

THE REPUBLICAN BROTHERS



**THE SACRIFICE IS NOT  
OBLIGATORY!!**

**NEITHER ON THE POOR!!**

**NOR ON THE RICH!!**



**FOURTH EDITION - SEPTEMBER 1982**

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# Dedication

To the people: Do not offer the sacrifice!!

For the noble Prophet (peace be upon him) has waived the obligation of sacrifice on behalf of his nation - when he sacrificed on their behalf. This was understood by the senior Companions, their scholars, and their wealthy individuals - they did not offer the sacrifice.

Moreover, the ruling on sacrifice is that it is a customary *sunnah* (i.e., a traditional practice), and such customs change according to historical, social, and economic circumstances.

Today, its economic and social harms are plain to see.

Therefore, the sacrifice is no longer a religious requirement!!

In fact, refraining from it is a religious act of devotion more than performing it!!

Abandon the sacrifice, and be keen on the true *sunnah* - in the excellence of worship and the excellence of conduct.

For the age of the *sunnah* we now live in demands precision in discernment and commitment to the essence and foundation of the *sunnah*.

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

"So today no ransom will be taken from you, nor from those who disbelieved. Your abode is the Fire. It is your protector - and what a miserable destination! *Has the time not come for those who have believed that their hearts should become humbly submissive at the remembrance of Allah and what has come down of the truth? And not be like those who were given the Scripture before, and a long period passed over them, so their hearts hardened - and many of them are defiantly disobedient?*" (57:15-16)

- Truthful is Allah, the Almighty.

## **Preface to the Third Edition**

Today, we present to the public the third edition of our book: "The Sacrifice Is Not Obligatory!! Neither on the Poor!! Nor on the Rich!!"

By the grace of Allah, the previous two editions of this book were met with great success. Our esteemed readers received it well. This is a sound indication that the book arrived precisely at its appointed time. Praise and gratitude be to Allah.

There is no argument between us and you:

This book has presented authentic evidences from the noble Sunnah and from the practices of the most eminent Companions, establishing that the sacrifice (uḍḥiyah) is not binding on the ummah. It has left no argument for anyone to use against us. There is no argument between us and you.

In this preface, we are not bringing new textual proofs, as the body of the book has sufficiently covered that. The new point here is that we are calling on the public to commit - to commit to abandoning the sacrifice this year.

From the many discussions we have had about this book, it has become clear that people do not possess a single religious proof in opposing our stance. Rather, they follow the dominance of habit, without knowledge, guidance, or an enlightening Book.

For this reason, we firmly call upon all members of the public to refrain from performing the sacrifice, just as the senior Companions, their wealthy and scholarly figures did - and just as the Republicans have been doing for quite some time.

It is now well within reach for the average person to know that sacrifice is not religiously mandatory. So let your knowledge be followed by action, for there is no benefit in knowledge that is not acted upon. Our people have become aware of this matter, so let that awareness assist us in applying our *shari'ah* - and let our *shari'ah* open itself to the spirit of our religion.

Do people not fear this divine warning:

"And follow the best of what was revealed to you from your Lord before the punishment comes upon you suddenly while you do not perceive?"  
(39:55)

## **Leave the Sacrifice This Year**

The annual sacrifice has always constituted a heavy economic burden on families. But this year, it is even more impactful - even on families with

above - average incomes. As is known, the price of an average sheep now exceeds sixty Sudanese pounds - excluding additional expenses.

This material reality is a practical example from Allah illustrating the necessity of abandoning the sacrifice - lifting hardship and averting difficulty:

"And such examples We set forth for mankind, but none will understand them except those of knowledge." (29:43)

It goes without saying that the Republicans do not subordinate legislation to economic conditions, nor do they evade religious obligations for fear of hardship. Rather, they perceive the breadth and flexibility of the texts, which can accommodate changing circumstances.

Now, the ruling of time has abrogated the sacrifice. And time is one of Allah's signs - indeed, it is one of His greatest signs!

On the matter of the sacrifice, we are not calling for the development of Islamic legislation. We have merely presented it in its traditional form - which is sufficient to justify abandoning the sacrifice. After that, we elevated the discussion to noble meanings of redemption.

If those who claim to be jurists had proper insight into the law, they would have ruled that the sacrifice is no longer required - without much scholarly effort. It is a matter that is plainly evident.

### **“So Today No Ransom Will Be Taken from You”**

This worldly life is the lower life. The Hereafter is the higher life. The higher life is the life of the human being:

"And this worldly life is nothing but play and amusement. But the Home of the Hereafter is indeed the true Life, if only they knew." (29:64)

The word *ḥayawān* (true life) is an emphatic form of "life" - a concrete realization through which our lower life ascends into the realms of the higher life.

Those who truly know (*al-‘ārifūn*) are already - now, not later - living the higher life. They have fulfilled and implemented the prophetic instruction:

"Die before you die."

Whoever does not enter the higher life now will not find it later - except after enduring torment in the Fire. Read, if you wish:

"And whoever is blind in this life will be blind in the Hereafter and more astray in path." (17:72)

In the higher life, Allah does not take any ransom from us - except our very selves. And the concept of *fidā'* (ransom or redemption) in Islam is evolving, subtle, and never-ending.

The father of the prophets, Abraham, redeemed the human sacrifice with an animal. The Seal of the Prophets, Muhammad, redeemed the animal with knowledge:

"So today no ransom will be taken from you." (57:15)

The principle is that the lesser ransoms the greater: the animal ransoms the human, and the ignorant ransoms the knowledgeable:

“And it is not for a soul to believe except by permission of Allah. And He places defilement upon those who do not use reason.” (10:100)

If Allah had not placed the burden of the believer upon the disbeliever, the believer would never have believed.

And the gnostic ransoms parts of himself for other parts - his denser aspect may be afflicted as redemption for his finer aspect. The body of the knower - his outer shell - may suffer in redemption for his heart and mind, as happened to the Prophet of Allah, Job (Ayyūb).

The Arab poet captured this well when he said:

“Our bodies may be stricken, Yet our honor and minds remain unharmed.”

If all of this is so - how do we persist in slaughtering animals while neglecting our own selves, leaving them in ignorance?

“And in your own selves - do you not then see?” (51:21)

Once again, leave the sacrifice this year.

There is no strong religious basis for continuing it. We have reminded you of the verses of your Lord - so do not fall before them deaf and blind.

- The religious argument supports abandoning the sacrifice.
- The economic argument supports abandoning the sacrifice.
- The health argument supports abandoning the sacrifice.
- The social argument supports abandoning the sacrifice.

So, what remains?

Abandon the sacrifice. It is ignorance of religion and ignorance of our time.  
In one phrase:

"The sacrifice today is ignorance of religion."

So abandon it. And do not be like those who were given the Scripture before you - then the term was prolonged for them and their hearts hardened...

"Has the time not come for those who have believed that their hearts should become humbly submissive at the remembrance of Allah and what has come down of the truth?" (57:16)

Yes - the time has come!

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

"And follow the best of what has been revealed to you from your Lord before the punishment comes upon you suddenly while you are unaware." (39:55)

- Truthful is Allah, the Almighty.

