

# Eid ul-Adha from A to Z (part 1 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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Published on 01 Jul 2013 - Last modified on 25 Jun 2019

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## Objectives:

- To learn some basic facts about *Eid ul-Adha*.
- To learn about the *al-Ayyam ul-Ashr* (the Ten Days) and their significance.
- To learn about *Yaum ul-Arafah* (The Day of Arafah) and its significance.
- To learn about the history and purpose of *Eid ul-Adha*.

## Arabic Terms:

- *Du'a* – supplication, prayer, asking Allah for something.
- *Eid ul-Fitr* – Muslim celebration at the end of Ramadan.
- *Eid ul-Adha* – “Feast of the Sacrifice”.
- *Ramadan* – The ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar. It is the month in which the obligatory fasting has been prescribed.
- *Hajj* – A pilgrimage to Mecca where the pilgrim performs a set of rituals. The *Hajj* is one of the five pillars of Islam, which every adult Muslim must undertake at least once in their life if they can afford it and are physically able.
- *Dhul-Hijjah* – the name of the 12<sup>th</sup> month of the Islamic lunar calendar.
- *Yaum ul-Arafah* – Day of Arafah when pilgrims gather at a place called *Arafah*.
- *Halal* – permissible.
- *Al-Ayyam ul-Ashr* – The Ten Days of Islamic month of *Dhul-Hijjah*.
- *Laylat al-Qadr* – a blessed night in the last ten days of *Ramadan*, the month of fasting.
- *SubhanAllah* – How Perfect is Allah, far removed is Allah from every imperfection.
- *Alhamdulillah* – All praise and thanks is for Allah. By saying this we are thankful and

we acknowledge that everything is from Allah.

- *Allahu Akbar* – Allah is the Greatest.

Without a Muslim family, substituting Christmas, Passover, or other religious celebrations with Muslim festivals can be quite a change. But, there is no need to worry. The first step to make a change is to read and learn about a subject. The second advice will be to follow the suggestions given. Third, make *du'a* to Allah, He is indeed your helper. These lessons will teach you everything you need to know along with simple ideas so you can get more out of this amazing festival and fully experience Islamic living.



## Eid ul-Adha Basic Facts

Islam has two beautiful celebrations that will be part of your life: *Eid ul-Fitr* and *Eid ul-Adha*. Some basic facts about *Eid ul-Adha*:

- Pronounced EED-ul-ADHA, it can be translated as the “Feast of the Sacrifice.”
- *Eid ul-Adha* is tied to *Hajj* - the pilgrimage to the sacred city of Mecca that brings in 2 million Muslims every year from all over the world.
- *Eid ul-Adha* lasts four days. On the other hand, *Eid ul-Fitr*, celebrated at the conclusion of *Ramadan*, is a one day celebration.
- During *Eid ul-Adha*, many Muslim families sacrifice an animal and share the meat with the poor.

In accordance to the command of Allah both Muslim festivals were celebrated since the time of Prophet Muhammad. Hence they are from Allah and authentic. No human being made them up. What is their spirit? Our Prophet told us,

“They are days of eating, drinking, and remembrance of Allah.”[\[1\]](#)

In other words, we can enjoy and have *halal*, wholesome fun without forgetting our Creator.

## Before *Eid ul-Adha*

As stated earlier, *Eid ul-Adha* is tied to *Hajj*. Performing *Hajj* is one of the five pillars of Islam that is performed in the 12<sup>th</sup> month of the Islamic calendar known as “*Dhul-Hijjah*.” *Eid ul-Adha* is celebrated by Muslims all over the world on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the month of *Dhul-Hijjah*. The first ten days of this month have a special merit. In Arabic, they are known as ‘*al-Ayyam ul-Ashr*.’ The season of worship brings many benefits, such as the

opportunity to correct one's faults and make up for shortcomings or anything that one might have missed.

## Virtues of the 'Ten Days'

The following are five virtues of the '*al-Ayyam ul-Ashr*' (the Ten Days):

1. Allah swears an oath by them in the Quran, and swearing an oath by something shows us its paramount significance and genuine benefit. Allah says:

### **"By the dawn; by the ten nights" (Quran 89:1-2)**

Early authorities of Quran have explained that this verse refers to the first ten days of *Dhul-Hijjah*.

2. To further convince us of their merit, the Prophet testified that these are the "best" days in the world. The *Ten Days* are better than all the other days of the year, with no exceptions, not even the last ten days of *Ramadan*! But the last ten *nights* of *Ramadan* are better, because they include *Laylat al-Qadr* ("the Night of Power").

3. There are no days greater in the sight of Allah and in which good deeds are more loved by Him than these ten days, so a Muslim must frequently recite "*SubhanAllah*", "*Alhamdulillah*" and "*Allahu Akbar*" during this time.

4. The Ten Days include the days of sacrifice and *Hajj*.

5. The 9th day of *Dhul-Hijjah* is called '*Yaum ul Arafah*' (The Day of *Arafah*). This is the day when the pilgrims assemble on the plain of *Arafah*, six miles away from Mecca. The Day of *Arafah* itself has many virtues.

## Virtues And Practices of *Day of Arafah*

1. *Yaum al-Arafah* is the day on which Allah completed the religion of Islam.

2. *Yaum al-Arafah* is one of the biggest gatherings of any place in the world.

3. *Yaum al-Arafah* is a day on which prayers are answered. One of the etiquettes of praying on this day is to raise one's hands as Allah's Messenger made *du'a* in *Arafah*, his hands raised up to his chest (Abu Daud).

4. It is recommended to fast on the day of *Arafah* for those who are not performing *Hajj*. The Prophet said,

"Fasting on the day of *Arafah* is an expiation for two years, the year preceding it and the year following it." [2]

"But for the pilgrims it is disliked to fast the day of *Arafah* in *Arafah* as Allah's Messenger has informed." [3]

If you want to offer a sacrifice or have it done for you, you must stop cutting your hair and nails from the beginning of the Ten Days until after you have offered your sacrifice or it has been offered on your behalf.

## History & Purpose of *Eid ul-Adha*

The history of *Eid ul-Adha* goes back to the time of Prophet Abraham, a major figure in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. *Eid al-Adha* commemorates the great event when Allah asked Abraham in a dream to sacrifice his son as an act of obedience.

**“And, when he [his son] was old enough to walk with him, he said, ‘O my son! I have seen in a dream that I am slaughtering you, so see what you think!’ He said, ‘O my father! Do that which you are commanded, if Allah wills, you shall find me patient.’” (Quran 37:102)**

As Abraham was about to sacrifice his son, Allah revealed to him that his “sacrifice” had been fulfilled. He had shown that his love for his Lord superseded all others, that he would make any sacrifice in order to submit to Allah. A version of the story also appears in the Bible’s Old Testament.

Some people are confused as to why Allah asked Abraham to slaughter his own son. Famous classical Islamic scholar, Ibn al-Qayyim explained, “the purpose was *not* for Ibrahim to *kill* his son; rather it was to sacrifice him in his *heart* so all love belonged to Allah alone.”

Thus, it is a part of our tradition that during the blessed Ten Days of *Dhul-Hijjah* and on the day of *Eid ul-Adha* we remember the sacrifice of Abraham. We reflect on what made him such a strong believer and one who was beloved to Allah, someone Allah blessed and made a leader of all the nations that were to follow.

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Endnotes:

[\[1\] Saheeh Al-Bukhari](#)

[\[2\] Saheeh Muslim](#)

[\[3\] Abu Daud](#)

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