

The Quran and its Message

The articles on this website may be reproduced freely as long as the following source reference is provided:

Joseph A Islam www.quransmessage.com

سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ

Salamun Alaikum (Peace be upon you)

EID

Joseph A Islam

Copyright © 2009 Joseph A Islam: Article last modified 13th September 2011

Unknown to many Muslims, the term 'Eid' has never been used by the Quran to mark the end of Ramadan or to celebrate the conclusion of the fasting period.

Before we take a look at how the Quran uses the word 'Eid', it is to be noted that there is absolutely nothing wrong with coming together, participating in wholesome festivities within social groups and upholding traditions which don't impinge on Islamic values. Eid is no different.

However, to understand these festivities such as 'Eid' as being part of 'ordained' religion instituted by God, when there is absolutely no support for this in the Quran, is quite a different matter.

Albeit an extremely pleasant festivity, it is to be appreciated that Eid remains a 'traditional' celebration and not a 'religious' one ordained by the Quran.

For example, the requirements to fast in the month of Ramadan, to pay 'zakat' and to establish 'salah' are not learnt by 'prophetic sunna' or tradition. These are clear directives instituted by the Quran as are many other prescriptive laws and edicts. There is absolutely no 'religious' prescription to celebrate 'Eid' in the Quran.

The reason for fasting in the month of Ramadan is also at times misunderstood. The Quran makes it absolutely clear that the reason for fasting is to magnify the greatness of God in that He has guided believers by way of the Quran and to render Him thanks.

002:185

...and (He desires) that you should complete the number and that you should exalt the greatness of God for His having guided you and that you may give thanks"

USING ISOLATED QURANIC VERSES TO JUSTIFY THE RELIGIOUS REQUIREMENT FOR THE EID FESTIVITY

010.057-58

"O mankind! There has come to you a direction / instruction / admonition (**Arabic: mawizatun**) from your Lord and a healing for what is in your breasts, and for those who believe, a guidance and a Mercy. Say "In the bounty of God and in His Mercy, in that let them rejoice (**Arabic: yafrahu**)": That is better than the (wealth) they hoard"

It is asserted by some Muslims, that the above verse by way of encouraging believers to rejoice, commands them to participate in the festivity of Eid as an occasion to celebrate the revelation of the Quran.

Quite apart from the above verse having a general context, where believers are asked to rejoice (on no specific day) for the guidance given, there is absolutely no Quranic justification to make use of this verse to support the religious requirement for a dedicated day of Eid.

Furthermore, the word 'Eid' is **well known** to the Quran and is not the term used here.

COMMEMORATING THE 'LAST SUPPER' - A CHRISTIAN FESTIVAL

The term 'Eid' has only been used **once in the entire Quran** and possibly in the context of the Eucharist which is the Christian ceremony which commemorates the Biblical Last Supper of Prophet Jesus. ^(pbuh) According to the New Testament, the festival is celebrated by Prophet Jesus's ^(pbuh) followers as per his instructions to remember him.

According to the Quran, Prophet Jesus ^(pbuh) in response to an initial request made by his disciples (5:112), prayed to Almighty God that He send from heaven a table spread (with food) as a festival (Eid). This festival would constitute a sign from God from the 'first to the last of them'

005.114

"Said Jesus the son of Mary: "O God our Lord! Send us from heaven a table spread, that there may be for us **a festival (Arabic: Eid(an))** for the first and the last of us and a sign from You; and provide for our sustenance, for You are the best Sustainer (of our needs)."

أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْنَا مَا يَدَّةُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ تَكُونُ لَنَا عِيدًا لِأَوَّلِنَا وَآخِرِنَا وَآيَةً

Eid (an.)

Despite fasting being ordained in the month of Ramadan for the believers to render thanks to God for His guidance, many Muslims still stand aloof from studying the Quran and extracting its message. This somewhat dismissive approach leaves them oblivious to the Quran's real contents, its exquisite arguments, guidance, directives and at the mercy of religious leaders.

In effect, the very purpose of fasting seems to be neglected. It is quite one thing to thank God for His guidance by virtue of revealing the Quran and quite another to put that very Quran aside in a nonchalant manner.

More pertinent questions to be asked at the end of the fasting period would be:

- Did one study the Quran, its verses, its content and ardently seek guidance from it? or did many attempt to read and listen to it in a language many Muslims don't even comprehend? (Please see related article below).
- Did one do 'Tadabbur' with the Quran as instructed by it? 'Tadabbur' 4:82, 23:68, 38:29, 47:24 i.e. research / ponder intently till the matter is clear.
- Did one feel spiritually renewed and cleansed after reading, reflecting and pondering over the Quranic verses?
- Did one acquire a sense of patience, humility, abstention from worldly lusts and did one increase in God consciousness?

In the end, did one really fulfil the purpose of 'Ramadan', the reason why it received the title 'blessed' and why one fasted?

FINAL THOUGHTS

So why do Muslims really celebrate Eid?

Has the Muslim 'Ummah' lost the true essence of what may have once been a noble tradition, where celebrations were solely for thanking God for the Quran after reading, studying its content and gaining God consciousness?

As true essence and spiritual meanings possibly become obfuscated in what are known as 'religious' traditions, quite ironically, it takes guidance from the Quran to take one back to first principles.

Related Article:

- (1) [Why was the Quran revealed in Arabic?](#)

[Joseph Islam](#)

© 2010 Quransmessage.com All Rights Reserved