



# *The Spirit of Qurbaani*

*Selected Articles of*

**Hazrat Moulana  
Muhammad Ilyas Patel Saheb  
(daamat barakaatuhum)**

*Published by:  
Madrasah Ta'leemuddeen  
Isipingo Beach*

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The writer, compiler, editors, and typesetters humbly request your du'aas for them, their parents, families, Mashaayikh and Asaatizah.

Published by:

Madrasah Ta'leemuddeen

4 Third Avenue

P.O. Box 26024

Isipingo Beach

4115

South Africa

Tel: (+27) 31 902 9818

Fax: (+27) 31 902 5681

E-mail: [publications@alhaadi.org.za](mailto:publications@alhaadi.org.za)

Website: [www.alhaadi.org.za](http://www.alhaadi.org.za)

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## Foreword

With the grace of Allah Ta'ala, to a great extent the atmosphere of qurbaani is widely experienced in our country. In many communities, animals are kept and slaughtered in backyards. The children look forward to this and engage in all the work with great enthusiasm. This is something commendable and should be increased, as it will keep alive the 'ibaadat of qurbaani for the future generations.

However, there is a great need for us to move from the mere atmosphere to achieving the true spirit of qurbaani. If this is not understood, then under the false pretence of "spirit" various laws of sharee'ah will be violated, such as taking of selfies, intermingling, etc. This then results in this momentous 'ibaadat becoming a mere event of entertainment and fun.

Allah Ta'ala says in the Quraan Majeed: "It is neither their flesh nor their blood that reaches Allah Ta'ala, rather your *taqwa* reaches Him." (Surah Hajj, v37) *Taqwa* refers to the spirit of obedience to Allah Ta'ala and submission to His command. This was the actual and continuous sunnah of Sayyiduna Ebrahim ('alaihi salaam) which needs to be inculcated in these days.

This booklet is a collection of various articles from the Al-Haadi newsletter of the madrasah which were written by Hazrat Moulana Muhammad Ilyas Patel Saheb (daamat barakaatuhum). Coincidentally the first article of this booklet is from the first issue of the newsletter which was published in Zul Hijjah 1413.

It is hoped that these articles will greatly assist in shedding light on different dimensions of the spirit of qurbaani.

May Allah Ta'ala accept it out of His grace and mercy and make it a means of tremendous benefit for the Ummah.

Madrasah Ta'leemuddeen publications department.



# Qurbaani

Thousands of animals will once again be slaughtered worldwide on the occasion of 'Eidul Adha to commemorate the astounding spirit of sacrifice of Sayyiduna Ebrahim ('alaihi salaam).

## Sacrifice of Ebrahim ('alaihi salaam)

Indeed, the entire life of Sayyiduna Ebrahim ('alaihi salaam) is filled with incidents of self-sacrifice. He embodied sacrifice by totally surrendering himself to the command of Allah Ta'ala to fulfil whatever was demanded of him on every occasion.

He sacrificed the company of his father and his community to pursue the road to the recognition of his Creator. His wife and infant child were left in a barren land with no apparent means of survival and he eventually placed the sharpened knife on the throat of his beloved son in an attempt to slaughter him to fulfil the command of Allah Ta'ala, his Sustainer and Nourisher. These incidents speak volumes of the extent to which Sayyiduna Ebrahim ('alaihi salaam) had surrendered himself to the divine law.

Hence to kindle within ourselves this spirit of self-sacrifice, we have been ordered to follow this “sunnah” of Ebrahim (‘alaihi salaam) by sacrificing an animal on the occasion of ‘Eidul Adha. The Sahaabah (radhiyallahu ‘anhum) once inquired as to what was the significance of sacrificing an animal. “It is the sunnah of your father Ebrahim (‘alaihi salaam)” answered Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam). (Sunan Ibni Maajah #3127)

## Importance

The ‘ibaadah of qurbaani is among the sha’aair (distinguishing features) of Islam. Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) has greatly stressed the performance of qurbaani. Such importance has been accorded to qurbaani that a severe warning was sounded to those who shirk in performing it despite having the means.

Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) is reported to have said: “He who has the means to sacrifice an animal but does not do so should not come near our musalla (‘Eidgaah)”. (Sunan Ibni Maajah #3123)

We can truly appreciate the full impact of this hadeeth if we ponder for a moment what a tremendous blessing it was to perform a single salaah behind Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam). Here Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) is

prohibiting the person who failed to perform qurbaani, despite having the means, from performing the 'Eid salaah behind him. This, then, illustrates the tremendous importance of qurbaani in Islam and the reprehensible position of those who ignore this injunction. Hence no true Muslim who has the means will ever omit performing the qurbaani.

## Rewards

Great rewards have also been promised to that person who performs qurbaani. It is reported in a hadeeth that the one who performs qurbaani will be rewarded for every hair on the body of the animal or for every fibre of wool in the case of sheep. (Sunan Ibni Maajah #3127)

There are various aspects pertaining to qurbaani which should be borne in mind. Some of these aspects are as follows:

## Best Animal

When purchasing the qurbaani animal one should spend with an open heart. The best animal should be acquired (within one's means).

It is reported in a narration that Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) said: "Verily it (the sacrificed animal) will come on the Day of Qiyaamah with its horns, hair and hooves (to be weighed

on the scale of good deeds); and indeed it is accepted by Allah Ta'ala before its blood reaches the ground, therefore sacrifice with a happy heart". (Sunan Tirmizi #3123)

Hence, within one's means one should spend freely to acquire the best animal.

## **Giving the Value**

On the occasion of qurbaani, the most beloved act in the sight of Allah Ta'ala is the slaughtering of animals. Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) is reported to have said: "There is no action more beloved to Allah Ta'ala on the day of 'Eidul Adha than causing the blood (of the sacrificial animal) to flow". (Sunan Tirmizi #3123)

Hence the one who has the means must perform qurbaani. It is not sufficient to give the value of the animal in cash to the needy. Just as the injunction of fasting cannot be fulfilled by performing salaah and vice versa, similarly the order of qurbaani cannot be fulfilled by giving charity. Besides this, there were many people who were in dire need even in the time of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam). However, despite this, Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) did not give the money to these people. Instead he ordered that the animals be sacrificed and the meat be distributed to the poor.

