Sacrifice - Eidul_Adha

In the Name of Allah the Compassionate the Merciful

Muslim Brothers

Muslim Sisters, and

Muslim Children:

Today as our Muslim brothers and sisters in Hajj complete all the rites and procedures of Hajj, we all celebrate Eid, Eid-ul-Adha, the Eid of Sacrifice.

We take this opportunity to supplicate to Allah that He accept their Hajj, forgive their sins, bring them all safely to their homes, make their Hajj reach their hearts, change them into strong believers, and make them useful to our Islamic Ummah.

We also take this opportunity to supplicate to Allah to make us among those who will be blessed by performing Hajj and Umra in future years In'sha'Allah.

Several aspects of this Holy occasion are worthy of our study and examination: I will briefly dicuss three of them, the hardship of Hajj, the Sacrifice of Prophet Ibraheem, pbuh, and the meaning of Eid.

(The hardships of Hajj)

Hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam which is a duty for the adult Muslims who can afford it both physically and financially.

Allah Says in Surat Al-Imran (3:97)



the translation of the meaning is: "Pilgrimage is a duty people owe to Allah -- Those who can afford the way (journey)."

In performing Hajj, a Muslim suffers many hardships. He takes out of his time, his money, his effort, and his health to perform this worship.

Examining our life on this earth, we see the same thing. There is always a mission, a goal, that we are to attain, yet there are always impeding factors that stand between us and that goal. And, those who are successful, do not let these impeding elements prevent them from reaching their goal and accomplishing the mission.

This is the way life is, and this is the way Islamic worship is as well. Islam is a way of life that makes worship part of life just like eating, studying, and raising our children. An integral part that blends with both aspects of our existence; physical and spiritual.

And, in Hajj we see the same picture in a more focused and concentrated form. The hardships we experience in Hajj are of the same kind we have to deal with every day. Yet, we have to deal with them, overcome them, and successfully accomplish our mission of sincere and devoted attachment to Allah and His way, simply worshipping Him.

Yes, in the midst of all these life hardships, we have to always remember Allah and worship Him sincerely, worship Him as if we see Him, because if we do not see Him, He sees us.

Yes, in Hajj, there are the hardships but there are the rewards as well. Rewards in this life and rewards in the hereafter.

We see a similar example to that in our daily prayers. In our prayer, as we take the time to do it, we feel the rewards of tranquillity and humbleness in our soles, we feel the rewards of renewal and strength in our hearts, and we know that the ultimate reward of Allah's Satisfaction is awaiting us.

Physical effort is required in performing Hajj: travel in itself is a physical hardship, Tawaf, walking and rushing between Safa and Marwa, the Rajm (stoning) of Iblis, and you do that in an ocean of humans. An unparalleled crowd

Many other hardships of financial expenses, travel, dress code, and other restrictions

And one wonders: How can a Muslim, in the midst of all these hardships and with all such suffering, devote himself to the worship of Allah and perform pilgrimage? The answer to this question is simple if we consider the case of the other worships that Allah commanded us to do, also if we were to consider any meaningful action or task that we are to accomplish

There is always a mission, a goal, that we are to attain, yet there are always impeding factors that stand between us and that goal. And, those who are successful, do not let these impeding elements from preventing them from reaching the goal and accomplishing the mission

Success never comes easily whichever success we talk about

In education and studies, one has to spend these long hours of reading, working out practices and exercises, and research to get the knowledge he seeks

In professional life, it takes tremendous effort, trials and error, and many hardships and disappointments, before one reaches any degree of success

In raising children, it takes out of parents time, comfort, money, and emotions, to do a sincere effort leading to a successful mission

This is the way life is, and this is the way Islamic worships are as well. Islam is a way of life that makes worship part of our lives just like eating, studying, and raising our children. An integral part that blends with both aspects of our existence; physical and spiritual

In our daily prayers, we take out of our time and effort to do them on time under all circumstances and conditions to strengthen our belief and our ties to Allah, as we worship Him

In fasting, we struggle with hunger and thirst as we strengthen our belief and our ties to Allah, as we worship Him

In Zakat, we pay out of our wealth, we help others as we help ourselves, and in this way again we worship Allah

In all these are hardships, but there is a goal, and our objective is the successful achievement of the mission. And, in going through these hardships, we learn how to deal with them and how to overcome them. And that makes us better humans and stronger Muslims

