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WHAT EID MEANS TO MUSLIMS

EID AL-ADHA

The second Eid is Eid ul Adha, which means “Festival of Sacrifice” and occurs two months after Eid’ul Fitr in which Muslims sacrifice animals for the sake of Allah. The date of Eid al-Adha also varies in accordance with the Islamic lunar calendar, falling on the tenth day of Dhu al-Hijjah (the twelfth month).

Eid ul Adha is known as the greater Eid and commemorates the willingness of the Prophet Abraham to sacrifice his son Ishmael as an act of obedience to Allah at which point Allah showed great mercy by switching a ram with Ishmael at the last moment of sacrifice. Muslims believe that the very moment Abraham raised the knife, Allah instructed him to stop, that Abraham had passed the test, and to replace Ishmael with a sacrificial ram. In Britain, anyone wishing to sacrifice a sheep is required to make arrangements for the sheep to be slaughtered humanely.

Eid ul Adha also marks the end of Hajj, the annual pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia. Hajj is the pilgrimage to Mecca, Islam’s holiest site, and is an integral part of the Muslim faith. According to the Koran, all Muslims who can afford to should make the journey to Saudi Arabia at least once in their lifetime. Every year, at least two million Muslims will make the pilgrimage and stand before the Kaaba, a shrine built by Ibrahim, and pray to Allah. The prophet Muhammad Peace be upon him, said that a person who performs Hajj properly “will return as a newly born baby and hence free of all sins”.

Islam teaches Muslims how to celebrate Eid. The day begins with morning prayers, followed by visits to family and friends and the exchange of food and gifts. Muslims are obliged to share food and money with the poor so that they can take part in the celebrations. On these days, Muslims bathe and wear their best clothes. Even though fasting is not permitted on Eid days and food plays a big part in Eid, the major part of the celebration is not eating or drinking; rather, it is a prayer that brings Muslims together to remember Allah’s bounties and celebrate in his glory and greatness.



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