## Partaking of the Animal

It is preferable that the qurbaani animal be divided into three portions; one third should be given to the poor, a third to relatives and friends and the rest could be kept for oneself. One may also give away the entire animal whilst it is also permissible to keep everything. Nevertheless, it is sunnah to partake of the qurbaani animal.

It is reported that on the day of 'Eidul Adha, Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) would not eat anything until he returned (after the 'Eid salaah) and first ate from the animal that was sacrificed. (Majma'uz Zawaa'id #3214) In another narration it is mentioned that he would partake of the liver of his qurbaani animal. (As-Sunanul Kubraa - Baihaqi #6230)

Similarly, it is reported from Abu Hurairah (radhiyallahu 'anhu) that Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) said: "When one of you has sacrificed an animal he should eat therefrom." (Musnad Ahmad - Majma'uz Zawaa'id #5990)

Hence from the above it is understood that one should partake of the qurbaani animal. Many people, despite sacrificing many animals, do not eat a single morsel due to some unfounded reasons. This is indeed a great deprivation.

## Overseas Qurbaani

Many people are accustomed to sending money overseas to have the qurbaani performed on their behalf. If this is done to alleviate food shortages as well as to feed the starving people in that place, then it is a noble action. Nevertheless, actions are judged according to the intentions. If this is done merely to save oneself the “work” and “trouble,” it is indeed reprehensible.

Whilst the qurbaani is absolutely valid even if it is performed elsewhere, the most preferable method is that one should choose the animal personally. Thereafter (if possible) the animal should be brought to one’s place some time before the qurbaani and one should tend to it.

It is also mustahab (preferable) to slaughter the animal personally. If this is not possible, one should be present when the animal is being slaughtered. Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) said to Faatimah (radhiyallahu ‘anha) “O Faatimah, stand and witness your animal being slaughtered for verily Allah Ta’ala will forgive your sins with the first drop of the animal’s blood.” (Majma‘uz Zawaa'id #5934 & 5935) Hence to be present at such a noble time is indeed meritorious.

As mentioned earlier, if possible, the first thing eaten on the day of ‘Eidul Adha should be the qurbaani animal. By performing qurbaani elsewhere, these virtues cannot be obtained.

However, what could be done is that the (one) waajib qurbaani should be performed personally. Besides this any number of nafl (optional) qurbaanis could be performed elsewhere, where the need exists to alleviate food shortages.

Another aspect to consider is that if the qurbaani is always performed elsewhere, the next generation will become totally unaccustomed to the sacrificing of animals on the occasion of 'Eidul Adha. Hence it is feared that they may completely abandon this great 'ibaadah.

## Submission

The days of Hajj are with us. Those who undertake this momentous journey will be constantly reminded of Sayyiduna Ebrahim ('alaihi salaam), his wife Sayyidah Haajar ('alaihas salaam) and his son Sayyiduna Ismail ('alaihi salaam).

The Ka'bah Shareef that the haaji will perform tawaaf of was built by this illustrious father and son. The seven rounds between mount Safa and Marwa is the living reminder of the anxious running at that very pace by Sayyidah Haajar ('alaihas salaam) in search of water for her infant son. The precious water of Zam-zam makes one ponder over the thirst of Sayyiduna Ismail ('alaihi salaam) and the extreme concern of his mother – until finally this miracle was granted to them. These are but just a few of the reminders of this illustrious family.

Nevertheless, one tremendous lesson that shines extraordinarily in the lives of these great personalities is the level of their unquestioning submission to the command of Allah Ta'ala. In these blessed days of Hajj we should be learning especially this lesson from them and enacting it in our lives.



## **Barren Land**

Consider the command of Allah Ta'ala to Sayyiduna Ebrahim ('alaihi salaam) to leave his wife and infant child alone in a barren land. No amount of human intelligence can fathom the wisdom behind this command. A solitary innocent woman and an infant child being left alone in a desert without any apparent means of survival is something that seems senseless.

Had it been one of our liberal thinkers of today, he would have readily "re-interpreted" this command of Allah Ta'ala. Many would have at least asked: "But why must I do this?"

Sayyiduna Ebrahim ('alaihi salaam) however responded very differently. He responded by doing exactly what he was told. Without any question he leaves his wife and child in the barren land and quietly turns to return. He lived up to his declaration which the Quraan Majeed has preserved for eternity. Allah Ta'ala says: "And remember the time when your Rabb said to him (Ebrahim ['alaihi salaam]), 'Submit!' He (Ebrahim ['alaihi salaam]) replied, 'I have submitted to the Lord of the worlds'." (Surah Baqarah, v131). And indeed he submitted without any hesitation and did what many today would have termed senseless – he left his wife and child in a desert without any apparent means of survival.

## Command of Allah Ta‘ala?

As he turns to leave, his wife Sayyidah Haajar (‘alaihas salaam) asks in utter astonishment: “Are you going to leave us here?” This was the response of a normal human being. Anyone would have been perturbed at being left in a desert totally exposed to the elements. But her question is met with silence from Sayyiduna Ebrahim (‘alaihis salaam) who was commanded not to say anything. His silence in this trying situation was also an act of submission.

Sayyidah Haajar (‘alaihas salaam) repeated the question, but to no avail. She finally rephrases the question and asks: “Is this the command of Allah Ta‘ala?” Sayyiduna Ebrahim (‘alaihis salaam) indicates positively. That was all she needed to know. Without any further question she exclaims: “In that case He will not allow us to perish.” (Saheeh Bukhaari #3364)

Subhanallah! What absolute submission to the command of Allah Ta‘ala. No cries of “discrimination” were heard from her – as many women of our times would have done. No question was raised about whether this was “democratic.” There was no clamour for “equality”. No sooner did she come to know that she was being left in that barren place on the command of Allah Ta‘ala, she fully submitted to it. No “ifs” and “buts.” No “I cannot understand this” or “it doesn’t make sense.” Nothing of the sort. Only total submission was to be seen.

