**6 Tips on How to Wake Up for Fajr**

*Amna Anwaar*

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Waking up for Fajr is no easy feat so here are some tips to help you out.

*Lifestyle*

How many times have you found yourself ‘snoozing’ your way through the Fajr prayers? How many times have you told yourself “five more minutes” and the next thing you know, the sun is up and the time for Fajr has passed? Quite a few times, I would imagine, because that is something most of us are all too familiar with. Waking up for Fajr is indeed a trying task for a believer. In the words of our beloved Holy Prophet (PBUH):

*“During your sleep, Satan knots three knots at the back of the head of each of you, and he breathes the following words at each knot, ‘The night is, long, so keep on sleeping,’ If that person wakes up and celebrates the praises of Allah, then one knot is undone, and when he performs ablution the second knot is undone, and when he prays, all the knots are undone, and he gets up in the morning lively and in good spirits, otherwise he gets up in low spirits and lethargic.” (Bukhari 4:491)*

By starting our day with the Fajr prayers, we incur the immense blessings of Allah (SWT) as the prayer of Fajr holds great significance in the realm of Islam. While the whole world sleeps, Allah (SWT) looks to those of His devoted servants who sacrifice their sleep in order to stand in Salah, with the sole purpose of worshipping Him and exalting Him. It is a time of utter peace and tranquility when the hustle bustle of the world comes to a standstill and nothing stands between us and our Lord. According to the Prophet (PBUH), during the last quarter of the night, Allah (SWT) comes down to the lowest of the heavens, nearer to His servants, who are standing in prayer and calling out to Him, with the sole purpose of granting what His believers ask of Him, as stated in the following hadith:

*Narrated by Abu Hurayrah, the Prophet (PBUH) said: “The Lord descends every night to the lowest heaven when one-third of the night remains and says: ‘Who will call upon Me, that I may answer Him? Who will ask of Me, that I may give him? Who will seek My forgiveness, that I may forgive him?’” (Bukhari 1145)*

However, waking up for Fajr can pose as a difficult task for most of us. Detaching ourselves from the comfort of our bed is a daily struggle. Sometimes, our bodily needs of slumber outweigh our spiritual needs, especially at the time of Fajr – we are human, after all. However, if you find yourself feeling guilty about missing Fajr, that in itself is a gift from Allah (SWT) which reminds us that He wants us to keep working towards maintaining a connection with Him which is organic in nature: a connection that needs to be nurtured and cared for. Hence, here are a few steps you can follow to help yourself get out of bed and say your Fajr prayers on time:

**1. Remind yourself: You are doing this for Allah (SWT)**

Before going to sleep, remind yourself why you should get up for Fajr: it is to please Allah (SWT). If we cannot even sacrifice a few minutes of sleep to stand in front of Him, how can we expect Him to grant us ‘sabr’ and strength in our worldly trials and the Hereafter? How can we expect Him to be there for us when we cannot even give up a few minutes of worldly slumber?

**2. Remember the rewards of praying Fajr**

Every night, recount the blessings and rewards attached to the prayer of Fajr in order to boost your motivation levels of waking up for the blessed task, as highlighted in the following Ahadith:

*“He who observes Al-Bardan (i.e., Fajr and `Asr prayers) will enter Jannah” (Bukhari 9:57).*

*"He who offers the dawn (Fajr) prayers will come under the Protection of Allah. O son of Adam! Beware, lest Allah should call you to account in any respect from (for withdrawing) His Protection"(Muslim 9:59).*

*"He who performs Salah (prayers) before the rising of the sun and before its setting, will not enter the Hell” (Muslim 9:58).*

**3. Firm Intention**

Knowing the importance of waking up for Fajr, you must be resolute in doing everything in your power to fulfill the obligation of offering Fajr and pleasing Allah (SWT). Consciously make the Fajr prayer a part of your daily schedule, just as you prioritize your otherworldly tasks during the day. If you do not consciously intend to wake up for Fajr, every other effort will be in vain. Sleep with the intention of waking up!

**4. Make sincere Dua**

Before you doze off, make sincere dua and ask for Allah’s (SWT) help in waking you up in time for Fajr. If you call upon Him, He does not let you down. You would be surprised as to how much more effective a sincere dua can be than a mere alarm clock.

**5. Disable the dreaded snooze button altogether**

Do yourself a favor and disable the dreadful feature of the snooze button from your alarm clock, be it on your phone, tablet, watch etc. If you know, subconsciously, that there will be no snooze options, you can either get up once the alarm rings or just turn off the alarm and go back to sleep. This way, you might just find yourself more aware of your alarms and be more proactive about it, as opposed to repeatedly hitting the snooze button for over an hour and lounging around in bed.

