

The Farewell Scene

التَّحِيَّاتُ لِلَّهِ وَالصَّلَوَاتُ وَالطَّيِّبَاتُ ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ ، السَّلَامُ عَلَيْنَا
وَعَلَىٰ عِبَادِ اللَّهِ الصَّالِحِينَ ، أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

‘Words of Praise and Salutations are for Allah, and Prayers and pure words.

Peace and salutations upon you O Prophet and the Mercy of Allah and His Blessings. And peace be upon us and upon all of Allah's righteous servants. I testify that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah, and testify that Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger.’¹

If you have just finished the first Rakah [unit] of your Salah, then rise for the second and rise for a new chance to improve your focus and to ensure that this time, your heart and mind are fully alive with the humbleness and humility required of us in Salah. If this is your last Rakah, then we have arrived at the Farewell Scene... the sweet ending to this beautiful meeting between a servant and his Merciful Lord. We have arrived at...The Tashahhud.

Our hands are to be placed upon our knees or just above - on the lower thighs. As is proper when speaking to Our Lord, our farewell address must also begin first, by sending all praise and glorification to Allah, for His eternal existence, His perfection, and His sovereignty....Greet Him directly; speak to Him with these beautiful words: “*Attahiyyatul lillabi*”. All “*Attahiyyat*” [greetings/praises/glorification] is due to Allah alone and no one else. “*Wassalamatu*”- and all our duas and prayers are to Him. “*Wattayyibat*”- and all the good deeds, in the form of actions or words, are for Him alone. For Allah accepts only what is good, pure, and sincere.

Now the words you will pronounce next will travel off to another land...thousands of kilometers away.. to Madinah!.. to where rests the blessed body of the greatest man who ever lived - our beloved Prophet, “*Assalamu alaika ayyuha-nnabiyyu warahmatullahi wabarakatuh*”- May the peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you, O Prophet! Everyday, you send this special greeting to him and he answers you back! Listen to this hadeeth: The Prophet ﷺ said, “*There is not one who sends upon me his peace and blessings but Allah returns my soul to me, so that I can return upon him, my peace and blessings.*”

¹ Transliterated: “*At-tahiyyatul lillabi was-salamatu wat-tayyibat. Assalamu alayka ayyahun-nabiyyu wa rahmatul-labi wa barakatuh. Assalamu alayna wa ala ibadillahis salibeen. Ashbadu alla ilaha ilal-ha wa ashadu anna Mubammadan abduhu wa rasuluh.*”

Please glance over at the nearest doorway to you and imagine that the Prophet ﷺ has just entered through that door. With his beautiful radiant face touched with a hint of rose, with his neatly wrapped ‘amama [head cover], in his pure white sweet-scented clothes.. and with his warm smile that melts your heart. He has chosen to greet only one today, and that’s you! How would you feel? What would you say? With these loving words above, you are speaking directly to the Prophet now. And just think.

You have this honorable privilege at least 5 times everyday! How many of us have wished to have lived during his time, to see him and to be with him... With these words above, we *are* with him! So let us greet our Prophet with a heart full of affection and full of appreciation and gratitude for the best example he has set and for this priceless message he has brought to us. And while we reflect over how much love and esteem we hold for him, let us remember...that we are now sitting in the hands of The One who created our Prophet and how much love we hold for Allah Himself - Whom as a result of your greetings and peace upon His Prophet, now sends upon *you* a ten-fold share of the blessings and peace!

After sending off praise and greetings upon Allah, then upon His Prophet, we now send the blessings of peace upon ourselves and upon all of Allah’s righteous servants: “*Assalamu alaina wa ala ibadillahi-saalibeen*”- upon every righteous servant whether in the heavens or earth - angel or man. Next- those powerful words of Tawheed- those words that affirm and renew our faith and sincerity: “*Asbhadu anna la ilaha illa-llah, wa asbhadu anna Muhammadan abdubu wa rasuluh*”- I bear witness that none has the right to be worshiped except Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger. When death comes upon us, there is not one of us, but he will die sometime between any two given times of Salah - either between Fajr and Dhuhr, or Dhuhr and Asr, or Asr and Maghrib, etc.

The Prophet ﷺ tells us, “*The one whose last words [in this life] are “La ilaha illallah”, enters Paradise.*” This is no time to drift! These words of affirmation above are the key to paradise! Finally, as this beautiful meeting nears its end, Allah has guaranteed that in these last precious moments you have with Him, your duas made here - are answered! So first, ask for Allah’s prayers and blessings upon our beloved Prophet and his family, seek much forgiveness for yourself and for your parents, then ask The Most-Gracious, Most-Merciful the best of this

life and the best of the next. Try to learn the prayers [duas] that the Prophet ﷺ used to say, as they cover every possible need we could ever have.

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ
مَجِيدٌ ، اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا بَارَكْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ

“O Lord, bless Muhammad and his family as You blessed Ibrahim and his family. You are the Most-Praised, The Most Glorious. O Lord, bestow Your grace on Muhammad and his family as You bestowed it on Ibrahim and his family. You are the Most-Praised, the Most-Glorious”.²

As you end your prayer and turn your head to the right in Salam upon those with you, you should be feeling a deep sense of comfort, peace and serenity now. If you don't, then your deeds are to blame, as they weigh down and numb the heart.. and distance you from your Lord. Seek Allah's forgiveness for the deficiency in your Salah at least 3 times upon its completion, and stand up for Sunnah prayer - for another chance to attain that needed peace that only Allah can supply. And always remember, as your love for Allah grows and grows and as you draw nearer to Him, your heart will begin to come alive with the due humbleness before Him, your focus will improve, and finally, you will be able to taste the true beauty of Salah!

