

The Day of Arafah, Eid and the Days of Tashriq

The Best Day of the Year

The magnificent ten days of Dhu'l-Hijjah are almost over and we are approaching their climax, which is the Day of Arafah (9th Dhu'l-Hijjah). On this day there is an immense outpouring of divine mercy and bounty and it is considered by many scholars to be the best day of the year.

The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said there is no day in which Allah saves more people from the fire than the Day of Arafah.¹ It has also been narrated that anyone who has an atom's weight of faith in their heart will be forgiven by Allah on this day, whether or not they actually stand at Arafah.²

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) taught those not on Hajj to fast on this day with the promise that this would wipe away the wrongdoings of the previous year and the wrongdoings of the year to come.³ What is meant by the wrongdoings of the coming year being wiped out? The scholars mention that it is either protection from falling into them in the coming year or that if we fall into them we are forgiven. The wrongdoings mentioned are "minor" sins between a person and Allah, not cases where one person has wronged another. This is an immense gift from Allah to the Ummah of His Beloved (peace and blessings be upon him).

We should also turn to Allah to ask for forgiveness and for our needs to be answered, especially in the afternoon of this day. In doing so we imitate the people standing at Arafah, to whom forgiveness is guaranteed, and we ask Allah to give to us what He is giving to them. As the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said: "The one who imitates a people is one of them."⁴

We should apportion some time to recitation of the Qur'an (especially *Surat al-Ikhlās*), invoking prayers upon the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him), and other forms of remembrance, particularly *tahlil*, or proclaiming the oneness of Allah. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said: "The best du'a is the du'a of the Day of Arafah. The best thing which I and the Prophets before me have said is:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَ لَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَ هُوَ عَلَى
كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

¹ Narrated by Muslim, al-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah

² Narrated by Abu Daud

³ Narrated by Muslim, Ahmad, Abu Daud and al-Nasa'i

⁴ Narrated by Abu Daud and Ahmad

[“There is no god but Allah, alone, He has no partners. To Him belongs the dominion and all praise and He has power over all things.”⁵]

Sayyiduna `Ali narrates that the supplication that the Prophet made most on the Day of Arafah was:

اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدُ كَالَّذِي نَقُولُ وَخَيْرًا مِمَّا نَقُولُ اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ صَلَاتِي
وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي وَإِلَيْكَ مَابِي وَلَكَ رَبِّ تَرَاتِي اللَّهُمَّ
إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ عَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ وَوَسْوَسَةِ الصَّدرِ وَشَتَاتِ الْأَمْرِ
اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا تَهْبُ بِهِ الرِّيحُ

[“O Allah to You belongs all praise, as we praise You and better than that. O Allah my prayer, worship, life and death are for You, and to You is my return. Everything I possess, my Lord, returns to You. O Allah I seek refuge in You from the punishment of the grave, the whispering of the devil and from my affairs being in disarray. O Allah I seek refuge in You from the evil which the wind carries”⁶]

If it is possible to gather with a group of people at this time then the reward is greater and the chance of acceptance is higher. This was the way of Sayyiduna `Abdullah Ibn `Abbas and other companions and it is a tradition in Tarim where hundreds gather in an open square after Asr to remember Allah and make du`a until Maghrib.

Eid Takbirs and the Night Before Eid

The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) taught us to fill these blessed days and nights with the remembrance of Allah generally and specifically with the takbir in which we express Allah’s greatness and transcendence. He said (peace and blessings be upon him): “Beautify your Eid days with the takbir.”⁷ It is recommended to make the takbir after every prayer (fard or nafil) from Fajr on the Day of Arafat (9th Dhu’l-Hijja) until Asr on the 13th, the final day of the three Days of Tashriq. This year the Day of `Arafat in Saudi Arabia is on Saturday, Eid is on Sunday and the final day of the Days of Tashriq is Wednesday.

