

Eid al-Adha

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Eid al-Adha (Arabic: عيد الأضحى *ʿīd al-aḍḥā* [ʕiːd æl ˈʔaðħæ] meaning "Festival of the sacrifice"), also called the **Feast of the Sacrifice** (Turkish: *Kurban Bayramı*; Bosnian: *Kurban Bajram*; Persian: عيد قربان, *Eid-e qorban*), the "Major Festival",^[1] the "Greater Eid", *Baqr'Eid* (Urdu: بقر عید), or *Tabaski* (West Africa), is the second of two religious holidays celebrated by Muslims worldwide each year. It honors the willingness of Abraham (Ibrahim) to sacrifice his promised son, Ishmael (Ismail)^a, as an act of submission to God's command, before God then intervened, through His angel Gabriel (Jibra'il) and informs him that his sacrifice has already been accepted. The meat from the sacrificed animal is preferred to be divided into three parts. The family retains one third of the share; another third is given to relatives, friends and neighbors; and the remaining third is given to the poor and needy.

In the lunar-based Islamic calendar, *Eid al-Adha* falls on the 10th day of Dhu al-Hijjah and lasts for four days.^[2] In the international (Gregorian) calendar, the dates vary from year to year, drifting approximately 11 days earlier each year.

Eid al-Adha is the latter of the two Eid holidays, the former being Eid al-Fitr. The basis for the observance comes from the 196th *ayah* (verse) of Al-Baqara, the second *sura* of the Quran.^[3] The word "Eid" appears once in Al-Ma'ida, the fifth *sura* of the Quran, with the meaning "solemn festival".^[4]

Like Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha begins with a *Sunnah* prayer of two rakats followed by a sermon (*khutbah*). Eid al-Adha celebrations start after the descent of the *Hujjaj*, the pilgrims performing the *Hajj*, from Mount Arafat, a hill east of Mecca. Eid sacrifice may take place until sunset on the 13th day of Dhu al-Hijjah.^[5] The days of Eid have been singled out in the Hadith as "days of remembrance". The takbir (days) of Tashriq are from the Fajr prayer of the 9th of Dhu al-Hijjah up

عيد الأضحى

Eid al-Adha

"Feast of the Sacrifice"



Blessings for Eid al-Adha.

Observed by Muslims

Type Islamic

Significance

- Commemoration of Ibrahim (Abraham)'s willingness to sacrifice his young first-born and only son in obedience of a command from God
- Marks the end of the annual *Hajj* to Mecca

Celebrations

- Firstly offering Eid salat in Eid gah
- Gatherings of family and friends
- Meals, especially lunches and late breakfasts (brunches)
- Wearing new clothes
- Gift-giving
- Giving eidie to kids as a token of love

to the Asr prayer of the 13th of Dhu al-Hijjah (5 days and 4 nights). This equals 23 prayers: 5 on the 9th–12th, which equals 20, and 3 on the 13th.^[6]

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Observances

- Eid prayers
- Sacrifice of, usually, a sheep, cow, goat, buffalo or camel
- Donating one-third of the sacrifice meat to friends and neighbors
- Donating one-third or more of the sacrifice meat to the poor and needy

Begins	10 Dhu al-Hijjah
Ends	13 Dhu al-Hijjah
Date	Q4121217
2014 date	5 October
2015 date	23 September
2016 date	11 September
Related to	<i>Hajj · Umrah · Eid al-Fitr</i>

Other names



Eid al-Adha celebrations start at same time of the annual Hajj in Mecca.