## Preface to the Second Edition

This is the preface to the second edition of our book:

"The Sacrifice Is Not Obligatory!! Neither on the Poor!! Nor on the Rich!!"

This book has generated considerable interest among our esteemed readers. Many were surprised by its message, as they had long assumed that the *uḍḥiyah* (sacrificial offering) was obligatory - when in fact, it is not.

The title of the book was meant to emphasize that the sacrifice is not obligatory - neither on the poor nor on the wealthy. This was to refute the claim of the jurists who said that the sacrifice is obligatory only upon the well-off. That opinion, however, has no clear foundation - neither in the texts of the noble *Sunnah*, nor in the practices of the Companions, nor in the views of the *Tabi'in* (Successors). It is merely an interpretive ruling (*takhrīj*) that became customary, lacking textual support - as we have previously noted - and lacking insight into the spirit of religion. It also lacks the critical discernment that led the affluent among the senior Companions to abandon the sacrifice, explicitly stating that they were doing so lest the poor believe it to be obligatory. The esteemed reader will find all this substantiated in the body of the book.

## **The Sacrifice Is a Custom!**

We wish to emphasize to Muslims today that the long - standing familiarity with the practice of sacrifice does not make it religiously binding. Quite the contrary: once it has been established - with clear chains of transmission and compelling proofs from the Prophet's sayings and the actions of the Companions - that the sacrifice is not obligatory on either the poor or the rich, then immediate abandonment of the practice is required. It is merely a custom that people have grown accustomed to - gaining strength over time until they began to assume it was a duty due to its longevity.

The erroneous ruling of some jurists - that the sacrifice is only obligatory on the affluent - has unfortunately contributed to reinforcing and entrenching this practice in people's lives. This ruling has not succeeded at all in alleviating hardship for the poor, assuming that was its intent. The reason is simple: every Muslim fears being wrong in underestimating their financial ability, and thus prefers to perform the sacrifice despite hardship, rather than risk abandoning a religious duty that they might actually be capable of fulfilling.

Additionally, there are numerous social pressures that compel the poor to offer the sacrifice, especially when the wealthy are doing so.

Along with the ample evidences already presented in the book, we include in this preface further textual support affirming that the sacrifice is not obligatory on the ummah.

From *Subul al-Salām* (Vol. 4) regarding sacrifice:

It was narrated in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim from ‘Ā’ishah (may Allah be pleased with her), who said: "The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) commanded that a horned ram be brought to him to sacrifice. He said: ‘O ‘Ā’ishah, bring me the knife and sharpen it on a stone.’ I did so. He then took the knife and the ram, laid it down, and slaughtered it. Then he said: ‘In the name of Allah. Accept this on behalf of Muhammad, and the family of Muhammad, and the nation of Muhammad.’ Then he sacrificed it."

Ibn Ḥazm said:

"There is no authentic narration from any of the Companions stating that the sacrifice is obligatory."

Also, it was narrated from Jābir (may Allah be pleased with him):

"On the Day of Sacrifice, the Prophet slaughtered two horned, white, castrated rams. When he directed them (towards the Qiblah), he said: ‘Indeed I have turned my face toward the One who created the heavens and the earth, inclining toward truth, and I am not of those who associate others with Allah. He has no partner. This is what I have been commanded with, and I am the first of the Muslims. O Allah, this is from You and for You, on behalf of Muhammad and his ummah. In the name of Allah, Allah is the Greatest.’ Then he slaughtered the animals."

(Narrated by Abū Dāwūd and Ibn Mājah)

Some people cite the verse:

"*So pray to your Lord and sacrifice [to Him alone]*" (108:2) as evidence for the obligation of sacrifice. In response, we mention what was narrated by Jarīr from Anas:

"The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to slaughter before the prayer, so he was commanded to pray first, then slaughter."

This clarifies the timing of the sacrifice, not its obligation. It's as if the meaning is: "If you sacrifice, then do so after the Eid prayer." For this reason, the majority of the Companions and their followers held that sacrifice is not obligatory.

## **Muslims Face One of Two Choices!**

This concludes our addition of further textual evidence confirming that the sacrifice is not obligatory on the ummah. We now turn to address Muslims in general, and scholars in particular:

The non - obligation of the sacrifice is clearly established by explicit prophetic traditions and the clear statements and practices of the most eminent Companions. Therefore, there is no justification for anyone to claim that it is obligatory - on either the poor or the rich. The affluent among the senior Companions did not perform the sacrifice - thus the claim that it is obligatory upon the wealthy is a mere juristic interpretation that must be immediately revisited, for the truth has more right to be followed.

In any case, people now face one of two choices:

- Either what we have stated concerning the sacrifice is true - (and it is undoubtedly true, as the reader will see in the body of this book) - and therefore it must be accepted, and people must be educated and made aware of it without delay;

- Or it is not true - in which case, it must be opposed with authoritative evidence and definitive proofs from the Prophet's sayings and the actions of the Companions.

We are absolutely certain that such opposition is not possible - and if it were, our critics from among the scholars would have done it by now.

Therefore, it is incumbent upon all Muslims not to allow scholars of Islamic law to dilute religious matters or take ambiguous "middle ground" stances. Rather, they must be held to a clear position - for there is nothing after guidance but misguidance.

And we ask Allah to guide us and to guide others through us. Indeed, He is All-Hearing, Ever-Responsive.

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

“Neither their meat nor their blood reaches Allah, but it is your piety that reaches Him. Thus, He subjected them to you that you may magnify Allah for guiding you. And give glad tidings to those who excel.” (22:37)

- Truthful is Allah, the Almighty.

## Introduction

This book is about the sacrificial offering (*udhiyah*). It presents decisive texts and authenticated reports proving that the obligation of sacrifice has fallen away from the Muslim ummah.

This book comes precisely at the right time. The current harsh economic conditions, especially the soaring prices of livestock, have created immense pressure - making our call more relevant than ever. We urge people to emulate the noble Prophet (peace be upon him), who sacrificed on behalf of his ummah, thereby lifting the obligation from them. We also call people to follow the example of the Prophet’s Companions - his senior followers and wealthy companions - who did not perform the sacrifice, acting in accordance with the spirit of the religion and in deep understanding of the Prophet’s action.

This call is now more practical and intellectually acceptable than at any previous time, especially in light of the social harms caused by the practice of sacrifice in our present circumstances.

It is not our intent to fabricate religious justifications for the difficulty or practical impossibility of sacrificing today - as is often the custom of

modern religious preachers. Rather, we seek to affirm the sound religious view we have always held about the sacrifice, and to find support for it in today's reality - true to our usual approach of letting reason speak ahead of events. Often, our views seem strange and ignored - until reality catches up and proves them true.

We, the Republican Brothers, in our pursuit of adhering to the true *sunnah* - and we are the ones calling for its revival today - hold that the *uḍḥiyah*, as understood within the religion, is a customary practice (*sunnah 'ādah*). Its ruling ceased once its original circumstances ceased to exist, and this is supported by the strongest of textual evidences from both the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

Therefore, for quite some time, we have refrained from offering the sacrifice, just as Abu Bakr, 'Umar, and the wealthy among the Companions also refrained from it - as confirmed in the well - established reports cited in this book.

