As Salaam Alaikoom,

As we enter the new Muslim year we also approach the "Aashoorah" celebration. The Prophet ﷺ observed that Jews in Madinah fasted on the tenth of Muharram remembering Allah's favor upon their ancestors who were delivered from the Pharaoh on this day.

Not to be outdone in worship by other religious groups and sects, the Prophet ﷺ set a standard and fasted an additional day along with the tenth. The Sahabah read this practice correctly and made it part of their Muslim culture. The Aashoorah is a celebration for Muslims also. The Sahabah used to say that being kind and generous to one's family members on this day yields a whole years of ease and blessings from Allah Who had blessed the Bani Israel on this day. The Sahabah initiated a "family day" and treated their family members on this day. This tradition became part of the Muslim culture.

We must remember that all celebrations in Islam are coupled with fasting. We celebrate Divine attention and not merely the fact that Allah has given us a father, mother, family (and I dare say very soon in America a dog). I am not at all suggesting that we make (and I am sure some clown will interpret this that way) the Aashoorah a "family day". The idea that in the West, there is a Father's Day, Mother's Day and Valentine's Day is devoid of any Divine attention on those days and hence, they should not be promoted as either Islamic or otherwise. Those of us who choose to "celebrate" (with some cynicism in the word celebrate) these days, should do so at their own risk and not invite others to follow suit. Again, I dare say that some fool might even suggest that we fast on Father's Day, etc in order to attract Divine attention.

Fasting is prescribed on the Aashoorah (tenth of Muharram) and we should fast on either the 9th or the 11th with it. This is a perfect example of how Muslims incorporated Divine attention given to other communities and attracted that attention towards them. Prophetically ingenious and wholesomely universal. This is the way of Muhammad ﷺ.