**6. Make it a point to sleep early**

This is pretty much a no-brainer: if you sleep early, it is natural that you shall wake up early too, which essentially fulfills your purpose of waking up for prayers and starting the day on a fresh note! If you sleep late, you will feel tired, lethargic and devoid of energy throughout your day. Do not try to cram in multiple activities right before your bedtime because that way, you will end up staying awake half the night. Prioritize and keep your day-end tasks to a minimum so you can sleep early with a clear head.

**Conclusion**

Think of it this way, if we have a plane to catch in the morning or if we have an interview for our dream job, we tend to toss and turn all night in anticipation of waking up in the morning. So why don’t we feel the same way about waking up for Fajr? Perhaps it is because we tend to get attached to worldly things (which are all temporary) and forget about our ultimate purpose of existence and the Hereafter (which is eternal). Hence, we must continually ask ourselves, ‘are our worldly desires more important than our duty to Allah (SWT)?’, because only then can we keep ourselves in check and prioritize Allah (SWT) above all else.

**Sadaqah Jariyah Acts**

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Scared of dying & not doing enough good deeds?

*Lifestyle*

Islam places great importance on charity. So much so, Zakat or charity is one of the five pillars of Islam. The underlying objective is to ensure that the wealth is shared equally among the rich and poor so that there is no concentration of wealth. This concept ensures that the poor do not suffer by having to experience dreadful living conditions.

Sadaqah means charity and Jariyah means continuous. Thus as a whole Sadaqah Jariyah means continuous charity which implies that the reward from certain acts are continuously granted to the person who has performed the act, even after he/she is dead. Thus, we should try to do these acts as much as possible. These acts will continue to benefit everyone for a long time to come. As long as these acts benefit someone you will continue to be rewarded by Allah (SWT).

After a person dies, there isn’t anything he/she can do. The acts you commit in this life will be written and you will be rewarded/punished accordingly. However, as reported by Abu Hurairah;

*The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, "When a man dies, his deeds come to an end except for three things: Sadaqah Jariyah (ceaseless charity); a knowledge which is beneficial, or a virtuous descendant who prays for him (for the deceased)." (Muslim 4005)*

Here are some acts which can help you gain Sadaqah Jariyah:

1. Plant a tree. Every time someone benefits from the tree by sitting in its shade or by eating its fruit, you will receive the reward for it.

2. Assist (through monetary or physical help) in building a mosque or an orphanage.

3. Pay for the education of a student or teach a student for free.

4. Help a person learn a Dua or send them a Dua/Surah to read. In today’s age, there are numerous ways to convince people to do that. You can send them apps like [Athan](http://bit.ly/2ilY0Vn)or Whatsapp them [Duas](https://www.islamicfinder.org/duas/). You can even distribute copies of the [Quran](https://www.islamicfinder.org/quran/)or Duas to people. Every time they read the Dua/Surah, the act will prove to be Sadaqah Jariyah for you.

5. Raise an orphan. You can sponsor partially by lending financial support or raise one up.

6. Install water coolers or a well. Every time a person drinks from the well or the water cooler, you will be rewarded by Allah (SWT).

7. Donate a wheelchair or some other equipment to a hospital or help in building a hospital for the poor and needy. Every time the hospital or the equipment is used, you will receive the reward.

If you come to think of it, these acts which have been outlined above do not require a lot of effort however the benefits they will reap are endless. When people, animals or basically anyone will benefit from these acts after you die, the rewards will keep on accumulating to those from the good deeds you performed when you were alive.

Most importantly, performing these acts will not only earn you continuous rewards but will also help out numerous people in the process and may even start a chain of goodness. So are you ready to start this chain?

**10 Time Management Tips for Mothers**

*Amna Anwaar*

*Monday October 23, 2017*

Mothers have a tonne of tasks on their schedule at all times so here is a quick guide to help them manage their day more effectively.

*Lifestyle*

*Narrated Abu Hurayrah (RA), a man came to Allah’s Messenger and said, “O Allah’s Apostle! Who is more entitled to be treated with the best companionship by me? The prophet said, “Your mother.” The man said. “Who is next?” The prophet said, “Your mother.” The man further said, “Who is next?” The prophet said, “Your mother.” The man asked for the fourth time, “Who is next?” The prophet said, “Your father.” (Bukhari 8:73)*

This hadith goes to show the extremely high status granted to mothers in Islam. The role of a mother possesses an unparalleled honor, which remains unmatched, hence, Islam places great emphasis on being dutiful to one’s parents, to always being kind to them and to honor and respect them unconditionally.

