



The Qur'an at Dawn is Witnessed

The First Khutbah

All praises are due to Allah. The Pure and the Most Compassionate. Who has singled out the prayer of Fajr for a great reward and a noble compensation. And I bear witness, with every facet of my being, that there is nothing worthy of absolute love and adoration, except Allah, the Uniquely One, having no competing second in that One-ness. And I bear witness that our Leader and Master, our Prophet, Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon his name), is the perfect example of servanthood unto Allah, and is His sent Messenger unto the entirety of the created universe.

To Continue: I advise you, dutiful servants of Allah, and myself, to adhere to a heartfelt consciousness (Taqwa) of Allah. For He, the Most Gloriously Transcendent, states:

وَأَنْ أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَاتَّقُوهُ وَهُوَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ

And to establish prayer and fear Him." And it is He to whom you will be gathered. [Qur'an: ٦:٧٢]

O Muslims: Allah states in His blessed Book: **أَقِمِ**

الصَّلَاةَ لِدُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ إِلَى غَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ وَقُرْآنِ الْفَجْرِ إِنَّ قُرْآنَ

الْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُودًا

Establish prayer at the decline of the sun [from its meridian] until the darkness of the night and [also] the Qur'an of dawn. Indeed, the recitation of dawn is ever witnessed. [Qur'an: ١٧:٧٨]

In this blessed verse, Allah commands us to offer the prayer in its set time. He also stirs us to honor this prayer by giving it its due, in that it is of profuse rank and reward. This is the prayer of Fajr (dawn). Allah has sworn by the prayer of Fajr and entitled a whole chapter of the Qur'an by its name. For Allah says:

وَالْفَجْرِ*
وَلَيَالٍ عَشْرٍ

By the dawn [time and prayer] And [by] the ten nights [Qur'an: ٨٩:١-٢]

Allah has also sworn by the sanctity of its time, stating:

وَالصُّبْحِ إِذَا تَنَفَّسَ

And by the dawn when it breathes [Qur'an: ٨١:١٨]
Scholars have said that by 'breath' is meant the phenomenon of the sun rising and lighting up the horizons. In similar manner, Allah says:

وَالصُّبْحِ إِذَا أَسْفَرَ

And [by] the morning when it brightens, [Qur'an: ٧٤:٣٤]

Scholars have said this is a reference to the spreading and diffusing rays of the Sun as it brightens the day in the morning. It is considered that at this time the spiritual presence of a multitude of Angels descends,

flocking to be around those of the select of the servants of Allah (who are engaged in His remembrance). So these Angels bear witness to the prayer of the worshippers, hearing the remembrance of Allah therein, and especially hearing the recitation of the Qur'an. They record all these noble deeds in their Scrolls. In this regard, the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) is reported to have said:

يَتَعَاقِبُونَ فِيكُمْ مَلَائِكَةٌ بِاللَّيْلِ وَمَلَائِكَةٌ بِالنَّهَارِ، وَيَجْتَمِعُونَ فِي صَلَاةِ الْفَجْرِ وَصَلَاةِ الْعَصْرِ، ثُمَّ يَعْرُجُ الَّذِينَ بَاتُوا فِيكُمْ، فَيَسْأَلُهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِهِمْ: كَيْفَ تَرَكْتُمْ عِبَادِي؟ فَيَقُولُونَ: تَرَكْنَاهُمْ وَهُمْ يُصَلُّونَ، وَأَتَيْنَاهُمْ وَهُمْ يُصَلُّونَ

Angels take turns among you by night and by day, and they all assemble at the dawn and afternoon prayers. Those (of the angels) who spend the night among you, then, ascend, and their Lord asks them, though He is the best informed about the matter: How did you leave My servants? They respond: We left them while they were praying and we came to them while they were praying. [Bukhari and Muslim] So who deserves to rejoice more than someone who avails the company of Angels witnessing and recording their prayer at Fajr? For they are in the company of the noble Angels, with the most noble of the noble. And who is better than a person who tries his utmost to ensure that he preserves his prayer at Fajr, to be a

prayer with the congregation of believers? For Allah Himself ‘boasts’ about such a person, as stated in a Hadith Qudsi (as if Allah is directly speaking) which narrates: **انظُرُوا إِلَى عَبْدِي تَرَكَ فِرَاشَهُ وَقَامَ إِلَى صَلَاتِهِ؛ رَغْبَةً**

فِي مَا عِنْدِي، وَشَفَقَةً مِمَّا عِنْدِي

Look at My servant, he has left his bed and risen up for his prayer, only out of desire for what is with Me and a consideration for what is from Me.