We previously published a private internal bulletin, which we strictly committed to among ourselves. Then, on November 7, 1978, we issued a public statement to the entire nation, in which we clarified the ruling of the sacrifice as a customary and transitional *sunnah*, whose obligation the noble Prophet lifted from the ummah. His Companions followed his example beautifully.

In that statement, we said:

“If people were truly motivated by religious concern in performing the sacrifice, they would not cling to it - which is a transitional and circumstantial practice - while neglecting the Prophet's foundational

sunnahs: in character, in night prayer, in caring for the needy and giving to them. This shows that the time for sacrifice as a religious act of devotion has ended. It has now become a social custom that people uphold with methods that push them further from religion and destabilize their financial wellbeing - despite the existence of more critical sunnahs for religious people, which are increasingly needed yet do not receive the same attention as this social custom.”

Thus, the sacrifice is not required of this ummah - and abandoning it today is more imperative than ever before.

So, let us approach this book with sincere intent, in diligent pursuit of the truth, and with firm resolve to follow it, for the truth has more right to be followed.

And Allah is our Helper.

## *Chapter One*

# **The Sacrifice Was a Customary Sunnah, Not a Worship Sunnah**

### **What Is a Customary Sunnah?**

A *customary sunnah* (*sunnah 'ādah*) is something the Prophet (peace be upon him) practiced in accordance with prevailing customs of the society he lived in. These relate to outward aspects of life - such as food, clothing, and means of transport - which reflect the historical development of that society. These practices are not related to the essence of worship or interpersonal dealings, and they do not conflict with the objectives of the religion at that time.

The Prophet's (peace be upon him) adoption of such customs was a necessary part of the *descent of the message into lived reality*. Wisdom dictates that the message should not confront societal customs head - on, but rather coexist with them, refine them, and elevate them. Allah said to His noble Messenger:

“Hold to forgiveness, enjoin what is customary, and turn away from the ignorant.” (7:199)

This approach was taken as a gradual means to guide people, show them mercy, and spare them hardship and suffering. Allah also says:

“There has certainly come to you a Messenger from among yourselves. Grievous to him is what you suffer; [he is] concerned over you and to the believers is kind and merciful.” (9:128)

Based on this divine wisdom, the customary sunnah is not a permanent sunnah - it is tied to historical circumstances. It changes and evolves along with the development of human society and the individual.

Examples of customary sunnahs include the beard, the turban, the staff, and the sacrifice (uḍḥiyah).

The *worship sunnah* (*sunnah ‘ibādah*), by contrast, is permanent and binding. It is based on the unchanging principles of the Qur’an and represents the Prophet’s own personal practice of worship - reflecting his knowledge of and servitude to his Lord. This is the sunnah we refer to whenever we speak of reviving the sunnah.

Examples include the five daily prayers, the night prayer in the last third of the night, and the *Prophetic zakat*, which involved giving away anything in excess of immediate need.

This worship sunnah defines the Prophet’s relationship with God, which in turn shapes his relationship with creation. It begins with refraining from harming others, then progresses to bearing their harm, and finally culminates in delivering good to them.

This is the sunnah referred to in the Prophet’s words:

“Islam began as something strange and will return to being strange as it began. So glad tidings to the strangers.” They asked, “Who are the

strangers, O Messenger of Allah?" He replied: "Those who revive my sunnah after it has been forsaken."

The *sacrifice* is one of the *customary sunnahs* that the Prophet practiced. But even as a customary sunnah, it is among the least emphasized, since the Prophet performed it on behalf of his ummah, thereby relieving them of its obligation. Consequently, the senior Companions - including the wealthy among them - did not perform it, as we will demonstrate in this chapter.

Ustadh Mahmoud Mohamed Taha speaks of the evolution of the concept of sacrifice - beginning with a stage where the human being himself was the sacrifice, progressing to a stage where the human was redeemed with an animal, and finally to a future stage where even animal sacrifice will be replaced by knowledge - as a means of redeeming both the human and the animal.

In his book *The Second Message of Islam*, page 29, he writes:

"When the early human being was crude in nature, hard of heart, dull in sensitivity, and animalistic in inclination, he required intense severity to train and civilize him. The first social order was, accordingly, severe and harsh - imposing death for the slightest infractions, and even requiring noble individuals to sacrifice their own lives for the sake of their community."

"Human sacrifice was common - victims were slaughtered on the altars of temples to appease the gods or prevent their wrath. This violent system that crushed individual liberty for the sake of collective welfare remained

accepted as both religiously and rationally valid well into the time of the Prophet Abraham.”

“Abraham himself, who lived about two thousand years before Christ, was commanded to sacrifice his son Ishmael. He approached the command with complete readiness, but God abrogated that practice, replacing it with a sacrifice from among livestock - an animal more primitive than the human. This abrogation marked the nearing of the human’s transcendence above animalistic nature.”

He cites the verses:

“He said: I will go to my Lord; He will guide me. My Lord, grant me a righteous son. So We gave him good tidings of a forbearing boy. And when he reached the age of striving with him, he said: O my son, I have seen in a dream that I must sacrifice you - so consider what you think. He said: O my father, do as you are commanded; you will find me, if Allah wills, among the patient. And when they had both submitted and he laid him down on his forehead, We called out: O Abraham! You have fulfilled the vision. Indeed, We thus reward the doers of good. This was surely a manifest trial. And We ransomed him with a great sacrifice. And We left for him [favorable mention] among later generations. Peace be upon Abraham.” (37:99–109)

*“And We left for him [favorable mention] among later generations”* signifies, among other things, the abolition of human sacrifice, which had endured for long ages and served its purpose in civilizing humanity. The human had risen above the animal state and was now fit to be redeemed by something inferior to him: livestock.

While some forms of violence against individuals persist in modern societies, they are fading as awareness grows. The physical sacrifice of humans did not end in Abraham's time with a stroke of the pen.

For instance, during the Muslim conquest of Egypt, the practice of "*Bride of the Nile*" was still ongoing. It was said that each year, the people chose a beautiful girl from a noble family to be thrown into the Nile - believing it would secure blessings and protect against drought.

When 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ (the Muslim governor) learned of this, he delayed the ritual and wrote to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. 'Umar replied:

"In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. From the servant of Allah, 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, Commander of the Faithful, to the Nile of Egypt: Peace be upon you. If you flow by your own will, then do not flow. But if you flow by the will of Allah, the One and Only, then flow."

'Amr cast this letter into the Nile. The river flowed - and the practice was abolished. In this, a new redemption was accomplished - through knowledge.

## **Redeeming Humanity Through Knowledge**

This is what *The Second Message of Islam* says about redeeming humans with animals. It also refers to redeeming humanity through knowledge, when discussing the Israelites and the following verse:

"And when Moses said to his people: O my people, you have wronged yourselves by taking the calf [as an idol]. So repent to your Creator and kill yourselves. That is better for you in the sight of your Creator. Then He

accepted your repentance. Indeed, He is the Accepting of repentance, the Merciful.” (2:54)

The book comments:

“They were commanded, as part of repentance, to literally kill themselves - something akin to the human sacrifice practiced in primitive religious rituals.”