We should also fill the night before Eid with takbir from Maghrib up until the Eid prayer. On the night of Eid only the takbir is not limited to being read after the prayer, but rather it should be read at all times in our houses and mosques and in the streets (without causing

⁵ Narrated by al-Tirmidhi

⁶ Narrated by al-Tirmidhi

⁷ Narrated by al-Tabarani

disturbance). We should read it with our hearts filled with the greatness of Allah so that we are not merely repeating words without experiencing their meaning.

It is a sunna to give life to the night before Eid, meaning spending whatever time we are able in worship and remembrance such that the night comes alive. The least we should do is to pray Maghrib, Isha and Fajr in congregation. The mosques of Tarim fill in the the second half of the night with people reading the Qur'an in groups, praying and making takbir together at intervals. At the end of the night everyone comes together for a khatm and du'a.

It is mentioned in the hadith that if someone gives life to the nights before the two Eids Allah will give life to his heart on the day when hearts die.⁸ What is primarily meant is safety on the Day of Judgement but even in this life the majority of people's hearts are dead, starved of the remembrance of Allah and heedless of the return to Him. Remembering Allah on nights such as these, however, when most people are busy with other things, will give life and tranquility to our hearts.

There are different forms of the takbir. Here is one of them:

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ , لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ , اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ اللَّهُ
أَكْبَرُ وَلِلَّهِ الْحَمْدُ (three times)
اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ كَبِيرًا وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ كَثِيرًا وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَا نَعْبُدُ إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ
الْكَافِرُونَ .

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ صَدَقَ وَعْدُهُ وَنَصَرَ عَبْدَهُ وَأَعَزَّ جُنْدَهُ
وَهَزَمَ الْأَحْزَابَ وَحْدَهُ
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ وَلِلَّهِ الْحَمْدُ

[“Allah is most great, there is no god but Him, all praise belongs to Him.

There is no god but Him and we worship none but Him in complete sincerity even if the disbelievers dislike it.

There is no god but Him alone. He fulfilled His promise, gave victory to His slave, made mighty His forces and He alone destroyed the Confederates. Allah is most great, there is no god but Him, all praise belongs to Him.”]

⁸ Narrated by Ibn Majah

The scholars say that whenever it is recommended to remember Allah it is also recommended to mention His Messenger (peace and blessings be upon him). Had it not been for him there would be no `Arafat or Eid or takbir. For this reason we should add, in honour of our Messenger, his Companions, wives and progeny:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ
وعلى آل سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ
وعلى أَصْحَابِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ
وعلى أَنْصَارِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ
وعلى أَزْوَاجِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ
وعلى ذُرِّيَّةِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ
وسلم تسليماً كثيراً

Sunnahs of Eid al-Adha

We should do what we are able to implement the other sunnahs of the Eid. Among them are taking a bath whether or not one is attending the Eid prayer and wearing one's best clothes and best perfume. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) had special garments that he would only wear on Eid. He would not eat or drink anything until after the Eid prayer and the first thing he ate was liver from the animal he had sacrificed. It is recommended to walk to the prayer, taking a longer route on the way there and returning by a different route. One should shake hands with one's brethren and congratulate them on the Eid. One should be especially generous to one's family, display one's happiness on the occasion and try to visit one's relatives and friends.

The Days of Tashriq

The three days following Eid al-Adha are the Days of *Tashriq* (the 11th, 12th and 13th of Dhu'l-Hijjah). These days are mentioned by Allah when He says: **Remember Allah during the Appointed Days.**⁹ The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) described them as days of eating and drinking and remembrance of Allah.¹⁰ Fasting is thus forbidden on Eid and the Days of Tashriq. Just as we tried to draw close to Allah by fasting before Eid, we now

⁹ *Al-Baqarah* 2.203

draw close to Him by enjoying that which He has bestowed us with. All that the slave must do is obey the order of his Lord, knowing that therein is His pleasure and safety from following his own caprice.

¹⁰ Narrated by Muslim, Ahmad and al-Nasa'i