

FRIDAY KHUTBA OF TOKYO CAMII

November 20, 2009

THE SACRIFICE

Dear Mumins!

As is known, qurban, the sacrifice, means the slaughter of an animal to approach Allah with the intention of reaching His Ridâ. A Mumin who has a permanent habitation and is not insane, and is free and rich according to the religious measurements, comes closer to Allah (s.w.t.) by slaughtering the animal. He also comes closer to his fellow believers by giving some portions of the meat to those who cannot slaughter. Actually, the sacrifice is a sign that the Muslim is ready to sacrifice all of his existence for Allah's cause when necessary.

While Islam has aimed at conveying wisdom and human virtues to the individual, in the meantime, it has institutionalized the commands and practices that promote unity among the people. This superior characteristic of Islam has appeared more obviously in the financial and social forms of worship, like zakah, hajj, and sacrifice.

The worship of the sacrifice is mentioned both in Qur'an and in our Prophet's (s.a.w.) sunnah. As is said in the Qur'an, with the ayah, "It is neither their meat nor their blood that reaches Allah, but it is piety from you that reaches Him."¹ Thus, slaughtering an animal is not done in response to the need for its meat; on the contrary, it is quite clear that it is a practice aimed at worship.

The Prophet (s.a.w.) acknowledged qurban as worship and conducted the slaughter himself as well. Narrated Anas (r.a.): "The prophet (s.a.w.) had slaughtered seven camels with his hand and in Madina motley and two horned sheep as well."²

According to the sahih hadith books, the Prophet (s.a.w.) expressed that the most

pleasant worship from the view of Allah in the Eïd al-Adhâ was to slaughter. It would be accepted by Allah as soon as the animal is slaughtered, and even the horns and nails of the slaughtered animal would be written among his good deeds. He also advised to carry out this worship for the Rida of Allah.³

Dear Mumins !

Recently, some rumors have been spread that it would better to donate an equivalent amount to the poor people instead of slaughtering the animal. Although according to most of the sects (madhab) the adjudication of slaughtering is sunnah, it is wajeab according to the preferred opinion of the Hanafi fiqh. But simply because one might not be fard, this does not remove the sacrifice from the circle of worship. Further,

neither its method nor its content can be changed. As there are some methods, conditions, and rukns of worship, there are also goals and reasons for them. Thus, it is impossible to think that these characteristics are separate from each other.

Whether its fiqhee adjudication is wajeab or sunnah, the worship of sacrificing can only be carried out by slaughtering an animal which is suitable according to Islamic procedures. It cannot be carried out by giving an equivalent amount to the poor people.

May Allah (s.w.t.) grant us a strong, unshakeable, and certain iman, such as Ibrâhîm (a.s.), who tried to slaughter his son, Ismâ'îl (a.s.), which is clearly much harder than slaughtering an ordinary animal.



¹ Al-Hajj, 37.

² Bukharî, Hajj, 117, 119; Muslim, Adâhî , 17.

³ Tirmidhî, Adâhî, 1; İbn Mâjah, Adâhî, 3.