And, in Hajj, is a greater hardship, if we examine the fact that it is only mandatory for those who can afford it

In Hajj, we see a great wisdom, as we struggle with all the hardships of Hajj, we are to sincerely worship Allah

The goal is the worship and the impeding factors are those of our daily lives

A concentrated dose of hardship we experience in this Hajj yet it is the same kind we have to deal with every day

And we have to deal with it, overcome it, and successfully accomplish our mission of sincere and devoted attachment to Allah and His way, simply worshipping Him

Yes, in the midst of all this life hardships like working for income and dealing with people, we have got to remember Allah at all times and worship Him sincerely, worship Him as if we see Him, because if we do not see Him, He sees us

In Hajj, we live the same circumstances in a comprehensive, concentrated and intensified form

And as we examine ourselves as we practice the other aspects of our lives and worships. As we achieve our goal and feel the rewards, benefits, and joy of success. We then feel that every effort that was put in the process was worth it

In our prayer, as we take the time to do it, we feel the rewards of tranquillity and humbleness in our soles, we feel the rewards of renewal and strength in our hearts, and we know that the ultimate reward of Allah's Satisfaction is awaiting us

And we know then that we did not waste our time or our effort in performing this prayer

And in Hajj, the same happens. Those of us who have been through it know exactly that. Yes there are hardships in Hajj, but there are the rewards as well. Rewards in this life and rewards in the hereafter

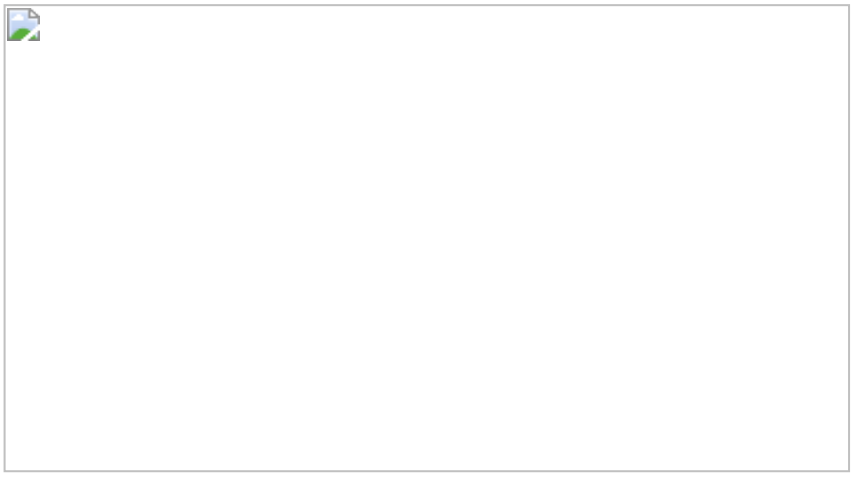
May Allah help us all realize these rewards and enable us to his way and to his satisfaction

And today we celebrate Eid and do takbeer to Allah. We praise Him and thank Him for his bounties and His generous giving. May Allah allow us to observe it next year while we and the Islamic Ummah are blessed by his bounties.

And today as we joy for our brothers and sisters who completed their Hajj and as we joy for the coming of Eid, we are reminded of the great *sacrifice of Prophet Ibraheem, pbuh:* in his story is a great insight for us.

Allah says in Surat Assaffat (37:100-111)





the translation of the meaning is:

"O my Lord! grant me A righteous (son)!" So, We gave him the good news of a forbearing son. Then, when the son reached the age of serious work with him, he said: "O my son! I have seen in a dream that I offer you in sacrifice: now see what is your view!" The son said: "O my father! do as you are commanded: you will find me, if Allah so wills, one of the steadfast." So when they had both submitted to Allah, and he had laid him prostrate on his forehead, We called out to him, "O Ibraheem! you have already fulfilled the dream!" -- Thus, indeed do We reward those who do right. For this was a clear trial -- And We ransomed him with a momentous sacrifice: And We left for him among generations to come in later times: peace and salutation to Ibraheem!" Thus indeed do We reward those who do right, for he was one of our believing servants."

An aging man was about to sacrifice his only son as he believed that this was a command from Allah. Neither he nor his son argued, disputed, nor even doubted the message, nor did they hesitate in the execution.

That was a test from Allah, and what a test, a great one given to two great people.

That was Prophet Ibraheem, a great prophet, who was willing to sacrifice his son as he had sacrificed his father's love before. As he rejected idolatry, he gave away love and support and even peace with his father and his people, a big sacrifice for the sake of Allah.

