



Eid Essentials

The Sunnah Acts of the Two Eid (Festivals)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ
said, “For every people
there is a feast and this is
our feast.” (*Bukhari, Muslim*)



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Table of Contents



The Two Eids	Page 1
Time	Page 1
The Eid Prayer Described	Page 2
The Sermon After the Prayer	Page 3
The Sunnah Acts of the Two Eids	Page 3
Wrong Practices During Eid	Page 13
Significant Practices Related to Eid-ul-Fitr	Page 14
Giving Charity Before Eid-ul-Fitr	Page 14
The Virtues of Fasting Six Days of Shawwal	Page 14
Significant Practices Related to Eid-ul-Adha	Page 18
The Best Ten Days	Page 18
The Types of Deeds in These Ten Days	Page 18
Zakaat-ul-Fitr	Page 21
On Whom is Zakaat-ul-Fitr Obligatory?	Page 23
Is it Compulsory on Every Muslim or Can One Pay on Behalf of His Dependents?	Page 23
To Whom Should Zakaat-ul-Fitr be Paid?	Page 25
When Should Zakaat-ul-Fitr be Paid?	Page 26
The Wisdom Behind Enjoining Zakaat-ul-Fitr?	Page 27
How Much Zakaat-ul-Fitr is Due?	Page 29
References	Page 31

The Two Eids

Eid – an occasion of great joy and festivity.

- The Arabic word *Eid* refers to something that returns and is repeated, and hence, refers to a recurrent event.
- The Two Eids: When the Prophet ﷺ came to Madeenah, he found that they had two days on which they used to celebrate from the time of ignorance (i.e. before Islam). He said, “Allah has given you two days better than these, the day of al-Fitr and the day of al-Adha.” (*Abu Dawud 1134; classed as saheeh by Al-Albani in al-Silsilah al-Saheehah 2021*)
- The two festivals are days of rejoicing, and for remembering and thanking Allah for bestowing His infinite bounty and mercy upon us.
- Eid Al-Fitr (Fitr literally means breaking the fast) happens on the 1st day of Shawwal (the day right after the month of Ramadan is over).
- Eid Al-Adha happens on the 10th of Dhul-Hijjah.



Time

The Eid prayer can be prayed anytime between when the sun is an arrow's length above the horizon, until the zenith (the highest point reached by the sun).



The Eid Prayer (Offered on the Day of Eid After Sunrise) Described

Neither Adhaan nor Iqaamah are to be pronounced for Eid Prayer. *(Muslim)*

It (i.e., the Eid Prayer) consists of two Rak'ahs (unit of prayer). Ibn 'Umar said: "The journey prayer consists of two Rak'ahs, the Adhaa prayer consists of two Rak'ahs, and the Fitr prayer consists of two Rak'ahs as well, and they are complete prayers not shortened according to what the Prophet ﷺ said."

The first Rak'ah begins with the Takbeer (saying: *Allaahu Akbar* "Allah is the Greatest") as the case is in all other prayers. Then the Imam (followed by the praying Muslims) recites seven Takbeeraat (plural of Takbeer). In the second Rak'ah there are five Takbeeraat other than the transmission Takbeer (i.e. the one recited when the Imam and the praying Muslims stand up to perform second Rak'ah). 'A'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: "The Prophet ﷺ used to recite Takbeer in (the prayers of Eid) Al-Fitr and Al-Adhaa, seven Takbeeraat in the first (Raka'ah) and five in the second one other than the two Takbeeraat that precede the Rukoo' (bowing)."

Imaam Al-Baghawi said: "This is the opinion of most of the well-versed scholars of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them all, and those who followed them that there are seven Takbeeraat in the first Rak'ah of the Eid prayer other than the first Takbeer (Takbeeratul Ihram), and five Takbeeraat in the second Rak'ah other than the transmission Takbeer and all before reciting (verses from the Glorious Quran). This was narrated from Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Ali and others (may Allah be pleased with them)."



The Sermon After the Prayer

It is of the Prophetic Sunnah that the Eid sermon should follow the Eid prayer. *Al-Bukhari* named one of his Saheeh's chapters by "The book of the sermon after the Eid prayer." Ibn 'Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "I offered the Eid prayer with Allah's Messenger ﷺ, Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman, and all of them offered the Eid prayer before delivering the Khutbah (religious sermon)."

Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "The Prophet ﷺ, Abu Bakr, and 'Umar used to offer the prayers before delivering the Khutbah."



The Sunnah Acts of the Two Eids (Festivals)

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ
غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

"Say, [O Muhammad], 'If you should love Allah, then follow me, [so] Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.'" (*Āli 'Imrān, 3:31*)

Some Scholars observe the Eid prayer as an obligatory act, because the Prophet ﷺ ordered the women to come out to the prayer-place, with no differentiation between virgins and non-virgins, young or old, menstruating or otherwise to come and participate in the two Eid prayers but the menstruating women are to keep away from the Musalla-Praying place. So if this order is for the women, then the men are more obliged to perform this act of worship. Therefore some Scholars took this Hadith as evidence that the Eid prayer is compulsory, while on the other hand some other Scholars said that the Eid prayer is Sunnah

“Mu’akkadda” (i.e. offered regularly by the Prophet ﷺ – hence a stressed Sunnah).



1. Preference is given to the women and the boys to go to Musalla-al-Eid for offering the Eid prayer:

Narrated Umm ‘Attiyah (may Allah be pleased with her): “We were ordered to bring out on Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha, the young women and the menstruating women to participate in the goodness and supplications of the Muslims, but the menstruating women would refrain from prayers.” (*Bukhari, Muslim*)

Regarding the boys, *Al-Bukhari* reported that Ibn Abbas offered Eid prayer when he was young.



2. Taking a bath and walking to the Musalla (prayer place):

Narrated Saeid Bin Al-Mussaiyeb: “The Sunnah acts of Eid-ul-Fitr are three: Walking to the Musalla, eating before going out for the Eid-ul-Fitr prayer, and taking a bath.” (*With correct chain, Irwa’a Al-Ghalil/Al-Albani*)

Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) used to take a bath on the day of Fitr before proceeding (for the prayer). (*Reported by Abdul-Razzaq with correct chain*)

Narrated Ali (may Allah be pleased with him): “It is Sunnah to go to the Eid prayer on foot.” (*Reported by At-Tirmidhi: who graded it good*)



3. The preference of wearing the best available clothes (for the Eid festivals):

It was narrated that ‘Abd-Allaah ibn ‘Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said that ‘Umar took a brocade cloak that was for sale in the market and brought it to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and said, “O Messenger of Allah, buy this and adorn yourself with it for Eid and for receiving the delegations.” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to him, “Rather this is the dress of one who has no share (of piety or of reward in the Hereafter)...” (*Bukhari, 948*)

The Prophet ﷺ agreed with ‘Umar on the idea of adorning oneself for Eid, but he denounced him for choosing this cloak because it was made of silk.

It was narrated that Jaabir (may Allah be pleased with him) said: The Prophet ﷺ had a cloak which he would wear on the two Eids and on Fridays. (*Saheeh Ibn Khuzaymah, 1756*)

Al-Bayhaqi narrated with a saheeh isnaad that Ibn ‘Umar used to wear his best clothes on Eid.

With regard to women, they should avoid adorning themselves when they go out for Eid, because they are forbidden to show off their adornments to non-mahram men. It is also haram for a woman who wants to go out to put on perfume or to expose men to temptation, because they are only going out for the purpose of worship.



4. Eating on the Two Eids:

Eid-ul-Fitr:

Narrated Anas bin Malik (may Allah be pleased with him): Allah’s Messenger ﷺ never proceeded (for the prayer) on the

day of Eid-ul-Fitr unless he had eaten some dates. Anas also narrated: The Prophet ﷺ used to eat an odd number of dates. (Bukhari)

- **It is mustahabb to eat before going out** to emphasize the fact that it is forbidden to fast on that day and to demonstrate that the fast has ended. Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) suggested that the reason for that was so as to ward off the possibility of adding to the fast, and to hasten to obey the command of Allah. (Al-Fath, 2/446)

Eid-ul-Adha:

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



5. Offering the prayer in the Musalla not in a Mosque:

The Musalla (i.e. the prayer place) is an open area such as the desert, as reported by *Al-Bukhari* and *Muslim*; narrated Abu-Saeid Al-Khudri (may Allah be pleased with him): “The Prophet ﷺ used to proceed to the Musalla on the days of Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha.”

In case it becomes difficult to perform a prayer in the Musalla-Eid for a reason (e.g. rain, etc.), it is permissible to perform the same in a mosque.



6. Takbeerat During the Days of Eid:

Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) used to say Takbeer aloud on the days of Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha till he reached the Musalla; then he said Takbeer till the Imam stood to offer the prayer. (Irwa'a Al-Ghalil/Al-Albani)

In the case of Eid-ul-Fitr, the time for Takbeer starts from the night before Eid until the Imam enters to lead the Eid prayer.

The time for this Takbeer begins when the sun sets on the night of Eid (i.e. the night before) if it is known that the new month has begun when the sun sets, such as when the people have completed thirty days of Ramadan, or when it is proven that the new moon of Shawwal has been sighted. And it ends when the prayer begins, i.e. when they start the Eid prayer then the time for the takbeer ends. (*Majmoo' Fataawa Ibn 'Uthaymeen, 16/269-272*)

This is one of the greatest Sunnahs on the day of Eid because Allah says in the Qur'an:

وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَانَكُمْ
وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

"(He wants that you) must complete the same number (of days), and that you must magnify Allah (i.e. to say Takbeer: Allaahu Akbar "Allah is the Most Great") for having guided you so that you may be grateful to Him." (Al-Baqarah, 2:185)

In the case of Eid-ul-Adha, the Takbeer begins on the first day of Dhul-Hijjah and lasts until sunset on the last of the days of tashreeq.

وَيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْلُومَاتٍ

"And mention the name of Allah on the appointed days" (Al-Hajj, 22:28)

This has been explained (by some) to mean the ten days (of Dhul-Hijjah), and the scholars consider it desirable to increase adh-Dhikr in these days, based upon the hadith of Ibn Umar narrated by Ahmad:

It is narrated from Ibn Umar that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: "There aren't any days greater, nor any days in which deeds done in them are more beloved to Allah, the Most High, than these ten days (of Dhul-Hijjah). **So, increase in them the saying of Tahleel (*La Ilaaha illa Allah*), and Takbeer (*Allahu Akbar*) and Tahmeed (*al-Hamdu lillah*).**" (*Musnad Imaam Ahmad*)

It is reported about Ibn Umar and Abu Hurairah that the two of them used to go out to the market place during the ten days (of Dhul-Hijjah) saying: Allahu Akbar, causing the people also to say it. (*Al-Bukhari*)

It is a beloved act to raise the voice when saying the Takbeer in the markets, the houses, the streets, the masjids, and other places, because of the saying of Allah, the Most High, in Surah Al-Hajj:

لِتَكْبِرُوا لِلَّهِ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَانَا لَكُمْ

"... that you may magnify Allah for His Guidance to you" (*Al-Hajj, 22:37*)

The saying of Takbeer in congregation, i.e. everyone pronouncing the Takbeer with one voice, is not permissible since this has not been transmitted (to us) from the early generations of the Sahabah and those who followed their ways. Verily, the Sunnah is for everyone to say the Takbeer individually. And this is (generally) applicable to Dhikr and supplications, except if the person doesn't know what to say. In

that case, he may repeat after someone else until he learns (the words to be said). It is also permissible to make Dhikr with all the different wording of Takbeer and Tahmeed and Tasbeeh, and the rest of the Islamic legislated supplications (from the Qur'an and Sunnah).

It is legislated in these days to make at-Takbeer al-Mutlaq at all times of the night and day until the time of the Eid Prayer. Also, at-Takbeer al-Muqayyad is legislated, and it is done after the (five) obligatory prayers that are performed in congregation. This begins from dawn (Fajr) on the Day of Arafah (the 9th of Dhul-Hijjah) for those not performing Hajj, and from noon (Zuhr) on the Day of Sacrifice (10th of Dhul-Hijjah) for those performing Hajj (pilgrims); and it continues until Asr prayer on the last day of the days of Tashreeq (13th of Dhul-Hijjah).

At-Takbeer al-Mutlaq: the Takbeer (Allahu Akbar), which is unrestricted to specific times or any specific form.

At-Takbeer al-Muqayyad: The Takbeer, which is done at a particular time and in a specific manner.

Also narrated Ibn Abbas that he used to say Takbeer from the dawn (Fajr) prayer on the day of Arafah till the Asr of the last day of Tashreeq (i.e. 13th day of Dhul-Hijjah). (*Reported by Ibn Abu Shaiba, with correct chain*)



7. The way of Takbeer is to say:

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُ
أَكْبَرُ، وَبِاللَّهِ الْحَمْدُ

Allaahu akbar, Allaahu akbar, laa ilaaha illallaah, wa Allaahu akbar, Allaahu akbar, wa lillaahi'l-hamd.

“Allah is Most Great, Allah is Most Great, there is no god but Allah, Allah is Most Great, Allah is Most Great, and to Allah be praise.”

As confirmed by Ibn Masoud. (*Irwa'a Al-Ghalil by Al-Albani*)



8. No Nafil Salat (voluntary prayer) is offered before or after the Eid prayer:

Al-Jama'a (the group of Scholars) reported that Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated: “When the Prophet ﷺ proceeded to the Musalla (Praying Place) on an Eid day, he offered two Rak'a prayer (Eid prayer) and didn't pray before or after them (i.e. no voluntary prayer was offered before or after Eid prayer in the Musalla).



9. Offering congratulations:

Muhammad Bin Ziad said: “I was with Ummah Al-Bahili and other companions of the Prophet ﷺ when they returned from Eid prayer, and they used to say to each other:

تَقَبَّلَ اللهُ مِنَّا وَمِنْكَ

Taqabbala Allaahu Minna Wa Mink.

“May Allah accept from you and us.” (*Imam Ahmad said: good chain*)



10. To return (after offering the Eid prayer), on the day of the Eid using a way different from that by which he went:

Narrated Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him): on the day of Eid the Prophet ﷺ used to return (after offering the Eid prayer) using a way different from that by which he went.”
(Al-Bukhari)

It was said that the reason for that was so that the two routes would testify for him on the Day of Resurrection, for the earth will speak on the Day of Resurrection and say what was done on it, both good and bad. And it was said that it was in order to manifest the symbols of Islam on both routes.



11. Offering a two Raka’ah prayer at home: Narrated Abu Saeid (may Allah be pleased with him):

The Prophet ﷺ never used to offer any prayer before the Eid prayer, but when he went back home, he used to pray two Raka’a. *(Reported by Ibn Majah through a good chain, and authenticated by Al-Albani)*



12. Whoever misses the Eid prayer with the congregation can offer a two Raka’ah prayer:

Imam *Al-Bukhari* said: "Whoever misses the Eid prayer should offer two Rak’ahs prayer."

If a person fails to join the Eid prayer behind the Imam, it is advisable for him to offer two Raka’ah alone or in congregation. *(Fath Al-Bari by Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani)*

Waliullah Ad-Dahlawi said: "This is the Shaafi'i's Madhhab (school of jurisprudence) that if one misses the Eid prayer with the Imam could offer a two Rak'ahs prayer so as not to miss the blessings of the Eid prayer having missed the blessings of the congregational prayer with the Imaam.

Imaam Maalik said in Al-Muwatta: "Whoever - whether a man or a woman - offers the Eid prayer alone should recite seven Takbeeraat in the first Rak'ah and five Takbeeraat in the second one before reciting (some verses from the Glorious Quran)." And whoever misses part of the Eid prayer (with the Imam) should make up for the missed part as it is, just like other prayers.

Reciting Takbeer (in the Eid prayer) is a Sunnah (i.e. recommended deed) which if missed intentionally or out of forgetfulness - the prayer is not null, and this issue is agreed upon by the scholars. But the one who leaves it, is undoubtedly, contradicting the Prophet's Sunnah.



Question: What should be done if Eid coincides with Friday?

Answer: If the day of Eid coincides with Friday, then whoever prays Eid with the Imaam does not have to attend Jumu'ah (it is not obligatory on him); in his case, it becomes Sunnah. If he does not pray Jumu'ah, he has to pray Zuhr. This is in the case of people other than the Imaam. As for the Imaam, he has to be present for Jumu'ah and lead those Muslims who attend the prayer. The Jumu'ah prayer should not be forsaken completely on this day.

(Shaykh Saalih ibn Fawzaan al-Fawzaan)



Wrong Practices During Eid

1. The belief that one must spend the night of Eid in worship:

Some people think that Islam tells us to stay up and pray on the night of Eid, quoting an unsound Hadith which says that “Whoever stays up and prays on the night of Eid, his heart will not die on the day when hearts die.” This Hadith was reported with two isnaads, one of which is da’eef (weak), and the other is very da’eef. (*See Al-Fawaaidul Majmoo’ah: by Imaam Ash-Shaukaanee: p. 71*)

Islam does not tell us to single out the night of Eid for staying up and praying; if, however, a person habitually stays up and prays at night (qiyaam), there is nothing wrong with him doing so on the night of Eid as well.

2. Visiting graves on the two Eid days:

This is contrary to the purpose of Eid which is to express joy and happiness, and is against the way of the Prophet ﷺ. It falls under the Prophet’s prohibition on visiting graves on a specific day and making it like a festival, as the scholars stated.

3. Forsaking the jamaa’ah and sleeping late and missing the obligatory prayer.

4. Mixing of the women and men in the prayer place, the streets and elsewhere.

Note: When they go out, the women must make sure to be covered properly, and refrain from wearing make-up and perfume.

5. Being involved in all sorts of sins during the day (i.e. not praying on time, not safeguarding the tongue, free mixing with the opposite sex, wasting money, etc.)

Significant Practices Related to Eid-ul-Fitr

Giving Charity Before Eid-ul-Fitr

Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated: Allah's Messenger ﷺ made obligatory the payment of one saa' of dates or one saa' of barley as Zakat-ul-Fitr (charity on occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr) on every Muslim slave or free male or female, young or old; and he ordered that it be paid before the people went out to perform the Eid prayer. *(Bukhari, Zakat, Chapter: Obligation of Sadqat-ul-Fitr, Hadith: 1503)*

See more details about **Zakaat-ul-Fitr** on **Page 21**.



The Virtues of Fasting Six Days of Shawwal

Abu Ayyoob (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Whoever fasts Ramadan and follows it with six days of Shawwal, it will be as if he fasted for a lifetime." *(Narrated by Muslim, Abu Dawood, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nisaa'i and Ibn Maajah)*

Fasting six days of Shawwal after the obligatory fast of Ramadan is Sunnah Mustahabbah, not waajib. It is recommended for the Muslim to fast six days of Shawwal, and in this there is great virtue and an immense reward.

The Prophet ﷺ explained this when he said: "Whoever fasts for six days after Eid-ul-Fitr has completed the year: (whoever does a

good deed (hasanah) will have ten hasanah like it).” According to another report: “Allah has made for each hasanah ten like it, so a month is like fasting ten months, and fasting six days completes the year.” (*al-Nisaa’i and Ibn Maajah. See also Saheeh al-Targheeb wa’l-Tarheeb, 1/421*)

Another of the important benefits of fasting six days of Shawwal is that it makes up for any shortfall in a person's obligatory Ramadan fasts, because no one is free of shortcomings or sins that have a negative effect on his fasting. On the Day of Resurrection, some of his naafil deeds will be taken to make up the shortcomings in his obligatory deeds. (*Sheikh Muhammed Salih Al-Munajjid*)

Fasting Shawwal is a fulfillment of the remainder of the acts of worship (Ibadah) as long as the slave is alive. The acts of worship do not end with the end of the seasons. If the season ends, still Allah remains, and He is the Lord of Forgiveness and Pardon.



Question: When should a Muslim start fasting six days of Shawwal?

Answer: You can start fasting six days of Shawwal from the second day of Shawwal, because it is haram to fast on the day of Eid. You can fast the six days at any time during Shawwal, although the best of good deeds are those which are done soonest. (*Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa’imah, 10/391*)

The sooner you do them, the better, because Allah says (interpretation of the meanings):

فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ

“So compete in good deeds” (*Al-Maa’idah, 5:48*)

❁ وَسَارِعُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ

“And march forth in the way (which leads to) forgiveness from your Lord” (*‘Ali ‘Imrān, 3:133*)

٨٤ قَالَ هُمْ أَوْلَاءُ عَلَىٰ أَثَرِي وَعَجِلْتُ إِلَيْكَ رَبِّ لِتَرْضَىٰ

“[Moosa (peace be upon him) said:] and I hastened to You, O my Lord, that You might be pleased” (*Ta-Ha, 20:84*)



Question: Do the six days of Shawwal have to be fasted consecutively?

Answer: It is not a necessary condition that they should be fasted consecutively. If you fast them separately or consecutively, it is permissible.

Our companions said: it is mustahabb to fast six days of Shawwal. Because of this Hadith, they said: it is mustahabb to fast these days consecutively at the beginning of Shawwal, but if one separates them or delays them, this is permissible because he will still be following the general guidelines of the Hadith. We have no dispute regarding this matter, and this was also the view of Ahmad and Dawood. (*Al-Majmoo Sharh al-Muhadhdhab*)



Question: Should a woman start with making up missed fasts from Ramadan or with the six days of Shawwal?

Answer: If she wants to earn the reward mentioned in the Hadith of the Prophet ﷺ, “Whoever fasts Ramadan then follows it with six days of Shawwal, it will be as if he fasted for a lifetime.” (*Reported by Muslim, No. 1984*), then she should complete her

Ramadan fasts first, then follow it with six days of Shawwal, so that the Hadith will be applicable to her, and she will gain the reward mentioned in it.

As regards the matter of permissibility, it is permissible for her to delay making up her Ramadan fasts, provided that she makes them up before the next Ramadan comes along.

(Sheikh Muhammed Salih Al-Munajjid)

Significant Practices Related to Eid-ul-Adha

The Best Ten Days

The Superiority and Virtue of the First Ten Days of the Month of Dhul-Hijjah

It is narrated from Ibn Abbaas (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet ﷺ said: "There are no days in which righteous deeds done in them are more beloved to Allah than these days, i.e. the ten days (of Dhul-Hijjah). They said: O Messenger of Allah, not even Jihaad in the path of Allah? He said: Not even Jihaad in the Path of Allah, the Most High, except if a man goes out (for Jihaad) with his self and his wealth, then he doesn't return with anything from that." *(Al-Bukhari, Abu Dawud and others. The exact wording is that of Abu Dawud)*



The Types of Deeds in These Ten Days

1. **Slaughtering of the sacrifices (animals) on the 10th Dhul-Hijjah after the Eid prayer:** Narrated Al-Bara bin 'Azib (may Allah be pleased with him): I heard Allah's Messenger ﷺ delivering the Khutba. He said: "The first (thing) to do on this day (10th of Dhul-Hijjah) is to offer the Salat (prayer), and on returning from the prayer we slaughter our scarifies; and whoever did this he acted on our Sunnah (legal way)." *(Al-Bukhari)*

This is the Sunnah of our father Ibrahim - when Allah, the Most High, redeemed Ibrahim's son by the great sacrifice (of an animal in his place). It is authentically reported that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ slaughtered (sacrificed) two horned rams, black and white in color, and said Takbeer (Allahu Akbar), and placed his foot on their sides (while slaughtering them). *(Al-Bukhari and Muslim)*

2. The performance of Hajj and Umrah

3. **Fasting during these days** – as many of them as may be easy (for one to fast); especially the Day of Arafah.

From Abu Qatadah that the Prophet ﷺ said: Fasting the Day of Arafah will be credited with Allah by forgiving one's sins of the previous year and the following year. *(Muslim)*

4. **At-Takbeer (Allahu Akbar) and adh-Dhikr** (the remembrance of Allah through different words of praise and glorification) in these (ten) days
5. **At-Tawbah (repentance) and abstaining from disobedience and all types of sins**
6. **Doing plenty of voluntary (nafl) righteous deeds.** These include reciting and pondering upon the Quran, giving charity, praying extra voluntary prayers, etc.
7. **Offering animal as Udhyia and refraining from cutting one's hair and nails.**

The Sunnah indicates that the one who wants to offer a sacrifice must stop cutting his hair and nails and removing anything from his skin from the beginning of the ten days until after he has offered his sacrifice, because it has been narrated from Umm Salamah (may Allah be pleased with her) that the Prophet ﷺ said: "If you see the Hilal (new moon) of Dhul-Hijjah, and any one of you wants to make a sacrifice, then he

should not cut (anything) from his hair and his nails.” (*Muslim and others*)

This prohibition appears to apply only to the one who is offering the sacrifice, not to his wife and children, unless any of them is offering a sacrifice in his or her own right (i.e. he/she is doing the sacrifice with his or her own money).



Zakaat-ul-Fitr

Obligatory Charity After Ramadan

Ramadan is the Holy month of fasting and therefore, filled with great blessings. It is a true sign of Allah's wisdom that along with Eid-ul-Fitr (feast of ending the fast), Allah the Exalted allows us more opportunity to purify ourselves by way of Zakaat (Sadaqat) al-Fitr.

By observing the Sadaqat-ul-Fitr according to the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ we will, insha'Allah, purify both ourselves and the Muslim Ummah from vanity and dissent. This Zakaat (Sadaqah) at the end of Ramadan is a great blessing that serves to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood within the Ummah. Insha'Allah, we will explore some of the wisdom behind the rules and etiquette of this blessed duty.

The fact that it is a duty comes to us through the legislation of the Prophet ﷺ. Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet ﷺ made it incumbent on every Muslim to pay Sadaqat-ul-Fitr at the end of Ramadan. *(Sahih Muslim and Al-Bukhari)*

Zakaat (Sadaqat) al-Fitr is not just an act of charity but an obligatory practice through which we can purify our souls. This has been reported to us by Sa'eid bin Musayab and Umar bin Abdul-Aziz (may Allah have mercy on him) in their commentary on Allah's saying in the Qur'an:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا ﴿٩﴾

“Indeed he succeeds who purifies his ownself (i.e. obeys and performs all that Allah ordered, by following the true Faith of Islamic Monotheism and by doing righteous good deeds).”
(Ash-Shams, 91:9)

They said that this verse refers to Zakaat-ul-Fitr, which is meant to be a Sadaqah of the body and soul, just as general Sadaqah is a charity of money and property. Any Sadaqah is a means of purifying ourselves, but Sadaqat-ul-Fitr is of a special nature as we shall see, insha'Allah.



On Whom is Zakaat-ul-Fitr Obligatory?

Those who must pay the Sadaqah of Ramadan have been described in many Ahadith. It will suffice here to mention the elaboration of the previously mentioned Hadith of Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) when the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ enjoined the payment of one Saa' of dates or one Saa' of barley as Zakaat-ul-Fitr on every Muslim (slave or free, male or female, young or old), and he ordered that it be paid before the people went out to offer Salaat-ul-Eid (the Eid prayer)." (One Saa' = approximately 2.5 kilograms) *(Bukhari, Muslim)*

Non-Muslims are excluded from paying Zakaat, because it is a form of purification and nothing will purify the disbelievers except embracing Islam.

This Zakaat is compulsory on every Muslim who has an excess beyond what would suffice him and his dependents for the day and night of the Eid. If the excess is about one Saa', then it is to be paid. Any excess is calculated after one subtracts what is considered a need. This would include such items as housing, clothing, and that which is needed to support a wife and children. If one has enough to care for these necessities and one's dependents for one day and night, then the Sadaqah must be paid on the excess.



Is it Compulsory on Every Muslim or Can One Pay on Behalf of His Dependents?

The most common and correct point of view, as mentioned by Shaikh Muhammad bin Salih al-Uthaimin (may Allah be pleased with him) in the book "Sharh al-Mumti' Alaa Zaad al-Mustaqna'," is that Zakaat-ul-Fitr is obligatory on every Muslim by himself (i.e. it is obligatory on oneself, on the wife by herself, on the father by

himself and so on). It is not obligatory to pay on behalf of others who are dependent on you because Allah said:

وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ

“No bearer of burdens shall bear the burden of another.” (Al-*'An`ām*, 6:164)

Also, the Prophet ﷺ said, “Enjoined on every Muslim, male and female, young and old...” except for the slave, as his master should pay on his behalf, because he owns no money or property. It is permissible for a man to pay on behalf of his dependents, with their permission (or approval) and he is rewarded, but if he doesn't, nothing is on him (i.e. he is not considered a sinner). Thus, it is permissible for a man to pay Zakaat on behalf of his wife, if she so requests, although she can pay it herself. Even children and servants should pay their Zakaat if they have their own accounts. So it is obligatory on every Muslim who has an excess beyond what suffices him and his family for the day and the night of the Eid. It is also incumbent upon the person who is in debt, to pay Zakaat-ul-Fitr.

