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Thoughts on Eid

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Many people wonder why we celebrate Eid at the end of Ramadhan. Are we happy that Ramadhan has finished? How can we be happy that such a great month of Allah, with all its blessings and mercies, has gone away? The actual reason we celebrate Eid is not because we are glad the holy month is over, but because we are thankful to Allah for giving us the chance and the strength to carry out His commands in the blessed month. We are happy that we were able to fast and pray in Ramadhan, and have hopefully attained Taqwa, the goal of fasting.

In the holy Qur'an Allah talks about Eid. He says in Sura al-Baqarah, ayat no.185:

You shall complete the number (of days) and you may glorify God for His guiding you, and that you may be thankful.

Imam Ali (a) has a very beautiful hadith about Eid in which he says: Eid is for him whose fasts have been accepted by Allah, and whose worship has been appreciated by Allah. Everyday in which you do not disobey Allah is a day of Eid. This hadith is something to think about. Every day in which we do not commit a single sin, is actually a day of Eid for us.

The Holy Prophet (S) and our Imams celebrated Eid and encouraged all Muslims to do so. They told Muslims to wear good clothes, put on perfume, and go to the mosque to recite the Eid prayer. They also said we should exchange Eid greetings, visit each other, and generally pass the day joyfully. We are supposed to remember the poor by taking out the fitrah before Eid, and visiting them and sending them gifts if we can.

The day of Eid is meant for remembering Allah. The Holy Prophet (S) says: "Give beauty to your Eid by doing Takbir". It is said that the Prophet (S) himself used to come out of his home on the day of Eid, reciitng the Takbir and glorifying Allah in a loud voice.

Let me narrate to you a beautiful story about a day of Eid during the time of our eighth Imam, Imam Ali ar-Ridha (a). Mamoon who was the Khalifa at that time, had appointed the Imam as his successor.

When the day of Eid approached, mamoon sent a message to request the Imam to lead the Eid prayer. Imam refused at first, but when Mamoon insisted he said he would lead the prayer in the same way as his grandfather the Holy Prophet (S) did. Mamoon agreed.

On the morning of Eid, Imam took a bath and changed his clothes. He put on a white turban and applied perfume. He came out of his home barefooted. He took a few steps, turned his face towrads the sky, and said the takbir; Allahu Akber, Allahu Akber. The people of the city had flocked to see the Imam come to lead the Eid prayer.

They responded loudly to the Takbir of the Imam. Allahu Akber, they said. The effect was magnetic. People began to throw off their shoes to become bare-footed like the Imam, and they all followed him to the Mosque, reciting the Takbir as they went. When Mamoon heard of the effect Imam was having on the people, he was scared. He quickly sent a message to the Imam that Imam should return to his home, and that he himself was coming to lead the Eid prayer.

Celebrating Eid unites Muslims. As a community, they get closer to work together to make it a memorable occasion. Eid prayers, and other programs held to celebrate it allow Muslims to meet and enjoy the company of one another.

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