

THE POWER OF ADHAN

By: Nida Choudary



A Muezzin Calling from the Top of a Minaret the Faithful to Prayer by Jean-Léon Gérôme

Around five in the morning, I woke up to the adhan hauntingly playing over the summer dawn. I stumbled out of my bed and walked into the courtyard with half-closed eyes. The cement was cold against my feet and everything was still dark and quiet in the village. I climbed up to the roof of my dad's childhood home in Pakistan and watched the lights of all the little houses slowly flicker on. One by one people stumbled out of their beds and fought over the bathroom to get ready for the morning prayer. Men put on their prayer caps and hiked up the hilly path with the lights of their flashlights bouncing across the brick walls of the houses they passed on their way to the mosque. I finally walked down, did wudu with icy cold water, put on layers of sweaters and socks, and performed Fajr prayer alongside my cousins. One by one, everybody slid back into bed and fell asleep. But I struggled to follow. Through the door, I could see the sky changing its colors from a deep blue to warm orange with the adhan still faintly echoing.

What is Adhan?

For many Muslims, this is how their day begins. The adhan for Fajr, the first prayer of the day, wakes them up to a new day. A muezzin is a person arranged by the mosque to make the adhan, the call to prayer, a few minutes before the prayer. Then a second call (iqamah) is made immediately before the prayer begins. Adhan does not have to be made by a dedicated muezzin, that is, the adhan does not have to be made by the same person every day. The adhan in Arabic is: