

‘Īd – An Occasion of Happiness

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Allāh ﷻ, through His sheer Grace and Mercy only, grants us many moments and days of happiness throughout our lives. When we hear of engagements and weddings, or of the birth of a child, or anticipate the day of ‘Īd, we experience joy in our hearts. Despite all our shortcomings, disobedience and subsequent unworthiness, He does not deprive us of such occasions of happiness. These occasions are unique in the sense that each individual, no matter what condition he is in, experiences happiness to some degree at the mere thought of their arrival. This happiness is from Allāh ﷻ alone, as He is the one in whose control lies joy and sorrow.

One such occasion is the day of ‘Īd. However, when we entertain the thoughts of happiness that surround ‘Īd, many disobediences run through our minds. As far as the Dīnī aspects surrounding ‘Īd are concerned, only a handful are thought of, and even those, as mere rituals. At most, people will think of certain sunan of ‘Īd and ‘Īd ṣalāh, and on ‘Īd-ul-Aḏḥā the uḏḥiyah (qurbānī). Thereafter, Zuhr, ‘Aṣr and the remaining ṣalāhs of the day are almost unheard of. Even the Fajr ṣalāh is missed by many especially when the days of ‘Īd fall in the summer months in the UK, because it is too early for them to make an effort to perform it. To perform the five times daily ṣalāh is farḍ (compulsory) upon each and every believer, whilst the ‘Īd ṣalāh is at most wājib, which, although of great importance, is albeit of a lower degree than farḍ. Therefore, being punctual in fulfilling a wājib whilst leaving aside a farḍ, is not the way a Muslim behaves, especially on an occasion of happiness.

The happiness surrounding ‘Īd-ul-Aḏḥā is based upon the great life of Sayyidunā Ibrāhīm ؑ, in which he was tested numerous times by Allāh ﷻ, but never once did he waver or falter in his obedience to Him. He was tested during his youth; he was exiled by his father when he had no resources and was in need of his father’s support. But for Allāh ﷻ, he left him. Then again he was tested during his old age, when he was commanded to sacrifice his son Sayyidunā Ismā‘īl ؑ, when he needed him the most. Allāh ﷻ says,

When his Lord put Ibrāhīm to a test with certain Words, and he fulfilled them... (2:124)

It is this great life that we remember on the days of ‘Īd-ul-Aḏḥā, and we are made to understand by Allāh ﷻ that just as My Khalīl Ibrāhīm ؑ, who gave all sacrifices in order to carry out My commands, is being remembered throughout the world by millions of people, year in, year out, and will be remembered in the Hereafter, if you also live your lives according to My commands, I will grant you also honour and dignity both in this world and the Hereafter.

‘Īd in no way means that we enjoy ourselves as we like, disobeying Allāh ﷻ by watching movies, intermingling freely with the opposite gender, consuming ḥarām and generally neglecting our duties as Muslims. We should at all times, especially on this happy day of ‘Īd, purify our hearts from harbouring grudges, jealousy, hatred and ill-feelings towards our fellow Muslim brothers and sisters, which is

against the spirit of the way of our beloved Prophet ﷺ.

In contrast, we should have a greater sense of remembering Allāh ﷻ: the one who granted us this day of happiness. On the occasion of ‘Īd-ul-Fiṭr, Imām Abū Ḥanīfah ؑ would complete the recitation of the entire Qur’ān during the night, and another during the day, after having already completed its recitation 61 times over the month of Ramaḍān. Our salaf-uṣ-ṣāliḥīn (pious predecessors) would spend their days of ‘Īd in the obedience of Allāh ﷻ and in His remembrance, whereas we spend ours in His disobedience.

We should learn our lesson from the blessed sīrah of Ibrāhīm ؑ not to disobey Allāh ﷻ in the slightest, and submit totally to His command at every juncture in our lives, just like he ؑ did. If we do this, then we will acquire the proximity of Allāh ﷻ and every day of our lives will be a day of ‘Īd; a day of happiness and ecstasy. A person who gains the proximity of Allāh through obedience to Him experiences such happiness and ecstasy during every moment of his life, that in comparison to it the pleasures of the whole world amount to nothing. Moreover, the truth is that the pleasures we search for in the displeasure of Allāh are superficial, fake, and hollow. They are nothing but illusions. True pleasure lies in the connection and strength of relationship with Allāh ﷻ, in love for the Prophet ﷺ, and in following his teachings in all aspects of life.

It is this pleasure that our pious predecessors would experience. If that wasn’t the case, why would Sayyidunā Ibrāhīm ؑ have gone through so much for the sake of Allāh ﷻ? Why would Imām Abū Ḥanīfah ؑ have recited the Qur’ān so much, even on the day of ‘Īd? One of our great predecessors, Mawlānā Faḍl-ur-Raḥmān Ganjmurādābādī ؑ used to say that whenever he would go into prostration, he would not wish to raise his head again. Such was the feeling of ecstasy in worship and obedience.

Ibrāhīm ibn Adham ؑ would say, “By Allāh! If the kings were to know the pleasure we are in, they would fight us with swords [to snatch it away from us].”

Abū Sulaymān Ad-Dārānī ؑ would say, “The worshippers of the night in their worship experience more pleasure than those who engage in futility.”

This was the feeling of ecstasy and pleasure that compelled Bilāl ؓ to say, “Aḥad, Aḥad (Allāh is One, Allāh is One)” despite being brutally tortured.

This lesson that we learn at the occasion of ‘Īd-ul-Aḏḥā, should be revised each time Allāh ﷻ grants us any kind of happiness. At occasions of happiness we should not forget our Compassionate Creator ﷻ who has granted us the happiness. May Allāh ﷻ grant us all the pleasure of His obedience, and keep us steadfast on the creed of Sayyidunā Ibrāhīm ؑ and his immense will of submission. Āmīn.

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