



SUNNET (CIRCUMCISION)

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and Secondary School

Comenius Students Team

Tekirdağ, TURKEY

- Circumcision is known to have been practiced in ancient Egypt even before it was introduced to the Jews as part of God's covenant with Abraham. Circumcision is a universal practice which is greatly influenced by cultural and religious traditions, especially of the Moslems and Jews. The performance of circumcision is one of the rules of cleanliness in Islam. In Islam, however, the authority for circumcision came not from the Koran but from the example of the Prophet Mohammed. In Islam, whatever the prophet does or says is called **sunnet**; therefore this word stands for circumcision in modern Turkish.



- Urologists claim that circumcised males have far fewer urinary tract infections and are less at risk for catching sexually transmitted diseases than are uncircumcised males.



- As an Islamic country, in Turkey all Moslem boys are circumcised between the ages 2-14 by licensed circumcising surgeons. From the social point of view, the most prominent feature of circumcision is the introduction of a child to his religious society as a new member. This explains the reason for circumcision of people who convert into Moslems as a first step. It is impressed on a boy at a very early age that circumcision is a step for transition to manhood. As long as they are accepted as very important events in people's lives, circumcisions are generally made with big ceremonies in festive atmosphere.



- If a family has more than one boy, they wait for an appropriate time to perform it altogether. In this case the younger child might be less than 4. In some rural areas, villagers sometimes share expenses of a circumcision feast like they do with the work. Wealthy people may take poor boys or orphans together with their children for circumcision. Charity organizations make collective ceremonies for poor boys and orphans. Considering school periods of children, circumcisions are held in summer months while the children are on vacation, from June through September at weekends.



CIRCUMCISION CEREMONY

- When a family determines a date for their feast, they invite relatives, friends and neighbors by sending invitation cards in advance. Depending on the economic position of families, feasts might take place in a ceremonial hall or a hotel instead of a house. They prepare a highly decorated room for the boy with a nice bed and many colorful decorative things. Boys should also wear special costumes for this feast; a suit, a cape, a scepter and a special hat with "*Masallah*", meaning "God preserve him", written on it.



- In the morning of the feast, the children of guests are all taken for a tour around in a big convoy with the boy either on horseback, horse carts, or automobiles. This convoy is also followed by musicians playing the drums and the clarinet.



- After they come back, the boy wears a loose long white dress and, is circumcised by the surgeon while somebody holds him. This person who holds is called *kirve*, and has to be somebody close to the boy. In the eastern parts of Anatolia, this is the first contact of a big relationship which will continue for lifetime. He will play an active role in the boy's lifetime and have nearly equal rights with the father in decisions. This is similar to a godfather in Christianity. Although there is no blood relation to his kirve, the boy will not even be allowed to marry his kirve's daughter in order not to have incest because he is considered to have become somebody from the family.



- After the circumcision, the boy is in pain and has to be kept busy with music, lots of jokes or some other animation. Presents also are given at this time to help him forget his pains. In the meantime words from the Koran are recited and guests are taken to tables for the feast meal which is a special one laid with different food changing from region to region. After a few days the boy recovers and festivities end.
- Today, there is a small group of people who prefer their children to be circumcised in hospitals while they are in hospital after birth, whereby ignoring the traditional side.





Invitation Card



Oğlumuz
AHMET'in

Sünnet düğününde sizleri de aramızda
görmekten mutluluk duyarız.

Öznur - Turgut Alptekin

Anneannesi - Dedesi
Emine - Ahmet Uruş

Babaannesi - Dedesi
Sengül - Ahmet Alptekin

Yer: Yukarı İğde Ağacı Köyü Beylikova / ESKİŞEHİR
23 Haziran 2007 Cumartesi günü
Saat: 19:00'da Düğün Akşamı Konvoy Saat: 20:00'de Düğün
24 Haziran 2007 Pazar günü
Saat: 11:30'da Çayda Medeni Saat: 14:30'da Çayda Nispetiye Akşamı

