For five days, he trekked through the desert in the early mornings. After saying goodbye to his best plan of action. He arranged his things and packed his animal for the journey. After saying goodbye to his family and the Prophet, he started his new prayer place. "Allahu Akbar," he said as he put his hands beside his ears and then crossed them over his chest. He paused for a moment, and then began: "Bismillahir-Rahmanir- Rahim." Ahamdu li'llah rabbi ilamaren... , "All praise is due to Allah, the Exalted and Most Merciful," he thought. He continued his prayer, never leaning to the right or left but with perfect attention as if he was speaking to Allah directly.

Some women and children passing by began to investigate his strange movements. As they got closer they became curious, "What is he saying?" They whispered to each other. The crowd grew and gathered around the yard. Unaware, Abu Bakr continued his prayer. The Quraysh believed that the sight of the people of Makkah. The Quraish believed that the sight of Abu Bakr in prayer was negatively influencing the women and children. If he complied with the agreement, the leaders gave their word Abu Bakr would be left alone. For a few days, Abu Bakr went along with their plan, but it did not take him long until he decided to do things his own way. He built a place of prayer in his yard and began to pray there.

In preparation for prayer, Abu Bakr made wudhu and then stood in his new prayer place. "Allahu Akbar," he said as he put his hands beside his ears and then crossed them over his chest. He paused for a moment, and then began: "Bismillahir-Rahmanir- Rahim." Ahamdu li'llah rabbi ilamaren... , "All praise is due to Allah, the Exalted and Most Merciful," he thought. He continued his prayer, never leaning to the right or left but with perfect attention as if he was speaking to Allah directly.

As soon as they found out that people were watching Abu Bakr pray, the Quraysh leaders called for Ibn Ad Dughnah to lodge their complaint. Ibn Ad Dughnah walked out of his meeting in a huff and raced to the Ka'bah for prayer. Along the way, a man saw him walking with vigour up the road. He scooped up some dirt, darted behind the wall and readied himself. As Abu Bakr was passing, the man dumped the dirt all over his head and ran.

The beauty of Abu Bakr's prayer - its sincerity, its emotion - was a threat to the disbelievers of Makkah, and we shouldn't be surprised by this. We are often told that the best da'wah is to be a good Muslim, to always be on our best behaviour, to always do the right thing. Who isn't influenced by acts of goodness? The remarkable examples of goodness that can be found among the companions is awe-inspiring. What is a better act of goodness than prayer, the reason for our creation?

And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me. (Ash-Shaharir: 56)

Prayer in Islam was given to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in the heavens from Allah ﷻ directly, during the ascension of Isra and Mi'raj - that is how special this ‘Badah is. Whenever I see pictures of Makkah at prayer time and the rings of worshippers performing prayer in unison, I can't help but get this overwhelming feeling of pride that I am a member of this awesome group, and I wonder how anyone can look at our prayer and not believe.

Even if some people are put off by our prayer, we should be strong just like Abu Bakr who after Ibn Ad Dughnah left and took back his guarantee, raced to the Ka'bah for prayer. Along the way, a man saw him walking with vigour up the road. He scooped up some dirt, darted behind the wall and readied himself. As Abu Bakr was passing, the man dumped the dirt all over his head and ran.

Abu Bakr shook the dust from his head and clothes. His patience and tolerance were being tested. He remarked "My Lord, how forbearing and clement (merciful) you are."

He continued on down the road to the Ka'bah, not allowing a little dirt to get in the way. Instead, he reflected upon Allah ﷻ and His perfect abilities, turning the situation around completely and staying strong in the face of adversity. May Allah ﷻ give us the strength to follow in the steps of these great companions, amen.

Further reading
The Biography of Abu Bakr ﷺ Al-Siddique By Dr. Ali Muhammad

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