Allah says in His Holy Book (29:2,3)



the translation of the meaning of which is:

"Do people think that they will be left alone on saying, "We believe," and that they will not be tested? We did test those before them, and Allah will certainly know those who are true from those who are false.".

Sacrifice is the act of giving up our desires and wants in order to conform to Allah's commands and prescriptions.

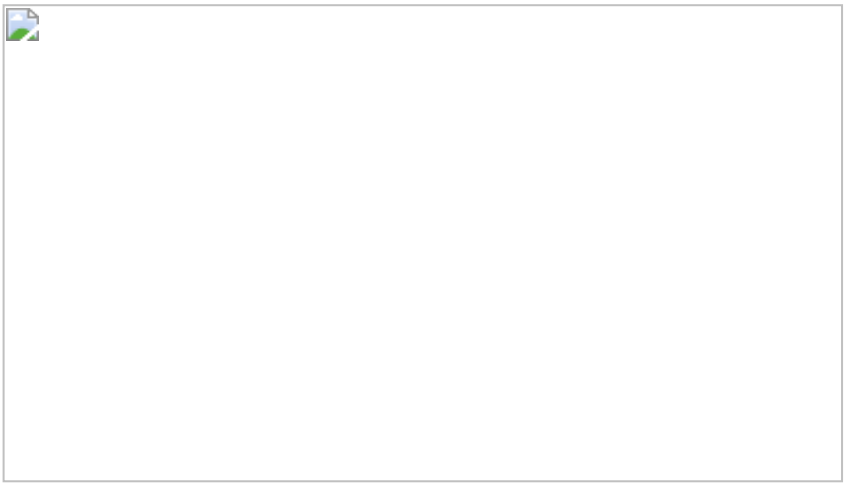
And, sacrifice has many forms. Following the straight path implies sacrifices.

Maintaining worships involves sacrifice. Spending money, effort, and time to serve Islam and Muslims involves sacrifice.

Being an active member of one's community is a sacrifice.

Being a good example to be followed is a sacrifice.

Allah says in His Holy Book (3:195)



the translation of the meaning of which is:

"And their Lord has accepted of them, and answered them: "Never will I suffer to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female: you are members of one another: those who have immigrated and left their homes, and were driven out therefrom, and suffered harm in My Cause, and fought, and were slain,-- verily, I will blot out from them their iniquities, and admit them into Gardens with rivers flowing beneath;-- a reward from Allah, and from Allah is the best of rewards.".

This Ayah demonstrates a typical sacrifice pattern for the early Muslims, the companions of the prophet, pbuh. They were tortured and they were exposed to many forms of suffering. They sacrificed a lot for the sake of Islam and in Allah's Cause. And their reward is the pleasure of Allah and His Gardens. They are no doubt the true winners.

And today, and in this beautiful occasion of Eid we ask ourselves, how much do we appreciate the sacrifice of Prophet Ibraheem and his son Isma'il, pbut, and how much do we appreciate the sacrifice of Prophet Mohammad, pbuh, and his companions.

Brothers and sisters, how much is our sacrifice, and are we doing enough in the Cause of Allah, and are we worthy of Allah's pleasure and rewards.

And, here we are on Eid day, and we are supposed to joy and enjoy, yet our Islamic Ummah is undergoing a great hardship. Our Muslim brothers and sisters are severed and oppressed. Our hearts are full of sorrow for what we have witnessed and are witnessing.

Muslims everywhere are suffering what some might call the utmost of humility, the utmost of weakness, the utmost of division and the utmost of defeat.

Well, let us examine the example at the early Muslims in Mecca. They were weak as a force, yet they were strong in belief,-- they were few in number, yet they were accounted for,-- they were humiliated by the idol worshippers, yet they kept their pride in what they stood for: Islam.

It was their belief that gave them the strength to endure, and it was their belief that gave the courage to fight back, and it was their belief that won them Allah's pleasure and chamionship.

In Badr, they were but a few in number, in skill, and in arms and supplies, but they were full of belief.

True believers as Allah promised, no fear will be on them nor will they ever grieve.

And, if we become those true Muslims that understand and apply Islam, we will have no fear on us and we will never grieve.

If we become those true believers, we would be certain to win Allahs chamionship against enemies of number and arms.