The Arabic term "festival of the sacrifice", *ʿīd al-aḍḥā*/*ʿīd ul-aḍḥā* is borrowed into Indo-Aryan languages such as Hindi, Bengali, and Gujarati, Urdu and Austronesian languages, such as Malay and Indonesian (the last often spelling it as *Aidiladha* or *Iduladha*). Another Arabic word for "sacrifice" is *Qurbani* (Arabic: قربان), which is borrowed into Dari Persian and Standard Persian as عيد قربان (*Eyd-e Ghorbân*), or in Urdu as قربانی کی عید (Qorbani ki Eid) Tajik Persian as Иди Қурбон (*Idi Qurbon*), Kazakh as Құрбан айт (*Qurban ayt*), Uyghur as *Qurban Heyit*, and also into various Indo-Aryan languages such as Bengali as কোরবানির ঈদ (*Korbanir Eid*). Other languages combined the Arabic word *qurbān* with local terms for "festival", as in Kurdish (*Cejna Qurbanê*),^[7] Pashto د قربانی اختر (*da Qurbānai Axtar*), Turkish (*Kurban Bayramı*), Turkmen (*Gurban Bayramy*), Azeri (*Qurban Bayramı*), Tatar (*Qorban Bāyrāme*), Albanian (*Kurban Bajrami*), Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian and Macedonian (*Kurban bajram*, Курбан байрам), Russian (Курбан-байрам), Bulgarian (Курбан Байрам), Mandarin Chinese (古尔邦节 *Gúěrbāng Jié*), and Malaysian and Indonesian (*Hari Raya Korban*, *Qurbani*).

Eid al-Kabir, an Arabic term meaning "the Greater Eid" (the "Lesser Eid" being Eid al-Fitr),^[8] is used in Yemen, Syria, and North Africa (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt). The term was borrowed directly into French as *Aid el-Kebir*. Translations of "Big Eid" or "Greater Eid" are used in Pashto (لوی اختر *Loy Axtar*), Kashmiri (*Baed Eid*), Pakistani (*Barī Īd*), Hindustani (*Barī Īd*),

Tamil (*Peru Nāl*, "Great Day") and Malayalam (*Bali Perunnal*, "Great Day of Sacrifice"). Albanian, on the other hand, uses *Bajram(i) i vogël* or "the Lesser Eid" (as opposed to *Bajram i Madh*, the "Greater Eid", for Eid al-Fitr) as an alternative reference to Eid al-Adha. Some names refer to the fact that the holiday occurs after the culmination of the annual *Hajj*. Such names are used in Malaysian and Indonesian (*Hari Raya Haji* "Hajj celebration day", *Lebaran Haji*, *Lebaran Kaji*), and Tamil (*Hajji Peru Nāl*). In Urdu- and Hindi-speaking areas, the festival is also called *Bakr Īd*,^[9] stemming from the Hindustani word *bakrī*, "goat", because of the tradition of sacrificing a goat in South Asia. This term is also borrowed into other languages, such as Tamil *Bakr Īd Peru Nāl*.

Other local names include Mandarin Chinese 宰牲节 *Zǎishēng Jié* ("Slaughter-livestock Festival") as well as *Tfaska Tamoqqart* in the Berber language of Djerba, *Tabaski* or *Tobaski* in Wolof,^{[10][11]} *Babbar Sallah* in Nigerian languages, *Pagdiriwang ng Sakripisyo* in Filipino and *ciida gawraca* in Somali. Eid al-Adha has had other names outside the Muslim world. The name is often simply translated into the local language, such as English *Feast of the Sacrifice*, German *Opferfest*, Dutch *Offerfeest*, Romanian *Sărbătoarea Sacrificiului*, and Hungarian *Áldozati ünnep*. In Spanish it is known as *Fiesta del Cordero* ("festival of the lamb").

Origin

According to Islamic tradition, approximately fourteen hundred years ago, the valley of Mecca (in present-day Saudi Arabia) was a dry, rocky and uninhabited place. God instructed Abraham to bring Hagar (Hājar), his Arabian (Adnan) wife, and Ishmael, his only child at the time, to Arabia from the land of Canaan.

As Abraham was preparing for his return journey back to Canaan, Hagar asked him, "Did God order you to leave us here? Or are you leaving us here to die." Abraham didn't even look back. He just nodded, afraid that he would be too sad and that he would disobey God. Hagar said, "Then God will not waste us; you can go". Though Abraham had left a large quantity of food and water with Hagar and Ishmael, the supplies quickly ran out, and within a few days the two began to feel the pangs of hunger and dehydration.

Hagar ran up and down between two hills called Al-Safa and Al-Marwah seven times, in her desperate quest for water. Exhausted, she finally collapsed beside her baby Ishmael and prayed to God for deliverance. Miraculously, a spring of water gushed forth from the earth at the feet of baby Ishmael. Other accounts have the angel Gabriel (Jibrail) striking the earth and causing the spring to flow in abundance. With this secure water supply, known as the Zamzam Well, they were not only able to provide for their own needs, but were also able to trade water with passing nomads for food and supplies.



