



Ar-Rayyan

Ica Ummu Shohia

Illustration by Nida

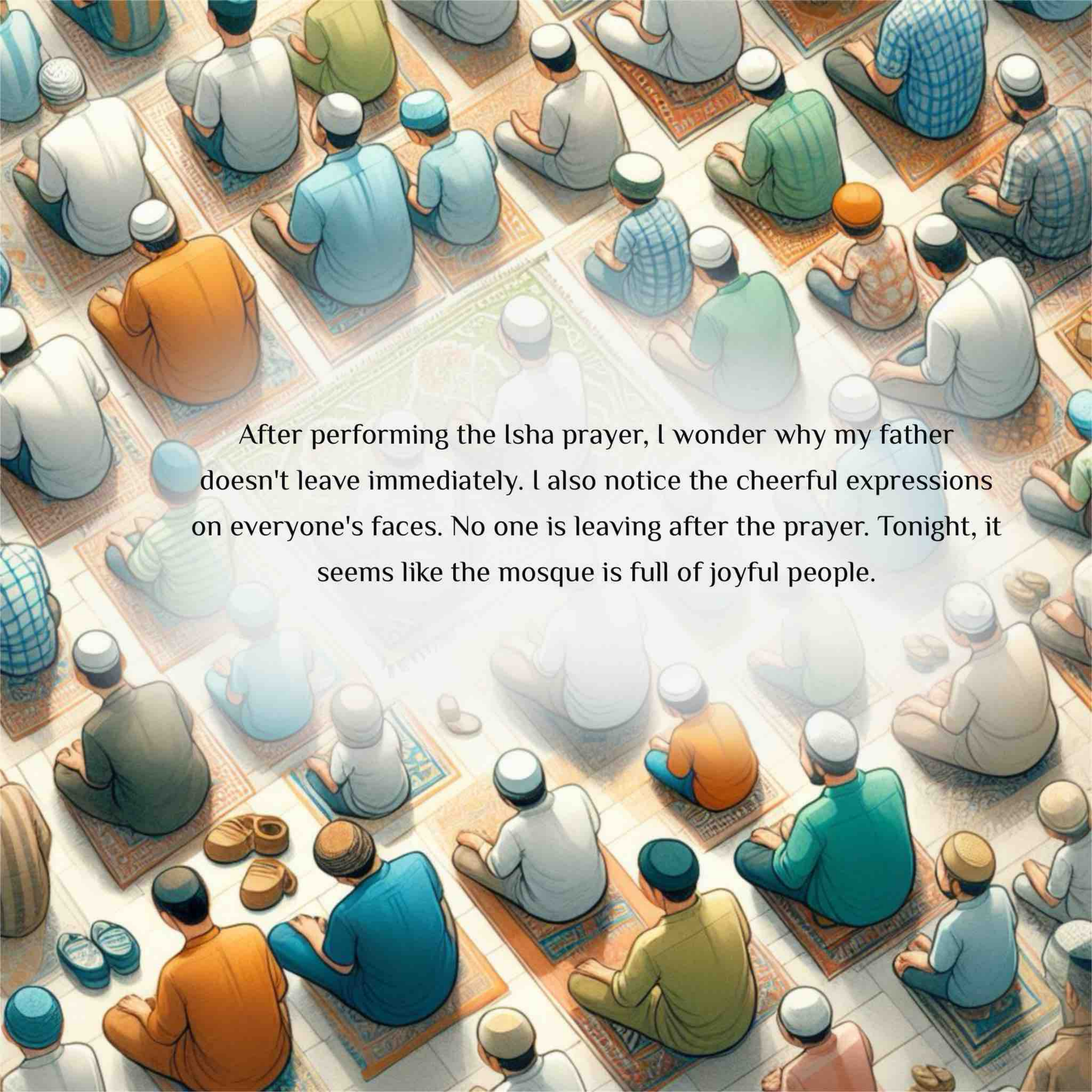
(Was Created with the assistance of dall E)

English translation by Nandyka Yogamaya



"Allahu akbar, Allahu akbar!" The adzan to prayer for Isha echoes. My heart is filled with joy. I put on my best clothes and do not forget to perform ablution, eager to go to the mosque with my father.



An illustration from a high-angle perspective showing a large group of men in a mosque. They are sitting on individual prayer mats arranged in a grid pattern on a light-colored tiled floor. The men are dressed in various styles of Islamic attire, including long-sleeved shirts, trousers, and different styles of caps (kufis). Some are wearing white, while others are in blue, green, orange, or grey. The scene is brightly lit, and the overall atmosphere is one of a communal religious gathering. The text is centered over the middle of the image.

After performing the Isha prayer, I wonder why my father doesn't leave immediately. I also notice the cheerful expressions on everyone's faces. No one is leaving after the prayer. Tonight, it seems like the mosque is full of joyful people.



Curiosity gets the better of me, and I ask my father, "Why aren't we going home, Dad? And why is everyone else staying? Why is it so crowded tonight? Even women who don't usually come to the mosque are here." My father smiles and gently replies, "My child, tonight is the first night of the holy month of Ramadan. We will go home, but first, we will perform the Tarawih prayer."



Ah, it all makes sense now. Ramadan has arrived, a month full of blessings and forgiveness, where our good deeds are multiplied. Muslims around the world will start their fasts, waking up early for the pre-dawn meal and abstaining from food and drink throughout the day for a whole month.



I remember the previous Ramadan, hunting for iftar meals at the mosque was one of my fasting goals. But my parents reminded me it shouldn't be like that. The true purpose of fasting during the month of Ramadan is to worship the One and Only Allah. As for the iftar meals that I eagerly seek, they are one of Allah's blessings for me. I can have them and be grateful for them.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا
كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

“O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was
decreed upon those before you that you may become righteous”

(Q.S. Al-Baqarah:183)



I try to correct my intention. This Ramadan, seeking iftar meals is not my goal. Instead, I want to become a righteous person, to earn rewards and the mercy of Allah. That's what I want. That is my ultimate goal. And perhaps, if I strive hard enough, I may enter jannah (paradise) through one of its gates called Ar-Rayyan, a gate reserved for those who fast.



From Sahl bin Sa'ad, The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) once said:

إِنَّ فِي الْجَنَّةِ بَابًا يُقَالُ لَهُ الرَّيَّانُ ، يَدْخُلُ مِنْهُ الصَّائِمُونَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ، لَا يَدْخُلُ مِنْهُ أَحَدٌ غَيْرُهُمْ يُقَالُ أَيْنَ الصَّائِمُونَ فَيَقُومُونَ ، لَا يَدْخُلُ مِنْهُ أَحَدٌ غَيْرُهُمْ ، فَإِذَا دَخَلُوا أُغْلِقَ ، فَلَمْ يَدْخُلْ مِنْهُ أَحَدٌ

"Indeed, in Paradise, there is a gate called Ar-Rayyan. Only those who have fasted will enter through it on the Day of Judgment. No one else will be allowed to enter.

Then the people who fast will be called out, 'Where are the fasting ones?' and they will stand up. No one else will be able to enter once they have entered." (HR.

Bukhari no. 1896 and Muslim no. 1152).

