

SUNAN *of* EID



What every Muslim should do on Eid

A call to the sunnah of Eid

In the name of Allah, the most merciful, the bestower of Mercy. All praise belongs to Him alone without any partners. I send peace and blessings upon our noble prophet and to his companions.

One of the great symbols of Islam and most joyous occasion is Eid. It is a time to celebrate and rejoice in the many blessings of Allah upon us. As Allah says:

{ Say, 'O Prophet,' "In Allah's grace and mercy let them rejoice. That is far better than whatever 'wealth' they amass."} [10:58]

This short article is pertaining to the recommended sunnah acts that every Muslim should know and apply on Eid, especially the sunnah acts that are directly connected to the Eid prayer.

Ibn Abbas says: (I witnessed Eid with the messenger of Allah Salla Allahu Alayhi Wasallam and Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman and they all used to pray before the khutbah.¹)

It is important for us to remember that the Eid prayer is an act of worship and as such we should familiarize ourselves with the sunnah of our Prophet Salla Allahu Alayhi Wasallam and his companions.

Some of these recommended acts have – unfortunately – been abandoned and forgotten and it is upon us to revive the sunnah and etiquettes of Eid.

The Prophet Salla Allahu Alayhi Wasallam said:

(Whoever revives a Sunnah of mine that dies out after I am gone, he will have a reward equivalent to that of those among the people who act upon it, without that detracting from their reward in the slightest. Whoever introduces an innovation (Bid'ah) with which Allah and his Messenger are not pleased, he will have a (burden of) sin equivalent to that of those among the people who act upon it, without that detracting from their sins in the slightest.²)

Here are just some of the highly recommended acts of worship that are connected to Eid.

¹ Bukhari 962

² Graded as Hasan by Al-Tirmidhi in his Jaami' 2677

1 – To bathe and wash yourself before the Eid prayer.

Although there is no authentic hadeeth from the Prophet (Salla Allahu Alaihi Wasallam) on this issue, however this was the custom of the companions. Naafi' reports that (Abdullah bin Umar used to wash on Eid Ul-Fitr before he left his house for the Eid prayer.)³ Al-Imam Al-Albani (May Allah Have Mercy Upon Him) says: (The best evidence that indicates to the recommended act of washing for the two Eids is what Al-Bayhaqi reports from the chain of Imam Al-Shaafi' who narrates it from Zaadan who said: ' A man asked Ali regarding 'alghusl' washing? He said: (Wash every day if you so wish), the man said: (No i mean the ghysl that is ghysl.) Ali said: (That ghysl is on Jummah, the day of Arafah, the day of Eid ul Fitr & the day of Eid ul Adha.⁴)

Washing before Eid was also the custom of the Taabi'een. Saaed bin Al-Musayyib says: (The Sunnah of Eid Al-Fitr is three: To walk to the prayer area, to eat before leaving and to wash.)⁵

Some of the Fuqahaa also cite as an evidence the Hadeeth regarding Jummah in which the Prophet (Salla Allahu Alaihi Wasallam) says: (**This day is an Eid which Allah has ordained for the Muslims. Whoever comes to Friday prayer let him take a bath and if he has perfume then let him put some on. And I encourage you to use the Miswak.**⁶) Since Eid is similar to Jummah as they are both days of celebration that reoccur periodically and people come together in these days, therefore washing for Eid is recommended similar to Jummah⁷.

2 – It is recommended before the Eid prayer to cleanse yourself, wear perfume if you are a male and use the Miswak.

The evidence for this is the Hadeeth of Ibn Abbas (...and if he has perfume then let him put some on. And I encourage you to use the Miswak.⁸) Although the hadeeth is regarding the Friday prayer Ibn Qudamah also uses this Hadeeth as an evidence for the Eid prayer as previously stated⁹.

³ Narrated by Malik in Al-Muwatta, the book of the 2 Eids no 2

⁴ Irwa Al-Ghalil 1/177 the sanad is mawquuf and graded as authentic by Albani

⁵ Irwa Al-Ghalil 3/104 graded as Sahih

⁶ Ibn Majah from the Hadeeth of Ibn Abbas, graded as Hasan by Al-Albani in Sahih Sunan bin Majah 1/326

⁷ Al-Mughni by Ibn Qudama 3/257 also refer to Zaad Al-Ma'aad 1/442

⁸ Ibn Majah, graded as Hasan by Al-Albani in Sahih Sunan bin Majah 1/326

⁹ Al-Mughni 3/257

3 – It is recommended to wear the best outfit and clothing you have.

