



In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

মুসলিম উম্মাহ অফ নর্থ আমেরিকা (মুনা)

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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MUNA Children 2021

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Valentine's day

Why we don't celebrate valentine's day

Firstly: it is not permissible to celebrate these innovated festivals, because it is an innovation for which there is no basis in Islam. It comes under the heading of the hadith of 'Aa'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her), according to which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Whoever introduces anything into this matter of ours that is not part of it will have it rejected."

Secondly: it involves imitating the kuffaar and copying them by venerating that which they venerate and respecting their festivals and rituals, and imitating them in something that is part of their religion. In the hadith it says: "Whoever imitates a people is one of them."

Thirdly: it results in evils and haraam things such as wasting time, singing, music, extravagance, unveiling, wanton display, men mixing with women, women appearing before men other than their mahrams, and other haraam things, or things that are a means that leads to immorality.

That cannot be excused by the claim that this is a kind of entertainment and fun. The one who is sincere towards himself should keep away from sin and the means that lead to it.

*Dear children, don't think that we have only two Eids for celebration in a year.

Every week we have a day of Eid. Allaahu Akbar! Do you know which day that is! That is Friday!

There are 52 weeks a year. So, do your math!

Ibn 'Abbas reported that Allaah's Messenger (Saw) said:

This day is the day of 'Eid. Allaah made this day for the Muslim, so the one who goes for Jum'ah should take shower, and if he has perfume then use from it, and use siwak.

[Hadith is in Ibn Maajah (1098) and is saheeh, see Saheeh Al-Jamee 2258.

May Allah protect us from this evil act. Ameen

Significance of the Month of Shaban

The month of Shaban is the 8th month of an Islamic calendar. There are a few months that hold a superior status as compared to other months and because of this, they are given more value and respect by the Muslims. One of such months is the month of Shaban. Shaban is considered one of the virtuous months for which we find particular instructions in the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). It is reported that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) used to fast most in the month of Shaban except the last few days of the month. Shaban is the month that comes immediately before the month of Ramadan. Shaban acts as a connection between the two blessed and sacred months of Rajab and Ramadan.

In this Holy month of Shaban actions of the people presented to Allah Almighty. Our beloved Prophet (SAW) used to fast repeatedly in this month. Aisha (RA) said that: "I never saw the Messenger of Allah fast for a complete month except for Ramadan, and I never saw him do more fasting in any month than he did in Sha`ban" (Al-Bukhari). In another hadith Prophet (PBUH) related to the significance of the month of Shaban in these words: "People neglect this month which is between Rajab and Ramadan, in this month the actions of the people are presented to Allah; so I like my deeds to be presented while I am fasting". (Abu Dawood)

The above-mentioned hadiths of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) give the importance of the fasting in the month of Shaban.

Fasting in the month of Shaban gives you a chance to start preparing for the month of Ramadan.

For fasting, you will have to wake up early on Fajr time, and spending a day without eating and drinking, will give you a clear idea of what it would take in order to successfully spend the blessed month of Ramadan.

May Allah give us the utmost love for such a month that meant so much to our beloved Prophet (SAW). May He give us the ability to fast abundantly in this month and committing good deeds and Muslim gain countless blessings from Allah Almighty in addition to receiving pardon and forgiveness.

April Fools' Day : Islamic View

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

April Fools' Day is a day for practical jokes, but in many places those jokes take the form of lies. Islam condemns lying. If lying is originally forbidden, then April Fools' would consequently be forbidden even if it is for just few minutes. It plays with people's trust.

Moreover, telling lies is bad conduct. It is not proper for righteous people and true believers; rather, it is a sign of hypocrisy, as the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said,

"The hypocrite has three characteristics: he tells lies, breaks his promise, and breaches the trust" (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).

The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) warned against lying for the purpose of entertaining people. He said, "Woe on anyone who speaks to entertain the people by lying, woe on him, woe on him..." (Abu Dawud, At-Tirmidhi, and An-Nasa'i)

The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) also said, "One is not considered a true believer till he abandons lying for fun and arguing even if he was telling the truth" (Ahmad and At-Tabarani).

Several Prophetic hadiths warned the Muslims against frightening others seriously or jokingly.

The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) is reported to have said, "It is not permissible for anyone to frighten a Muslim" (Abu Dawud)

Consequently, lying is forbidden in any form, and on this occasion (April Fools' Day) it is forbidden for four reasons:

- 1- The prohibition of lying which is confirmed by the Qur'an and the Sunnah.
- 2- The unwarranted grief or fear it may bring on a person or his entire family, even if only for one hour.
- 3- The betrayal of trust it entails
- 4- The emulation of a silly custom that is not ours, that of lying.