A mother is not only responsible for catering to a child’s physical needs i.e. feeding them, looking after them etc., but she is also responsible for building her child’s foundation of a strong character, good mannerisms, and religious beliefs. This, in no way, disregards the role of the father which is essential as well, but the main upbringing is usually in the hands of the caregiver who spends more time at home, which, the majority of times, is the mother. Hence, balancing between her child’s needs, household chores, job deadlines (for working mothers), social needs etc., a mother needs to function with a certain set of rules and regulations that can help her prioritize and organize her everyday schedule and attain maximum efficiency and productivity without missing out on any sphere of her life.

Here are a few handpicked tips for mothers to help them manage time:

**1. Make daily/weekly schedules**

Every mother has an endless list of daily tasks and responsibilities that cannot be ignored. Hence, it is important to plan effectively and organize your days instead of aimlessly spending your day without proper organization. Make To-Do lists your best friend – you can either make weekly schedules or make daily To-Do lists (basically whatever you find more convenient). Plan ahead, so you start off your week/day with a solid plan in mind, where you have your week’s/day’s goals outlined and identified – it will really help in maximizing your productivity and bringing about greater efficiency in your tasks.

**2. Begin your day at Fajr**

Make it a point to wake up for Fajr, offer your prayers and start your day from there. Sleep early if you have to. Starting your day at Fajr will give you a head start and you will find yourself having a lot of time to go about your daily business at your own pace. It will boost your day’s energy and motivations, helping you achieve all of your daily tasks in an efficient and timely manner. Do not go back to sleep after offering your Fajr prayers and make use of that opportunity. You can recite the Quran after your prayers to rejuvenate and then start your day accordingly – that is my honest, tried and tested advice.

**3. Plan your schedule around the 5 daily prayers**

No matter how busy or congested your schedule may seem, plan it around your five daily prayers – make no excuse to miss them! If you make a conscious effort to plan your tasks accordingly, Allah (SWT) will help you achieve your day’s goals in a better and more efficient manner. Set Salah reminders on your phone so you do not forget to take out five minutes from your day to attend your daily meetings with your Lord.

**4. Prioritize tasks**

Prioritization is key. Prioritize your tasks, prioritize your duties and prioritize the different spheres of your life, such as your family, your household, your work, your friends etc. Know what needs your maximum attention and know when it is required. Make it a point to put the needs of your family above all other tasks – that is a mother’s first and foremost duty.

**5. You are allowed to take power naps**

Remember: you are not superwoman. Give yourself a break and take power naps if need be. As a mother, you owe yourself some rest after the hustle bustle of the day and between running after your kids, your husband, your house chores, your job requirements and what not. Chalk out a time in your day when you can take out 15-20 minutes where you can just relax, take a nap or just have your cup of tea in peace and silence – it will help you get going through the rest of the day.

**6. Designate a part of your house as your ‘work’ space**

If you feel you cannot get any work/studies done while you are home, create your own ‘working space’ for yourself in a silent and secluded part of the house where you can get some peace and quiet (away from the kids); you will be able to concentrate much better and find yourself to be much more productive.

**7. Use productivity Apps**

In today’s day and age, the world has come up with an endless list of apps designed for every single thing we can possibly think of. In relevance to this article, you, as a mother, may find the following apps helpful in increasing your daily productivity:

● Intuition: Plays the role of a personal assistant (created by mothers, by mothers) to get things done
● EverNote: Allows you to make quick notes, scribbles, keep track of your engagements and categorizes all To-Do lists and files.
● [Athan](https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/athan-prayer-times-quran/id505858403?mt=8): Get Salah reminders, prayer timings, Qibla direction etc. to stay on top of your prayers
● Google Calendar: To keep track of all your appointments, birthdays, meetings, engagements etc.

**8. Do not waste time on irrelevant tasks**

Identify your time-wasting activities throughout the day and work towards eliminating them so you can achieve more goals. For example, be conscious of how much time you spend mindlessly scrolling on social media apps such as Facebook, Instagram, etc. and set time limits for yourself so you do not waste too much time dwelling on irrelevant tasks. Another example could be your addiction to the TV or Netflix. Cut down on mindless tasks and work towards becoming more productive.

**9. Take time out to just bond with your children**

Amidst busy schedules, we tend to forget the value of the time we spend with our children and spouse, with no other intention but to JUST be there with them, in that moment. At the end of the day, take time out to just bond with your children and build a connection with them. You can play games with them, read to them, bathe them, or take them out for a walk – it could be anything – and trust me, that in itself is most rewarding and it will go a long way.

**10. Do something for yourself once you achieve your day’s goals**

Being a mother is one of the most challenging jobs in the world! So at the end of the day, step back and think about all that you have achieved in your day (no matter how small the task) and acknowledge that you deserve to reward yourself. Be it by reading your favorite novel, getting a manicure, taking a long and relaxing hot bath, buying yourself a nice top that you liked for yourself that one time – you deserve to pamper yourself!

I hope these little tips and tricks help you become more organized and productive in your daily lives. Good luck!