Abraham and Isaac, 19th century.
Brooklyn Museum.

Years later, Abraham was instructed by God to return from Canaan to build a place of worship adjacent to Hagar's well (the Zamzam Well). Abraham and Ishmael constructed a stone and mortar structure – known as the Kaaba – which was to be the gathering place for all who wished to strengthen their faith in God. As the years passed, Ishmael was blessed with prophethood (*Nubuwwah*) and gave the nomads of the desert his message of submission to God. After many centuries, Mecca became a thriving desert city and a major center for trade, thanks to its reliable water source, the well of Zamzam.

One of the main trials of Abraham's life was to face the command of God to sacrifice his dearest possession, his only son. Upon hearing this command, he prepared to submit to God's will. During this preparation, Satan (Shaitan) tempted Abraham and his family by trying to dissuade them from carrying out God's commandment, and Abraham drove Satan away by throwing pebbles at him. In commemoration of their rejection of Satan, stones are thrown at symbolic pillars signifying Satan during the Hajj rites.

When Ishmael was about 13 (Abraham being 99), God decided to test their faith in public. Abraham had a recurring dream, in which God was commanding him to offer up for sacrifice – an unimaginable act – his son, whom God had granted him after many years of deep prayer. Abraham knew that the dreams of the prophets were divinely inspired, and one of the ways in which God communicated with his prophets. When the intent of the dreams became clear to him, Abraham decided to fulfill God's command and offer Ishmael for sacrifice.

Although Abraham was ready to sacrifice his dearest for God's sake, he could not just bring his son to the place of sacrifice without his consent. Ishmael had to be consulted as to whether he was willing to give up his life in fulfillment of God's command. This consultation would be a major test of Ishmael's maturity in faith; love and commitment for God; willingness to obey his father; and readiness to sacrifice his own life for the sake of God.

Abraham presented the matter to his son and asked for his opinion about the dreams of slaughtering him. Ishmael did not show any hesitation or reservation even for a moment. He said, "Father, do what you have been commanded. You will find me, Insha'Allah (God willing), to be very patient." His mature response, his deep insight into the nature of his father's dreams, his commitment to God, and ultimately his willingness to sacrifice his own life for the sake of God were all unprecedented.

When Abraham attempted to cut Ishmael's throat, he was astonished to see that Ishmael was unharmed and instead, he found a dead ram which was slaughtered. Abraham had passed the test by his willingness to carry out God's command.^{[1][12]}

This is mentioned in the Quran as follows:

100 "O my Lord! Grant me a righteous (son)!"

101 So We gave him the good news of a boy ready to suffer and forbear.

102 Then, when (the son) reached (the age of) (serious) work with him, he said: "O my son! I see in vision that I offer thee in sacrifice: Now see what is thy view!" (The son) said: "O my father! Do as thou art commanded: thou wilt find me, if Allah so wills one practising Patience and Constancy!"

103 So when they had both submitted their wills (to Allah), and he had laid him prostrate on his forehead (for sacrifice),

104 We called out to him "O Abraham!

105 "Thou hast already fulfilled the vision!" – thus indeed do We reward those who do right.

106 For this was obviously a trial—
 107 And We ransomed him with a momentous sacrifice:
 108 And We left (this blessing) for him among generations (to come) in later times:
 109 "Peace and salutation to Abraham!"
 110 Thus indeed do We reward those who do right.
 111 For he was one of our believing Servants.
 112 And We gave him the good news of Isaac – a prophet – one of the Righteous.

—Quran, sura 37 (As-Saaffat), ayat 100–112^[13]

Abraham had shown that his love for God superseded all others: that he would lay down his own life or the lives of those dearest to him in submission to God's command. Muslims commemorate this ultimate act of sacrifice every year during Eid al-Adha.

Eid prayers

Muslims go to the mosque to pray the prayer of the Eid.

