

*The Eternal Benefits of
Sending Ṣalawāt Upon the
Prophet Muhammad ﷺ*



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Introduction

Şalawāt is a form of worship and in many ways, the greatest form of them all. It is a supplication (*du'ā*) that we perform in the right of our beloved, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

How does şalawāt translate?

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is the recipient of şalawāt, but what this word mean depends on where it actually stems from. The Qur'ān states in *Sūrah al-Aḥzāb* (33):

Indeed, Allāh and His angels ان الله وملائكته يصلون على النبي
send şalawāt upon the Prophet. يا ايها الذين امنوا صلوا عليه وسلموا
O Believers! You [too] send şalawāt upon him and excessive
salutations! (33:56). تسليما

From this verse, we understand that three beings send or are asked to send şalawāt and *salām* upon the Prophet ﷺ:

- Allāh
- His angels
- the Muslims.

Şalawāt means different things, according to who is sending it.

Şalawāt from Allāh

For Allāh, his şalawāt translates as praising the Messenger ﷺ.

For many scholars, the fact that Allāh also sends şalawāt upon the Messenger makes it the best form of worship. Better than Hajj,

Ṣawm, Ṣalāh and Zakāh. The reason is simple. Because it is the only form of worship that Allāh orders us to do and He does it himself too. The same is not the case with Zakāh, Ṣawm and Hajj. It is mentioned in *Rūḥ al-Bayān (Sirat al-Qarib, 35)*:

الصلاة علي محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم افضل العبادات لان الله تولاهما هو و ملائكته ثم امر بها المؤمنين و سائر العبادات ليس كذلك

Sending *ṣalawāt* upon Muhammad ﷺ is the best of all worships because Allāh performs it, then He orders the angels and believers to do it. None of the other worships are like that.

In fact, the *ṣalawāt* and *salām* we send is better than the *sajda* (prostration) performed to Adam by the angels on this very basis. Allāh ordered the *sajda* but He did not do it himself.

Allāh orders *ṣalawāt* and *salām* and He does it himself. It is mentioned in *Rūḥ al-Bayān (Sirat al-Qarib, 32)*:

هذا التشريف الذي شرف الله به نبينا عليه السلام اتم من تشريف ادم عليه السلام بامر الملائكة بالسجود له لانه لا يجوز ان يكون الله تعالى مع الملائكة في هذا التشريف وقد اخبر الله تعالى عن نفسه بالصلاة علي النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ثم عن الملائكة

This honour - bestowed upon our Prophet ﷺ from Allāh - is better than then honour given to Adam, peace be upon him, when the angels prostrated to him, because it is not befitting that Allāh participate with the angels in this honour [of prostrating to Adam]. But Allāh Himself informs us that He sends *ṣalawāt* upon the Prophet ﷺ, as well as the angels.

This fact - that Allāh too sends *ṣalawāt* - is sufficient for us to appreciate the importance of *ṣalawāt*. It is a totally unique form of worship.

Ṣalawāt from the Angels

For them, it is a form of *du‘ā* for the Messenger, for the raising of his ranks. They pray to Allāh to shower blessings and mercy upon him.

We have no idea how many angels there are. What we do know is they all send salutations upon the Prophet ﷺ.

Please note that importantly, the *ṣalawāt* of the angels and Allāh are permanent.

Grammatically speaking, the verse is *jumla ismiyya* (nominal sentence) not *jumla fi‘liyya* (verbal sentence), meaning their *ṣalawāt* is not restricted to a particular time and tense; rather it is ongoing and has been too.

Ṣalawāt from the Muslims

Once Allāh and His angels have sent *ṣalawāt* and *salām* upon the Prophet ﷺ, is there any purpose behind us sending it? After all, we cannot improve on it. Once they have sent it, what is the purpose of us sending it?

- a. In reality it is in our benefit to send *ṣalawāt* and *salām*. Like all forms of worship, ultimately, we ourselves benefit.¹
- b. Secondly, Allāh says that when you send one *ṣalawāt* upon the Prophet ﷺ he will give you many things in return. It’s a mean of our forgiveness, our elevation and our happiness. It carries too many benefits to even list. In *al-Qawl al-Badī‘* (pp. 16-17), Imam al-Sakhāwī has listed hundreds of specific benefits for us in reciting *ṣalawāt* and *salām*.

¹ In reality, all forms of worship are done for the sake of Allāh, but we benefit from it. *Ṣalāh* is a constant in a volatile world. It is the ultimate body workout, for mind, body and soul. *Zakāh* is given to please Allāh, but we benefit. It stops stinginess and selfishness. Hajj eradicates racism and sows unity. Qur’anic recitation increases one’s memory and concentration span.

Benefits of Ṣalawāt

1. It leads to the forgiveness of sins, which is in our benefit:

On the authority of Abū Burdah رضي الله عنه who said that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: ‘No servant from my Ummah sends blessings upon me sincerely from himself, except that Allāh sends ten blessings upon him, and writes for him ten good deeds, raises him by it ten levels, and wipes away from him by it ten sins.’