[Ahmad]

For, generally speaking, the Fajr prayer marks the beginning of the day and entails that a person leave his sleep as a response to the call summoning every believer at that time:

الصَّلَاةُ خَيْرٌ مِنَ النَّوْمِ، الصَّلَاةُ خَيْرٌ مِنَ النَّوْمِ

Prayer is better than sleep. Prayer is better than sleep.

So the believer is tasked to respond, to get up, and to make a move for the prayer, to strive to place himself in the Divine presence, before His Lord. This response from him, is itself humbling and submissive, and as he begins standing, bending and bowing in prayer, he further abases that egoic-self that stands in the way of true submission. And then he has the opportunity to intimately supplicate to his Lord: A supplication that rises out of hope and awe. Would not such a person get what they ask? Would not they be saved from that

which they fear? Would not they be freed from the traps of Shaytan? Such people are those who become the best of the living. They are those who can lay claim to having the most expansive and merciful hearts, the most subtle and alert bodily vigor, and the purest of intentions, when it comes to those who purify themselves for Allah. This is testified to by the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) himself, who is reported to have said:

يَعْقُدُ الشَّيْطَانُ عَلَى قَافِيَةِ رَأْسِ أَحَدِكُمْ إِذَا هُوَ نَامَ ثَلَاثَ عُقَدٍ
 ... فَإِنْ اسْتَيْقَظَ فَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ؛ انْحَلَّتْ عُقْدَةٌ، فَإِنْ تَوَضَّأَ انْحَلَّتْ
 عُقْدَةٌ، فَإِنْ صَلَّى انْحَلَّتْ عُقْدَةٌ، فَأَصْبَحَ نَشِيطًا طَيِّبَ النَّفْسِ

When one you sleeps, the devil ties three knots at the back of his neck, sealing every knot with, "You have a long night, so sleep well." So if one awakes and mentions Allah, a knot will be loosened; if he performs ablution another knot will be loosened; and if he prays, the third knot will be loosened; and in the morning he will be active and in good spirits; otherwise he will be in bad spirits and sluggish.

[Bukhari and Muslim]

This ability to be 'active' comes out of a sense of joy. The joy one feels when Allah has accepted one's worship. For such people, not only is there the availing good in this life, they have also been promised a great reward as recompense in the next.

O You gathered to Pray:

Our Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) has advised us to specifically guard our adherence to the prayer of Fajr. This was precisely because it holds a tremendous good and Baraka (grace) and he wished that we would obtain that and not be deprived. As the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

وَأُو يَعْلَمُونَ مَا فِي الْعِشَاءِ وَالصُّبْحِ لَأَتَوْهُمَا وَلَوْ حَبْوًا

If they [the people] knew the reward for the `Isha' and the Fajr prayers in congregation, they would join them even if they had to crawl [to attend it].

[Bukhari and Muslim]

The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) would not have said this statement above if there wasn't some tremendous reward that he wanted to prevent us missing out on. In another narration he (peace and blessings be upon him) alludes to what this reward is. by stating that it is the equivalent of having prayed 'half of the entire night', stating: مَنْ صَلَّى الْعِشَاءَ فِي

جَمَاعَةٍ كَانَ كَقِيَامِ نِصْفِ لَيْلَةٍ، وَمَنْ صَلَّى الْعِشَاءَ وَالْفَجْرَ فِي جَمَاعَةٍ كَانَ كَقِيَامِ لَيْلَةٍ

If anyone prays the night prayer in congregation, he is like one who keeps vigil (in prayer) till half the night; and he who prays both the night and dawn prayer in congregation is like one who keeps vigil (in prayer) the whole night. [Muslim]

There is also a special protection one gets from Allah when observing Fajr, for the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) is narrated to have said:

مَنْ صَلَّى الصُّبْحَ فَهُوَ فِي ذِمَّةِ اللَّهِ

Whoever offers the morning prayer (in congregation), he is under the protection of Allah
[Muslim]

Scholars hold that such a ‘protection’ amounts to a state of security that one has with Allah in this life and the next. For the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) stated that whoever guards and ensures they pray their Fajr, whilst walking to the Mosque to attend congregation, shall have a special distinguishing light on the Day of Judgement:

مَنْ مَشَى فِي ظُلْمَةِ اللَّيْلِ إِلَى الْمَسَاجِدِ، آتَاهُ اللَّهُ نُورًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