May Allah swt protect us from this evil act.

Isra and Meraj story

The Isra and Mi`raj, the Night Journey and the Ascension, is one of those miraculous stories that we need to know about Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) and Islam –especially when one special pillar of Islam was established then – our five daily prayers.

So, this is what had happened...

Beginning of the Journey

Our Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings upon him) was sleeping at the Ka`aba one night, late in the month of Rajab. He loved sleeping there as he could feel the serenity of this special place of worship.

That was until he was awoken by Angel Gabriel. The Prophet and the Angel had already known each other well enough, of course, and the Messenger of Allah instantly knew that there was a special message awaiting him, especially if the Angel visited him in the middle of the night!

Before he knew it, Prophet Muhammad set eyes on an animal. It looked much like a horse, but it had wings – yes a horse with wings! A flying horse, he must have thought. Imagine that, seeing such a creature nearby the Ka`aba. This was going to be a journey to remember.

Prophet Muhammad mounted Buraq – that was what the creature was called – and accompanied by Angel Gabriel they took a leap into the night sky – pass the clouds, pass the stars, into the darkness.

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) looked down and realized how far away he was from the ground, but he never felt scared, as he knew this was special journey with special lessons and that Allah the Almighty had planned all of this for him and all the generations of Muslims to come – yes, all the way until us.

Reaching Al-Aqsa mosque

When they descended back to earth, Prophet Muhammad realized that he had reached the Masjid in Jerusalem and there waiting for him were all the other Prophets who had come to teach Allah's religion way, way, way before Prophet Muhammad was appointed. They greeted each other and the Prophet led them in prayer.

What a great congregation that must have been – all these Messengers and Prophets praying together to worship Allah and Allah alone. Then Angel Gabriel approached Prophet Muhammad with two vessels – one with milk and one with wine, seeing which he would choose. The Prophet chose the milk and drank it – upon this, Angel Gabriel knew that the Prophet had passed a special test, because he had chosen the drink that was good and pure for him, and not the other one, which was forbidden on earth.

But the journey was not over yet. It was time to ascend to the Heavens.

Ascensions to Heaven

Angel Gabriel led Prophet Muhammad and Buraq once again, and they travelled upwards to the Heavens. I don't know how much more amazing a journey can be, considering the different levels of the skies when travelling into the night! It must have been a scene so picturesque that Prophet

Muhammad may have committed all to memory! After all, he was the only Prophet to have travelled this way...

As they moved into the Heavens, the Prophet met several of the other Prophets at each level and they exchanged their greetings of peace.

Just like us, we are all of one brotherhood of Islam – and Islam only allows us to give greetings of peace from one Muslim to another. Furthermore, they were no longer on earth, but in this special place for believers only – only good people are entitled to go to heaven, as per Allah's decisions. Right at the top, Prophet Muhammad met Prophet Abraham, who was leaning on the Lute Tree. This tree is said to be the end of worldly knowledge – and that reminds us how only Almighty Allah (knows everything there is to know about the universe.

The gift of prayer

Allah revealed to our Prophet that Muslim believers were to engage in 50 prayers every single day. Prophet Muhammad agreed and began his descent through the Heavens. As he was on his journey back down, he met with Prophet Moses, who was worried at the large number. He told Prophet Muhammad that 50 daily prayers were way too many for us, and so Prophet

Muhammad decided to negotiate for a reduction from Almighty Allah. Almighty Allah reduced it by 5 prayers, making it 45 prayers, but Prophet Moses advised to continue to ask for less. After a few trips, there were only 5 daily prayers and Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) told Prophet Musa that he was too shy to ask for anything less.

Hence, here we are today, with our second pillar of Islam, the five daily prayers. That is why we must try our level best to always fulfill them on time and with great accuracy, because Prophet Muhammad did some hard work in helping us to establish such a small number of prayers, and of course Allah in all of His Glory, allowed us to do this.

We should be ever grateful for such a beautiful and simple religion!

Back on earth

Angel Gabriel brought Prophet Muhammad back to Makkah and they bypassed a caravan, which was on the way there.

In the morning, Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) excitedly told the people of Makkah about his Night Journey and Ascension – and everyone, except a few of his beloved friends – laughed at him.

He was mocked and bullied and called a mad man, but to their surprise, Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) could answer their questions about Jerusalem and the caravan that he passed, arrived as he told them.

Still, the disbelievers refused to believe him and continued to deny this miraculous message. Of course, there were those who stood by him – and this is a good reminder for us too.

Lesson to learn

Sometimes we will run into people who are awful to us because they think it is silly to be a Muslim or to pray five times a day.

