



Knife and Easy Guide to Qurbani



Qurbani is derived from the Arabic root word Qurbaan meaning closeness or nearness i.e. to Allah Ta'ala. In the Arab world the preferred terminology is Udhiyyah. It is undertaken by Muslims worldwide through animal sacrifice in keeping with the tradition of the Prophet Ebrahim or Abraham (peace be upon him), the Patriarch of the three monotheistic religions who was commanded to sacrifice his son Ismail according to Muslims and Isaac according to others.

The period for Qurbani commences after the Eid prayer (10th Zul Hijjah) and ends before Maghrib (evening prayer) on the (12th Zul Hijjah).

THE DIFFERENT SPECIES OF ANIMALS FOR SACRIFICE

1. CATTLE

Oxen, buffalos and camels are permissible. They should be two years old or more. Seven persons can be partners in the Qurbani of these large animals.

2. SHEEP, LAMB AND GOATS

They should be one year old or more, but in the case of sheep, at least six months old.

A FEW RULES REGARDING SLAUGHTER

The knife has to be sharp to minimize pain, the name of the Almighty God must be pronounced and the animal must be completely bled.

If the slaughterer omits the Tasmiyah (incantation) of **"in the name of Allah, Allah is Great"** intentionally, the animal will not be permissible to eat. If however, it is omitted forgetfully, it will be deemed Halaal and may be eaten.

The incision should be made below the Adams apple, (i.e. between the throat and the upper part of the chest).

The swift cut that involves the windpipe (trachea), gullet (oesophagus) and the two arteries without severing the spinal cord results in the rapid gush of blood draining. This purifies the meat by removing most of the blood that acts as a medium for microorganisms.

To continue cutting till the spinal cord when slaughtering and also to sever the head is reprehensible.

The intention of the sacrifice is of extreme importance to the end result. For example, if one person of the seven shareholders decides to utilize the Qurbani just to secure meat for a BBQ, than it will nullify the sacrifice of the others.

Every person is encouraged to slaughter his/her own animal. If one is unable to slaughter, then at least one should be present to witness the slaughter as encouraged in the traditions. It is not permissible to use animals for Qurbani which have defects such as more than a third of the tail, horn or ear is cut off and animals that are unable to walk to the place of slaughter.

After slaughtering we should read the following dua: **'O Allah accept this sacrifice from me as you have accepted from your beloved Nabi Muhammad (peace be upon him) and your friend Ebrahim (peace be upon him)'**

A FEW DESIRABLE (MUSTAHAB) ACTS OF QURBANI:

To face Qiblah when slaughtering.

It is recommended that one's Qurbani should be distributed in three portions, a third for yourself, a third for relatives and a third for the poor.

A FEW UNDESIRABLE (MAKROOH) ACTS OF QURBANI:

Slaughtering an animal in the presence of other animals.

Sharpening the knife in front of the animal to be slaughtered.

Placing the head of a live animal in the blood of other animals that were slaughtered.

Delaying the slaughter when the animal is already on the ground.

Using a blunt knife

Breaking the neck of an animal while still alive i.e. immediately after slaughter, whilst there is movement in the animal.

Skinning the animal while there are still signs of life.

IMPORTANT ADVICE

Ensure that payments for Qurbani are honoured timeously.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) strongly warned those persons who do have the means but do not carry out this important function for Qurbani in the following words, **"he who has the means to do Qurbani but does not do so should not attend Eid Prayer."**

Animals should be kept in areas with proper ventilation, transported in ventilated vehicles, fed well and given clean water to drink.

Rinse the carcass inside and out to avoid blood and smell remaining on the carcass.

Store carcass in a chiller or a cool area for a day for firmness and ease of slicing.

CONCLUSION

After completing one's own Qurbani it is meritorious to assist others in carrying out this sacred and virtuous deed.

This is an abbreviated version of advices and rules for Qurbani. Please consult your local Ulama for in-depth guidance and clarification.