Whoever walks in the darkness of the night to the Mosque [to pray Fajr and Isha], shall be bestowed a light on the Day of Judgement. [Ibn Hiban]

The darkness of the night includes both the prayers of Fajr and Isha, hence their special status. In addition, the prayer of Fajr is a means by which one is saved on the Day of Judgement:

لَنْ يَلْجَأَ النَّارَ أَحَدٌ صَلَّى قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ غُرُوبِهَا

He will never enter the Fire, the one who prays before the sun rises and before it sets. [Muslim]

The reference to ‘before the sun rises’ is Fajr, and the reference to ‘before it sets’ is Asr. Hence we can say that someone who persists and is committed to the prayer of Fajr, will be from the people of Paradise, by the permission of Allah. For the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) is reported to have said:

مَنْ صَلَّى الْبُرْدَيْنِ - أَيِ: الْفَجْرِ وَالْعَصْرِ - دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ

He who observed the two prayers at the two cool hours (i.e. Fajr and Asr) enters Paradise.

[Bukhari and Muslim]

And what does it mean to enter Paradise? It means to partake of endless bliss, with blessings that never come to an end. And yet there is even more therein. There is the ‘Vision’, the direct witnessing of the Lord of all existence, for the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said:

إِنَّكُمْ سَتَرَوْنَ رَبَّكُمْ، كَمَا تَرَوْنَ هَذَا الْقَمَرَ، لَا تُضَامُونَ فِي رُؤْيَيْهِ،

فَإِنْ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَنْ لَا تُغْلَبُوا عَلَى صَلَاةٍ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ

قَوْلِ اللَّهِ ﷻ غُرُوبَهَا فَافْعَلُوا». يَعْنِي: صَلَاةَ الْفَجْرِ وَالْعَصْرِ، ثُمَّ قَرَأَ

تَعَالَى: (وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ غُرُوبِهَا

[The companions were sitting with the Prophet when he looked upon the full moon and then said] “You shall see your Lord just as you are seeing this [full] moon, and you will not be harmed in your

vision of Him [therein]. So if you are able, do not let yourselves be overpowered [by your egos] in the observance of the Prayer before the rising of the sun (i.e. Fajr) and before its setting (i.e. Asr). So make sure you adhere to this. [The Prophet then quoted the Qur'anic verse from Surah TaHa:

۲۰:۳۰] And glorify your Lord before the rising of the sun and before its setting.” [Bukhari and Muslim]
O Allah make us from those who truly establish the prayer in our hearts, minds and bodies. Who adhere to its correct times and practice. And assist us all in the way of piety and obedience. Piety towards Your trustworthy Messenger, Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), the ability to be dutiful towards those You have commanded us to be dutiful towards, in accordance with Your words: **O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you.** [Qur'an: ۴:۵۹]

May Allah bless me and bless you with the Noble Qur'an and with the Way (Sunnah) of His Noble Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him). I say this, and I seek forgiveness for me and for you, so seek His forgiveness, for He is the All-Forgiving and the All-Merciful.

The Second Khutbah

All praises are for Allah. I praise Him with a praise commensurate to the majesty of His countenance, and the immensity of His authority. And I bear witness, with every facet of my being, that there is nothing

worthy of absolute love and adoration, except Allah, the Uniquely One, having no competing second in that One-ness. And I bear witness that our Leader and Master, our Prophet, Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon his name), is the perfect example of dutiful servanthood towards Allah, and is His sent Messenger unto the entirety of the created universe. O Allah: We ask you to bestow Your peace, blessings and grace upon him; his family; all of his companions; and whomsoever follows and seeks to emulate him in the best of ways till the Last Day. I advise you, O servants of Allah, and myself, with Taqwa of Allah (glorified be He).