Abdullah b. Umar reported: (Umar b. al-Khattab found a silk garment being sold in the market; he purchased it and brought it to Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) and said: Allah's Messenger, get it and adorn yourself (by wearing it) on the 'Eid (days) and for the delegations. Thereupon, Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said: That is the dress of one who has no share (in the Hereafter)¹⁰.

Ibn Qudamah commenting on the hadeeth says: (This proves that they use to adorn themselves with beautiful clothes on Eid ... And Imam Malik said: I heard that the people of knowledge would adorn themselves with perfume and beautiful attire on every Eid, and the Imam would be more worthy of this as he is the one they are looking towards.¹¹) Abdullah Ibn Umar would be seen wearing his best attire on Eid¹².

4 – It is recommended on Eid Al-Fitr to eat an odd number of dates before going to the Eid prayer, as for Eid Al-Adha it is better not to eat anything until after returning from the Eid prayer.

Anas reports: (That Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) did not go out in the morning on the day of Eid Al-Fitr till he ate some dates, and he would eat an odd number¹³.)

Buraida reports: (That the Prophet (ﷺ) did not go out on the day of Eid Al-Fitr till he had some food, but that he did not take any food on the day of Eid Al-Adha till he had prayed.¹⁴)

¹⁰ Bukhari hadeeth no 948 & Muslim hadeeth no 2068

¹¹ Al-Mughni 3/257-258

¹² Fath Al-Bari 2/439

¹³ Bukhari 953

¹⁴ Al-Tirmidhi 542 & Ibn Majah 1756, graded as sahih by Albani in Sahih Al-Tirmidhi 1/302

5 – It is recommended to walk to the Eid prayer in a state of calmness and tranquillity.

Sa'ad reports that the Prophet Salla Allahu Alaihi Wasallam (used to leave for the eid prayer on foot and would return on foot.¹⁵) This sunnah was also practiced by many of the Salaf (pious predecessors) including Ali bin Abi Talib, Al-Nakhai', Al-Thawri and Imam Al-Shaafi'i¹⁶.

From the statements of Ali on this issue: (From the sunnah is to leave for the Eid prayer on foot.¹⁷) Al-Imam Al-Tirmidhi comments on this Hadeeth and says: (This is the practice of the majority of scholars, they recommend walking to the Eid prayer and to consume some food before departing. They prefer not to mount any vehicle except for necessity.¹⁸)

6 – The sunnah is to pray both Eid prayers in a 'Musalla' which is a field or a place outside the masjid dedicated for the Eid prayer and not to pray in a masjid except if there is a need.

The evidence for this is the hadeeth of Abu Saeed Al-Khudri who said: (The Prophet Salla Allahu Alayhi Wasallam used to leave for the '*musalla*' on Eid Al-Fitr & Eid Al-Adha and the first thing he would begin with is the prayer.¹⁹) This was also the practice of the four rightly guided Khalifs after him and the prophet (ﷺ) never prayed in his masjid except for a need. This is also the *Ijmaa'*²⁰ of the Muslims²¹. However, if there is rain or the Muslims are fearful of something or the ruler of that country prevents this from happening then they should pray in the masjid and there is no harm in this²².

¹⁵ Sahih ibn Majah 1296

¹⁶ Al-Mughni 3/262

¹⁷ Sahih Al-Tirmidhi 1/296

¹⁸ Al-Tirmidhi after Hadeeth no 530.

¹⁹ Agreed upon by Bukhari (956) & Muslim (889)

²⁰ Consensus and unanimously agreed upon

²¹ Al-Mughni 3/260

²² Al-Mughni 3/261

7 – The sunnah is to go to the *musalla* via a route and to return via a different route.

Al-Bukhaari narrated that Jaabir ibn ‘Abd-Allaah (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: (On the day of Eid, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) would vary his route.²³).

There are those who search for the wisdom behind this, but it is important to remember that we are instructed to follow the sunnah of our noble messenger (ﷺ) regardless of whether we know the wisdom behind the sunnah or not.