Never forget that no one was bullied as much as Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) during the time he spread Islam – and God-willing, Allah the Almighty will always provide us with friends – good friends – who will stand by us, and take care of us, and always remind us that there's nothing to be worried about when Allah is with us.

The Night Journey and the Ascension is a wonderful story to remember.

We are told of things that we can only dream of, but for Prophet Muhammad, they were very real, and he came back to earth to share his tale so we will always continue to walk on the straight path, and love Allah for all the reasons of his Mercy that has been showered endlessly on His believers.



Eid -ul -Fitr



What Should Your Kids Know About Eid al-Fitr

1

Eid al-Fitr marks the end of the holy month of Ramadan when Muslims fast without food and water all day for the entire month. In Eid al-Fitr, we are forbidden to fast, as we are supposed to celebrate the sacrifices that were made in Ramadan.



2

A very important part of Eid al-Fitr is the payment of Zakat al-Fitr, which is a type of *sadaqah* paid by all Muslims. This Zakat is obligatory, and must be paid to the poor and needy by any Muslim who has the means by the end of Ramadan.



3

Muslims go to mosques very early on the first day of Eid al-Fitr for the Eid prayers. On the way to the prayer ground, it's recommended to pronounce this Takbir: "Allah-hu Akbar, Allah-hu Akbar (Allah is the Greatest, Allah is the Greatest), La-ilaha illa Allah (There is no God but Allah), wa-Allah-hu Akbar Allah-hu Akbar, (And Allah is the Greatest, Allah is the Greatest), wa-illah-il-hamd (and all praises for Allah)".



4

After the prayers, relatives and friends visit each other. Children wear their best clothes and get the special Eid gifts. Some people invite their neighbors for a meal during Eid al-Fitr.



5

Children are given gifts, candy and sometimes cash (Eidiyyah) to make them feel good about this special time of the year.



6

As the Eid lasts for three days, it might be a good idea to have a one-day trip to a distant family member's house or just go picnicking with friends and family.



7

During the feast, Muslims wish each other "Eid Mubarak" and greet one another.



8

Muslims are encouraged to prepare themselves for the occasion of eid by: Waking up early, offering Salat al-fajr, taking a ghusl (bath), cleansing teeth, dressing up neatly and men can use perfume.



9

Many Muslim families prepare a banquet for lunch or dinner and enjoy these meals with family and friends.



Mother's day in Islam

Our parents are the blessings from Allah swt. We Muslims have been commanded to honor our parents and uphold the ties of kinship, and we have been forbidden to disobey our parents. In our religion mothers have been given something which has not been given to them in any other religion; the mother's rights take precedence over those of the father, as al-Bukhaari (5514) and Muslim (4621) narrated that Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: A man came to the Messenger of Allaah and said: "O Messenger of Allaah, who is most deserving of my good company?" He said: «Your mother». He said: "Then who?" He said: «Your mother». He said: "Then who?" He said: «Your mother». He said: "Then who?" He said: «Then your father.

Honoring one's mother does not come to an end even when she dies, for she is honored in life and in death. That is done by offering the funeral prayer for her, praying for forgiveness for her, carrying out her last wishes and honoring her family and friends.

The mother is entitled to respect and honor, and upholding of the ties of kinship throughout her life, so what is the point of singling out a particular day to honor her? Let her know how special she is to you and that you can't possible single out one particular day to honor her. Explain to her what status a mother holds in Islam, and that you cherish her every day of your life, and that you hope she will not feel hurt or resent you if you didn't celebrate mother's day specifically.

Let us adhere to this great religion and follow its etiquettes and rulings, for in it is sufficient guidance and mercy.

☆ Just keep in mind that this celebration is a newly invented innovation. The Prophet, peace and blessing be upon him, said: The worst of matters are those which are newly-invented, and every innovation is a going-astray» (Narrated by Muslim, 867; al-Nasaa'i, 1578). Al-Nasaa'i's report adds the words «: And every going astray will be in the Fire».

Celebrating Mother's Day is an innovated matter which the Prophet, peace and blessing be upon him, and his companions did not do. It is also an imitation of the kuffaar from whom we have been commanded to differ.

Hajj, Arafah and Eid-ul-Adha

Hajj

Hajj is the fifth pillar of Islam. It is fard or compulsory on every adult Muslim, if he or she is in good health and can afford it. People have to go to Makkah to perform Hajj. The Hajj happens once a year in the lunar month of Thul Hijjah. This means, "the month of Hajj ". It is the twelfth and last month of the lunar year.

During Hajj, people remember Allah by praying, making dua and remembering Allah's blessing .

