

metaphorical—meaning of “to kill oneself” is “to kill oneself with grief (*al-bakhʿ*)” (*Kashshāf*). Ibn ‘Aṭīyya (480-546/1087-1151) and al-Nasafī (d. 710/1310) both mention this interpretation; Ibn ‘Aṭīyya says some find linguistic support for understanding *fa-qtulū* as “kill the diseases of the soul such as lust, rebellion, and anger (‘awāriḍ *al-nufūs min shahwa wa-taʿannut wa-ghadab*)” in the usage of the word in the ḥadīth about killing the smell of garlic and onions by boiling them and in a couplet of Ḥassān b. Thābit (ca.60 BH-63/563-683), who uses the word (“*qatal*”) [in that sense] (*Muḥarrar*). This, however, remains a minority view as most exegetes understand the command in its literal sense to mean it was an act of punishment and expiation—a far less painful outcome when weighed in the scale of the everlasting life of the Hereafter, as Al-Ṭabarī concludes: “Your repentance by killing each other, and your obedience to your Lord will be far better for you in the sight of your Lord, because you will thereby be saved from the punishment in the Hereafter for your sins, and you will thereby merit reward from Him...*verily He is Ever-Relenting, the All-Merciful.* (*Tafsīr*, sub Q 2:54).

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See also: ANIMALS; APOSTASY; BODY; CHILDREN OF ISRĀʿĪL; READINGS OF THE QURʿĀN; COVENANT; FIRʿAWN (PHARAOH); HĀRŪN, UPON HIM PEACE; HYPOCRISY AND HYPOCRITES; IDOLS AND IDOLATRY; MŪSĀ, UPON HIM PEACE; REPENTANCE; AL-SĀMIRĪ; UNBELIEF.

MUZAFFAR IQBAL

CALL TO PRAYER

ADHĀN, IQĀMA, NIDĀʾ ILĀ L-ṢĀLĀT

This entry comprises the following sections: (i) Definitions and Usage; (ii) Origin and Context; (iii) Adhān and Iqāma; (iv) Technical Terms and Legal Questions; (v) Other Forms; (vi) Answering the Call; (vii) Merits and Commentary; (viii) Bibliography.

Definitions and Usage

The herald of and invitation to the ritual prayer that constitutes one of the most fundamental acts of worship in Islam. Three terms denote the call to prayer: *al-adhān*, *al-iqāma*, and *al-nidāʾ ilā l-ṣalāt*:

Adhān (lit. “announcement”) is a nominal form derived from the weak stem (*al-mahmūz al-awwal*) ²-*dh-n*, and from the derived second stem *adhhdhana* in the sense of “announcing the time of prayer”. The “ritual call to prayer is performed with the well-known formula prescribed by Sacred Law at prayer times” (Ibn Qudāma, *Muqniʿ* and *al-Sharḥ al-kabīr*, al-Adhān wal-iqāma). Strictly speaking, “The linguists say the fundamental meaning of *adhān* is notification (*iʿlām*) and announcement, as in *And a proclamation (adhānun) from Allah and His Messenger* (Q 9:3); it can also be called *al-adhīn* and *al-taʿdhīn*. Al-Jawharī adds that the one who calls to prayer (*muezzin*, *muʿadhdhin*) may be called *al-adhīn*, that is, one who announces the prescribed prayer times; this noun is on the *faʿīl* pattern, although in the agential sense of *muḥaʿil*” (Nawawī, *Majmūʿ*, Bāb al-adhān). The place from where *adhān* is called is the *miʿdhana* (which is synonym of minaret, *al-manāra* and *ṣawmaʿa*) (Zabidī).

Iqāma (lit. “raising”) is a verbal noun derived from *q-w-m*, a Form IV (*aqāma/yuqīmu/iqāmatan*) “hollow verb”. It is the injunction to stand up for prayer, and in reciting this formula it is as if

the muezzin has made the sitting Muslim rise to perform prayer, hence its name (Ibn Muflīh, *Mubdi*⁶, sub Bāb al-adhān).

al-nidā' ilā l-ṣalāt (lit. “the call to prayer”) is a synonym of *adhān* (Zabīdī, sub ²-dh-n), and is a derivation from the weak stem *n-d-w*, yielding the From-III derivatives *nādā/yunādī/nidā'an* or *munādātan* (Ibn Manẓūr, sub *n-d-w*), literally meaning “raising of the voice”. It may also be vocalized *nudā'* (as with *du'ā'*; see Jawharī).