## Slaughter Son

When Sayyiduna Ebrahim ('alaihi salaam) was commanded to slaughter his son, he again submitted without any question and prepared himself to carry out the task. Consider this command at face value and it seems to be totally illogical.

Had it been one of our enlightened modern thinkers of today, he would have certainly asked: "But what did my son do? How can I slaughter an innocent child?" Or, perhaps, he would have just gone ahead and "re-interpreted" the command.

But this was Khaleelullah, Sayyiduna Ebrahim ('alaihi salaam). He proceeded to carry out the command of Allah Ta'ala without any question. When his son, the young Sayyiduna Ismail ('alaihi salaam) becomes aware that he is soon to be slaughtered on the command of Allah Ta'ala, he immediately submits and responds: "O my father, do what you have been commanded. You will soon find me to be among the patient". (Surah Saaffaat, v102) No protest. No rebellion. No question. Just total submission to the command of Allah Ta'ala.

## Muslim

We also have claimed to have submitted ourselves to Allah Ta'ala. Islam means "submission." A "Muslim" is one who

submits. The time has come for some sincere soul searching. To what extent have we submitted to the clear commands of Allah Ta'ala and His beloved Rasul (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam)?

When Allah Ta'ala has declared: "O you who Believe; fear Allah and forsake what is left of interest (Surah Baqarah, v278)," do we stop and submit?

When the Quraan Majeed exhorts the Believing men and women to lower their gazes, how do we respond?

When Allah Ta'ala commands the women: "And remain firmly within your homes (Surah Ahzaab, v33)" do we see the example of the unquestioning submission of Sayyidah Haajar ('alaihas salaam) being implemented?

The same question should be asked about the command of Allah Ta'ala to the Believing women to "draw down their shawls over them" (Surah Ahzaab, v59).

## **Music on Hold**

When we are informed that Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) closed his ears at the sound of music (Sunan Abi Dawood #4924) and that he declared: "My Rabb has commanded me to destroy musical instruments," (Musnad Ahmad #22307) do we submit and eradicate all music out of our lives? Or do we just ignore these ahaadeeth and instead promote music by playing it

ourselves in our homes and businesses, by having music on hold on our telephones, by installing musical doorbells, etc.?

Similarly, what about the injunctions pertaining to all our 'ibaadah, monetary affairs and social interactions?

## **Makes Sense?**

The time has come to fully submit to the commands of Allah Ta'ala in the manner that Sayyiduna Ebrahim ('alaihi salaam) and his family have displayed. No questions about "why this?" and "why that?" No re-interpretations and no waiting to see if it "makes sense" to us. All we need to establish is what the command of Allah Ta'ala and His Rasul (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) is. Then we merely need to submit to His command.

May Allah Ta'ala make us true Muslims - those who submit totally unto Him, aameen.

# Sacrifice

Islam and sacrifice have an extremely close relationship. The entire foundation of our deen is based on sacrifice.

From the very moment that Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) proclaimed the message of Allah Ta'ala, he had to make innumerable sacrifices.

## Sacrifice of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam)

He had to sacrifice his family members – his uncle Abu Lahab and Abu Jahal became his arch enemies. He had to make the sacrifice of being rejected by his community, the same people who until this time had called him As-Sadiq and Al-Ameen. He sacrificed a life of ease and rest. The time came when, with a heavy heart he had to sacrifice the Ka'bah Shareef and his birth place and migrate to Madeenah Munawwarah.

## **Sacrifice of His Family**

Those around Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) were also subjected to similar situations and for the sake of deen they also had to make the sacrifice.

For instance, two of his daughters had already been married to the sons of Abu Lahab. When Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) began propagating the deen of Allah Ta‘ala, both his daughters were simultaneously divorced by their husbands on the instructions of Abu Lahab.

His daughter Zainab (radhiyallahu ‘anha) passed away as a result of the wound that was inflicted upon her while migrating to Madeenah Munawwarah. The most beloved daughter of Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam), Faatimah (radhiyallahu ‘anha), had to often starve together with her family.

The Sahaabah (radhiyallahu ‘anhum) in general had to make untold sacrifices. The pages of history are filled with these incidents.

## **Legacy**

Thus the relationship of Islam with sacrifice is absolutely apparent. This sacrifice, as much as it is a part and parcel of this Ummah, is the legacy of the great-grandfather of Rasulullah

(sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam), Sayyiduna Ebrahim (‘alaihi salaam). He had to make numerous sacrifices.

Among these was leaving his wife and infant child on the command of Allah Ta‘ala in an absolutely barren land with no apparent means of survival. Finally, he was also commanded to sacrifice his son. He willingly took the knife and attempted to carry out this command. However, Allah Ta‘ala of His grace prevented this from happening and sent down a sheep from Jannah to be slaughtered in place of Sayyiduna Ismail (‘alaihi salaam).

It is to keep this very spirit of sacrifice alive in the Ummah that the order of sacrificing an animal on the occasion of ‘Eidul Adha was given to this Ummah. Qurbaani is not just some custom. It is not just a traditional practice. It is an ‘ibaadah of great significance.

It is therefore tragic that the life and spirit of this ‘ibaadah has been almost lost to the Ummah. In most cases the animal is bought, slaughtered, part of it is distributed, part of it is kept for personal use... and that is all. There is hardly any lesson taken. Hardly any spirit of sacrifice imbibed from this sunnah of Sayyiduna Ebrahim (‘alaihi salaam).



## Lesson

Qurbaani involves taking the life of an animal in the name of Allah Ta'ala and only for His pleasure. What lesson do we take from this?

