

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

أَتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ

تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ ...

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

صَلَاةُ الْجَمَاعَةِ تَفْضُلُ صَلَاةِ الْفَذِّ بِسَبْعٍ وَعِشْرِينَ دَرَجَةً.

COME TO PRAYER! COME TO SALVATION!

Dear Muslims,

A call we hear from minarets five times a day. Under the sky echoes our Lord's (swt) blessed invitation: "Come to prayer! Come to salvation!" This invitation is a call to the mosque and prayer in congregation. It is a call to stand before Allah the Almighty. It is the call for revitalization and salvation through prayer.

Aziz Müminler!

“Salah is the pillar of religion.”¹

“The first of man's deeds for which he will be called to account on the Day of Resurrection will be salah.”²

“The key to paradise is salah.”³

Salah, one of the five pillars of Islam, is our turning towards our Lord (swt) with both body and soul, and thus, establishing a permanent and strong bond with Him. Lonely in crowds, it is our meeting with Allah, talking with Him (swt), and expressing our situation to Him.

Dear Muslims!

We perform the prayer and the prayer makes us a perfect believer. The prayer guides those who perform it properly to goodness and keeps them away from evil. This truth is expressed in the Holy Qur'an as follows: “Recite what has been revealed to you of the Book and establish prayer. Indeed, genuine prayer should deter one from indecency and wickedness...”⁴

Dear Believers!

There is a great virtue and there are countless wisdoms in performing the five daily prayers, which are obligatory upon every Muslim, in congregation at the mosque. Performing the prayer in congregation is so important that in the Holy Qur'an, Allah the Almighty (swt) explains in detail how to pray in congregation even during jihad on the battlefield.⁵ Our beloved Prophet (saw) says in this regard, “Praying in congregation is twenty-seven degrees better than praying alone.”⁶ Prayer in congregation binds our hearts together. It increases love, respect and affection between us. It also serves as an opportunity to meet and get closer to each other as well as sharing one another's joy and sorrow.

Dear Muslims!

The Friday prayer that we are performing now is a weekly gathering for believers. The Friday prayer is the most vivid example of the brotherhood of faith, of being close and getting united as one body and one heart. It is the greatest indicator of being a pioneering ummah and a

beneficent society. Allah the Almighty (swt) has commanded us to leave our worldly worries aside and rush to Friday prayer on this blessed day as follows: “O believers! When the call to prayer is made on Friday, then proceed diligently to the remembrance of Allah and leave off your business. That is best for you, if only you knew.”⁷

Skipping the Friday prayer without a valid excuse is a great sin. The Messenger of Allah (saw) cautions us against this by saying: “Whoever missed three Friday prayers out of negligence, Allah will place a seal over his heart.”⁸

Dear Parents!

Our beloved Prophet (saw) also says, “Command your children to pray when they become seven years old.”⁹ So, let us invite our children to prayer using an affectionate language, with a smile on our face, and in a patient and understanding manner. Let us hold their hands and run to the mosque together as a family. May our children also benefit from the inspiring climate of mosques that gives awe and peace. Of course, we should teach them mosque etiquette. But we should also tolerate them playing and running in the mosques as children being children. We should not cause our children to turn away from the mosque and the congregation by a wrong step we may take.

Dear Youth!

The Messenger of Allah (saw) gives the good news that young people who grow up with worship of Allah will be in the shade of His Throne on the Day of Judgement.¹⁰ So, my young brothers and sisters, bless these most precious days of your lives by praying in congregation. Please do not deprive yourselves of the prayer that brings you closest to your Lord (swt). Remember, with the faith and courage you gain from praying in congregation in the house of Allah, and with the knowledge and wisdom you learn from khutbahs and sermons, you will turn your world into a home of peace, and your hereafter into paradise, insha Allah.

Dear Muslims!

There are no obstacles to performing prayers. There can be no important reason to keep us from prayer. So, let us make it a point to perform our five daily prayers in the mosque. In particular, let us plan our time for Friday prayer, which is obligatory to be performed in congregation. As workers or employers, managers or subordinates, students or teachers, children, young or elderly, let us all come together for Friday prayers. Let us encourage our friends and family to perform prayers in mosques and to attend Friday prayers. Let us not forget that when we breathe our last, we will be seen off for our journey to the eternal hereafter from the courtyard of a mosque, after the tributes, words of prayer and funeral prayer of our brothers and sisters with whom we once stood shoulder to shoulder in prayer.

¹ Bayhaqi, Shu'ab al-Iman, 3, 39.

² Nasa'i, Muharaba, 2.

³ Tirmidhi, Taharah, 1.

⁴ Ankabut, 29/45.

⁵ Nisa, 4/102.

⁶ Bukhari, Adhan, 30.

⁷ Jumu'ah, 62/9.

⁸ Ibn Majah, Iqamat, 93.

⁹ Abu Dawud, Salah, 26.

¹⁰ Bukhari, Adhan, 36.