

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

Hazrat Ameer's Eid ul Adha Message

(1434 Hijrah, October 2013)

لَنْ يَنَالِ اللَّهُ لُحُومَهَا وَلَا دِمَائُهَا وَلَكِنْ يَنَالُهُ التَّقْوَىٰ مِنْكُمْ كَذَلِكَ سَخَّرَهَا لَكُمْ

لِتُشْكِرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُمْ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

Not their flesh, nor their blood, reaches Allah, but to Him is acceptable observance of duty on your part. Thus has He made them subservient to you, that you may magnify Allah for guiding you aright. And give good news to those who do good (to others). (Al Hajj 22:37)

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Assalaam-o-Alaikum Wa Rakhmatullahi Wa Barakaato Hoo.

As I wish you a Very Happy *Eid ul Adha*, I would like to remind you through this message that the main aim of human life is to foster nearness to Allah through prayer and sacrifice. Verse 2 of Chapter 108, *Al Kausar* states:

فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَانْحَرْ ﴿٢﴾

So pray to your Lord and sacrifice.

The *Hajj* (Pilgrimage) is a means of reminding us of these two important aspects of expression of our desire to be close to Allah. The acts of devotion that the Muslims perform during the *Hajj* are only an outward expression of the deeper spirit that they signify.

As we celebrate *Eid ul Adha*, it is important to remind ourselves of the Qur'anic verse which I have cited above. The most important aspect of all Islamic devotional acts is the spirit that it conveys and with what intent it is performed.

The word *Qurbani* (sacrifice) is derived from the Arabic word which is akin to seeking *Qurb* or nearness to Allah. So it is imperative that we do not lose sight of the spirit behind the sacrifice. It reminds us of the need to sacrifice completely the animal passions that threaten to devour our souls and prevent our progress to attain the goal to be 'friends of Allah'. Today, as we slaughter the animal, we must remember to place a knife on the neck of the animal within us. The animal we sacrifice today has been made subservient to us to

remind us of the need to remain subservient to Him in whose hand is our life.

Today we pay homage to Hazrat Ibrahim (Abraham), may peace be upon him, who through his life full of sacrifices and unconditional submission to Allah became a role model for all mankind. More important than the outward celebration of *Eid* is the lesson to be learnt from the life of Hazrat Ibrahim, may peace be upon him, making him our role model for piety, faith in Allah and steadfastness in all trials. The ultimate submission to Allah's will was his willingness to sacrifice his son Hazrat Ismael, may peace be upon him. This son had been gifted to him in his old age as an answer to his prayers. Thus, when tried, Hazrat Ibrahim, may peace be upon him, did not hesitate for a moment to sacrifice what was most precious to him, his son. Hazrat Ismail, may peace be upon him, was equally submissive to the command of Allah.

Eid, which signifies real and recurring happiness is, in the spiritual sense, only possible if we succeed in following the footsteps of Hazrat Ibrahim, may peace be upon him, and be always prepared to submit to Allah without any hesitation. We should always be prepared, like him, to succeed when tested. Today is the day to make a firm resolve that, when commanded by Allah, like him we should be able to say:

أَسْلَمْتُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

I submit myself to the Lord of the worlds. (Al Baqarah 2:131)

I wish you a Very Happy *Eid* and pray that we will be able to grasp and follow the real spirit of *Eid* and sacrifice.

Aameen!

عید مبارک

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14 October 2013