From hadith we learn prophet Muhammad(s) said, " whosoever performs Hajj without making sins and mistakes, he will be coming back [pure of sins] like when he was first born ". (Narrated by Al-Bukhari & Muslim)

The day of Arafah

The day of Arafah is a very very special day. It is Allah Ta'aala's most favourite day, and there is no day better than it! As for Shaytan, it is his worst day! He hates the day of Arafah. On this day he feels really grumpy and angry. That's because on this day, Allah sends down a great amount of mercy and forgives people.

The day of Arafah is on the 9th of Dhul-Hijjah. If anyone has gone for the wonderful journey of Hajj, on this day after Fajr salah they will be marching by foot or driving in cars and buses to a place called Arafah. There will be millions of people all going to the same place, peacefully, and all of them will be saying to Allah: "Here I am in Your service, O Allah, here I am. Here I am, you have no partner, here I am. All praise and blessings are Yours, and all power, you have no partner." There will be people from all over the world, of every size, age, and colour; all going to do the same thing, with a love of Allah in their hearts.

When they get to Arafah they listen to a special talk at Dhuhr time and pray. They spend the whole day praying, reading Qur'an and making dua, repenting from all past sins. Hujjaj remember the Day of Judgment, when all people will gather in one place and seek Allah's forgiveness. Allah is so pleased with the people, he comes down to the lowest heaven, and he says: ""Look at My servants. They have come from far and near, with hair all messy and faces covered with dust, to seek My mercy..."

In Arafah there is a mountain called Mount Arafat or the Mount of Mercy. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) stood on it to give a talk to his people during Hajj. Even if you're not on Hajj, this day is special! We should fast on the day of Arafah because from hadith we learn - if we fast on the day of Arafah , insha'Allah our sins for the last year and the one to come will be forgiven. We should also carry on reciting Takbir, Tahmid, Tahleel and Tasbih. Say: "Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar, Lã ilãha illallãhu wallahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar, Walillahil hamd.

Allah is the Greatest, Allah is the Greatest. There is no deity besides Allah and Allah is the Greatest. Allah is the Greatest and all praises are for Allah only."

The people who are making Hajj must stay in Arafah on this day, only then will their Hajj be completed. At sunset, people start to leave Arafah and they go to a place called Muzdalifah to pray Maghrib and Isha and rest for the night. The next day is the 10th of Dhul-Hijjah – Eid day!

Eid-ul-Adha

Muslims have special days to celebrate. Muslims celebrate twice a year. A day of celebration in Arabic is called Eid. The Quran and Prophet Muhammad's (s) sunnah teaches us about Eid.

The first Eid is called Eid-ul -Fitr which comes after the month of Ramadan. We celebrate the end of fasting during Eid-ul-Fitr for three days.

The second Eid is called Eid-ul-Adha which comes during the month of Hajj, Thu-al-Hijjah. Muslims celebrate this Eid for four days. In Eid-ul-Adha, people slaughter a sheep or a goat to remember Prophet Ibraheem(A) and his son Ismael (A). They share the meat with family, friends and poor people.

Before Eid people clean their home. They make sweets and cook special food for Eid. Everyone celebrates by wearing nice clothes. Many children get new colorful clothes and shoes.

Families go to the Eid prayer, which is called Salat-al-Eid. The prayer is held outdoors in a community center or in a masjid. All muslims pray to Allah. They listen quietly to the imam's khutbah or speech.

After Eid prayer, the Muslims greet each other. Children get gifts, candy, balloon. Friends family and neighbors visit each other. They eat delicious food each other. They also give food and money to the poor.



Muharram and Ashura

'Muharram'

◆ Muharram is the first month of the Hijri calendar and is one of the four sacred months concerning which Allah says, "Verily, the number of months with Allah is twelve months (in a year), so it was ordained by Allah on the Day when He created the heavens and the earth; of them, four are sacred. That is the right religion, so wrong not yourselves therein" (At-Tawbah 9:36)

◆ Muharram is called so because it is a sacred (muharram) month and to confirm its sanctity. Allah Almighty says, "...so wrong not yourselves therein..." which means do not wrong yourselves in these sacred months, because sin in these months is worse than in other months.

◆ The sacred months are four: Dhul-Qi`dah, Dhul-Hijjah and Muharram, and Rajab. Sins in these months are more serious and good deeds bring a greater reward. Therefore, Muslims are encouraged to refrain from sins and increase the good deeds during these months.

'Ashura'

◆ 'Ashura' is the 10th day of Muharram, which Muslims celebrate by fasting.

◆ The tradition of 'Ashura' fasting is very ancient. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) and his Companions used to fast on the 10th day of Muharram while they were in Makkah (before the hijrah).

◆ It was a day on which people of Makkah used to change the covering (kiswah) of the Ka`bah. Quraysh also used to fast on this day.