It then continues:

“As the human individual gradually evolved and no longer required such harsh methods to be trained, the burden was lifted from him.”

This alleviation is evident in the legislation for the *ummah* of Muhammad:

“And do not kill yourselves. Indeed, Allah is to you Most Merciful.” (4:29)

“He was merciful in His legislation because we had become merciful ourselves - ‘as you deal, so shall you be dealt with.’”

(The Second Message of Islam, pp. 44-45)

The Prophet (peace be upon him) made it clear that even animal sacrifice was reaching the end of its relevance. He offered a sacrificial animal on behalf of his *ummah*, thereby ransoming them - and also concluding the tradition of Abraham’s animal sacrifice, while opening the door to a new era in which animal sacrifice would come to an end.

When asked by his Companions about the sacrifice, he said:

“It is the sunnah of your father, Abraham.”

(Sunan Ibn Mājah, Vol. 2, p. 26; Tafsir Ibn Kathir, Vol. 4, p. 641)

## **Sacrifices and Offerings in the Age of Ignorance**

Regarding the pre-Islamic custom of offering sacrifices (*udhiyah*) and gifts (*hady*) as acts of devotion, Ibn Kathīr comments in his exegesis of the verse from Sūrat al-Ḥajj:

“It is neither their meat nor their blood that reaches Allah, but it is your piety that reaches Him. Thus We have subjected them to you that you may magnify Allah for having guided you. And give good tidings to the doers of good.” (22:37)

Ibn Kathīr explains:

“Allah says: Verily, these sacrificial animals have only been legislated for you so that you may remember Him at the time of their slaughter, for He is the Creator and the Sustainer. Nothing of their flesh or blood reaches Him - He is free of all need. In the Age of Ignorance, they used to offer sacrifices to their idols, placing the meat on the altars and sprinkling the blood over them. So Allah revealed: ‘It is neither their meat nor their blood that reaches Allah...’”

Ibn Abī Ḥātim narrates:

‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn narrated to us, from Muḥammad ibn Abī Ḥammād, from Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mukhtār, from Abū Jurayḥ, who said: “The people of the Age of Ignorance used to sprinkle the House [Ka‘bah] with the meat and blood of their camels. When the Companions of the Prophet heard of this, they said: ‘We are more deserving of sprinkling [the Ka‘bah with blood/meat].’ So Allah revealed: ‘It is neither their meat nor their blood that reaches

Allah, but it is your piety.’ Meaning: He accepts your sacrifice and rewards you for it.” (End of Ibn Kathīr’s commentary)

Thus, sacrifices and offerings were a well-established social custom before Islam, but they were presented as offerings to idols. The names of these deities were invoked over the animals, and their meat was not consumed.

When Islam came, it retained this ritual, due to its place in the historical development of that society, but transformed it into a devotional act dedicated solely to Allah. Now, His name alone was to be mentioned over the animal, and the sprinkling of meat and blood on the Ka’bah was forbidden. Furthermore, consumption of the meat was permitted.

Allah says:

“And the camels and cattle We have appointed for you as among the symbols of Allah; for you in them is good. So mention the name of Allah upon them as they line up [for sacrifice]; and when they fall down dead [after slaughter], eat from them and feed the needy who do not ask and those who do. Thus have We subjected them to you that you may be grateful.” (22:36)

The term “*al-budn*” (the sacrificial camels) refers to those animals brought by pilgrims to be sacrificed after completing their rites. Islam affirmed that there was good (*khayr*) in them - meaning benefit in their meat - and that they should be used to glorify Allah and express gratitude.

In Ibn Kathīr’s exegesis (Vol. 4, p. 632), he says:

“The disbelievers used to abstain from eating their sacrificial animals, but Allah permitted it for the Muslims.”

Ahmad Ibrāhīm al-Sharīf writes in his book *Mecca and Medina in the Age of Ignorance and the Time of the Prophet* (pp. 182–183) about the pre-Islamic origins of *hady* and how it was carried into Islam:

“The meanings and style of the verses strongly suggest that the practice of sacrificial offerings was one of the Arab traditions before the advent of Islam. Islam endorsed it because of the great benefit it offered in the context of Hajj, both before and after the Prophetic mission. The Arabs revered and sanctified this custom to such an extent that a pilgrim would leave his offering untethered, grazing freely, and no one would dare harm it - doing so was seen as an offense against the property of Allah. One of their customs was to smear the walls of the Ka’bah with the blood of the offerings as an act of devotion to the Lord of the House. Islam abolished this practice, stating that Allah does not receive anything of their flesh or blood. What He wants from people is piety and sincerity. The pre-Islamic Arabs considered it sinful to eat from their sacrificial animals, leaving the meat instead for the poor, the needy, wild animals, and birds of prey. Islam, however, allowed those offering the sacrifice to eat from it, as well as to feed the destitute - whether they asked or not. Prior to Islam, they also slaughtered their sacrifices at idols and stone altars near the Ka’bah, and invoked the names of these idols during slaughter. The Qur’an prohibited this and required the name of Allah alone to be pronounced.”

In summary, both *hady* and *udḥiyah* - as acts of atonement and devotional offering - were part of pre-Islamic social customs. Islam incorporated them after refinement, transforming them into monotheistic rituals. We will see

next how the noble Prophet sacrificed on behalf of his community, lifting the obligation from them.

# The Noble Prophet Sacrifices on Behalf of His Nation, Lifting the Obligation

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) sacrificed on behalf of his entire ummah, thereby lifting the obligation of *uḍḥiyah* from them.

In *Tafsir Ibn Kathir*, Volume 4, p. 642, it is narrated:

From ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn, from Abū Rāfi‘, that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) would, when offering the sacrifice, buy two fat, horned, white rams. After praying and delivering the sermon, he would bring one while still standing in his prayer place and slaughter it himself with a blade. Then he would say: “O Allah, this is on behalf of my entire nation - those who testify to Your Oneness and my conveying [of the message].” Then he would bring the second ram, slaughter it himself, and say: “This is on behalf of Muhammad and the family of Muhammad.” He would distribute both as food to the poor and also partake of it with his family.

Narrated by Aḥmad and Ibn Mājah.

Ibn Kathir continues on page 646: “As previously stated, he (peace be upon him) sacrificed on behalf of his nation - thus lifting its obligation from them.”

By sacrificing on behalf of himself, his family, and his ummah, the Prophet (peace be upon him) fulfilled the sunnah of his forefather Abraham. However, he did not initiate the practice as a permanent religious obligation. Rather, he concluded Abraham’s tradition, redeemed his nation, and inaugurated a new era of drawing near to Allah through

knowledge and inner refinement, not through the sacrifice of animals. At the same time, he aligned with a prevailing custom - refining it, elevating it, and pointing the way toward a higher alternative.