Allah the Most High says:

{ Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example for whoever has hope in Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah often.} [33:21]

And He also says:

{ It is not for a believing man or woman—when Allah and His Messenger decree a matter—to have any other choice in that matter.¹ Indeed, whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger has clearly gone ‘far’ astray.} [33:36]

If one believes in this fact, then there is no harm in searching for the *hikmah* and wisdom behind this particular sunnah. The scholars mention the following reasons behind this sunnah;

- 1 – So that the two routes bear testimony for him.
- 2 – So that the Jinn and the humans that witness him bear testimony for him.
- 3 – To make apparent one of the symbols of Islam.
- 4 – To make apparent the remembrance of Allah.
- 5 – To humiliate and cause grief and anguish to the enemies of Islam.
- 6 – To remind the people whom he meets in these two routes of the beauty of Islam and make them happy and spread beneficial knowledge as well as the sunnah.
- 7 – To greet as many people as possible and give them charity if needed.

²³ Al-Bukhari 986, this means he would go via one route and come back via a different route

8 – It is a symbolic gesture of optimism and hope that indicates to the changing of the person’s situation to forgiveness and the pleasure of Allah.

9 – To have the opportunity to strengthen the ties of kinship by visiting more relatives.

After mentioning all the above and others Ibn Al-Qayyim says: (All of them can be considered reasons and wisdoms for this sunnah²⁴).

8 – The sunnah is for the worshippers to leave for the *musalla* after the fajr prayer, as for the Imam then the sunnah is for him to leave for the *musalla* when the time of the prayer has drawn near.

This was the sunnah of the companions because the first thing that the Prophet (Salla Allahu Alayhi Wa sallam) would do when he reached the *musalla* was to pray and he used to lead them in prayer. Abu Saeed Al-Khudri says: (The Prophet Salla Allahu Alayhi Wasallam used to leave for the ‘*musalla*’ on Eid Al-Fitr & Eid Al-Adha and the first thing he would begin with is the prayer.²⁵) It is widely accepted that the companions would arrive before him and they would wait for him²⁶.

9 – The sunnah is for men to say the Takbeer in a loud and audible voice while walking to the *musalla*.

It is narrated that the Prophet (Salla Allahu Alayhi Wasallam) used to make takbeer in a loud voice until he reached the *musalla*, he would stop the takbeer when he completed the prayer²⁷.

Ibn Umar would also recite the takbeer loudly for both Eid prayers while walking to the *musalla* until the Imam appeared²⁸. This was also the custom of many of the companions and righteous

²⁴ Zaad Al-Ma’aad 1/449 & Al-Mughni 3/283

²⁵ Agreed upon by Bukhari (956) & Muslim (889)

²⁶ Al-Sharh Al-Mumti’ 5/163 - 164

²⁷ Narrated by Ibn Abi Shayba in Al-Musannaf 2/2/1

²⁸ Silsilatul Ahadeeth Al-Saheeha by Albani no 170

predecessors such as Ali, Abu Umaamah, Umar bin AbdulAziz, Al-Nakhai', Saeed ibn Jubayr, AbdulRahman bin Abi Layla, Malik and others²⁹.

This is an abandoned sunnah so I encourage everyone reading this to revive this sunnah and not to shy away from it. It is important to note that this takbeer is done individually and not collectively as is the case for every type of remembrance. Collectively saying the takbeer in one voice is a despised innovation that has no basis in this religion. Do not be fooled by the practice of the foolish who collectively recite the takbeer or other types of dhikr in one voice. This religion is not based on what makes us feel good or 'what seems to be right' but rather it is based on authentic narrations that are supported by the practice and understanding of the three most guided generations. If it wasn't part of the sunnah in the first 300 years of Islam, then it certainly isn't today. Therefore pay close attention to this principle and do not be misled.³⁰

10 – The Sunnah is not to pray anything before or after the Eid prayer unless the Eid prayer is in a masjid, in which case you must pray two units of prayer.

Ibn Abbas narrates that the messenger of Allah (Salla Allahu Alayhi Wasallam) left for the Eid prayer and immediately prayed, he didn't pray anything before or after it and Bilal was with him³¹. Al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar says: (There is no sunnah either before or after the Eid prayer and it should not be compared to the Jummah prayer.³²) As for the hadeeth of Abu Saa'ed Al-Khudri in which he says: (The Prophet (Salla Allahu Alayhi Wasallam) never used to pray anything before the Eid prayer but when he returned to his home he would pray two units of prayer.³³) Imam Al-Albani says: 'We can reconcile between this hadeeth and the others that negate the fact that the Prophet never prayed anything after the Eid prayer by saying that the negation is regarding only praying in the *musalla*, as was mentioned by Ibn Hajar in Al-Talkhees.³⁴' This narration teaches us that the sunnah is to pray two units of prayer when you return home from the Eid prayer.

