

Eid al-Adha 1439/2018 Message to the Harvard Muslim Community

As-Salamu Alaikum Harvard Muslim Community

Eid Mubarak to all of you!

This is a time of great spiritual awakenings and opportunities. During this time, we celebrate the Eid with the spirit of knowing that the year is concluding and we have done our best in worshiping Allah. We are reminded during this time of the eternal covenant that Allah took from us when Adam (peace be upon him) was reunited with his wife Hawa (Eve) at the sacred plain of Arafat. Allah references this in Quran 7: 172-173 when He says, “(Prophet), when your Lord took out the offspring from the loins of Adam and made them bear witness about themselves, He said, ‘Am I not your Lord?’ and they replied, ‘Yes, we bear witness.’ So you cannot say on the Day of Resurrection, ‘We were not aware of this...’” The Day of Arafat is the day we remind ourselves of this covenant and the day recommit ourselves to sincere devotion to Him.

On Eid al-Adha (the Festival of Sacrifice), the day following Arafat, we participate in the ritual sacrifice, reenacting the practice of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him). This sacrifice is symbolic of our devotion to Allah and our readiness to sacrifice our desires in favor of His Will and Desires. These two actions mark our closure to each Islamic year of our lives. Each year we conclude by recommitting ourselves to the sacred covenant that Allah alone is our Lord and we express our commitment to that covenant through sacrifice.

The Hajj time is a time for all Muslims to be reminded of the importance of returning to sincere worship of Allah. Muslims all over, whether performing Hajj or not, are drawn to the message of unity and global fellowship among all Muslims. It is the most potent time in the year when we are charged to do what we can to eliminate the most insidious aspect of human nature that has been and is still a primary cause of much discord, division, injustice and oppression in the world - the notion that some people are superior to others because of race, gender, socio-economic status, blood ties, freedom or ability. The Eid al-Adha is the celebration of the reformation of the human condition from that of servitude to other men to that of devotion to the Creator of all living and non-living things. Beware these last few days of the Islamic calendar of thinking yourself better than others; Remember, “People We created you all from a single man and a single woman, and made you into races and tribes so that you should get to know one another. In Allah’s eyes, the most honored of you are the ones most mindful of Him: God is all knowing, all aware.” (Quran 49:13). Celebrate commitment to this message; dedicate yourself to this covenant; and commission yourself to be a steward of what Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) stood for and for the the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessing be upon him, revived and died for.

May you all be blessed with peace and forgiveness on the joyous occasion; and may you find your prayers answered and hearts filled with contentment.

With Salam