

Eid ul-Adha from A to Z (part 2 of 3)

Description: Muslims celebrate two festivals: *Eid ul-Fitr* and *Eid ul-Adha*. These lessons will cover everything you need to know about *Eid ul-Adha* to make it a part of your life and please Allah.

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Objectives:

- To learn the wisdom behind the animal sacrifice.
- To learn the basic rules of *udhiyyah*.
- To learn 5 *Sunnahs* (recommended deeds) of Prophet Muhammad related to *Eid ul-Adha*.

Arabic Terms:

- *Adhan* - an Islamic way of calling Muslims to the five obligatory Prayers.
- *Eid* - festival or celebration. Muslims celebrate two major religious holidays, known as *Eid-ul-Fitr* (which takes place after *Ramadan*) and *Eid-ul-Adha* (which occurs at the time of the *Hajj*).
- *Eid ul-Adha* - "Feast of the Sacrifice".
- *Ghusl* - ritual bath
- *Iqamah* - This word refers to the second call to prayer that is given immediately before the prayer begins.
- *Khutbah* - sermon.
- *Rakah* - unit of prayer.
- *Sunnah* - The word *Sunnah* has several meanings depending on the area of study however the meaning is generally accepted to be, whatever was reported that the Prophet said, did, or approved.
- *Udhiyyah* - the sacrificial animal.

Understanding Animal Offerings on *Eid ul-Adha*

Sacrificing one's son was a test of Abraham's faith. To commemorate and remember Abraham's trials, Muslims slaughter an animal such as a sheep, camel, or goat. The practice is often misunderstood by those outside of the faith. Therefore, several points must be understood here:



First, there are no special rituals involved, other than the animal meeting certain requirements. The animal is slaughtered in the same way it is slaughtered any other time in the year. The only difference is in the intention. For regular slaughter, the intention is the meat, but for *Eid ul-Adha*, it is to worship Allah by commemorating Abraham's trial.

Two, God's Name is pronounced since Allah has given us power over animals and allowed us to consume their meat, but only in His Name. By saying the Name of Allah at the time of slaughter, we remind ourselves that even the life of an animal is sacred and we can only take away its life in the Name of the One who gave it in the first place.

Three, good acts atone for one's sins. Offering *udhiyyah* is an act of worship that is no exception. Prophet Muhammad said that the most beloved deed on *Eid ul-Adha* is offering the *udhiyyah* and that it will come on the Day of Resurrection with its horns, cloven hoofs, and hair. Its blood is accepted by Allah before it reaches the ground. "So let your heart delight in it." (Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah)

Laws of *Udhiyyah* for *Eid ul-Adha*

a) Type of Animal

A single **sheep** can be offered as a sacrifice for a single person or a family. "At the time of the Messenger of Allah, a man would sacrifice a sheep on behalf of himself and the members of his household, and they would eat from it and give some to others."[\[1\]](#)

A camel or cow is sufficient for seven people, because of the report "A cow would be sacrificed on behalf of seven men and we would share it."[\[2\]](#)

b) Age of Animal

The animal should be of a certain age to be fit for *udhiyyah*. The minimum ages are:

- a) 6 months for a lamb or sheep.
- b) 1 year for a goat.
- c) 2 years for a cow.
- d) 5 years for a camel.

c) Characteristics of the Animal

It should be free of any faults, because the Prophet said,

“There are four that will not do for sacrifice:

- a) a one-eyed animal whose defect is obvious,
- b) a sick animal whose sickness is obvious,
- c) a lame animal whose limp is obvious and
- d) an emaciated animal that has no marrow in its bones.”[\[3\]](#)

There are milder defects that do not disqualify an animal, but it is disliked to sacrifice such animals, like an animal with a horn or ear missing, or with slits in its ears, etc. If the animal is castrated, it is not considered a fault.

d) Time of Sacrifice

It should be sacrificed at the specified time, which is after the prayer and *khutbah* of *Eid ul-Adha* has concluded until before sunset of the 13th day of *Dhul-Hijjah*. The Prophet said:

“Whoever sacrifices before the prayer let him repeat it.”[\[4\]](#)

The meat from the sacrifice of *Eid ul-Adha* is eaten by family and relatives, given away to friends, and donated to the poor. We recognize that all blessings come from Allah, and we should open our hearts and share with others.

Calendar of Eid ul-Adha from 2013-2015 CE

The exact dates of Eid ul-Adha will be determined based on moon sighting, but the rough dates are as follows:

Tue Oct 15 2013

Sun Oct 5 2014

Thu Sep 24 2015

Sunnahs (Recommended deeds) of Eid al-Adha

The following are recommended acts that bring additional reward on *Eid ul-Adha*. No need to worry if you forget some, but try to do as many as possible to maximize your reward.

1. The Prophet used to take a complete ritual bath (*ghusl*) on the day of *Eid*.

2. The Prophet used to wear his best clothes to go to the *Eid* prayer. Both men and women should observe the proper, modest Islamic dress when they go out for the *Eid* prayer.
3. The Prophet would take different routes for going and coming back from the *Eid* prayer.
4. Another *sunnah* (recommended deed) is to pronounce Allah's greatness with these words:

Allahu akbar, Allahu akbar, la ilaha il-lal-lah, wa-Allahu akbar, Allahu akbar, wa lil-la hil-hamd

"Allah is Most Great, Allah is most Great, there is no true deity but Allah, Allah is Most Great, Allah is Most Great, and all praise be to Allah."

They are to be said when coming out of one's house for the prayer place and until the imam comes to perform the prayer.

5. On *Eid ul-Adha* it is recommended not to eat anything until one comes back from the prayer, so he should eat from the *udhiyyah* if he has offered a sacrifice. If he is not going to offer a sacrifice there is nothing wrong with eating before the prayer.

Basic Format of the *Eid* Prayer

The Prophet did not offer any prayer immediately before or after the *Eid* prayer. Only if the *Eid* prayer is in a mosque, you pray two *rakahs* before sitting down.

There is no *adhan* or *iqamah* for the *Eid* prayer. The Prophet would do the prayer first followed by the sermon (*khutbah*).

Endnotes:

[1] *Ibn Majah, Tirmidhi*

[2] *Saheeh Muslim*

[3] *Sahih al-Jami*

[4] *Saheeh Al-Bukhari, Saheeh Muslim*

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