This should instil within us the spirit of being prepared to sacrifice our own lives for the sake of deen. But alas, only the very next day after 'Eidul Adha, a great number of those who sacrificed animals do not manage to sacrifice their sleep for the sake of fajr salaah. Many do not manage to sacrifice the ringing tills for the sake of zuhr salaah. Numerous people do not have the courage to sacrifice the dictates of their base desires and give up all sins. The spirit of qurbaani is almost lost. There is a need to revive this spirit of sacrifice within us.

At the very least, when placing the knife on the throat of the animal let us resolve to sacrifice our desires in order to fulfil the command of Allah Ta'ala and to uplift His deen. If this resolution is made sincerely, it is absolutely possible that it could be the first spark that will set alight an iota of the enthusiasm of sacrifice displayed by Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam), Sayyiduna Ebrahim ('alaihi salaam) and the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu 'anhum).

May Allah Ta'ala enable us to perform qurbaani with true zeal and enthusiasm and may we imbibe the lesson of sacrifice that

was displayed by Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) and the Sahaabah (radhiyallahu 'anhum) for the protection and propagation of deen, aameen.

## Deen vs Desire

Thousands of animals will once again be sacrificed worldwide on the occasion of 'Eidul Adha. Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) described this qurbaani (sacrifice) as the “Sunnah of your father Ebrahim ('alaihi salaam)”. (Sunan Ibni Maajah #3127)

Sayyiduna Ebrahim ('alaihi salaam) was commanded to offer his little son, Sayyiduna Ismail ('alaihi salaam) as a sacrifice. He submitted himself to the command of Allah Ta'ala and in compliance to the command he firmly passed the knife over the throat of his son. Allah Ta'ala prevented the knife from cutting and Sayyiduna Ismail ('alaihi salaam) was spared.

## Parent's Desire

The Quraan Majeed refers to this incident as one of the tests that Sayyiduna Ebrahim ('alaihi salaam) was put through, which he passed with distinction. What really was the test?

The test was simply to determine what will be given preference – deen or desire? Like any other parent, Sayyiduna

Ebrahim (‘alaihi salaam) also certainly desired to see his beloved child living with him in this world. Yet, deen – the command of Allah Ta‘ala – dictated that the desire to see the child living, no matter how intense, must be curbed and the child should be slaughtered. Sayyiduna Ebrahim (‘alaihi salaam) did not hesitate a moment in giving preference to deen over desire.

This is the message and the spirit of qurbaani – to always give preference to deen over desire; to slaughter one’s desire but refrain from slaughtering the command of Allah Ta‘ala or the beloved sunnah of Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam).

## **Worshipping Desires**

The entire life of a Mu‘min is a test. Allah Ta‘ala says: “Do the people think that they will be left to say ‘we have believed’ and they will not be tested?” (Surah ‘Ankaboot, v2) The core of this test, to put it simply, is one’s desire.

Many desires are natural and in-born in every human being. The very nature of one’s desire is that it has no limit and wishes to be expressed unhindered. However sharee‘ah has placed clear limits and boundaries. To curb one’s desires and restrict them within these boundaries is deen, while overstepping these limits is akin to worshipping one’s desires. Allah Ta‘ala asks in the

Quraan Majeed: “Have you seen the one who has made his desire his deity (god)?” (Surah Jaathiyah, v23) The meaning of this verse is that the one who does what he desires and disregards the command of deen, it is as if he is a worshipper of his desires.

Restraining one’s desires, despite any pain that may be experienced in doing so, is the dictates of imaan. Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) is reported to have said: “None of you is a Believer until he submits his desires to that which I have brought (the Quraan and sunnah).” (Sharhus Sunnah vol. 1, pg. 213) This is the greatest test.

Nabi (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam)’s greatest fear was that his followers must not become the slaves of desires. He is reported to have said: “Among the things I fear most for my people are the following of desires (against the commands of sharee‘ah) and having lengthy worldly aspirations. As for following one’s desires, this prevents one from (accepting or following) the truth (deen) while future worldly aspirations make one forgetful of the Hereafter.” (Shu‘abul Imaan #10132 and Fathul Baari vol. 11, pg. 284)

In order to assist us to curb our desires and pass the test, Allah Ta‘ala and His beloved Rasul (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) have declared numerous rewards for those who restrain their desires and give preference to deen.

## **Desire will Lead to Destruction**

For instance, every person has a natural desire to have wealth. Wealth earned in a halaal manner without compromising deen in any way, and spent in a correct manner, is a great blessing. Likewise, every person naturally desires to be respected and honoured. However, if one's desire for wealth becomes his object of life due to which he does not care about deen or the rights of people, or if he chases after fame, his desire will lead him to destruction. Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) is reported to have said: "Two hungry wolves let loose on a flock of sheep cannot cause as much destruction to the flock than the damage inflicted upon one's deen by one's greed for wealth and fame." (Sunan Tirmizi #2376)

On the contrary, curbing one's desire for name, fame, power and popularity and sincerely adopting humility is greatly rewarded. Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) is reported to have said: "He who humbles himself for the sake of Allah Ta'ala, Allah Ta'ala will elevate him." (Saheeh Muslim #6592)

## **Emotions and Thoughts**

Our emotions and thoughts are also subject to the same test – deen or desire. To desire good for every believer is deen. "None of you is a believer until he loves for his brother what he loves

for himself,” (Saheeh Bukhaari #13), declares Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam). On the contrary, to desire that somebody should be deprived of the bounty that he has been blessed with is termed jealousy. It is described in the hadeeth as “Al-haaliqah” – something that shaves off and destroys one’s deen. (Sunan Tirmizi #2510) The acid test is whether we desire good for others or wish harm for them?