◆ After the hijrah when the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) came to Madinah, he found that the Jews of Madinah also used to observe this day with fasting. The Prophet (peace and blessings

be upon him) asked them the reason of their fasting on this day. They said, "This is a blessed day. On this day Allah saved the Children of Israel from their enemy (in Egypt) and so Prophet Musa fasted on this day giving thanks to Allah."

◆ The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said, "We have more claim to Musa than you." He fasted on that day and commanded Muslims to fast on this day.

◆ 'Ashura' fasting was obligatory (fard) in the beginning. In the second year of hijrah (624 CE) when Allah's command came that Muslims should fast the whole month of Ramadan, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) then sent someone to announce to people that fasting of 'Ashura' had become voluntary (nafli). This indicates that whosoever wishes to fast, may fast and whosoever does not want to fast, there will be no blame on him/her. However, those who choose to fast, should fast the 9th and the 10th of Muharram to distinguish ourselves from the Jewish community.

◆ Fasting the 9th and the 10th of Muharram is a Prophetic Sunnah. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said, "Fasting the day of 'Ashura', I hope that Allah will accept it as expiation for the previous year." (Reported by Muslim)

Halloween in Islam

Muslims have two celebrations each year, 'Eid al-Fitr and 'Eid al-Adha. The celebrations are based on the Islamic faith and religious way of life. There are some who argue that Halloween, at least, is a cultural holiday, with no religious significance. To understand the issues, we need to look at the origins and history of Halloween.

Pagan Origins of Halloween

Halloween originated as the Eve of Samhain, a celebration marking the beginning of winter and the first day of the New Year among ancient pagans of the British Isles. On this occasion, it was believed that supernatural forces gathered together, that the barriers between the supernatural and human worlds were broken. They believed that spirits from other worlds (such as the souls of the dead) were able to visit earth during this time and roam about. At Samhain, Celts celebrated a joint festival for the sun god and the lord of the dead. The sun was thanked for the harvest and moral support requested for the upcoming "battle" with winter. In ancient times, the pagans made sacrifices of animals and crops in order to please the gods.

They also believed that on October 31st, the lord of the dead gathered all the souls of the people who had died that year. The souls upon death would dwell in the body of an animal, then on this day, the lord would announce what form they were to take for the next year.

Christian Influence

When Christianity came to the British Isles, the church tried to take attention away from these pagan rituals by placing a Christian holiday on the same day. The Christian festival, the Feast of All Saints, acknowledges the saints of the Christian faith in much the same way that Samhain had paid tribute to the pagan gods. The customs of Samhain survived anyway, and eventually became intertwined with the Christian holiday. These traditions were brought to the United States by immigrants from Ireland and Scotland.

Halloween Customs and Traditions

- "Trick or Treating": It is widely believed that during the Feast of All Saints, peasants went from house to house asking for money to buy food for the upcoming feast. Additionally, people dressed in costumes would often play tricks on their neighbors. Blame for the resulting chaos was placed on the "spirits and goblins."
- Images of bats, black cats, etc.: These animals were believed to communicate with the spirits of the dead. Black cats especially were believed to house the souls of witches.

- Games such as bobbing for apples: The ancient pagans used divination techniques to foresee the future. There were various methods of doing this, and many have continued through traditional games, often played at children's parties.
- Jack-O'-Lantern: The Irish brought the Jack-O'-Lantern to America. The tradition is based on a legend about a stingy, drunken man named Jack. Jack played a trick on the devil, then made the devil promise not to take his soul. The devil, upset, promised to leave Jack alone. When Jack died, he was turned away from Heaven because he was a stingy, mean drunk. Desperate for a resting place, he went to the devil but the devil also turned him away. Stuck on earth on a dark night, Jack was lost. The devil tossed him a lighted coal from the fire of Hell, which Jack placed inside a turnip as a lamp to light his way. Since that day, he has traveled the world over with his Jack-O'-Lantern in search of a resting place.

Irish children carved out turnips and potatoes to light the night on Halloween.

When the Irish came to America in great numbers in the 1840s, they found that a pumpkin made an even better lantern, and that is how this "American tradition" came to be.

Islamic Teachings

Virtually all Halloween traditions are based either in ancient pagan culture or in Christianity. From an Islamic point of view, they all are forms of idolatry (shirk). As Muslims, our celebrations should be ones that honor and uphold our faith and beliefs. How can we worship only Allah, the Creator, if we participate in activities that are based in pagan rituals, divination, and the spirit world? Many people participate in these celebrations without even understanding the history and the pagan connections, just because their friends are doing it, their parents did it ("it's a tradition!"), and because "it's fun!"