O Worshippers:

Indeed the time of dawn is a time of Baraka. Allah has made it from the signs of His omnipotent power. He has praised Himself by His creative capacity, referring

to Himself by the Title: **فَالِقُ الْإِصْبَاحِ**

[He is] The cleaver of daybreak [Qur'an: ٦:٩٦]

So whoever gets up before Fajr and busies themselves with Dua, and orients themselves towards their Lord, placing their hopes upon Him alone – will find Allah hears them and grants them that which they seek. For the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يَمَهِّلُ حَتَّى يَذْهَبَ ثُلُثُ اللَّيْلِ، ثُمَّ يَنْزِلُ
 فَيَقُولُ: هَلْ مِنْ سَائِلٍ؟ هَلْ مِنْ تَائِبٍ؟ هَلْ مِنْ مُسْتَغْفِرٍ؟. قَالَ
 فَقَالَ لَهُ رَجُلٌ: حَتَّى يَطْلُعَ الْفَجْرُ؟ قَالَ: «نَعَمْ»

Indeed Allah allows for time to pass till one-third of the night is over. He then descends to the lowest heaven and says [whilst knowing best]: It there any supplicating (of need)? Is there any repenting? Is there any seeking forgiveness? A man then asked the Prophet: Is this done till daybreak (at dawn)? He (peace and blessings be upon him) responded: Yes (i.e. it is till Fajr). [Muslim]

In light of this, we should note that we will be soon be encountering a tremendous night, the night of the middle of Sha'ban. It is a night of forgiveness and healing. So let us strive to do our utmost to draw near to Allah with our dua, our devotion and our worship. And with this, let us send our peace and blessings upon the one we have been commanded to send our peace and blessings upon, as Allah says: **Indeed, Allah confers blessing upon the Prophet, and His angels [ask Him to do so]. O you who have believed, ask [Allah to confer] blessing upon him and ask [Allah to grant him] peace.** [Qur'an: ٣٣:٥٦]. So, O Allah, bestow Your peace, blessings and grace upon our Master, our Prophet and upon his family and all of his companions. And may Allah be pleased with the

Righteous Caliphs: Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, Ali; and the noble companions of the Prophet, the Sahaba, may Allah be pleased with all of them. O Allah, we ask You for soundness in our faith, and trust in good character, and a true success that will be followed by eternal bliss. O Allah, we ask You for Your mercy, for true prosperity, for Your redemptive forgiveness and Your pleasure. O Allah, make us from those who are obedient, respectful, those who venerate their parents, honoring their mothers and their fathers, embodying excellent character towards their families and wider societies.

O Allah, grant success to the UAE President HH Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan and guide him to all that is good. O Allah, we seek Your favour in granting him continued good health and care. O Allah, we also ask You to grant success to the Vice-President, the Crown Prince and his Brothers, their Highnesses, the Rulers of the Emirates.

O Allah, we ask You to forgive all of the Muslims, both the men and women, the living and dead. O Allah, bestow your mercy on the late Sheikh Zayed, Sheikh Maktoum and the other late UAE Sheikhs who have passed on to the mercy of their Lord. O Lord, grant them from your abundant mercy and bless them with Your kindness and satisfaction. O Allah, we ask you to admit them into Paradise, being given bounties therein without being taken to account. O Lord, forgive and

show mercy on our parents, relatives and whosoever may have a right upon us.

O Allah, we ask You, from your loving kindness, for the immensity of your forgiveness, for the reward of all righteousness, for the safety and protection from all sin. O Allah, we ask you for the ultimate success in attaining Paradise, and the ultimate respite in being saved from the Fire. O Allah, do not allow us to sin except that You forgive us, nor to have any worry except that you relieve us therein, nor for any debt to come upon us except that You see it compensated, nor for there to be any sick amongst us except that You see them healed. Let there be no dead, except that You have covered them in Your mercy, and let there be no pressing need, amongst any of us, except that You see it met and fulfilled. O most Noble of the Noble, You are capable over all things, and You are the most generous in responding to those who call upon You.

We ask You, O Allah, the Lord of all domains, to continue blessing the UAE with stability, welfare, increase in its bounties, knowledge, civilization, happiness, beauty and tolerance. O Allah, please continue blessing it with safety and security. O Allah, have mercy on the honorable martyrs of our nation and gather them with the ones upon whom Allah has bestowed favour of the Prophets. O Allah, make the dwelling of the martyrs, their families, parents and relatives with the righteous. Indeed, You are ever-responsive to those who call upon You. O Allah, grant

to the people of Yemen that which is good, and unite them upon that which is True and Sacred, and provide for them all manners of prosperity, O most Noble of the Noble. O Allah, spread peace and security amongst all the Muslim nations, and the entirety of the world. O our Lord, we ask You for the best of this World, the best of the Hereafter, that You will protect us from the punishment of the Fire, and that You enter us into Your paradise with the righteous. Indeed You are the Most Generous and Most Forgiving.

O Servants of Allah: Remember Allah, the Majestic, and He will remember you. Thank Him for His blessings and He will increase you therein. And establish the prayer. **So stand up for prayer.**