More Evidence of the Prophet Abolishing the Obligation:

1. In *Subul al-Salām*, Volume 4, p. 91, it states:

Narrated in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim and others from Umm Salamah: The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: “When the ten [days of Dhul - Ḥijjah] begin, and one of you intends to offer a sacrifice, let him not cut his hair or nails.”

Imam al-Shāfi‘ī commented:

“His phrase ‘intends to sacrifice’ (fa arāda an yuḍaḥḥī) indicates that it is not obligatory.”

A similar narration and commentary is found in *Bidāyat al-Mujtahid*, Vol. 1, p. 464.

2. Many reports show that the obligation of sacrifice was written upon the Prophet but not upon his nation - he fulfilled the act on their behalf as part of a legacy custom, and thus lifted the burden from them.

In the same volume of *Subul al-Salām*, it is narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās:

“Three things were made obligatory upon me but are voluntary for you” - among them was the sacrifice.

Another narration reads:

“Sacrifice was prescribed upon me but not upon you.”

Thus, while the Prophet sacrificed to exempt his nation, the Companions sacrificed as a voluntary act, and many of the most senior, wealthiest, and most knowledgeable among them did not sacrifice, following this ruling.

3. *Subul al-Salām*, p. 96, also narrates:

From ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ, who said: A man asked the Prophet (peace be upon him) about the sacrifice, saying he could not find an animal. The Prophet said: “Trim your nails, cut your mustache, and shave your pubic hair - that will be your sacrifice in the sight of Allah.”

Also narrated by Abū Dāwūd, Vol. 3, p. 93.

This hadith subtly indicates the replacement of external animal sacrifice with internal human refinement - removing remnants of inherited animalistic traits (hair, nails) - and establishes a new value: the human ransoming himself by refining his own soul, rather than offering another being - animal or human - as a ransom.

## **The Companions Did Not Sacrifice**

In *Tafsir Ibn Kathir*, Vol. 4, p. 646:

Abū Sariḥah said: “I was a neighbor of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar, and they did not offer sacrifices, fearing that people would follow their example.”

In *Subul al-Salām*, Vol. 4, p. 91:

“The actions of the Companions indicate non - obligation. Al-Bayhaqī narrated that Abū Bakr and ‘Umar did not sacrifice, fearing it would become obligatory by example.”

In *Al-I'tiṣām* by al-Shāṭibī, Vol. 8, p. 91:

“The Companions did not sacrifice” - meaning they did not treat it as binding.

Had sacrifice remained obligatory, the Companions - especially Abū Bakr and ‘Umar - would have been the first to uphold it. Abū Bakr, who was known for strictly adhering to the Prophet’s practices and avoiding innovations, is quoted in *Al-I’tiṣām*, p. 55:

“I do not leave anything the Messenger of Allah used to do except that I do it. I fear that if I abandon any part of his practice, I may go astray.”

Other notable Companions also affirmed the abolition of obligation through word and deed:

- Bidāyat al-Mujtahid, Vol. 1, p. 464:

‘Ikrimah narrated that Ibn ‘Abbās sent him with two dirhams to buy meat, saying: “Tell people this is Ibn ‘Abbās’ sacrifice!”

Bilāl once sacrificed a rooster.

- *Subul al-Salām*, Vol. 4, p. 91:

When the day of sacrifice came, Ibn ‘Abbās would give a servant two dirhams and tell him: “Buy meat and tell the people it is Ibn ‘Abbās’ sacrifice.”

Bilāl sacrificed a rooster, and similar reports exist from Abū Hurayrah.

In *Al-I’tiṣām*, it is reported that Bilāl said:

“I do not care whether I sacrifice two rams or a rooster.”

These actions emphasized that sacrifice was no longer required. Ibn ‘Abbās went even further, as quoted in *Al-I‘tiṣām*, p. 91:

Ṭāqūs said: “I never saw a house with more meat, bread, and knowledge than that of Ibn ‘Abbās. He would slaughter every day - but not on the day of Eid.”

As for ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd, he left no doubt about the non - obligation of sacrifice for either the wealthy or the poor. *Al-I‘tiṣām*, Vol. 2, p. 91:

“I forgo sacrifice, though I am among the wealthiest of you - out of fear that my neighbors may think it is obligatory.”

After all this - can anyone still demand further textual proof that the sacrifice has been lifted from the ummah? Can anyone today claim to be more concerned with following the Prophet than Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, Ibn ‘Abbās, Abū Hurayrah, Ibn Mas‘ūd, Bilāl, and the rest of the Companions?

## **The Weakness of the Proofs for Obligation**

The proofs used to claim that *uḍḥiyah* is obligatory are weak in and of themselves.

*Subul al-Salām*, Vol. 4, p. 91, lists:

- The hadith: “Whoever has means but does not sacrifice, let him not come near our prayer place.”
- The hadith: “Each household must offer a sacrifice every year.”
- The verse: “So pray to your Lord and sacrifice.” (108:2)

But it notes:

- The first hadith is *mawqūf* (stopped at a Companion) and thus not authoritative.
- The second hadith is weak due to its narrator, Abū Ramlah - described as unknown.
- The verse has multiple interpretations. One interpretation is that “*sacrifice*” (Arabic word *Anhar*), refers to placing the hand on the neck during prayer - a meaning attributed to Ibn ‘Abbās and others.

*Ibn Kathir*, Vol. 4, p. 646, also comments on the hadith “*Let him not come near our prayer place*”, saying:

“It contains strangeness, and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal found it questionable.”

In *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, Vol. 2, p. 26, both Abū Dāwūd and al-Nasā’ī graded it weak.

The correct position is that sacrifice was lifted from the ummah - both the poor and the wealthy. When some Companions occasionally performed it, it was voluntary, and does not indicate obligation.

Even the juristic opinion that one should borrow money to sacrifice is baseless - it contradicts the spirit of the religion and the wisdom of its laws. (*Fiqh ‘alā al-Madhāhib al-Arba‘ah*, p. 715)

Some jurists argued for obligation upon the wealthy. *Ibn Kathir* cites:

Abū Ḥanīfah, Mālik, and al-Thawrī considered sacrifice obligatory for anyone who owns the minimum wealth threshold.

But: Al-Shāfi‘ī and Aḥmad said it is not obligatory - only recommended. As in the hadith: “There is no obligatory right in wealth other than zakat.”

Thus, the position that sacrifice is not obligatory - on either poor or wealthy - best matches the spirit of the Qur’an, Sunnah, and the Companions’ words and actions.

More than that - it makes no sense even to say that it is recommended for the wealthy, when the most senior of them decisively and explicitly abandoned it.

Jurists define sacrifice as:

“A confirmed individual sunnah: its doer is rewarded, and its abandoner is not punished.”

(Fiqh ‘alā al-Madhāhib al-Arba‘ah, Vol. 1, p. 715)

But this view stems from the transitional phase in which some Companions performed it voluntarily. The senior Companions concluded that phase by decisively abandoning the practice, both in word and in deed.