So what can we do, when our children see others dressed up, eating candy, and going to parties? While it may be tempting to join in, we must be careful to preserve our own

traditions and not allow our children to be corrupted by this seemingly "innocent" fun. When tempted, remember the pagan origins of these traditions, and ask Allah to give you strength. Save the celebration, the fun and the games, for our 'Eid festivals. Children can still have their fun, and most importantly, should learn that we only acknowledge holidays that have a religious significance to us as Muslims. Holidays are not just excuses to binge and be reckless. In Islam, our holidays retain their religious importance, while allowing proper time for rejoicing, fun, and games.

Thanksgiving

Allah says:

Then do you remember Me; I will remember you. Be grateful to Me and reject not Faith .(Al-Baqarah 2: 152)

And remember! Your Lord caused to be declared (publicly): “If you are grateful, I will add more (favours) unto you; but if you show ingratitude, truly My punishment is terrible indeed.(Ibrahim 14: 7)

The National Day of Thanksgiving in America (Canada, etc.) is a beautiful holiday. It contains a good spirit and noble message. It is not a holiday of any particular religion. It is not a Christian or Jewish holiday but it has many deeply religious and spiritual meanings.

It is unfortunate that like many other moral and spiritual things this holiday is also turned nowadays into too much indulgence and commercialism.

The Qur’anic word for thanks is “shukr.” It is mentioned in the Qur’an many times. It is the quality of human beings and it is also the quality of Allah. According to scholars shukr means: “It is the consideration of the favor and its acknowledgment. Shukr from the human means the recognition of the favor. Shukr from Allah means the reward and appreciation.”

Shukr is a very important principle in Islam. It is a quality of the believers and it is a source of all goodness. Shukr is used in the Qur’an sometimes as equivalent to faith. The faithful are thankful people and the unfaithful are ungrateful people.

Allah has described His prophets and messengers among those who were thankful people:

Prophet Nuh was a grateful servant of Allah (Al-Israa’ 17: 3).

Prophet Ibrahim used to thank Allah for His many blessings (An-Nahl 16:121).

Prophet Dawud and his family were told to be grateful to Allah (Sabaa’ 34:13).

Allah told His Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him):

{Nay, but worship Allah, and be of those who give thanks.} (Az-Zummar 39: 66)

Allah also promised:

{Nor can a soul die except by Allah’s leave, the term being fixed as by writing. If anyone

desires a reward in this life, We shall give it to him; and if anyone desires a reward in the Hereafter, We shall give it to him. And swiftly shall We reward those that who are thankful.}

(Aal `Imran 3: 145)

In Islam, thanksgiving is not only a particular religious act or service; it is the whole life. The whole life should be lived in obedience to our Ultimate Benefactor, Allah. God has been good to us and so

in our thankfulness we should worship Him, obey His commands and orders.

Our daily prayers, our fasting during Ramadan, our Zakah and Hajj are all our acts of thanksgiving.

We should do them not only as duties that must be performed but as our gratitude to our Lord and Creator.

Furthermore we should remind ourselves that we are constantly under Allah's favors and blessings.

When we eat, he told us that we should say: When the Prophet used to eat or drink, he used to say,

"Thanks be to Allah Who gave us food and drink and made us Muslims." (At-Tirmidhi, 3379) There are many special prayers that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) taught us to keep us on the path of gratitude and thankfulness:

– Whenever the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) put on any new dress, he would say its name 'Amamah or shirt or shawl, then he would say,

"O Allah, Thanks be to You, You gave me this to wear. I ask You to give me the good of this dress and the good for which it is made and I ask You to protect me from the evil of this dress and from the evil of that for which it is made." (At-Tirmidhi, 1689)

– When the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to mount his camel going on a journey he used to say "Allah Akbar" (God is the greatest) three times and then he would say,

"Glory to Him Who has subjected these to our (use), for we could never have accomplished this (by ourselves). And to our Lord, surely, must we turn back!" (Az-Zukhruf 43:13) O Allah, we ask you this journey righteousness and piety and the deeds that are pleasing to you.

O Allah, make this journey easy for us and shorten its distance.

O Allah, You are the Companion in journey and You are the Guardian for the family (left behind).

O Allah, We ask you to protect us from the exhaustion of journey, from bad scenes and from bad return to our property and family."

When he used to return he used to say, "Returning, repenting, worshiping and praising our Lord." (Muslim, 2392)

Islam does not only teach us to thank Allah, but we are also told to thank our parents, our spouses, our friends, neighbors and all those who do any good to us. The Prophet (peace and blessings of

Allah be upon him) said: "Those who do not thank people, they do not thank Allah." (At-Tirmidhi, 1878)

Thanksgiving - 2 ✓

▲ *Is it okay to celebrate Thanksgiving?*

by Asma bint Shameem

🌿 *ANSWER* 🌿

The vast majority of the scholars consider thanksgiving a 'religious' celebration, and thus say that it's NOT allowed for us to celebrate it or participate in it.