Anger is also a natural emotion in man. When one is angered, one naturally desires to give vent to that anger. Once again deen dictates that the anger in personal matters should be restrained. Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) has declared: “The one who restrains his anger where he is capable of venting it, Allah Ta‘ala will fill his heart with imaan and peace.” (Sunan Abi Dawood #4778)

## **Tug-of-War**

In the use of one’s limbs one is constantly engaged in the tug-of-war between deen and desire.

For instance, the heart desires to cast lustful glances. Submitting to this desire destroys the heart and all the noor of imaan. Deen demands that this desire be curbed. Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) has related from Allah Ta‘ala the reward for curbing this desire in the following words: “The

lustful glance (looking at non-mahrams) is from amongst the poisonous arrows of shaitaan. He who refrains from it out of my fear, I will bless him with such imaan, the sweetness of which he will experience in his heart.” (Majma‘uz Zawaaid #12946)

Deen dictates that one should dress with garments of taqwa (piety) – garments which fulfil the requirements of hayaa and simplicity. One’s desires dictate that one should wear flashy garments which will impress others (besides one’s spouse). To follow such desires harms one’s deen. Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) is reported to have said: “The one who wears garments to show-off, Allah Ta‘ala will clothe him with garments of disgrace on the Day of Qiyaamah.” (Sunan Abi Dawood #4030) Thus following the “style” of the pious will be deen while adopting the fashions of the day will be slavery of one’s desires.

## **Crux of the Test**

The crux of our test in this world is summed up in the Quraan Majeed wherein Allah Ta‘ala says: “As for the one who fears standing before his Rabb (on the Day of Judgment) and restrains himself from following his desires, verily Jannah is his abode”. (Surah Naazi‘aat, v40&41).



Thus the lesson of qurbaani is simple yet very comprehensive: Adopt “Deen” over “Desire”. Therefore, when any desire threatens to drag one beyond the limits of deen, slaughter it.

The courage to curb one’s desires and give preference to deen comes from adopting the company of the pious and by means of sacrificing for deen. The more one sacrifices, the stronger one will become against one’s desires.

May Allah Ta’ala keep us steadfast on deen and save us from becoming the slaves of our desires, aameen.

# Ultimate Goal

How would you respond to the following question: “What is your ultimate goal in life?”

Would any of the following responses ever be heard?

- To become super-rich.
- To keep expanding one’s business.
- To have the best comforts and luxuries.
- To acquire the highest qualifications in one’s field.
- To build one’s dream home or to own the smartest car.

Never! ... A thousand times never! We are Mu’mineen (Believers). Our ultimate goal can never be such mundane things. A Mu’min’s ultimate goal can only be that which Allah Ta’ala has himself declared: “And the Pleasure of Allah is the greatest”. (Surah Taubah, v72)

Since the pleasure of Allah Ta’ala is the ultimate goal, whatever is necessary in order to acquire His pleasure must be happily undertaken, while anything that becomes an obstacle in the path of obtaining His pleasure must be sacrificed.

## Reminder

The great 'ibaadah of qurbaani (sacrificing an animal on the occasion of 'Eidul Adha) teaches us exactly this lesson. The love for one's child is more than the love for everything in the world. One's last cent will be spent to save the life of one's child. Yet when Sayyiduna Ebrahim ('alaihi salaam) was commanded to slaughter his son, he set out to fulfil the command in order to acquire the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala.

Qurbaani is a commemoration of this great spirit of sacrifice. It is a reminder of the fundamental lesson that the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala is the ultimate goal and nothing must come in the way of attaining it.

## For Allah Ta'ala Alone

In order to acquire the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala, we must be guided by His commandments and by the noble example of our beloved Rasul (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam). Everything must be for Allah Ta'ala alone, as commanded in the Quraan Majeed: "Say, verily my salaah, my acts of worship, my living and my dying are for Allah, the Rabb (Nurturer) of the universe" (Surah An'aam, v162).

To understand this fundamental concept, consider the following examples:

**Business:** If one engages in business, it must be for the sake of Allah Ta'ala alone – that is to fulfil His command to acquire halaal sustenance and to take care of the needs of one's family. Hence when the business is *for Allah Ta'ala alone*, the business must stop for salaah – salaah must not be put on hold for business. Likewise the most lucrative deal must be sacrificed if it entails any haraam element. All the laws of sharee'ah pertaining to business must be upheld, since the business is *for Allah Ta'ala alone*.

**Nikaah:** Nikaah is a great 'ibaadah. One who gets married has completed half his imaan. Nikaah is also *for Allah Ta'ala alone*. Therefore it will be done in a manner that earns His pleasure. One of the most fundamental aspects to earn His pleasure in nikaah is adopting simplicity. Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) has declared: "The most blessed nikaah is wherein the least expenses were incurred". (Musnad Ahmad #24529) Thus if a nikaah is *for Allah Ta'ala alone* it will be a simple affair, not a lavish function. Thousands of Rands will not be wasted on "decor." Intermingling of males and females, music and other haraam activities will never take place. Let alone haraam activities, nothing will be done merely to impress people – since it is *for Allah Ta'ala alone*.

**Dressing:** One's dressing is also *for Allah Ta'ala alone*. Thus the choice of clothes must conform to the Quraan and sunnah. Tight-fitting, revealing or western-style garments must never be worn, nor must the brand culture be followed. One must never dress to impress people (except the wife dressing for her husband) since Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) has declared: "The one who wears clothing to impress people, Allah Ta'ala will clothe him in garments of disgrace on the Day of Qiyaamah." (Sunan Ibni Maajah #3607)

**Serving deen:** The primary objective of our existence on earth is to worship Allah Ta'ala and to serve His deen. It is obvious that serving deen must be *for Allah Ta'ala alone* or else it will be rejected in His court. Therefore, one will ensure that the manner of serving deen that one has adopted is pleasing to Allah Ta'ala. Hence transgressing the laws of sharee'ah to "serve" deen totally contradicts the objective of working *for Allah Ta'ala alone*. The Quraan Majeed describes such people as "... those whose efforts in the world have gone to waste, whereas they thought they were doing great acts" (Surah Kahf, v103). Thus if our service to deen is *for Allah Ta'ala alone*, it must be done in conformance to deen.

