

Eid Al-Fitr



Paraliturgy

Monday 26 June 2017
1 Shawwaal 1438 AH

Introduction

Welcome to this *Eid Al-Fitr* paraliturgy. It provides us with the opportunity to join with Muslims in acts of prayer and charity as they celebrate the end of their fast. Our worship has five components: an opening prayer, scripture reading, reflection, invitation to charitable action, and a closing prayer. The *Qur'an* is virtually the sole source of the prayers and readings. On the one hand, this gives the wording of the paraliturgy a distinctive Islamic character; on the other, those of us who are children of Abraham, or who are familiar with practices of prayer, fasting and charity in our own religions, should find resonance with the distinctive character of the prayer and scripture of our own traditions.



Opening prayer

1st Voice: IN THE NAME OF GOD, MOST COMPASSIONATE,
MOST MERCIFUL

All: Praise be to You, O God,
Lord of all worlds;
Most Compassionate, Most Merciful,
Ruler of Judgement Day.

We worship You,
and to You we appeal for help.

Show us the straight way,
the way of those You have graced,
those whose portion is not wrath,
and who go not astray.

Reading

2nd voice: Serve God,
and do not compromise
the integrity of God.
And be good to your parents
and relatives,
and to orphans and paupers,
and to neighbours close by
and neighbours remote,
and to the companion at your side,
and to the traveller,
and to your wards...

All: *Allahu Akbar*

3rd voice: ... It is not righteous
that you turn your faces
east and west:
but they are righteous
who believe in God
and the last day,
and the angels and the Book,
and the prophets;
and who donate goods and money

for love of God
to relatives and orphans,
and to the poor and the wayfarer,
and to the needy,
and for freeing slaves;
and who are constant in prayer
and give alms for welfare,
and those who fulfill their promises
when they make them,
and who are patient
in suffering, adversity, and hard times.
They are the truthful ones,
and they are the conscientious.

All: *Allahu Akbar*

Guided Reflection

On *Eid*, Muslims end their month-long fast with public worship, personal acts of charity, an offering given in at their mosque for the purposes of charity, and the sharing of food – with family, friends, neighbours, and the poor. The purpose of fasting in Islam, as in other religions, is to draw closer to God – to recognise one’s ultimate dependence on God. In Islam, as in other religions, there is a close link between fasting, prayer, and charity.

Special food is prepared for this celebration. Gifts of shoes and clothes are often bought for children. The *Eid khutbah* (sermon / address) delivered to the gathered Muslim community usually encourages reconciliation with family and neighbour, concern for the needy, work for peace, and the resistance of materialism.

- Think about the religious tradition you are part of, or most familiar with. Name to yourself its practices of prayer, fasting, and charity.
- Think of the role of prayer, fasting, or charity – or actions similar to these – in your own life.
- Consider what you can do to maintain peace, or bring about reconciliation, in your relationships with others at home, place of work, or wider society.

Invitation to action

Invite learners and staff to perform some action to mark the spirit of this day.



Closing

1st Voice: IN THE NAME OF GOD, MOST COMPASSIONATE,
MOST MERCIFUL

All: Praise be to You, O God,
thank You for Your light and guidance,
for *Torah*, Gospel, and *Qur'an*;
You have given each of us a norm
and an open way.

It was not Your will to make of us a single people,
but today we have gathered before you,
united in prayer and charity,
and in our quest for virtue.

Grant a blessed *Eid* to all muslims.
Keep us mindful of the whole community of humankind –
those like ourselves blessed with health and sufficiency,
and those who are poor.
Give us strength to strive for justice;
may we be signs of Your peace.

Notes

* Opening prayer: *al-Fatihah* ('The Opening'), *Qur'an* 1:1-7. Based on the translation given in 'Christians and Muslims: Praying together?' with some help from **The Essential Koran**. The calligraphy insert is the *Bismillah* – 'In the name of God, most Compassionate, most Merciful.'

* The reading includes two extracts from the *Qur'an*: *al-Nisa'* ('Women'), 4:36ff, and *al-Baqarah* ('The Cow'), 2:177ff. Translation from **The Essential Koran**. However, one change has been made to provide a clearer statement for those of us from religions and worldviews other than Islam, replacing 'Serve God, / and do not associate / anything with God' with 'Serve God, / and do not compromise / the integrity of God'.

* *Allahu Akbar*, means 'God is great'. It is used as an interjection by the faithful during *Eid* worship; it is used here as something roughly equivalent to 'Amen'.

* Closing prayer: drafted with reference to phrasings in the *Qur'an* – for example, see *al-Ma'ida* ('The Table') 5:44 & 46-50 as translated in **The Essential Koran**.

References

'Christians and Muslims: Praying together? Reflections and Texts.' Study paper prepared by the 'Islam in Europe' Committee of the Council of European Bishops' Conferences (CCEE) and of the Conference of European Churches (CEC), April 2003. Available at:

<http://www.cecekek.org/pdf/PrayingtogetherE.pdf> Accessed: 8 September, 2010.

The Essential Koran: The Heart of Islam. An Introductory Selection of Readings from the *Qur'an*, translated and presented by Thomas Cleary. Edison: Castle Books, 1998 (1993).