And although, there are some ulama who don't consider it to be a religious holiday, and thus say it's permissible, the SAFER opinion is to simply stay away from such things.

▲ Here's what shaikh Salah

as- Sawy says about thanksgiving and gathering to hold dinners on that day.

He said:

"The best of what has been said on the matter is that, whoever calls people to gather on this day, serves the same food and participates in the same rites, has entered the door of imitating non-Muslims more than any other.

Before all else, the hadith [prohibiting imitation of non-Muslims] applies to him.

He must repent to Allah (Mighty & Majestic) and quit doing this, for it has been reported that the Prophet Sal Allaahu Alaihi wa Sallam said:

"Whoever imitates a people is from them," and this implies the prohibition of imitating them completely.

Then there is also the saying of the Prophet Sal Allaahu Alaihi wa Sallam:

"Oppose the polytheists," and their holidays are one type of their deeds, which comprise their religion or are a symbol of their false religion.

Whoever calls for people to gather for food, but he opposes the people [non-Muslims] in the food he serves, for instance, or in some other way, arguing that it is just a vacation day, we say to him:

this deed of yours is not devoid of some share of imitation, for the vacation lasts several days and it would be possible for you to move this gathering to another day.

Allaah has not restricted you, so choose another day during the break in order to be farther from imitation, lest confusion befall the common people, most of whom do not distinguish between one intention and the other and who may move gradually from the lawful to the prohibited.

(It would be allowed to gather and eat on Thanksgiving Day) If only this day were simply chosen due to the circumstances of travelers or the circumstances of friends and relatives.

If only it would not be possible to move the gathering to another day for that reason.

And if only the intention of imitation would be completely and totally negated.

As for those who take advantage of the Thanksgiving break to do some religious or non-religious activities which bear no resemblance to this occasion and which are

totally unrelated except for the fact that one makes use of the vacation time to do them, there would be no blame in that, in shaa Allaah.”

▲ Someone also asked Shaikh Salah as-Sawy if it’s permissible to hold lectures and youth programs in the masjid, have family gatherings at home, take vacation, or do other activities during Thanksgiving holidays.

Would that be counted as ‘celebrating’ it?

He said:

“It is not part of the non-Muslims' rites for the Thanksgiving holiday that people gather in their churches to present a series of theological lectures over the course of the week-end vacation in which this holiday takes place.

Were that the case, there would be a sound basis for your fears.

On the contrary, what they do is invite one another to eat turkey and give thanks to God for ending their wars with the Native Americans and for starting a new stage of life and peace, as they say.

So, if any of the Muslims call for something like this to be done on these days, (meaning, eat turkey and give thanks to God on this specific day, in the specific manner as stated above), he has guided people away from the Straight Path.

But if the aim is to take advantage of this vacation to finish some work that has gotten backed-up, to visit relatives, to hold conventions, Islamic conferences or the like – activities which our normal schedules or regular commitments keep us from doing without vacations like this, I hope there would be no blame in that, insha'Allah.

(The Permanent Committee for issuing Fataawa- AMJA)

And Allaah knows best



Christmas

What is Christmas?

At a basic level, the word “Christmas” actually comes from two separate words. “Christ” means “Messiah,” or leader and promised deliverer. “Mass” means a religious ceremony. Therefore, Christmas, at its roots, is a religious celebration of the life of Jesus Christ. In Islam, we call him Prophet ‘Isa (AS).

Emphasize the Commonalities

Though Muslims and Christians have differences in both belief and practice, the two groups share many similarities. One of these is a common Abrahamic origin.

Children should understand that we believe in the same prophets as Jews and Christians do, and the fact that they all came from Allah (SWT) to teach us right from wrong.

At this time of year, we have the opportunity to focus specifically on Prophet ‘Isa (AS), sharing what we believe about him and the key lessons we can learn from him. The following are talking points to share:

Prophet Isa (As) was a Messenger

- Islam teaches that Prophet ‘Isa (AS) is among the five greatest messengers from Allah (SWT). The others are Ibrahim, Musa, Nuh, and Mohammed (SAW).
- Just as Prophet Mohammed (SAW) brought the Holy Qur’an, Prophet ‘Isa (AS) also brought revelation from Allah (SWT). We believe in this guidance, called the Injil, or Gospel.