These are merely some examples. Every aspect of our life must be scrutinized in the same way. Is it for Allah Ta'ala alone... or is it for my ego, status, position, power, name and fame or for any other ulterior motive.

## **Full of Barakah**

Whatever is *for Allah Ta'ala alone* is full of barakah and will be accepted in the court of Allah Ta'ala. The benefits of such actions are received in this world and the unimaginable rewards await one in the Hereafter, where Allah Ta'ala will manifest His total pleasure. That is the ultimate goal.

## What Are You Slaughtering?

Qurbaani time is a very exciting time. As the big day draws closer, the entire community is abuzz with qurbaani talk and activity. One of the common questions posed during this time is: “What are you slaughtering?”

Regardless of whether one is slaughtering a humble sheep or a raging bull, the important aspect is that if qurbaani is waajib upon any person, he is fulfilling his obligation. Together with fulfilling this duty he will also be performing an action that is unmatched in its reward and significance during the days of qurbaani. Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) clearly declared: “There is no action performed on the day of sacrifice which is more beloved to Allah Ta‘ala than shedding the blood of the sacrificial animals.” (Sunan Tirmizi #1493)

The qurbaani performed becomes a means of the forgiveness of one’s sins and one is rewarded equivalent to the number of strands of hair or fibres of wool on the body of the animal. (Sunan Ibni Maajah #3127)

## **Not a Mere Ritual**

Subhanallah! Such a great action! But... is it just a ritual to be over and done with? Is it just a time for enjoyment and merry-making (within the limits of deen)? Or does qurbaani teach us any lessons which we should remember and uphold even after the animals have been slaughtered and the meat digested?

Indeed, qurbaani has many deep lessons. Unfortunately, we generally fail to reflect upon and act upon the lessons we are taught by the shedding of the blood of the animals.

Again, we should ask ourselves the same question posed above: “What are you slaughtering?” If the answer is “a sheep”, very well. When slaughtering the sheep for Allah Ta‘ala, did one also take the lesson of always “slaughtering one’s sleep” for Allah Ta‘ala at the time of fajr, “slaughtering” one’s occupations, business, etc. at the time of zuhr and ‘asr and “slaughtering” all the obstacles that prevent one from any salaah?

Qurbaani is a waajib sacrifice. It teaches us the lesson of making the daily sacrifice of whatever comes in the way of fulfilling any fardh (compulsory) action of deen.

## **Slaughter a Bull**

Likewise, it is excellent and very rewarding to slaughter a bull,



but the question to ask oneself is: “Have I also slaughtered the ‘bully’ in me?”

The bully within one which makes one oppress the spouse, deal with employees in a harsh and ruthless manner, trample those who cannot defend themselves, etc.

When subduing the massive animal, has one also subdued one’s raging anger – the anger which is vented even on parents and other near and dear ones? When toppling the mighty cow, has one also toppled one’s pride? When the throat of the ox is slit, has one also slit one’s ego?

## Consideration

One of the emphasised aspects with regard to qurbaani is to treat the animals kindly. The animal must not be dragged to the place of slaughter by its hind legs, it must not be kept hungry or thirsty even though it will be slaughtered shortly, the knife must be very sharp and one animal must not be slaughtered in front of another.

These guidelines highlight the lesson of *consideration* for an animal. After having taken pains to adhere to all these directives and giving the best consideration to the animals, which is a part of our deen, have we also taken the lesson of *consideration for humans* in general? And what about the humans who are our

parents, spouse, children, other family members, neighbours, etc.? What about consideration for the poor and needy?

## Break Hearts

Among the lessons of consideration for the animal is that one should not even sharpen the knife in front of it, since this will distress the animal and “break its heart”.

Subhanallah! Our beautiful deen teaches us not to even distress *animals* and break their hearts. Has this taught us to totally refrain from distressing *humans* and breaking their hearts – by calling them names, or by mocking, ridiculing, degrading, demeaning and humiliating them???

## Un-Slaughter

Qurbaani is the most beloved action to Allah Ta’ala on the day of ‘Eidul Adha, as discussed above. However, it is amazing that on the day of slaughter, something even more beloved to Allah Ta’ala is, in a sense, to un-slaughter!

‘Abdullah bin ‘Abbaas (radhiyallahu ‘anhuma) reported that once, on the day of ‘Eidul Adha, Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) said: “There is no action more virtuous than the spilling of blood (qurbaani) on this day, except the joining of

family ties (that have been “slaughtered”). (Tabraani – Majma‘uz Zawaaid #5939)

Alhamdulillah, qurbaani is carried out with great enthusiasm and zeal and with a happy heart since it is a great ‘ibaadah. It is then only logical that the even greater ‘ibaadah of joining family ties be carried out with even greater zeal and enthusiasm.

## **Total Submission**

Qurbaani is not a mere ritual. It is the reminder of the total submission of Sayyiduna Ebrahim (‘alaihi salaam) and his son Sayyiduna Ismail (‘alaihi salaam). It teaches us to also submit ourselves totally to our Creator and Master, Allah Ta‘ala, in every aspect of life.

May Allah Ta‘ala enable us to “slaughter” every sin and totally submit ourselves to Him.

## Bloodshed

Soon there will be much bloodshed all around the globe. Rivers of blood will flow as millions of animals are sacrificed on the occasion of 'Eidul Adha, in commemoration of the great sacrifice of Sayyiduna Ebrahim ('alaihi salaam). Upon receiving the command to slaughter his beloved son, he unhesitatingly set out to fulfil the Divine order. When he proved his total submission and placed the knife on the throat of the little child, Allah Ta'ala saved the child and sent a sheep from Jannah to be slaughtered in its place.