²⁹ Al-Mughni 3/262

³⁰ Silsilatul Ahadeeth Al-Saheeha by Albani no 1/121 after hadeeth no 170

³¹ Bukhari 989 & Muslim 884 also refer to Zaad Al Ma'aad 1/443

³² Fath Al-Bari 2/476

³³ Ibn Majah 1293, graded Hasan by Ibn Hajar in Bulugh Al-Maram and Albani in Irwa Al-Ghalil 3/100, also see Sahih ibn Majah 1/388

³⁴ Irwa Al-Ghalil 3/100

11 – The Sunnah is not to call the Athan and Iqamah for the Eid prayer.

Jabir ibn Samurah narrates: (I prayed behind the messenger of Allah Salla Allahu Alayhi Wasallam the two Eid prayers on more than one or two occasions without an athan and iqamah.³⁵) This tells us that calling the athan and iqamah for the Eid prayer is an innovation that has no basis³⁶.

12 – Women should leave for the *musalla* wearing the full hijab and refrain from wearing any scent or perfume or any clothing that attracts attention.

Umm ‘Atiya said:

(We were commanded to bring out the menstruating women and those who remained secluded from the eyes of men on the day of the two Eids so that they might be present at the congregational prayer of the Muslims and witness their supplication, but the menstruous women had to keep at a distance from their place of prayer.³⁷)

The Eid prayer isn't obligatory on women but it is recommended for them to attend³⁸.

I remind our sisters of the statement of Allah:

{O Prophet! Ask your wives, daughters, and believing women to draw their cloaks over their bodies. In this way it is more likely that they will be recognized 'as virtuous' and not be harassed. And Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.} [33:59]

The objective of Eid is to please Allah and not to anger him, and the main objective of the hijab is to conceal the beauty of the woman, therefore, if the clothing that is worn is in itself a symbol of beauty and allurement then it defeats the purpose of the hijab. Eid is not an opportunity for women to display their beauty outside the confines of their homes, it is not an opportunity for women to compete with one another to impress others as though they are in a fashion show but rather it is an opportunity to please Allah and at the same time enjoy the occasion with family

³⁵ Muslim 887

³⁶ Subul – Al-Salaam by Al-San'aani 3/229

³⁷ Bukhari 324 & Muslim 890

³⁸ The Fatwa of the permanent committee 8/284

and friends. There is no harm for a Muslim woman to wear beautiful clothing and adorn herself with gold and henna as long as it is in the privacy of her own home and not in the company of strange men who are not her mahrams. The reason for this is to prevent fitna.

13 – It is recommended for parents to bring their children to the Eid prayer, so they can witness the supplication of the Muslims.

Al-Imam Al-Bukhari has dedicated a chapter to this in his sahih in which he says: (Chapter on children attending the *musalla*.) He then mentions the hadeeth of Ibn Abbas: (I left with the Prophet Salla Allahu Alayhi Wasallam on Eid Al-Fitr & Eid Al-Adha and when he prayed the Eid prayer he did the khutbah, he then went to the women's prayer area and admonished them and reminded them and encouraged them to give in charity.³⁹) Ibn Abbas was a child otherwise he would not have accompanied the Prophet (ﷺ) as he himself says: (If I wasn't a child I would not have witnessed this.⁴⁰) It is not a condition for children to pray but the parent must be able to control the child from causing a disturbance to the other worshippers⁴¹.

14 – To greet each other and make dua for one another is from the sunnah of the companions.

Al-Hafidh ibn Hajar narrates with a good chain on the authority of Jubayr ibn Nufayr who said: (Whenever the companions met on Eid they would greet one another with this dua: May Allah accept this from us and from you.⁴²)

Ali ibn Thabit says: (I asked Malik about this and he said: We continue to practice this in Madinah.⁴³)

³⁹ Bukhari 975

⁴⁰ Bukhari 977

⁴¹ Fath Al-Bari 2/466

⁴² Fath Al-Bari 2/446

⁴³ Al-Mughni 3/294

There is no specific narration from the messenger of Allah Salla Allahu Alayhi Wasallam regarding the greeting for Eid however it is the custom of the companions to say the aforementioned dua⁴⁴.

We ask Allah to accept our fast and our worship in Ramadan and to grant us the highest stations in Jannah. I humbly ask our creator and sustainer to continuously guide us to the sunnah and to protect us from falling into fitnah.

May Allah accept this small effort and make it a means of guidance for the Muslims.

Written by: Mohammed Aideed

28 Ramadan 1444

19 April 2023

⁴⁴ Majmu Al-Fatawaa of Ibn Taymiyah 24/253