The birth and life of Prophet Isa (AS) was full of miracles

- Prophet ‘Isa’s (AS) mother, Lady Maryam, is one of the four greatest and most honored women. In fact, there is an entire chapter of the Holy Qur’an called Surah Maryam, which we read to learn about this pious lady.
- We believe in the miracles of Prophet ‘Isa (AS) including the virgin birth, speaking from the cradle, healing the blind, healing lepers, and bringing the dead to life, all through the power and will of Allah (SWT).

Prophet Isa (AS) was an amazing role-model

- The purpose of prophets is to serve as role models for all of humankind. From Prophet ‘Isa (AS) we should take his example of absolute humility, simplicity in worldly possessions, and the love and compassion he showed to all those around him.

Be Clear about the Differences

While it is valuable to showcase the similarities Muslims and Christians share, it is essential to be clear about the differences as well. Learning about other faiths may actually strengthen one's own beliefs.

Understanding Jesus (Isa) is Not the Son of God (Allah)

The first difference that must be mentioned is that we do not believe that Jesus is the son of God.

Simply stated, "The example of Jesus to Allah is like that of Adam. He created Him from dust; then He said to him, "Be," and he was" (3:59).

This ayah puts forth the idea that we should believe in Prophet 'Isa's (AS) miraculous birth in the same way that we believe in the creation of Prophet Adam (AS).

Allah (SWT) cautions further,

"O People of the Book (Jews and Christians), do not commit excess in your religion or say about Allah except the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, was but a messenger of Allah and His word which He directed to Mary and a soul [created at a command] from Him. So believe in Allah and His messengers. And do not say, "Three"; desist – it is better for you.

Indeed, Allah is but one God. Exalted is He above having a son. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And sufficient is Allah as Disposer of affairs" (4:171).

Christmas is Not a Muslim Holiday

The second distinction we must make is that Christmas is not our holiday.

According to Anas ibn Malik (RA), the narration is as follows:

"The Prophet (SAW) came to Madinah during two days in which the people played. The Prophet (SAW) asked: What are these two days? They said:

These are two days we used to play in, during the time of ignorance. The Prophet (SAW) said: Allah has replaced them with two better days: Eid al-Adha and Eid al-Fitr."

From this we learn that Muslims have our own holidays worthy of celebration, and that Christmas is not one of them.

☆ An important note here is that we must cultivate respect for other people's beliefs and practices. Our perspective should align with the one reflected in the Holy Qur'an: "Say, "O disbelievers, I do not worship what you worship. Nor are you worshippers of what I worship. Nor will I be a worshipper of what you worship. Nor will you be worshippers of what I worship. For you is your religion, and for me is my religion."" (Quran, 109:6).

Decide as a Family How to Navigate Christmas Day

We should find ways to help our children decide for themselves that Christmas is not their holiday and provide an alternative path to participate.

One activity that we've developed to achieve these goals is to bake cookies for Christian neighbors and friends, sharing a card that shares our love for Prophet 'Isa (AS) too.

Through this activity, we can build bridges and educate others about what Muslims believe about this important figure.

Instill the Love for Islamic Holidays in Your Muslim Children

Another way to dissuade children from yearning for Christmas celebrations is to make Islamic celebrations more attractive.

There are many things we can learn from Christmas. This is not to say that we should imitate non-Muslims in their celebrations.

After all, we have our own rich Islamic tradition.

However, there are some key things to learn from the Christmas holiday.

Here are a few ideas:

Teach kids Nasheeds

We all know the popular Christmas carols, and may even find ourselves humming the tunes while cooking or showering. Making a conscious decision to teach children nasheeds can provide them with meaningful Islamic songs that they can recite instead. Popular artists include Yusuf Islam, Dawud Wharansby, Zain Bhikha, and One 4 Kids (Zaky). Teaching nasheeds is a way to reinforce beliefs and is a form of dhikr!

Build Excitement

We all love having something to look forward to. Living in the West, we often get excited about holidays from work and school, which are based on secular and Christian calendars. However, we should have even more excitement about Islamic holidays. This excitement can be created by taking time off from work and school, decorating the home, and gathering family and friends together.

Make it Memorable

Each family has its own culture. However, parents often play a huge role in developing and maintaining this culture. Therefore, it is wise to invest in family traditions.

This may mean giving thoughtful, meaningful gifts to one another. Or perhaps it means quality time spent as a family, listening to stories and discussing the importance of the occasion.

Share your joy

During Christmas-time, everyone feels the Christmas spirit. But, during Eid, oftentimes we don't share our Eid spirit with non-Muslim neighbors and friends.

To change this, invite your neighbors, friends, and family over for tea and dessert. You can also send them a card with pictures of your kids dressed in their Eid outfits.

We should use this chance to discover commonalities and share what makes our family's celebration unique.

END