The slaughter of millions of animals on the occasion of Eidul Adha is a remembrance of the total submission of Sayyiduna Ebrahim ('alaihi salaam) and is a means of rekindling the spark of sacrifice within us. While the sacrifice of animals on this auspicious occasion earns tremendous rewards, the lessons to be learnt from the 'ibaadah of qurbaani must not be lost in the midst of all the activity on this day.

Among the profound lessons is that together with slaughtering the animal that one has subdued on the ground, there is another wild animal that must be slaughtered within

one. This is the animal of the nafs (inner-self) – the root of the evil qualities (such as pride, arrogance, malice, love of the world, ego, etc.) and the base of corrupt actions in human beings. If the nafs is not subdued and slaughtered, the mayhem and havoc that will be unleashed will surpass the destruction that entire packs of wild animals can inflict on other creatures.

## Wild Animal

It is the wild animal of the nafs that incites outbursts of anger. It harbours malice and cunningly seeks revenge. This wild animal has a wicked temper and a foul mouth. The nafs is ruthless in business and merciless with those who cross its path. Amusement and entertainment is the “drug” which keeps the nafs on a “high”. Hence if hurting someone and making him cry will be a source of fun for the nafs, it will mock, hurt, maul and maim whoever it can. The nafs dulls a person’s intelligence and common sense and makes him a slave of lust and sensual pleasures. It makes one shameless and bold in committing sins.

The popular “zikr” of the nafs is: “Do you know who I am?”, “don’t fool with me” and “I will fix you”. Greed for wealth, power, name and fame is its staple diet, which makes it fatter than the biggest wild buffalo.

## **Humility**

The occasion of qurbaani is an occasion to rein in this ferocious animal and subdue it. When it is subdued, the beautiful sheep of humility, compassion, kindness, generosity, forgiveness and sweet words will emerge.

The “zikr” of the nafs will be replaced by the zikr of the soul, which will exclaim: “Allahu Akbar – Allah Ta’ala is great. I am nobody and nothing.” Greed for wealth will be replaced with the “crave” to earn the rewards of the Hereafter. The desire for amusement at the expense of others will be transformed into the zeal to bring happiness to others, even if one has to undertake difficulty on oneself. One will be released from the shackles of lusts and submit to the slavery of Allah Ta’ala. The desire to stamp down others will be substituted with the enthusiasm to help everyone to prosper and progress in deen and dunya.

## **Peace and Happiness**

One of the main requirements for peace and happiness — between spouses, parents and children, in-laws, extended family and communities — is to subdue the nafs. When the nafs is subdued, it becomes very easy to act on the following hadeeth which is the prescription for peace and happiness: “Join ties of relationship with the one who severs ties with you, give the one

who has deprived you, and forgive the one who has oppressed you.” (Musnad Ahmad #17452)

## **Taming the Beast**

Islaah (rectification) of the nafs and reining it in is gradually attained by constantly opposing it in all its impermissible desires and moderating even its permissible demands.

Hakeemul Ummah, Hazrat Moulana Ashraf ‘Ali Thanwi (rahimahullah) explained the crux of *islaahun nafs* (inner-self rectification) very simply: “To compel the nafs and fulfil whatever has to be done (such as performing all salaah with jamaa‘ah in the masjid) and to pressurize it and suppress its demand to commit sin.”

The pious predecessors would even “punish” the nafs if they erred. It is related of Sayyiduna ‘Abdullah bin ‘Umar (radhiyallahu ‘anhuma) that if he ever missed performing his ‘esha salaah with jamaa‘ah, he would then spend the entire night in ‘ibaadah. ‘Abdullah bin ‘Aun’s (radhiyallahu ‘anhu) mother once called for him. He answered with a raised voice. Hence he immediately freed two slaves in compensation for having raised his voice over the voice of his mother.

Thus by constantly applying pressure on the nafs in this manner, it is eventually reined in and brought under control. When this has been achieved, islaah has been acquired.

An easy approach to attain this is to submit oneself to one's seniors from whom one takes deeni guidance. Through this process one learns how to submit entirely to the commands of Allah Ta'ala and the beautiful sunnah – the way of life of Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam).

Together with sacrificing the animal on the ground, let us also shed the blood of the nafs within us. This will make the world a happier place for us and, most importantly, will earn the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala.



## The Greater Qurbaani

The immense rewards of qurbaani are mindboggling. One's sins are forgiven with the first drop of blood of the animal falling onto the ground. (Majma'uz Zawaa'id #5934 & 5935) A person's reward will be equivalent to the number of strands of hair or fibre of wool on the animal he is slaughtering. (Sunan Ibn Maajah #3127)

Likewise, many other great rewards have been promised for this very great 'ibaadah. Hence, can you imagine a reward greater than this?

Indeed, Allah Ta'ala loves something even more than sacrificing animals and blesses the one who undertakes it with greater rewards. 'Abdullah bin 'Abbaas (radhiyallahu 'anhuma) reported that once on the day of 'Eidul Adha, Rasulullah (sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam) said: "There is no action more virtuous than the spilling of blood (qurbaani) on this day, except the joining of family ties (that have been severed)." (Tabraani - Majma'uz Zawaa'id #5939)

## Greater Sacrifice

While performing qurbaani is certainly a great sacrifice, joining and maintaining family ties is a greater sacrifice.

The sacrifice of qurbaani only entails the sacrificing of wealth, while joining and maintaining family ties often entails the very great sacrifice and “qurbaani” of one’s ego and self-esteem. At times it also requires the sacrifice of some wealth. An indifferent family member may snub one and spurn the gesture of re-joining and patching up. However, if one undertakes the great “sacrifice” in humbling oneself to join kinship, it will definitely surpass the sacrificing of animals in reward and in securing the pleasure of Allah Ta’ala.

Allah Ta’ala loves that the paragon of His creation (insaan) and the followers of His beloved Nabi (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) should live harmoniously and cordially with one another. Hence any initiative undertaken to foster a harmonious relationship is greatly appreciated and rewarded by Allah Ta’ala.

