

The Meaning of ‘Eid Takbīr

[Eid-ul-Adha 1998]

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So the day after tomorrow will be ‘Eid.¹ Already telephone calls have started coming in asking about Eid, and to everyone who asks, “When will Eid be?” I say, did you read the *Monitor*² in the last twelve months? The date is fixed! It is based upon calculation. So our Eid will be Tuesday, insha’allah, and the Eid prayer will start at ten o’clock, as usual.

Normally, on Eid day we have takbīr here in the mosque, but the takbīr is not limited to the mosque only. As understood by most of us here, recitation of takbīr means “O, we go for prayers on Eid day at 9 o’clock in the morning to start the takbīr, then we pray Eid and that’s it.” It is not. This is something we ought to know: the number of days we have to make takbīr. This differs between Eid-ul-Fitr³ and Eid-al-Adha.⁴ You can make takbīr in your house, in the street, and while you are driving your car from the house to the mosque. Rather than listening to Michael Jackson on your radio, recite some takbīr.

The small Eid is the Eid after Ramadan and we recite takbīr for thirteen prayers. We start takbīr on the day before Eid which is known as *Yawm-ul-Waqfah*, at the time of *al-‘Asr*.⁵ We continue takbīr for all five prayers of the day of the Eid and the second day of the Eid.

Takbīr is recited after each prayer instead of the *du‘a*⁶ which is normally said at all other times.

‘Eid-ul-Fitr	
<i>Yawm-ul-Waqfah</i> (the day before Eid): start at <i>al-‘Asr</i>	3 prayers
The day of Eid:	5 prayers
Second day of Eid:	5 prayers
Total:	13 prayers

The big Eid is the day the animals are sacrificed in the month of Dhul-Hijja at the completion of Al-Hajj. The big Eid has more

¹ April 7, 1998

² The bi-monthly publication of the Islamic Center

³ Also called Al Eid-us-Sagheer or the small Eid

⁴ Also called Eid-ul-Kabīr or the big Eid

⁵ The late afternoon prayer

⁶ Supplication

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takbīr and the number of prayers after which the takbīr is recited is twenty-three. Takbīr starts from *Fajr*⁷ of the day before Eid which is *Yawm-ul-Waqfah* – when the pilgrims stand on the Mount of 'Arafāt till sunset. Then add *Yawm-ul-Eid*.⁸ The day after 'Arafāt is Eid, because the pilgrims have performed the obligation of Al-Hajj – required once in a lifetime by those who are able to do it. *Ayyam-ut-tashreeq* are the three days after Eid-ul-Adha during which the pilgrims throw stones at the three pillars symbolizing Iblīs. These three days finalize the rituals of Hajj, and these are the days during which we recite takbīr, and the pilgrims are also reciting takbīr while at the same time completing their rituals of Hajj. The Eid extends over the three days of *Ayyām-ut-tashreeq*, and it is permissible, if you didn't pray the Eid prayer on the day of Eid, to pray it on the second day, or the third day. During these three days after Eid-al-Adha, fasting is prohibited.

'Eid-ul-Adha	
<i>Yawm-ul-Waqfah</i> – the day before Eid i.e. the Day of Arafāt	
Start at Fajr:	5prayers
<i>Yawm-ul-Eid</i> :	5prayers
Two full days after Eid	10 prayers
Third day after Eid: morning, noon, and 'Asr prayers	3 prayers.
This adds up to the 23 salah after which we should read takbīr	

The word *Eid* is sometimes translated into English as “feast” or “festival day”. Festival day, in fact, does not give the true meaning of the word *Eid* as understood in Arabic, because you can have a festival day for the Islamic Center and it even includes pony riding. But the word *Eid* has a special meaning:

it is a day to be celebrated after performing an obligation; Eid means we are pleased and we celebrate because we have performed a duty which is incumbent upon us by the decree of Allah. Thus we celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr because we performed the obligation of fasting and we celebrate Eid-ul-Adha because we performed the obligation of Hajj. How did this takbīr come into existence? The Qur'an mentions it. [Imam quotes Arabic verses. The translation is:]

“It was the month of Ramadan in which the Quran was first bestowed from on high as a guidance unto man and a self-evident proof of that guidance, and as the standard by which to discern the true from the false. Hence, whoever of you lives to see this month shall fast throughout it; but he that is ill, or on a journey, shall fast instead for the same number of other days. God wills that you shall have ease, and does not will you to suffer hardship; but He desires that you complete the number of days required, and that you extol God – **وَلْتُكَبِّرُوا لِلَّهِ** for His having guided you aright, and that you render your thanks unto Him” [2:185].

“And as for the sacrifice of cattle, We have ordained it for you as one of the symbols set up by God, in which there is much good for you. Hence, extol the name of God over them when they are lined up for sacrifice; and after they have fallen lifeless to the ground, eat of their flesh, and feed the poor who is contented with his lot and does not beg, as well as him who is forced to beg. It is to this end that We have made them subservient to your needs, so that you might have cause to be grateful. But bear in mind: never does their flesh reach God, and neither their blood: it is only your God-consciousness (*taqwa*) that reaches Him. It is to this end that We have made them subservient to your needs, so that you might glorify God (**لِتُكَبِّرُوا لِلَّهِ**) for all the guidance with which He has graced you” [22: 36-37].

⁷ Dawn prayer. For those who are in Hajj this will be the dawn prayer in Mina after which they travel to 'Arafat

⁸ The day of Eid

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Allah is the greatest, Allah is the greatest, Allah is the greatest	اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ
There is no deity but Allah	لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ
Allah is the greatest, Allah is the greatest And to Allah belongs the praise	اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، وَلِلَّهِ الْحَمْدُ
Allah is the greatest in the greatest way	اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ كَبِيرًا
And to Allah belongs the praise many times	وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ كَثِيرًا
And glory be to Allah at the beginning and end of each day.	وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا
There is no deity but Allah alone.	لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ
He fulfilled His promise, and He supported His servant, and He made His soldiers victorious	صَدَقَ وَعْدَهُ، وَنَصَرَ عَبْدَهُ، وَأَعَزَّ جُنْدَهُ
And He Alone defeated the Confederates	وَهَزَمَ الْأَحْزَابَ وَحْدَهُ
There is no deity but Allah	لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ
And we worship none but Him	وَلَا نَعْبُدُ إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ
Invoke, then, God, sincere in your faith in Him alone, however hateful this may be to those who deny the truth	مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ
O Allah! Send Your blessings on Muhammad	اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ
And on the family of Muhammad	وَعَلَى آلِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ
And on the companions of Muhammad	وَعَلَى أَصْحَابِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ
And on the supporters of Muhammad	وَعَلَى أَنْصَارِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ
And on the wives of Muhammad	وَعَلَى أَزْوَاجِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ
And on the offspring of Muhammad	وَعَلَى ذُرِّيَّةِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ
And send many salutations upon him.	وَسَلِّمْ تَسْلِيمًا كَثِيرًا