## *Chapter Two*

### **Returning the Sacrifice to Its Origin**

The *uḍḥiyah* (sacrifice) in its true nature and origin is the redemption of the higher with the lower. Thus, the human being was redeemed with an animal:

"And We ransomed him with a great sacrifice." (37:107)

The fundamental requirement has always been to confront deficiency within the human self - a deficiency so deep that a person might offer their own life in devotion or be sacrificed for others. Allah says:

"So repent to your Creator, and kill yourselves..." (2:54)

and

"Indeed, I have seen in a dream that I [must] sacrifice you..." (37:102)

But with the advancement of knowledge and religious understanding, as we previously explained, the human was redeemed by the animal. Yet, the true purpose of animal sacrifice - and of all forms of devotion - is to refine the self.

This refinement begins from the outer self, then deepens and moves inward, chasing deficiency to its depths. Today, our need for peace is a matter of life or death. Peace on earth cannot be achieved unless it is first achieved within the human self.

But the self will not attain peace while it is entrenched in ego. Therefore, the *uḍhiyah* now must return to its true essence: the slaying of the inner deficiency in the human being.

And just as the end mirrors the beginning - though not exactly - today's "killing" is no longer physical but spiritual, achieved through powerful and precise thought by which we rid ourselves of inner defects.

Thus, this is the time for the greater jihad - the struggle against the self. What is required now is not drawing near to God by killing a disbeliever or slaughtering an animal, but rather killing the lower self within each of us, in obedience to the prophetic command: "Die before you die."

We will elaborate on this further in the remainder of this chapter.

## **In the Age of Peace, Thought - Not Animal Sacrifice - is the True Offering and Redemption**

The noble Prophet (peace be upon him) lifted the obligation of sacrifice from his nation! His Companions understood and followed this - signaling the end of the era of drawing near to God and offering redemption through animals, and the beginning of the era of drawing near and redeeming through thought!

That is: thought that is disciplined by worship, refined by the etiquette of religion, and purified of selfish desires - in other words, upright thought.

Indeed, the essence of the Prophet's sunnah is upright thought. We could even define the sunnah as: thought.

As Ustadh Mahmoud Mohammed Taha writes in *The Path of Muhammad*:

“The life of the Prophet was entirely goodness, presence, and thought - in all that he did and refrained from. Just as his acts of worship were thoughtful and renewing, not habitual, so too were his customs imbued with thought, worship, and balance. He would give preference to the right over the left. He loved what was auspicious. And whenever given a choice between two options, he chose the easier of the two - so long as it was not sinful. He remained in constant remembrance and contemplation in all his movements. Even his sleep, eating, and clothing were acts of thought. His actions embodied the meanings of the Qur’an. The fruit of his prayer, reflection, and remembrance in all his states was the sweetness of his character, which endeared him to hearts and made him a model to follow.”

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

“One hour of contemplation is better than seventy years of worship.”

Why? Because upright thought is the sum total of Islamic responsibilities. The Qur’an was revealed, the laws were legislated, and the commands were made binding - all for the purpose of producing upright thought. Allah says:

“And We have sent down to you the Reminder so that you may explain to people what was sent down to them - and so that they may reflect.” (16:44)

True human dignity is not attained in its fullness unless the individual corrects their condition and elevates their capacity from within - through thought, not through an external medium like an animal that is used as a means of devotion or redemption.

Thus, when a person redeems themselves through their own thought - through actions like repentance and gratitude, which are fundamentally mental and spiritual acts - they are awakening their inner perceptive faculties and training them to fully take responsibility for their own reformation and spiritual ascent.

This form of self-redemption also liberates the animal from being used as an object of sacrifice and broadens the scope of life, uplifting our relationship with all living beings and even with inanimate things.

## **The End of the Sacrifice in the Age of Peace**

There is a connection between the slaughter of sacrificial animals and the killing of disbelievers in Islam.

War was permitted in Islam against disbelievers as a transitional measure - because their minds at that stage were not sufficiently mature to recognize the truth and commit to it. Therefore, such harsh guardianship was imposed.

Even the act of fighting disbelievers by the hands of believers was a milder stage that came after the era of divine punishments in past nations - such as floods, storms, and thunderbolts - due to their even greater brutality and dullness of heart.

Allah said regarding this war:

“Fight them - Allah will punish them by your hands, disgrace them, give you victory over them, and heal the hearts of believing people.” (9:14)

Such war verses were revealed in Medina, abrogating earlier Meccan verses of peace, which humanity at the time was not yet ready to embrace, such as:

“And say: the truth is from your Lord - so whoever wills, let him believe; and whoever wills, let him disbelieve...” (18:29)

Today, however - in this era where humanity’s need for peace is existential, and where modern philosophies have utterly failed to bring about global peace - human intellects have matured and are capable of recognizing and committing to the truth.

So, the ruling of our time demands that we revive the verses of peace and abrogate the verses of war.

And under the shade of this Age of Peace, which can only be completed through the revival of Islam, animal sacrifice also comes to an end. The animal is redeemed from being slaughtered in religious rituals.

(Was not the believer rewarded for fighting the disbeliever?)

It is enough that the disbeliever, by mere disbelief, serves as redemption for the believer:

“And it is not for a soul to believe except by the permission of Allah, and He places defilement upon those who do not use reason.” (10:100)

It is also enough that the mere existence of the animal serves as redemption for humanity - by virtue of humans rising above the level of animality and by the animal being subjugated for human benefit.

In the Age of Peace, the Prophet said:

“The Muslim is one from whose tongue and hand others are safe.”

And the term “Muslim” here expands to include all living beings and even inanimate objects - since every rational and irrational being is a Muslim before Allah.

As the Qur’an says:

“Do they seek other than the religion of Allah, while to Him have submitted all those in the heavens and the earth - willingly or unwillingly - and to Him they will be returned?” (3:83)

and

“There is not a thing except that it glorifies His praise - but you do not understand their glorification.” (17:44)

Therefore, in the Age of Peace, the Muslim refrains from killing animals for the sake of sacrifice or religious closeness, because they now possess a superior and deeper alternative: thought.

## *Chapter Three*

### **Clinging to the Sacrifice Today Is Clinging to the Shell of Religion and Neglecting Its Core**

Muslims' adherence to the sacrifice (*uḍḥiyah*) today is a reflection of their broader tendency to cling to the outer shell of religion while neglecting its essence. We need not exert much effort to prove this neglect - a quick glance at the current moral and behavioral state of Muslims suffices as evidence.

It is well known from the Prophetic tradition:

“Religion is interaction (*al-dīn al-mu‘āmalah*)” and “I was only sent to perfect noble character.”

Yet today, Muslims are adrift. Some of them perform religious rituals in a lifeless and mechanical fashion - devoid of spirit, absent of vitality. These acts have become subject to the dominance of habit and fail to influence either their character or the character of those around them.

Thus, the core of the religion has departed, and only its external shell remains - leaving Muslims no different from Christians and Jews who merely perform outward forms of religion, without religion.

They go to places of worship in a mechanical, habitual manner, which yields no real transformation in their morals or spiritual stature. In doing so, they fall under the ominous warning of the infallible Prophet (peace be upon him):

“You will surely follow the ways of those before you, handspan by handspan, and arm’s length by arm’s length - until if they were to enter a lizard’s hole, you would enter it too.”