However, one must pay on behalf of those whom one supports and are unable to pay for themselves, such as the orphans (who have not attained their puberty), the insane, etc. The guardian must give Zakaat-ul-Fitr from the orphan's money, but if he owns nothing, then he (the guardian) will pay from his own money (if he is one of those who are obliged to support them).

According to a Hadith of Ibn Qilaabah, transmitted by Shaafi'i (may Allah be pleased with him), it is a Nafil (voluntary) Sunnah to pay it on the fetus if one's wife is pregnant. Ibn Qilaabah said they used to like to give Sadaqat-ul-Fitr upon the youth, the elders, and the “load in the mother.” However, Ibn al-Mundhir reported from all the scholars that he learned from, that it is not compulsory to pay the Zakaat on the fetus, but it is a liked act as reported by Ibn

Abi Shaibah that Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him) paid the Zakaat on the fetus. Although it is not quoted by the Prophet ﷺ, we know that Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him) was one of the Caliphs, whom the Prophet ﷺ ordered to follow their Sunnah, when he ﷺ said: “It is incumbent upon you to follow my Sunnah (practice) and the Sunnah (the practices) of my rightly guided successors (Caliphs).” (*Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi, graded as Hasan Sahih*)

Shaikh Ibn Uthaimen (may Allah be merciful with him) is of the opinion that is a liked act to pay Zakaat-ul-Fitr on the fetus after the soul is breathed into it, i.e. after four months. According to the narration of Ibn Masud (may Allah be pleased with him), Allah’s Messenger ﷺ, the true and truly inspired, said, “(The matter of the creation of) a human being is put together in the womb of the mother in forty days, then it becomes a clot of thick blood for a similar period, then a piece of flesh for a similar period. Allah then sends an angel who is ordered to write four things: the new being’s deeds, livelihood, (date of) death, and whether he will be blessed or wretched (in the Hereafter). The soul is then breathed into him.” (*Al-Bukhari*)



To Whom Should Zakaat-ul-Fitr be Paid?

The scholars have two opinions concerning the distribution of Sadaqat-ul-Fitr. The first opinion is the same as that of Zakaat-ul-Maal (the annual Zakaat, which is one of the five Pillars of Islam). The second opinion, which is espoused by Shaikh Muhammad bin Salih al-Uthaimen (may Allah be merciful with him), is that it is paid to the poor only.

It is permissible to pay Zakaat-ul-Fitr to one poor person (even if one paid 10 Saa’ of food), or to divide it among several poor persons.



When Should Zakaat-ul-Fitr be Paid?

The Sadaqah of Ramadan has a special purpose and is therefore due at a specified time. As reported by ibn Abbas, the Prophet ﷺ said, “Sadaqat-ul-Fitr has been imposed as a purification for the one who is fasting and it purifies him from the evils of idle talk and anger while serving as a means of feeding the needy.” (*Abu Dawud, Al-Hakim*)

The Zakaat has been attributed to the Fitr, which starts after sunset on the night before Eid (i.e. the last day of fasting after Maghrib) till just before the Eid prayer.

The virtuous time for giving Zakaat-ul-Fitr is in the morning of the Eid day, before going to offer Salat-ul-Eid (the Eid prayer). According to the narration of Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) reported by *Al-Bukhari* and *Muslim*, the Prophet ﷺ ordered Zakaat-ul-Fitr to be given before the people go for Salat-ul-Eid. In another Hadith, Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said, “Allah’s Messenger ﷺ prescribed Zakaat-ul-Fitr as a purification of the fasting person from empty and idle talk, while serving as a food for the poor. Whoever delivers it before Salat-ul-Eid, will have it accepted as Zakaat-ul-Fitr, and if it is delivered after Salat-ul-Eid, then it is simply a general Sadaqah.” (*Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah, Ad-Darul-Qutni, Al-Hakim, Al-Baihaqi*)

Therefore, the Imam should delay offering Salat-ul-Eid in order to give enough time for paying the Zakaat.

The permissible time for giving Zakaat-ul-Fitr is one or two days prior to the Eid. Some of the Sahabah (companions of the Prophet ﷺ) used to even suggest paying a day or two before the Eid. However, if one wants the Sadaqah to be accepted as that paid for Ramadan, then it is preferable that it is paid before the Salat (prayer) on the day of the Eid.

There are also some legislative considerations one should be aware of concerning the night of al-Fitr. For example, whoever embraced Islam before the sunset of the night of the Eid must pay the Zakaat. Also, if the wife gives birth before the sunset, then the husband must pay Zakaat on this new dependent. Similarly, if any of these things happen after sunset, then he is excused from paying the Zakaat.

This also relates to someone who dies, i.e. if he dies after sunset then the Zakaat must be paid, but if he dies before sunset his heirs are excused from paying Zakaat on his behalf.



The Wisdom Behind Enjoining Zakaat-ul-Fitr?

We must keep in mind the purpose of Zakaat-ul-Fitr and the day of Eid. All Muslims, rich and poor, fast the month of Ramadan, seeking the Mercy of Allah the Exalted. Therefore, on the day of celebration, it is only just and proper that all Muslims have food to eat so that the normal disparities in wealth are aside. The giving of food is also a more personal and neighborly means of helping which encourages more interaction between the Muslims.