The terms *adhān*, *iqāma*, and *al-nidā' ilā l-ṣalāt* do not appear in the Qur'an in reference to the call to prayer, but the former noun appears once in the meaning of “announcement” in Q 9:3 and the latter is used twice in verbal constructions. The injunction to establish prayer uses imperative forms of the Form IV verb, as in the masculine singular *perform the prayer* (*aqim l-ṣalāta*) (Q 11:114; 17:78; 20:14; 29:45; 31:17); the feminine plural (*aqimna*) (Q 33:33); and the masculine (*aqimū*) (Q 2:43, 83, 110; 4:77, 103; 6:72; 10:87; 22:78; 24:56; 30:31; 58:13; 73:20). Other phrases used for the injunction to pray include *those who perform prayer* (*aqamū l-ṣalāta*) (2:277; 7:170; 9:5, 11; 13:22; 22:41; 35:18); *so you lead them in prayer* (*fa-aqamta lahum*) (Q 4:102); *if you perform prayer* (*la-in aqamtumu-l-ṣalāta*) (Q 5:12); *to perform prayer* (*yuqimū l-ṣalāta*) (Q 14:31, 37; 98:5); and *who perform prayer* (*yuqimūna l-ṣalāta*) (Q 2:3; 5:55; 8:3; 9:71; 27:3; 31:4).

The phrase *nādaytum ilā-ṣ-ṣalāti* (*call to prayer*) appears in two verses: *And when you make the call to prayer* (*wa idha nādaytum ilā-ṣ-ṣalāti*), *they take it as ridicule and sport. That is because they are a people who do not understand* (Q 5:58) and *O you who believe, when the call to prayer is proclaimed* (*idhā nūdiya lil-ṣalāti*) *on Friday, hasten to the remembrance of Allah* (Q 62:9). The mention of the Friday prayer has special significance, as it constitutes the weekly prayer at which believers assemble in congregation at mosques, it is a day when every creation was perfected (Ibn Kathīr).

Origin and Context

There was no formal call to prayer during the Makkan period and the first months of the Madinan era as per a report from 'Abdullāh b. 'Umar (8BH-73/614-693), Allah be well-pleased with him and his father, who said, “When the Muslims came to Madina, they assembled and estimated the time of the prayer, but no one called to it (*wa laysa yunādī bihā aḥad*)” (Muslim, *Ṣalāt*, bad' al-adhān).

When the Prophet, upon him blessings and peace, prayed with prophets during the Night Journey

(*al-Isrā'*) “at the Farthest Mosque (*al-Masjid al-Aqṣā*), where all [earlier] Prophets were assembled, an angel performed the call to prayer and the *iqāma*, and Messenger of Allah led them in the prayer; some say (*qīla*) that Jibrīl, upon him peace, descended with it. Kathīr b. Murra adds, Jibrīl called [to prayer] in the heavens and 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, Allah be well-pleased with him, heard it [in Makka]” (Sarakhsī, *Mabsūt*, Bāb al-adhān; for Kathīr b. Murra, see Dhahabī, sub Kathīr b. Murra, no. 11) (see ANGELS; NIGHT JOURNEY AND ASCENSION).

Before the *adhān* was instated, Muslims had simply said, “the prayer is assembled” (*al-ṣalātu jāmi'a*) to announce the time of prayer. After the Prophet's migration to Madina and the change of the direction of ritual prayer from Jerusalem to Makka (see HIJRA; QIBLA), the Prophet, upon him blessings and peace, reflected on how to gather believers to congregate. Certain of his companions suggested the use of a trumpet (*būq*) (or a horn, as practiced by the Jewish communities), and others a bell (*nāqūs*) (Qurṭubī, sub Q 5:58; cf. Q 2:144; see also Ibn Mājāh, *Adhān wal-sunna filh*; Ibn Sa'd, *Dhikr al-adhān*). The historian and Prophetic biographer Ibn Hishām (d. 217/833) provides the following details:

While they were searching for a solution [for how to call Muslims to prayer], 'Abdullāh b. Zayd Anṣārī (d. 32/652; see al-Dhahabī, 2:375, no. 79), the brother of Balḥārith b. al-Khazraj, dreamt the call (*al-nidā'*). He went to the Messenger of Allah, upon him blessings and peace, and said: “O Messenger of Allah, this night a nocturnal visitor appeared to me in my sleep. A man passed by me wearing two green garments and carrying in his hand a bell. I said to him: 'O slave of Allah, will you sell this bell?' He asked me what I would do with it. I answered: 'We can call [people] to the prayer by means of it.' He asked: 'Shall I show you something that is better than this?'” And he told him the wording of the *adhān*. As he (i.e. 'Abdullāh b. Zayd) informed the Prophet, upon him blessings and peace, who said: “Verily, this is a true vision, if Allah wills, go and tell Bilāl these words. He should give call to prayer, because he has a more euphonious voice than you.”

(*Sira*, *Dhikr al-Adhān*; see also Tirmidhī, *Sunan*, Mā jā'a fi bad'i-l-adhān; for 'Abdullāh b. Zayd, see al-Dhahabī, 2:375, no. 79; Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, sub 'Abdullāh, who identifies him as 'Abdullāh b. Zayd b. Tha'laba b. Zayd b. al-Ḥārith b. al-Khazraj al-Anṣārī; and Ibn