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“Le courage c’est de chercher la vérité et de la dire” – Jaures

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

EID-UL-FITR & THE BOND OF BROTHERHOOD

Eid-ul-Fitr is the gift of Allah to Muslims to reward them for their endurance as well as their obedience and devotion to Him during Ramadan. Since fasting is obligatory on all Muslims during Ramadan, celebrating Eid is incumbent upon them as a community (one Ummah). It is the occasion offered to them to enjoy divine favours, to rejoice, to wear their best, to be at their best and to eat and drink what best has been prepared for it is expressly forbidden to fast on this festive day. But as always in Islam, all in spirit of moderation!

Eid-ul-Fitr is a day of peace and blessing; it is a day of sharing; it is also a day celebrated in the warmth of the family. The festivities of Eid-ul-Fitr commence with thanksgiving, assemble in the mosques in the early morning, prayer is offered and a special sermon is delivered, often on the theme of the gains obtained in the outgoing blessed month of Ramadan and the efforts which one and all must make to keep up with the

good habits and the mode of behaviours that Ramadan has helped to achieve. Thereafter greetings are exchanged, visits are paid to friends and relatives, the young visiting the elders, gifts are offered to children, dainties are shared especially with neighbours; in certain families, there exists the tradition of visiting the dear departed ones (in cemeteries) to invoke the Almighty's blessings on their souls.

Members of the family gather during the day to share a meal. The spirit of solidarity in Islam is also manifested in moments of joy, to enable the less fortunate to celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr with grace and dignity. Islam has prescribed the Zakaat-ul-Fitr, commonly known as Fitra, a fixed due (equivalent to 1.6Kg worth of wheat) incumbent on every head of family who can afford it; the head of the family is responsible to pay this due for every member of the family. Although one is allowed to effect this payment prior to the Eid-ul-Fitr prayer, it is customary and commendable that it be effected days before so that the recipient may have sufficient time to pro-

vide himself with his own and his family's needs for Eid. The Almighty in His divine wisdom has thus made provision for everyone to be entitled to a decent celebration of Eid-ul-Fitr.

Therefore, those who are afflicted with poverty, ignorance, disease and other misfortunes are not to be forgotten on this day. If each Muslim believer mediates on the true spirit of Eid, then he will feel connected to his other brethren, feeling their pains and sufferings, feeling that he has to do something for them, anything which can alleviate their troubles and pains. One clear example is the martyrdom which the Muslim brothers, sisters and children of Palestine are experiencing on a daily basis and that too in the blessed month of Ramadan. With the very increasing death toll, there is the increasing possibility that those who witnessed the beginning of Ramadan have not witnessed its end and died in a state of fear, hunger and pain.

The spirit of Eid-ul-Fitr forces us to stop for some time, to meditate on what is really essential to our physical, moral and spiritual

needs, of our bond with the others of the same faith as us, of doing something for them which shall see to their sense of achievement in the hereafter. In these troubled times, all we have is prayer to our Creator, the Lord of mankind, of all the Worlds, who has all power whereas we feeble humans are powerless. But prayer is the key to open the doors of salvation, divine mercy and blessings for those whom we cherish with all our hearts but cannot help in some material, worldly way.

With these words, I wish an Eid Mubarak to all my Muslim brothers, sisters and children around the World. May Allah remove your every difficulty and enable you to accomplish your sincere devout desires in His path as true Muslims dedicated to please Him. My thoughts go also to those who are suffering and cannot partake of the joy of Eid-ul-Fitr. May Allah enable a change in their present state and transform their lives for the best. Ameen.

Hazrat Imam Muhyiud-Din Munir A. Azim
Jamaat Ul Sahih Al Islam