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ
وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَيَطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ
اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ



“The believers, men and women are Auliya (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another; they enjoin (on the people) Al-Ma’ruf (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that

Islam orders one to do), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. polytheism and disbelief of all kinds, and all that Islam has forbidden); they perform As-Salat, and give the Zakaat and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah will have His Mercy on them. Surely Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.” (At-Tawbah, 9:71)

It is a forbidden act to give Sadaqat-ul-Fitr after Salat-ul-Eid because it contradicts the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Give to the poor to enrich them so that they will not ask or be in need on that day (i.e. Eid-ul-Fitr).” Giving the Zakaat after the Salat means that part of the day has passed while the needy were still in need. To delay payment is to delay giving the poor their rights. However, if one pays Zakaat-ul-Fitr after Salat-ul-Eid deliberately, he will get the reward of an ordinary act of charity only, but he is considered a sinner because he has left an obligatory act. This verdict is based on the general rule which states: “If a man performed an act of worship at other than its fixed (appointed) time intentionally, then it will not be accepted from him.”



Question: If one delayed the payment of the Zakaat because of an excuse (e.g. he didn't know that it is Eid, or he asked (entrusted) someone to pay on his behalf because he was traveling and when he returned from his journey discovered that the man didn't pay it), what should one do in this case?

Answer: In this case, he should pay it as soon as he realizes that it has not been paid, even if he came to know after the Eid days, and he will not be considered a sinner. Compare this act with prayer, when the Prophet ﷺ said, “If anyone forgets offering a Salat (prayer) he should pray that prayer when he remembers it.”
(Agreed Upon)



Question: Is it permissible to pay Zakaat-ul-Fitr to the poor of another country?

Answer: It should be borne in mind that the person should pay his Zakaat-ul-Fitr to the poor of the country he is living in and in which Zakaat became obligatory on him by the sunset of the night of the Eid. Transferring it to another country may delay its distribution and in fact, it is contrary to the Sunnah, because neither the Prophet ﷺ nor the companions or the pious predecessors did that. However, it is permissible if one asked his family (in the other country) to pay Zakaat-ul-Fitr on his behalf instead of paying it in the country that he is living in, and that is in the case of need (e.g. the other country is poorer than the one he is living in), or in the case of necessity (e.g. if one has poor relatives in the other country). In such cases, it is better to pay them, and it will be considered as a Sadaqah as well as joining the kinship. This verdict is based on the following verse of:

﴿ إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ ﴾

“As-Sadaqat (here it means obligatory charity, i.e. Zakaat) are only for the poor (who do not beg), and Masakin (the poor who beg)...” (At-Tawbah, 9:60)

The poor and the Masakin who are mentioned in this verse are the poor that are everywhere.



How Much Zakaat-ul-Fitr is Due?

As far as the content of Zakaat-ul-Fitr, it is most generally agreed upon amongst the Ulamaa (the scholars) that it should be food products (i.e. food that is common to the region). As already mentioned, the amount should be at least one Saa' which is equal to four hand-fulls with the hand held out, palms up and slightly

cupped – and it is always better to add a little extra after that. It is approximately 2.5 kilograms. As mentioned before, the type of food should be that which is common to that particular area.

Sa'd b. Abu Sarh heard Abu Sa'id al-Khudri as saying: We, on behalf of young or old, free or slave, used to take out the Zakat of Fitr while the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was among us, in three kinds, one sa' of dates, one sa' of cheese, or one sa' of barley, and we continued to take that out till the time of Mu'awiya, for he saw that two mudds of wheat were equal to one sa' of dates. Abu Sa'id said: I would continue to take that out as before (i.e. one sa' of wheat). (*The Book of Zakat (Kitab Al-Zakat), Muslim – Book 5: Hadith 2156*)

However, if these kinds of food are not available (e.g. the food of the people of North Pole is only meat), then what should be given as Zakaat is the food that is common in the region and available as food (e.g. meat). Shaikh Muhammad bin Salih al-Uthaimin (may Allah be merciful with him) was asked about the permissibility of giving macaroni as Zakaat-ul-Fitr. He answered, "It is permissible as long as it is uncooked." Accordingly, a wide variety of food could be used such as flour, rice, etc. (e.g. if wheat flour is given, the weight should be equal to a Saa' of whole ground wheat). Also, it is a favorable act to give products of the best quality. Furthermore, it is the general opinion that money should not be given, because the Prophet ﷺ never made mention of Dinars or Dirhams in connection with Sadaqat-ul-Fitr, although they dealt with these things during that time.



The one who gives Sadaqat-ul-Fitr is thanking Allah the Exalted for His Bounty. Allah thus, grants the believer success in fasting and praying (Qiyaam). The Muslim ends the fasting by seeking the Barakah (blessing) and reward of Sadaqah.



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