Who must attend

According to some fiqh (traditional Islamic law) (although there is some disagreement).^[14]

1. Men should go to mosque—or a Eidgah (a field where eid prayer held)—to perform eid prayer; Salat al-Eid is *Wajib* according to Hanafi and Shia (Ja'fari) scholars, *Sunnah al-Mu'kkadah* according to Maliki and Shafi'i jurisprudence. Women are also highly encouraged to attend, although it is not compulsory. Menstruating women do not participate in the formal prayer, but should be present to witness the goodness and the gathering of the Muslims.^[15]
2. Residents, which excludes travellers.
3. Those in good health.

When is it performed

The Eid al-Adha prayer is performed any time after the sun completely rises up to just before the entering of *Zuhr* time, on the 10th of Dhu al-Hijjah. In the event of a *force majeure* (e.g. natural disaster), the prayer may be delayed to the 11th of Dhu al-Hijjah and then to the 12th of Dhu al-Hijjah.

The Sunnah of preparation

In keeping with the tradition of Muhammad, Muslims are encouraged to prepare themselves for the occasion of Eid. Below is a list of things Muslims are recommended to do in preparation for the Eid al-Adha festival:

1. Make *wudhu* (ablution) and offer *Salat al-Fajr* (the pre-sunrise prayer).
2. Prepare for personal cleanliness—take care of details of clothing, etc.
3. Dress up, putting on new or best clothes available.

Rituals of the Eid prayers

The scholars differed concerning the ruling on Eid prayers. There are three scholarly points of view:

1. That Eid prayer is *Sunnah mu'akkadah* (recommended). This is the view of Malik ibn Anas and Al-Shafi'i.
2. That it is a *Fard Kifaya* (communal obligation). This is the view of Abū Ḥanīfa.
3. That it is *Wajib* on all Muslim men (a duty for each Muslim and is obligatory for men); those who do not do it with no excuse are considered sinners. This is the view of Ahmad ibn Hanbal, and was also narrated from Abū Ḥanīfa.

Eid prayers must be offered in congregation. It consists of two *rakats* (units) with seven *Takbirs* in the first Raka'ah and five Takbirs in the second Raka'ah. For Sunni Muslims, Salat al-Eid differs from the five daily canonical prayers in that no *adhan* (call to prayer) or *iqama* (call) is pronounced for the two Eid prayers.^{[16][17]} The *salat* (prayer) is then followed by the *khutbah*, or sermon, by the Imam.

At the conclusion of the prayers and sermon, Muslims embrace and exchange greetings with one other (Eid Mubarak), give gifts (*Eidi*) to children, and visit one another. Many Muslims also take this opportunity to invite their non-Muslim friends, neighbours, co-workers and classmates to their Eid festivities to better acquaint them about Islam and Muslim culture.^[18]

The Takbir and other rituals

The Takbir is recited from the dawn of the ninth of Dhu al-Hijjah to the thirteenth, and consists of:^[19]

<i>Allāhu akbar, Allāhu akbar</i>	الله أكبر الله أكبر
<i>lā ilāha illā Allāh</i>	لا إله إلا الله
<i>Wallāhu akbar, Allāhu akbar</i>	الله أكبر الله أكبر
<i>wa li-illāhil-hamd</i>	والله الحمد

*God is the Greatest, God is the Greatest,
There is no deity but God
God is the Greatest, God is the Greatest
and to God goes all praise*

Multiple variations of this recitation exist across the Muslim world

Traditions and practices

Men, women and children are expected to dress in their finest clothing to perform Eid prayer in a large congregation in an open *waqf* ("stopping") field called Eidgah or mosque. Affluent Muslims who can afford to, i.e. *Malik-e-Nisaab*, sacrifice their best *halal* domestic animals (usually a cow, but can also be a camel, goat, sheep or ram depending on the region) as a symbol of Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his only son. The sacrificed animals, called *adhiya* (Arabic: أضحية, also known by its Persian term, *Qurbāni*), have to meet certain age and quality standards or else the animal is



Prayers in Comilla, Bangladesh can be seen attending Khutbah as part of the Eid al-Adha prayers on 7 November 2011.