They said: “The Jews and Christians, O Messenger of Allah?”

He replied: “Then who else?”

Today, the sunnah has disappeared among them, and Islam has returned to being a stranger, just as it began.

In another narration of this *ḥadīth* about the disappearance of the *sunnah*, it is said:

“Islam began as something strange, and it will return to being strange as it began - so glad tidings to the strangers!” They asked: “O Messenger of Allah, how will it be strange?” He said: “As when it is said of a man in such-and-such tribe: ‘He is a stranger!’” In another version: “They are those who revive my sunnah after the people have abandoned it.”

(*Al-I‘tiṣām*, Vol. 1, p. 3)

Ibn ‘Abbās said:

“Not a year passes over the people except that they invent a new innovation and abandon a sunnah - until innovations come to life and sunan die out.”

(*Al-I‘tiṣām*, same source)

Also in *Al-I‘tiṣām*, Vol. 1, p. 9, are early signs of the disappearance of the *sunnah*:

Narrated from Abū al-Dardā': "If the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) were to come out to you today, he would not recognize anything of what he and his Companions were upon - except the prayer."  
Al-Awzā'ī said:

"What if he saw us today?" 'Īsā ibn Yūnus said: "What if al-Awzā'ī himself saw our time?" Umm al-Dardā' said: "Abū al-Dardā' entered one day angry. I asked, 'What has upset you?' He said: 'By Allah, I do not recognize anything among them of the matter of Muhammad - except that they all pray together!'"

Narrated by al-Bukhārī.

Maymūn ibn Mahrān said: "If one of the early Muslims were to come among you today, he would recognize nothing except this Qiblah (direction of prayer)."

Sahl ibn Mālik, from his father, said: "I recognize nothing of what I saw the people doing except the call to prayer."

These are all signs of the early disappearance of the *sunnah* - which began at the end of the prophetic or rightly guided era - and the gradual collapse of the *sunnah* until Muslims reached their current state of religious decline. This marks their entrance into the second era of darkness, or the second age of ignorance (*al-jāhiliyyah al-thāniyah*).

One of the first signs of the death of the *sunnah* today is the dividing of Muslims into sects, parties, and factions:

"Each faction rejoicing in what it has." (30:32)

This division has occurred because the *sunnah* is no longer clearly understood.

The Prophet warned of this outcome:

“The Jews split into seventy-one sects, all in the Fire except one. The Christians split into seventy-two sects, all in the Fire except one. And my ummah will split into seventy-three sects - all in the Fire except one.” They asked: “Who are they, O Messenger of Allah?” He replied: “Those who are upon what I and my Companions are upon.”

Today, Muslims widely take innovations (*bid'ah*) to be the *sunnah* - such as the practice of tarāwīḥ prayers - and take customary practices to be acts of worship - such as the beard and the sacrifice - while at the same time neglecting the true sunnah, which lies in perfecting worship and refining conduct.

Their insistence on the sacrifice (*uḍḥiyah*) is a clear illustration of this blind adherence to the superficial. The Prophet clearly lifted its obligation, and the Companions rightly followed him by abandoning it. Yet, each year at Eid al-Aḍḥā, the sacrifice is promoted as the central religious symbol among Muslims!

This blind attachment either stems from ignorance of the fact that it is no longer a religious obligation, or from performing it as a social ritual far removed from genuine devotion or religious redemption.

In both cases, it is a departure from the spirit and text of religion.

Worse still, there are those who are meticulous about offering the sacrifice - while they neglect the most basic religious obligations in worship and conduct!

## *Chapter Four*

### **The Sacrifice Today Is an Act Contrary to Religion**

If someone were to object, saying: “But we are dealing with a practice that the noble Prophet performed, and there is a Qur’anic verse mentioning sacrificial animals as a means of drawing closer to God and as a redemptive act”, using this to argue that the uḏḥiyah has not been lifted from the Ummah, we would counter with evidence from the Prophet’s own practice and speech, and from the actions and understanding of his Companions, which prove its abrogation.

Indeed, the Prophet (peace be upon him) sacrificed on behalf of his community as a ransom, and out of deference to the prevailing custom. His Companions sacrificed as well, then later abandoned it, having understood that the Prophet had effectively lifted its obligation. The golden rule in Islamic legislation is: “Interest changes with changing times.”

A clear precedent for this is the abolition of the category ‘those whose hearts are to be reconciled’ (*al-mu’allafatu qulubuhum*) in the disbursement of zakat, despite it being mentioned in a Qur’anic verse:

“Zakat expenditures are only for the poor, the needy, those employed to collect [zakat], those whose hearts are to be reconciled, for freeing captives, for those in debt, in the path of Allah, and for the stranded traveler - an obligation from Allah. And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.” (9:60)

The Messenger of Allah used to allocate a share to this group until his death. But when Abū Bakr became caliph, ‘Umar suggested discontinuing this category, saying:

“We no longer need them. Allah has strengthened Islam and made it independent of them. If they accept Islam, then fine. Otherwise, the sword lies between us and them.” (Al-Jawhara al-Nayyira, Vol. 1, p. 164)

Abū Bakr upheld ‘Umar’s opinion.

Al-Duwalībī writes in *Uṣūl al-Fiqh* (p. 239) that ‘Umar’s opinion reflected the principle that interest (*maṣlaḥah*) changes with time, even when the Qur’anic text remains unchanged and unabrogated. He notes that ‘Umar looked to the underlying rationale (*‘illah*) of the verse, not merely its wording. He understood that giving to this group was tied to specific historical conditions - namely, reconciling their hearts or warding off their harm when Islam was weak. Once Islam became strong and those conditions vanished, the rationale for the ruling vanished too.

Thus, Qur’anic texts and prophetic traditions are always governed by divine wisdom. A key objective of the *sunnah* is to discern that wisdom, and to act accordingly - whether that means upholding a ruling or developing it.

The texts themselves are not the goal; they are means to realize higher interests.

In the specific case of the *uḍḥiyah*, we are now faced with evidence for its abrogation, which overrides the earlier evidence supporting its temporary

prescription. What matters is the understanding of the text - not just the text itself.

The Qur'an demands that we engage its verses with insight, warning against blind submission:

"And those who, when reminded of the verses of their Lord, do not fall upon them deaf and blind." (25:73)

So the religious duty requires us to differentiate between the foundations of Islam and its branches, and between enduring acts of worship and temporary customary practices.

Now that it is time to revive the true *sunnah* in worship and conduct...  
Now that the human intellect has matured, and religion can open the door to spiritual closeness through thought, rather than through the shedding of animal blood...

Now that economic, social, and health conditions (as we will see) have rendered the sacrifice burdensome, harmful, and outdated...

Now that the Prophet (peace be upon him) clearly exempted his Ummah from it, and his foremost Companions followed suit...

Then the sacrifice today, in light of these developments, becomes an act entirely contrary to religion.

In fact, it is nothing more than a resurgence of superficial religiosity - a confirmation of Muslims' attachment to the shell of religion while forfeiting its essence.