Before we ask, when will we have the number, the wealth, the influence, or the fire power, we need to be certain that we have the belief, the piety, and the Islamic character.

The Muslims in Badr did not have the number, the wealth, the influence, or the fire power, but most certainly, they had the belief, the piety, and the Islamic character, and that is why Allah gave them victory.

Our problem is that we have a week belief in Allah's promises to us that: if we try He will help us.

We seem to have a week belief in His way which He has prescribed to us in His Book.

Instead, we are eager to correct the structure and the system before correcting the individuals: ourselves.

We do not seem to recognize that a sound and healthy structure can only be built using sound and healthy elements or individuals.

There is no way out of the long and the hard way of achieving victory over the enemies of Allah.

The road to that victory is full of hardships and sacrifices and we have to go through them.

We will have to sacrifice our money, our time, our lives, and our worldly ambitions to pay the price of this victory.

This victory will never come about while we are away from Islam taking from it what ourselves desire and leaving out what contradict our ambitions and desires.

This war is for every one of us and, is not only for those who are affected directly by the oppression and the hardships.

And, this war will only be won through Islam and by Islam. And by understanding Islam in its true meaning.

Islam is not just doing prayers, fasting and Zakat.

Islam is doing Ibadat right, may Allah accept them from us.

Islam is being active in one's society in the way of Allah.

Islam is becoming strong, and to stand opposed to oppression and evil Islam is to fight hypocrisy in our souls and in Muslim lines.

Islam is to become the example of quality humans Allah intended for Muslims.

Islam is not to associate with Allah any such as our wealth our families, or our personal ambitions.

Islam is to propagate Allah's word with confidence and pride.

Islam is not to be ashamed of what we believe in, of our Islamic identity, and of our Islamic practices.

Brothers and Sisters in Islam, let us get back to Islam, in its true meaning, and its true form.

Allah says in a Hadeeth Qudsi, "I am as My servant thinks I am (or expects Me to be)."

Why do not we believe Him and believe in Him?

Why do not we believe that He will champion us, so He will champion us?

Why do not we believe that His mercy will include us, so His mercy will include us.

Why do not we believe in His way, so He may guide us to it.

Brothers and Sisters in Islam, let us get back to Allah and His way, for that Allah might forgive us, and may Allah's mercy and blessings include us.

Aqool qawly haza wa-astighfur Allah lee wa lakum.

Alhamdu'lillah, wassalatu wassalamu ala rasulillah.

(The meaning of Eid)

Brothers and Sisters in Islam Today is Eid, and we have the right to joy.

We have the right to have fun and play This is one aspect of Eid that we are entitled to. So, let us have fun and play not in waste and not in vain And, I warn myself and warn you from trifling, abuse, and committing the forbidden. I remind myself and remind you of Allah, his Prophets, His Messengers, and His Books.

I remind myself and remind you that Allah is Powerful and Just.

"Then shall anyone who has done an atom's weight of good see it, and anyone who has done an atom weight of evil shall see it." (99:7,8)

But Eid is also an occasion of Takbeer and worship. As we declare 'Allahu Akbar,' we are renewing our committment to the greatness of Allah. And as we declare 'La Nabud Illa Iyyah,' we are renewing our committment to worshipping no one but Him: not our lives, not our families, not our wealth, not our jobs, and certainly not our desires. And as we declare 'Mukhliseen LahuDeen Walaw Karihalkafiroon,' we are renewing our committment to perfection and sincerity in carrying on our Islamic duties and our roles as vicegerents and deputies to Allah on this earth.

Brothers and Sisters in Islam: Let us remember that Allah is ever-watching over us to guide us to the straight path as well as to judge us in The hereafter.

In the Hadith Qudsi: "When Allah decreed the Creation, He pledged Himself by writing in His Book which is laid down with Him: My mercy prevails over My wrath." Brothers and Sisters of Islam: Let us not despair from Allah's mercy, He is the Oft-Forgiving, Full of Loving-Kindness.

Let us All supplicate and make Dua'a to Allah, may Allah Accept our supplication.

<<DUA'A>>

Dear Muslims: As we get up now to shake each other's hand or embrace each other, wishing one another an Eid Mubarak, as we do that let us do it in sincerity, with clean hearts towards each other, and with a positive attitude of brotherhood and sisterhood. May Allah help us to put our hearts together as the heart of one person.

Eid Mubarak to All of You, Wassalamu Alaykum Warahmatullah Wabarakatuh.

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