



Eid For Peace

MAULANA WAHIDUDDIN KHAN explains the rationale behind the Eid of sacrifice, called Eid al-Adha

Eid al-Adha means Eid of Sacrifice. Animal sacrifice on this day is purely symbolic: the real sacrifice that is needed is self-sacrifice.

There are two levels of involvement in the Islamic life. The higher level of involvement entails self-sacrifice. The other level is that of the believer adopting Islam as a culture. This kind of involvement requires no sacrifice, for it is enough to perform certain rituals and adopt some forms which point to the 'Muslim identity'. This is the preliminary level of involvement.

Divine Mission

The higher level of involvement is that in which the believer adopts Islam as a divine mission. He devotes himself to the promotion of this mission, and expends all his time and energy on it. A mission requires sacrifice, for without sacrifice, no one can carry a mission through to completion.

The Islamic mission centres on *tawhid* and *salam*, that is, oneness of God and social peace. Oneness of God is the central ideology of Islam, and peace is important for practical purposes. Without peace, there can be no constructive activity at all.

The ideology of *tawhid*, or the oneness of God, is the central theme of Islam. *Tawhid* means that God is one, He is Self-existent; He has created the universe. God is alive; He is the Sustainer of the world; He is all-powerful, and He alone controls all the events of the world and those of human life. In Islam, it is required that one must

adopt a life that is God-oriented.

On the day of Eid al-Adha, Muslims go out of their homes, gather at a place of worship and interact with other people. During all these activities, they always greet people with these words: *As-salamu alaykum* — May peace be upon you! In their prayer on Eid al-Adha and in their daily prayers, Muslims always conclude by saying: *As-salmu alaykum warahmatullah* — May peace and bless-



ings of God be upon you! When they utter these blessings, they turn their heads to the right and the left. In doing so, they convey the message of peace to all mankind throughout the world.

When the new moon of Eid al-Adha appears, Muslims are required to say: "O God, make this month for us a month of peace." The Prophet of Islam used to pray thus: "O God, You are peace; peace comes from You and returns to You. O God, grant us a world of peace."

No More Violence

Muslims remember that they have to promote peace, and they are required to abandon violent activities that are a hindrance in the establishment of peace.

A verse in the *Quran* says: *And God calls to the Home of Peace. (10:25)* This means that according to the divine scheme of things, it is necessary to establish a peaceful society. Peace is required for all kinds of development. If one decides to live a God-oriented life, one must try to establish peace, otherwise living a God-oriented life is not possible.

Great Sacrifice

This mission is a very sincere one. This kind of mission requires great sacrifice — not physical sacrifice, but psychological sacrifice. It also entails sacrificing one's time and energy. It is this missionary spirit that is remembered on the day of Eid al-Adha. ■



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