A panorama in 12 folds showing Muslims returning from their Mosques after Eid prayers in the Mughal Empire

considered an unacceptable sacrifice. This tradition accounts for the slaughter of more than 100 million animals in only two days of Eid. In Pakistan alone nearly 10 million animals are slaughtered on Eid days costing over US\$3 billion.^[20]

The meat from the sacrificed animal is preferred to be divided into three parts. The family retains one third of the share; another third is given to relatives, friends and neighbors; and the remaining third is given to the poor and needy. Though the division is purely optional wherein either all the meat may be kept with oneself or may be given away to poor or needy, the preferred method as per sunnah of Muhammad is dividing it in three parts.

The regular charitable practices of the Muslim community are demonstrated during Eid al-Adha by concerted efforts to see that no impoverished person is left without an opportunity to partake in the sacrificial meal during these days.

During Eid al-Adha, distributing meat amongst the people, chanting the Takbir out loud before the Eid prayers on the first day and after prayers throughout the four days of Eid, are considered essential parts of this important Islamic festival. In some countries, families that do not own livestock can make a contribution to a charity that will provide meat to those who are in need.

Eid al-Adha in the Gregorian calendar

While Eid al-Adha is always on the same day of the Islamic calendar, the date on the Gregorian calendar varies from year to year since the Islamic calendar is a lunar calendar and the Gregorian calendar is a solar calendar. The lunar calendar is approximately eleven days shorter than the solar calendar. Each year, Eid al-Adha (like other Islamic holidays) falls on one of about 2–4 different Gregorian dates in different parts of the world, because the boundary of crescent visibility is different from the International Date Line.

The following list shows the official dates of Eid al-Adha for Saudi Arabia as announced by the Supreme Judicial Council. Future dates are estimated according to the Umm al-Qura calendar of Saudi Arabia.^[21] However, it should be noted that the Umm al-Qura is just a guide for planning purposes and not the absolute determinant or fixer of dates. Confirmations of actual dates by moon sighting are applied to announce the specific dates for both Hajj rituals and the subsequent Eid festival. The three days after the listed date are also part of the festival. The time before the listed date the pilgrims visit the Mount Arafat and descend from it after sunrise of the listed day.

Future dates of Eid al-Adha might face correction 10 days before the festivity, in case of deviant lunar sighting in Saudi Arabia for the start of the month *Dhul Hijja*. In many countries, the start of any lunar Hijri month varies based on the observation of new moon by local religious authorities, so the exact day of celebration varies by locality.

- 1418 (Islamic Calendar): 7 April 1998
- 1419 (Islamic Calendar): 27 March 1999
- 1420 (Islamic Calendar): 16 March 2000
- 1421 (Islamic Calendar): 5 March 2001
- 1422 (Islamic Calendar): 23 February 2002
- 1423 (Islamic Calendar): 12 February 2003
- 1424 (Islamic Calendar): 1 February 2004
- 1425 (Islamic Calendar): 21 January 2005

- 1426 (Islamic Calendar): 10 January 2006
- 1427 (Islamic Calendar): 31 December 2006
- 1428 (Islamic Calendar): 20 December 2007
- 1429 (Islamic Calendar): 8 December 2008
- 1430 (Islamic Calendar): 27 November 2009
- 1431 (Islamic Calendar): 16 November 2010
- 1432 (Islamic Calendar): 6 November 2011
- 1433 (Islamic Calendar): 26 October 2012
- 1434 (Islamic Calendar): 15 October 2013
- 1435 (Islamic Calendar): 5 October 2014
- 1436 (Islamic Calendar): 23 September 2015 (calculated)
- 1437 (Islamic Calendar): 11 September 2016 (calculated)
- 1438 (Islamic Calendar): 1 September 2017 (calculated)
- 1439 (Islamic Calendar): 21 August 2018 (calculated)
- 1440 (Islamic Calendar): 11 August 2019 (calculated)
- 1441 (Islamic Calendar): 31 July 2020 (calculated)
- 1442 (Islamic Calendar): 20 July 2021 (calculated)
- 1443 (Islamic Calendar): 18 July 2022 (calculated)

See also

- Binding of Isaac
- Phrixus

Notes

^aIslamic commentaries state Abraham's oldest and firstborn son, Ishmael, was asked to be sacrificed in the vision, and not his second son Isaac who was born later as one of the rewards for Abraham's fulfillment of his vision, contrary to the Old Testament narratives.^[22]

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External links

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