

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

Hazrat Ameer's Eid ul Adha Message

Zil Hajj 1435, October 2014

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Assalaamo Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakaato Hoo

إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ رَبُّهُ أَسْلِمْ ۖ قَالَ أَسْلَمْتُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٣١﴾

When his Lord said to him, Submit, he said: I submit myself to the Lord of the worlds. (2:131)

لَنْ يَنَالَ اللَّهُ لِحُومَهَا وَلَا دِمَاءُهَا وَلَكِنْ يَنَالُهُ التَّقْوَىٰ مِنْكُمْ ۚ كَذَلِكَ سَخَّرَهَا لَكُمْ لِتُكَبِّرُوا

اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَيْتُمْ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

Neither their flesh, nor their blood, reaches Allah, but to Him is acceptable observance of duty on your part. Thus has He made them (the animals) subservient to you, that you may magnify Allah for guiding you aright. And give good news to those who do good (to others). (22:37)

Eid ul Adha is here, reminding us again of the spirit of sacrifice embodied by Hazrat Ibrahim and Hazrat Ismail (may Allah be pleased with them). Every person, irrespective of age, joins the *Eid* festivity, having his own reason to celebrate this day; the reasons range from physical joy to spiritual experiences. Allah has blessed us with physical senses to express the joy and happiness we experience. Whilst such joy is confined only to the physical being for some, in Islam the expression of joy must be spiritual as well. If we analyse the acts of devotion associated with *Eid ul Adha* we see them in two distinct categories. Firstly, there is the physical and community aspect: the food, dressing up, wishing one another a Happy Eid and going out to meet friends and family. Secondly, the spiritual aspect which is more important and conveys the real meaning of this blessed occasion. This includes the *Eid* prayer and sacrifice of an animal. In the prayer there are additional *takbirs* of 'Allah o Akbar' (Allah is the Greatest of all) repeated seven and five times in the first and second *rakkah* respectively. This in itself may amount to a mere utterance of words. However, it could be a real spiritual experience if we visualise Allah's greatness and compare it with our own insignificance, bringing to mind each time we say *Allah o Akbar* that He is the Greatest of all beings and how insignificant we are in comparison; removing the

ego of self, putting an end to all 'I-ism' and replacing it with just the 'One-ness' and Greatness of Allah in our hearts.

As regards the sacrifice of an animal, Allah has already made it plain in the verse cited above that if the spirit of the sacrifice does not enter our minds as we slaughter an animal, then merely shedding its blood and having its meat does not achieve its real purpose, which is nearness to Allah. The real spirit is that, as we place a knife on the throat of the animal, we must get the feeling of our subservience to our Creator in Whose hand is our life and Who could take it away from us at any time that He wishes. We must live in His service every moment of our lives and be prepared to lay down our lives in submission as commanded by Him:

وَلَا تَكُفِّرُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

... *And die not unless you are in submission.* (3:101)

The animal is sacrificed in memory of the acceptance by Allah Ta'ala of the spirit of sacrifice demonstrated by Hazrat Ibrahim, who was prepared to sacrifice his son, Ismail, in submission to His command. Only when we sacrifice what is dearest to us, as also our desires and the 'animal' within us that the real spirit of the animal sacrifice will be achieved. The actual spirit of sacrifice is to demonstrate our unconditional subservience to Allah, which is real happiness, the literal meaning of *Eid*.

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Let us resolve on this *Eid* day that we will live the rest of our lives in submission to Allah by obeying all his commands and thus make our lives truly happy and live the real spirit of *Eid*.

As we celebrate, let us not forget those who are in great need of our prayers. The people tried by natural disasters like famine, floods, disease and by the disunity and turmoil caused by wars, protests and misguided ventures in the name of religion. May Allah guide us all to play our part in making this world a better place for our children. *Aameen*.

Please remember me in your prayers as I pray for you.

A VERY HAPPY EID UL ADHA TO YOU ALL

Professor Dr. Abdul Karim Saeed
Ameer and President

Worldwide Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement

30 September 2014