rasool (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). Some of the Sunnahs are listed below, and what better way could we spend our day of Eid, than following in the footsteps of our Beloved Aaqa (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam):

- Cut the hair
- Trim the nails
- Have a bath (Ghusl)
- Use a Miswaak
- Wear nice clothes - if you have new clothes then wear new, otherwise nice clean clothes.
- Wear an Amaama
- Put on Itr (perfume)
- Put Surma
- Perform the morning prayer in the local Masjid
- Go to the Eid Gah early
- Pay the Sadqa-e-Fitr before the Eid Salaah
- Walk to the Eid Gah and take a different route on the way back home.
- Eat some dates before leaving home for the Eid Salaah (3, 5 or any amount that is an odd number). If there are no dates available, then you should eat anything sweet.
- Express happiness, give lots of charity, go to the Eid Gah calmly, relaxed and dignified, with the gaze lowered.

May Allah Ta’ala grant us the Taufeeq and Hidayat to celebrate Eid the way His pious servants celebrated it, and the Taufeeq to always stay away from sins, but especially during this Mubarak Day, Ameen.