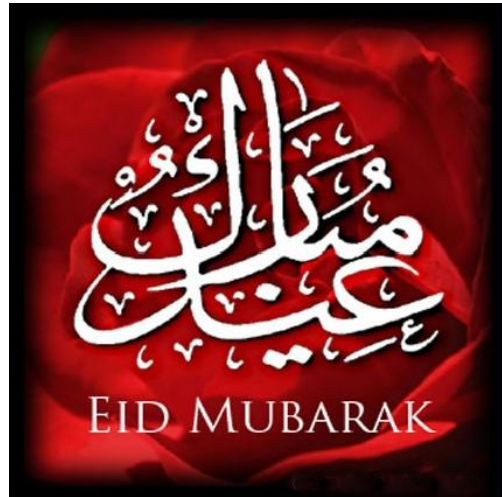


Eid – e – Zehra

9th Rabi ul-Awwal
Eve: Sunday 16th March 2008
Day: Monday 17th March 2008

**“9th of Rabi al-Awwal is the day of Eid.
It is our greatest Eid and the Eid of our followers.”**

(As narrated to Ahmad ibn Is-haq al-Qummi by Imam Muhammad al-Hadi (AS).)



Ahmad ibn Is-haq al-Qummi was a great companion of Imam Hassan al-Askari (AS). On the 9th Rabi al-Awal, Muhammad Hamadani and Yahya Baghdadi came to visit him and were informed that Ahmad was busy performing Ghushl for that day. When they inquired what the Ghushl was about, they were told that Ahmad had heard from Imam Muhammad al-Hadi (AS), who said: “9th of Rabee’ al-Awwal is the day of Eid. It is our greatest Eid and the Eid of our followers.”

After performing his Ghushl Ahmad ibn Is’haq said to the two visiting men: “I have performed Ghushl because today is the Eid of 9th Rabi al-Awwal. I visited Imam Hassan al-Askary (AS) on this day and noticed that his ring was shining. The people of his household wore new clothes and had applied perfume. When I asked the reason, Imam (AS) said, ‘Today is 9th Rabee’ al-Awwal. It is the day of Eid for us and for our follower.”

Narrators of history suggest four historic events which mark the day of 9th Rabi ul-Awal as significant. Firstly, historians are of the opinion that the Holy Prophet (SAW) was born on the 9th Rabi al-Awal. There are two other opinions: 12th Rabi al-Awal and 17th Rabi al-Awal respectively. For the Shia’hs, the most popular narration is the one which states that the Holy Prophet (SAW) was born on the 17th Rabi al-Awal 570 AD.

Whatever the case, its date does not make a big difference. Ayatullah Ruhullah Musawwi al-Khumaini (RA) had declared the week between 9th and 17th Rabi al-Awal as **Usboo’ al-Wahda** meaning “**the week of unity amongst Muslims.**” Muslims all over the world are urged to get together and celebrate the birth of the Holy Prophet (SAW) for the whole week.

Secondly, it is noted that the Prophet of Islam himself was seen smiling and ‘celebrating’ on this day while in the presence of Imams Ali, Hassan and Hussain (AS) and said, “**It is on this**

day that Allah will destroy your enemies and the enemies of your grandfather and it is on this day when Allah will accept the actions of your Shi'a and those who love you. This is the day when the words of Allah came true where He said (in the Qur'an): 'So those are the houses fallen down because they were unjust.' (27:52) And this is the day when the Pharaoh (Firawn) of the time of the Ahlul Bayt was destroyed ..."

Thirdly, 9th of Rabi al-Awal is also known as **Eid-e-Zahra** meaning the festival of Fatima al-Zahra (AS), because 3 to 4 years after the tragedy of Karbala, it was on this day that joy and happiness was restored in the family of Ahlul-Bayt (AS). From the tragedy of Karbala in 61 A.H. till this day, the family members of the Holy Prophet (SAW) had continuously mourned and grieved the martyrdom of Imam al-Husayn (AS).

Then Mukhtar bin 'Ubaydullah al-Thaqafi, together with Ebrahim bin Malik al-Ashtar and others rose to avenge the blood of Imam al-Husayn (AS). They arrested every killer of Karbala and executed them. Finally, Mukhtar arrested 'Umar ibn Sa'd (commander-in-chief of Yazid's army at Karbala) and 'Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad (governor of Yazid in Kufa). He beheaded them and sent their heads to Imam Sajjad (AS) in Medina. These two heads reached the Imam (AS) on 9th Rabi al-Awal and on seeing them, Imam (AS) went into prostration and said, **"I thank Allah who kept me alive to this day so that I could see the heads of the tyrants who killed my father."** He then instructed the members of his family to remove the clothes of mourning, adorn themselves and celebrate the day with joy and happiness.

Lastly, 9th Rabi al-Awal is the first day of the Imamate of our Living Imam, Imam Muhammad al-Mahdi (ATF) – a day of rejoicing and celebration.

It is true that an Imam is an Imam from birth but every Imam assumed the official role of his Imamate after the death of the previous Imam. The reason why we celebrate, in particular, the Imamate of our Living Imam (ATF) is to perhaps remind ourselves of his presence and about our responsibilities towards him. Imam Hassan al-Askari (AS) passed away on 8th Rabi al-Awal 260 A.H. and our 12th Imam (ATF) assumed his Imamate formally at a young age of 5 years on 9th Rabi al-Awal 260 A.H.

One of the ways which we can strive to be amongst the companions of our Imam is to follow the responsibilities which rest upon us, including the recitation of Dua al-Ahd (the Pledge) every morning in which we proclaim: **"O' Allah, truly I renew on the dawn of this day and all the days of the remainder of my life my pledge, covenant and allegiance to him, as my obligation, which I shall neither contravene, nor neglect ... O' Allah include me among his helpers, defenders, those fulfilling his wishes and commands, his defenders, the fore-runners to carry out his intentions and those to be martyred in his presence ... O' Allah: make him the refuge for Your oppressed servants; a helper for him who has no other helper besides You; the reviver of the commandments of Your book which have been neglected; the strengthener of the sciences in Your religion, and the traditions of Your Prophet. May Allah's blessing be upon him and his progeny."**

Reference:

www.world-federation.org

www.al-mujtaba.com

www.almahdi.org.uk