## Importance

Maintaining family ties is afforded such importance in the court of Allah Ta’ala that a person’s entry into Jannah is subject to him maintaining family ties. Nabi (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) stated

in a hadeeth: “Rahim (family ties) are linked to Rahman (Allah Ta’ala). Allah Ta’ala makes Jannah haraam on the one who severs them.” (Musnad Ahmad #1651)

Having a tit-for-tat attitude, as is common nowadays, is very far from what our most beloved Nabi (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) advocated. Huzaifah (radhiyallahu ‘anhu) reports that Nabi (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) said: “Do not behave in a dishonourable manner and say: ‘If people treat me kindly then I will treat them kindly, and if they are unjust to me then I will be unjust to them.’ Instead, control yourself. If people are kind to you then be kind to them, and if they ill-treat you then do not retaliate.” (Sunan Tirmizi #2007)

Once a Sahaabi complained to Nabi (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam): “O Rasulallah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam), I have some relatives. I try to strengthen bonds of family ties with them, but they ignore me. I treat them with kindness, but they ill-treat me. I exercise patience in my behaviour towards them, but they are rude to me.” Rasulallah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) replied, “If you are treating them as you say, you are throwing dust in their faces (they will be disgraced) and Allah Ta’ala will continue to support you against them as long as you remain steadfast in your behaviour.” (Saheeh Muslim #6525)

## **Not Accepted**

The severity of the evil of severing family relations cannot be overemphasised. In one hadeeth, Nabi (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) said: “The deeds of man are presented to Allah Ta’ala on the eve of every Friday, and the deeds of the one who breaks family ties are not accepted.” (Musnad Ahmad #10272) Such a person is also deprived of the special forgiveness and amnesty of Allah Ta’ala on the Night of Baraa’ah (15th night of Sha’baan) when millions of people are forgiven. (Shu’abul Imaan #3556)

## **Barakah in Life and Wealth**

On the converse, when one plucks up the courage and undertakes the great “sacrifice” of re-joining family ties and maintaining a healthy relationship, besides the immense rewards of the Hereafter one will also enjoy its benefits in this very life.

Nabi (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) has stated in a hadeeth: “The one who wishes to be blessed with a long life, enjoy expanse in his sustenance and livelihood, and be saved from a bad death then he should fear Allah Ta’ala and maintain family ties.” (Musnad Ahmad #1213)

There are numerous other benefits and rewards that one receives for maintaining a healthy relationship and reuniting torn hearts. It is therefore the duty of every individual to undertake the “sacrifice” necessary to maintain kinship. It is better to trample one’s ego or tolerate some loss of wealth to join and maintain family ties (earning great rewards and benefits in the process) rather than suffer the severe consequences of severing family ties.

Therefore, this ‘Eidul Adha, let us engage in the ‘ibaadah of qurbaani as well as the ‘ibaadah of the act that is greater than qurbaani.

May Allah Ta’ala guide us all to the path of love and harmony, aameen.

# Slaughtering

The practice of eating the flesh of animals is probably as old as mankind itself. Indeed, among the various purposes for which animals have been created is that some of them would be for human consumption. This is clearly declared in the Quraan Majeed that: “It is Allah who has created for you the cattle so that you may use some for riding and you may eat of some” (Surah Ghaafir, v79)

## Exclusively Humane Islamic Method

However, since life permeates the entire body of the animal, it is the dictates of humanity that the life should be first released in a humane and dignified manner before any part of it could be consumed. For this purpose, nothing is more dignified and humane than the Islamic method of slaughtering.

From a cleanliness and health point of view, no method of killing can surpass our method of slaughtering. In a swift movement of the hand, the sharp knife severs the jugular veins, oesophagus and wind pipe. This causes the blood of the animal

to pour out of its body. In the methods of electrocution and the injecting of lethal doses, the blood remains within the body and is consequently imbibed into the flesh. Together with this, the harmful organisms in the blood such as urea and uric acid are also imbibed into the flesh of the animal. Hence slaughtering remains as the most hygienic method of killing.

It is obvious that taking a life involves inflicting a certain amount of pain. However, the sharee'ah stresses very strongly that the animal should only suffer the bare minimum amount of pain. To cause any unnecessary pain and suffering is totally prohibited in the sharee'ah.

It is therefore tragic that often, especially on the occasion of qurbaani, the guidelines of the sharee'ah are not fully heeded, hence causing unnecessary pain and suffering. It is extremely important that all the various aspects with regards to slaughtering are fully observed. Listed below are vitally important guidelines with regards to slaughtering.

## **Before Slaughtering**

Every step should be taken to ensure that the animal does not sense beforehand that its life is going to be taken. In this regard, the following must be strictly adhered to:

- The animal should be fed and given water to drink. To keep the animal hungry is makrooh.
- The knife should be extremely sharp. It is also important that the knife should not be sharpened in front of the animal. This should also not be done after the animal has been laid down for slaughtering.
- The animal should either be held by the horns and brought along to the place of slaughter or driven from the back. It is cruel to grab the hind legs of the animal and drag it along. This should be avoided.
- It is preferable that the owner should slaughter his animal personally. However, this only applies if one is capable of executing this in an efficient manner and as painlessly as possible. If one cannot slaughter in a proper manner, one should not venture to do so, since this causes it unnecessary suffering.

## **During Slaughtering**

- The animal should be dropped for slaughtering with the minimum amount of force necessary.
- It should be made to lie on its left side facing the qiblah.



- The slaughtering should not take place in front of another animal.
- Only the four vessels previously mentioned should be severed. To slaughter up to the spinal vertebrae is makrooh since this causes unnecessary pain.
- Only three legs of the animal should be tied together (if necessary).
- It is important that the slaughtering is done very quickly.

## **After Slaughtering**

- Skinning the animal should not commence until the body has become cold.
- The neck should not be twisted or broken immediately after the animal has been slaughtered.