Below, we examine the economic, social, and health-related reasons for its fall.

## **Economic Harms of the Sacrifice Today**

The *uḍḥiyah* was legislated temporarily to bring joy and abundance to families during a time when meat was not widely available. It was a rare, seasonal food in the harsh living conditions of the Arabian Peninsula, typically affordable only to the wealthy.

In al-Zurqānī's commentary on al-Muwaṭṭa' (Vol. 3, p. 75), we read:

‘Abdullāh ibn Abī Bakr said: “The Messenger of Allah forbade eating the meat of sacrificial animals after three days.” He mentioned this to ‘Amrah bint ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, who said: “He told the truth. I heard ‘Ā’ishah, the wife of the Prophet, say: ‘Some Bedouin came to Medina for Eid, so the Prophet said: Eat for three days and then give away the rest.’ Later, when it was mentioned to him that people were benefiting from their sacrifices beyond three days, he said: ‘I only forbade you because of the needy who came to you. Now eat, give in charity, and store what remains.’”

And in *Sunan Abū Dāwūd* (Vol. 3, p. 93):

“We used to be forbidden from eating its meat beyond three days so that it would suffice for all. But now Allah has granted abundance - so eat, store, and benefit. These are days of eating, drinking, and remembering Allah.”

Thus, the economic dimension was one of the justifications for the *uḍḥiyah* during that time.

Today, however, meat is no longer a rare commodity - its economic function has faded, and the practice has shifted from benefit to burden.

In our country, as in many others, the prices of livestock have risen dramatically under the pressure of global inflation. It has become prohibitively expensive, even for middle-class families, let alone the poor. As a result, the *uḍḥiyah* today has become economically impractical and spiritually counterproductive.

Many families struggle to meet even their basic daily needs - how then can they afford a costly sacrifice?

This economic strain, coupled with poor religious education, opens the door to many ethical violations:

- Debt accumulation
- Bribery
- Misuse of public funds
- Failure to meet financial obligations

These are all economic harms that render the *uḍḥiyah* undesirable in religion, for the sake of preventing harm and closing the door to corruption.

Since the sacrifice is already not legally required of Muslims - especially today - why do we insist on blindly performing it while it brings financial ruin to individuals and families and contributes to economic imbalance in national consumption and exports during these difficult times?

## Social and Health Harms of the Sacrifice Today

In today's harsh living conditions, the economic burdens of the *uḍḥiyah* lead to countless social harms.

Not only does it cause social anxiety for those who sacrifice while deeply in debt and unable to support their families, but the actions of the wealthy also impose a psychological and economic toll on others.

The well-off either:

- Pressure the less fortunate to sacrifice, pushing them further into hardship
- Or humiliate them when they resist, reinforcing harsh class divisions

The result is destructive psychological effects on the community.

This is why the fatwa issued by the Grand Mufti of Sudan in 1978 (published in *Al-Sahafa*, 9 Nov. 1978) worsened the problem. He claimed that the sacrifice was a "*sunnah for the capable person who does not need its cost for himself or his family throughout the year*" - effectively making it obligatory for the well-off.

This view contradicts the sayings of the Companions, like 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās and 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd:

- Ibn 'Abbās would slaughter daily, except on Eid - when he refrained.
- Ibn Mas'ūd said: "I forgo my sacrifice though I am among the wealthiest of you - lest my neighbors think it is obligatory."

The social harms that result from the wealthy sacrificing while the poor cannot, are proof that the *uḍḥiyah* has fallen for both groups alike.

Imagine the psychological toll on a poor family that doesn't sacrifice, while their wealthier neighbors do - only to then receive meat as charity.

And we won't even delve here into the health risks of slaughter in overcrowded residential neighborhoods, where lack of hygiene and proper disposal leads to environmental and public health dangers.

The health guidelines that circulate annually show just how significant these risks have become.

## Conclusion

From all that has been presented in the body of this book, it has become entirely clear and firmly established that the *uḍḥiyah* (sacrifice) is a customary sunnah (*sunnah 'ādah*). And a customary sunnah changes with the changes in societies and is subject to specific circumstances.

It is also established that the noble Prophet (peace be upon him) sacrificed on behalf of his nation, thus lifting the obligation from them. It is equally established that the Rightly Guided Caliphs, the scholarly Companions, and their wealthy peers did not offer the sacrifice.

So where, then, does our insistence on sacrificing come from in light of all this?

It stems from habit, from boasting, from social competition - and it is these very motives that entangle us in problems, distortions, and ultimately lead us to blame religion for our downfall.

Even more astonishing is that we regard this as an act of devotion, when in fact, this stems from a complete ignorance of the spirit of religion - indeed, ignorance even of the texts and of the positions of the senior Companions.

So, if you, dear reader, are among the religiously committed, then know that the noble Prophet (peace be upon him) sacrificed on behalf of his nation, thereby absolving them of its obligation.

And if you know that Abu Bakr - renowned for his precision in following the Prophet and his deep concern for adhering to his example - did not perform

the sacrifice, then realize: Had it truly been required, as we mistakenly assume today, he would have been the first to do it, and to call others to it.

And if you are someone others look up to and emulate, then refrain from sacrificing knowingly, so that people do not follow your example - just as Abu Bakr did.

And if you are wealthy, then instead of “drawing nearer” to Allah by burdening others and embarrassing them in front of their families, remember that those more knowledgeable than you in the religion, and more devoted to it, refrained from the sacrifice - even while being financially capable - in order to publicly declare its non-obligation, and to consider the feelings and circumstances of others.

It has been narrated that Abu Bakr did not sacrifice, nor did ‘Umar, Abū Hurayrah, Bilāl, and many other senior Companions.

Ibn ‘Abbās, the great scholar of the ummah, would slaughter animals often - except on the Day of Sacrifice, when he would refrain.

‘Abd Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd said:

“I forgo my sacrifice, and I am among the wealthiest of you - out of fear that my neighbors may think it is obligatory.”

And if you are throwing your household finances into disarray, thinking that the Prophet commanded you to do so - then know that the Prophet forbade you from this.

In one hadith, a Companion asked the Prophet (peace be upon him) about the sacrifice, saying:

“But if all I have is a sheep that belongs to my household, from which they drink milk - shall I sacrifice it?” The Prophet replied: “No.”

If this is the religious position on *uḍḥiyah*, then why cling to it, unless we have fallen into the clutches of usury (*ribā*) and have been struck by the forewarning of religion’s eclipse - so that we hold tight to outward forms while abandoning the essence?

O Muslims! Know the true *sunnah* of the Prophet, and adhere to it. Abandon the superficialities you currently cling to. This is the time to revive the sunnah.

The *uḍḥiyah* was once a transitional customary sunnah. It has now fallen away from this ummah, as demonstrated in this book.

We ask Allah to guide us to the truths of our religion - so that we may live them with awareness and thought, not mere habit. For the greatest affliction of worship is when it becomes routine.

He – exalted is He - is the most Generous of those who are asked, and the Swiftest to respond.

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The Republican Brothers  
Omdurman – P.O. Box 1151  
Phone: 56912