

# Have you heard the call to prayer?

The Cry from the Minaret  
by the Children of Ishmael

About 1.5 billion Muslims daily hear the call to prayer from their local mosque, on the web and even on their cell phones. Five times a day the Muezzin lifts his voice and loud speakers on minarets world wide broadcast these words:

الله اكبر God is the greatest

اشهد ان لا اله الا الله I bear witness that there is no lord except God

اشهد ان محمدا رسول الله I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of God

حي على الصلاة Make haste towards prayer

حي على الفلاح Make haste towards success

الله اكبر God is greatest

لا اله الا الله There is no lord except God

**For the pre-dawn (*fajr*) prayer this phrase is added** after the fifth part above, “prayer is better than sleep”!

In this resource we will share from the Qur’an and the Hadiths on the Adhan and its historical development. There’s a huge multitude of comments from each of these sources on prayer in general, but we’ll focus our attention on the Adhan itself. And we’ll conclude with recommendations on how a follower of Jesus can answer to the Muslim call to prayer.



Want to see a Muezzin performing the Adhan? Click the following link to go to a Muslim website. Press play ► on the video player: <http://smma59.wordpress.com/2007/12/06/azan-is-said-every-moment-in-this-earth/>

The **Adhan** is the public call to the prescribed five daily times of ritual prayer and the person who calls it is called the muadhan. As transliteration from Arabic script to English script is not standardized, adhan and muadhan are sometime also written “azan,” “mu’adhan,” “muezzin,” etc. The prescribed group prayer commences about five to ten minutes after the adhan is given.

### Qur’anic admonition

The Qur’an admonishes all Muslims in Surah al-Jum’ah 62:9,

*O ye who believe! When the call is heard for the prayer of the day of congregation, haste unto remembrance of Allah and leave your trading. That is better for you if ye did but know.* (Pickthall)

### History

Answering-Islam.org shares the following:

Sahih al-Bukhari, one of the six major Hadith collections (Hadith are oral traditions recounting events in the lives of the Islamic prophet Muhammad), records Ibn ‘Umar saying:

*When the Muslims arrived at Medina, they used to assemble for the prayer, and used to guess the time for it. During those days, the practice of Adhan for the prayers had not been introduced yet. Once they discussed this problem regarding the call for prayer. Some people suggested the use of a bell like the Christians, others proposed a trumpet like the horn used by the Jews, but ‘Umar was the first to suggest that a man should call (the people) for the prayer; so Allah’s Apostle ordered Bilal to get up and pronounce the Adhan for prayers.*

([Sahih Bukhari 1.578](#). see also [Sahih Bukhari 1.577](#), [Sahih Bukhari 1.580](#))

This also indicates that the practice of Adhan is a human invention. This, however, is contradicted by the hadiths in Sunan Abu Da’ud concerning its origin: See ([Sunan Abu Da’ud 2.507](#)) and ([Sunan Abu Da’ud 2.498](#))

It is interesting to see the differences between the two versions of the origin of the adhan. The one in Sahih Bukhari says that `Umar was the one who suggested the adhan,' while Sunan Abu Da'ud says that `Umar was hiding it until Abdullah told Muhammad about it.' Noting that Sahih Bukhari has a higher degree of authenticity than Sunan Abu Da'ud (in Islamic theology), and that Abu Da'ud was born and died (202-275 A.H.) about twenty years later than al-Bukhari (194-256 A.H.), there appears to be some form of reconciliation in order to portray that the adhan was not a human invention. Interestingly, even Sunan Abu Da'ud contains no justification that the dream was a divine direction.

### **Satan's mischiefs**

Sahih Bukhari, Narrated Abu Huraira, also record Muhammad's comments on what Satan is up to while the Adhan is being performed:

*Allah's Apostle said, "When the Adhan is pronounced Satan takes to his heels and passes wind with noise during his flight in order not to hear the Adhan. When the Adhan is completed he comes back and again takes to his heels when the Iqama\* is pronounced and after its completion he returns again till he whispers into the heart of the person (to divert his attention from his prayer) and makes him remember things which he does not recall to his mind before the prayer and that causes him to forget how much he has prayed." ([Sahih Bukhari 1.582](#))*

\* The "iqama" is the second call to prayer given immediately before group prayer begins.

### **A Christian's Response to the Muslim call to prayer**

We ask believers in Isa al-Masih, "Will you answer the adhan?" That's right...will you as a follower of Jesus answer the Muslim call to prayer? Our call to prayer isn't from a minaret five times daily, but is the constant call from the heart of God. And His heart is calling the people of His House, as He said: *"My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations."*

We can help you answer God's call to pray for Muslims—the largest unreached religious group in the world! If you've not already signed up, join our weekly prayer and equipping email group, "Jumuah Friday Prayer Network." Visit the Jumuah page of our website for instructions and past issues.

Click here to go to the Jumuah page:  
<http://www.cmocanada.org/jumuah/>