² Transliterated: “*Allahumm salli ‘ala Mubammad wa ‘ala ali Mubammad kama sallayta ala Ibraheem wa ‘ala ali Ibraheem innaka hameedun majeed. Allahumma barik ‘ala Mubammad wa ‘ala Mubammad kama barakta ‘ala Ibraheem wa ‘ala ali Ibraheem innaka hameedun majeed*”

A Meeting Announcement - The Call to Prayer

We're not quite done yet. A few words about Adhan [the call to prayer]. Do you know when Salah really starts? Would you say at "Allahu Akbar"? Actually, it starts way before then. It starts with the *Adhan!* The Prophet says, "*Each one of you is [really] in a state of prayer as he awaits [to perform] the Salah.*" Adhan signals you to prepare yourself for your upcoming meeting with Allah [Salah]. It should summon those feelings of humbleness and humility felt when reminded of Allah. Thus, you are already in Salah because you are now in that Salah mindset! Adhan also expels Satan, since upon hearing it, he flees with anger and rage!

Knowing this fact - that he's no longer there to distract you, should improve your concentration in prayer and help you attain that needed level of humbleness and humility for a beautiful satisfying prayer. Adhan is your chance to augment your Salah rewards that might have been reduced due to deficiencies you could not prevent [i.e. when you drift.] So how do we augment that reward? The Prophet tells us that the Muadhlin [the one who makes the call to prayer] gets the reward of everyone who prays with him. So, for example, if 100 men pray with him, he gets the rewards of these 100 prayers. For us to accumulate a reward similar to this Muadhlin, all we need to do... is repeat the Adhan after him! "*Say as they [the Muadhlin] say*"- was our Prophet's tip! So imagine if you were repeating the Adhan in Makkah, where millions pray, and where one Salah equals 100,000 in worth!

Imagine your rewards then! Such is Allah's grace and generosity. A small simple act, met in return, with such immense rewards! What does the Adhan start with? "*Allahu Akbar!*"- Allah is Greater! No one is more important in your life right now than He! Leave your business, leave your job, leave your family and your children, leave your sleep! Allah is Greater than all of it - It's time to report to Him now. This is why the Muadhlin repeats these words more than once.

And for what are we to rise and leave all of that? The answer lies in the words that come next: "*La ilaha ill Allah*"- There is no one worthy of worship except Allah! For you alone O Allah, I leave it all behind. Stated another way - to ignore the call and neglect a prayer is to say that what is at hand is more important than Allah - that it is more worthy of worship than He. What comes after "*La ilaha ill Allah*"? Well when we rise to pray, whose example do we follow in the way we pray? It's the Prophet's example, "*Pray as you have seen me*

pray.” Thus the Adhan calls out, “*Asbhadu anna Muhammadan Rasulullah*”- I testify that Muhammad is Allah’s messenger. So this establishes that for any given deed, two criteria must be met before a deed can be accepted: *Sincerity* to Allah [La ilaha illAllah] and *Conformance* to His Prophet’s example [Ashhadu anna Muhammadan Rasulullah].

This fundamental rule is summarized in the last verse of Surah al-Kahf:

Say, “I am only a man like you, to whom has been revealed that your god is one God. So whoever would hope for the meeting with his Lord - let him do righteous work and not associate in the worship of his Lord anyone.”³

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهٌ
وَاحِدٌ فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا
وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا

Realize how honorable our Prophet Muhammad is...No individual’s name is raised as high as his. With Muslims living in every part of the globe, calling out their Adhan as the sun shines upon their land, the entire planet glorifies Muhammad ﷺ around the clock - minute by minute, uninterrupted, 24 hours a day! So join the greatest glorification campaign ever known! Repeat after your Muadhni! So what is required of us now, after we have testified to sincerity and conformance? “*Hayya ‘ala-Salab!*” [Come/Rise to prayer!]. But instead of repeating these words now, what must we say? We are to say “*La hamla wala qumwata illa billah*”- There is no might or power [in me] but which Allah [grants me]. Only Allah can help me rise in obedience and facilitate my worship. I can’t do it without His help. So Adhan is similar to the expressions of the Fatihah where we first establish that worship is due to Him alone [*ijyaka na’budu*], then we seek His help to carry it out [*wa ijyaka nasta’een*]

The next words should inspire in us sheer joy and enthusiasm! The next words promise us all the success - “*Hayya ‘alal-Falaab!*”- [Come/Rise to success!] If this Salah guarantees my success in my work in this life and then in the next, then how can I not rise and answer its call? And again, the power I have in me comes only from Allah so to these words I say again, “*La hamla wala qumwata illa billah*.” And finally, the words that end the Adhan are similar to those that started it- “*La ilaha illAllah*”. Where “Allahu-Akbar” in the beginning calls upon you to leave the Dunya [this world] because Allah is

³ Surah al-Kahf 18:110.

Greater - Now “la ilaha illAllah” summons you to come focus upon the Akhira [the next life], the real life to work for.

The next time you hear the Adhan, hear it as the long awaited announcement that your meeting with your loved One is almost here! Listen to it like a child would as he stands in the arrivals terminal anxiously awaiting his mother’s return, and then hears the announcement, that her flight has just touched down! The Adhan also has its unique flavor, for “*whomever loves to meet/be with his Lord - his Lord also loves to meet/be with him.*”

And this longing and yearning to be with Allah should inspire you to rush to your Salah without delay, just as Prophet Musa rushed to His Lord, “*..and I hastened to You, my Lord, that You may be pleased [with me].*”⁴

The sad reality today is that Adhan has become for many, a dull play of words that fades unnoticed into the backdrop of the commotion of busy hectic lives. But as we learn of what its words really signify, we come to realize the power of Adhan in retuning our outlook on life and on our entire existence.

⁴ Surah Taha 20:84.