عن أبي بُردة بن نيار رضي الله عنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ما صَلَّى عليّ عبدٌ من أمّتي صلاةً صادقاً بها من قَبْلِ نَفْسِهِ إِلَّا صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ بِهَا عَشْرَ صَلَوَاتٍ وَكُتِبَ لَهُ بِهَا عَشْرَ حَسَنَاتٍ وَرَفَعَهُ بِهَا عَشْرَ دَرَجَاتٍ وَحُحَا عَنْهُ بِهَا عَشْرَ سَيِّئَاتٍ

Also, Anas ibn Mālik رضي الله عنه reports from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ:

“Whosoever sends *ṣalawāt* upon me once, Allāh sends *salawāt* upon him, he forgives ten minor sins and raises him by ten stations (*darajāts*).”

عن انس بن مالك رضي الله عنه ان النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال من صلي علي صلاة واحدة صلي الله عليه عشر صلوات ويحط عنه بها عشر سيئات ورفعه بها عشر درجات

2. It increases our weight on the *Mīzān* (Scales) on the Day of Judgement. Again, who benefits? We do. Imam al-Qurṭubī writes in his *Tafsīr*:

When the good acts of a believer are light [on the Scales], the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ will produce a card and he will throw it on the scales on the right side. So the good acts side will now weigh more. So that believing servant will say to the Prophet ﷺ: ‘May my father and mother be sacrificed for your sake! How beautiful is your face! And how wonderful is your character! Who are you?’ The Prophet ﷺ will reply: ‘I am Muhammad, your Prophet. And this [card] represents the *ṣalawāt* you used to send on me...’

إذا خفت حسنات المؤمن اخرج رسول
الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بطاقة كالانملة
فيلقيها في كفه الميزان اليميني التي فيها
حسناته فترجح الحسنات فيقول ذلك
العبد المؤمن للنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم
ياي انت وامي! ما احسن وجهك وما
احسن خلقك فمن انت؟ فيقول انا محمد
نبيك وهذه صلوات التي كنت تصلي علي
قد وفيتك احوج ما تكون اليها

3. The *ṣalawāt* we send now will transform into a *nūr* (light) for us on the *Ṣirāt* (Bridge) on the Day of *Qiyāma*. In *Dalā'il al-Khayrāt*, Abū Hurayra رضى الله عنه reports that the Messenger ﷺ said:

“For the one who sends *ṣalawāt* upon me is a *nūr* on the *Ṣirāt*. And who is on the *Ṣirāt* and is from the people of *nūr*, he will not be from the people of the fire of *Jahannam*.”

للمصلي علي نور علي الصراط ومن كان
علي الصراط من اهل النور لم يكن
من اهل النار

Read *ṣalawāt* now and it will be saviour on the Day of Judgement.

4. It leads to closeness to the Prophet ﷺ on the Day of *Qiyāma*. In a hadith recorded by Imam al-Tirmidhī and reported by Ibn Mas‘ūd ؓ the Prophet ﷺ said:

“The person closest to me on the Day of Judgement is the one who sent most ṣalawāt upon me.”
 اولي الناس بي يوم القيامة اكثرهم صلاة

This is where you will want to be on the most difficult day of all - at the feet of the Messenger ﷺ. Related to this fact is that on the Day of Judgement, we will yearn and beg for the *shafā‘ah* (intercession) the Messenger, with Allāh’s permission. Sending ṣalawāt upon him is the price we give now in order to attain that great gift on the Day of Judgement. It is mentioned in *Rūḥ al-Bayān (Sirat al-Qarib, 41)*:

“Ṣalawāt is the price for *shafā‘ah*.”
 فان الصلاة ثمن الشفاعة

5. In return for sending ṣalawāt upon him, Allāh and His angels send blessings upon us. Imam Aḥmad reports in his *Musnad*:

“Whosoever sends blessings upon the Prophet once, Allāh and His angels send blessings upon him seventy times.”
 من صلي علي النبي واحدة صلي الله عليه وملائكته سبعين صلاة

6. It leads to the acceptance of our *du‘ās*, which again is in our benefit:

‘Alī said: ‘Every *du‘ā* is veiled until one sends ṣalawāt upon Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.”
 علي: كل دعاء محجوب حتي يصلي علي محمد

عمر: ان الدعاء موقوف بين السماء و الارض لا يصعد منه شيء حتى يصلي علي نبيك محمد

‘Umar said that indeed a *du‘ā* is suspended between the skies and earth and does not ascend at all, until one sends *ṣalawāt* upon your Prophet, Muhammad ﷺ.

The reason is explained by Abū Sulaymān:

إذا سألت الله حاجة فأبدا بالصلاة علي النبي وسل حاجتك واختتم بالصلاة علي النبي صلي الله عليه وسلم فإنهما دعوتان لا تردان ولم يكن الله ليرد ما بينهما

‘When you ask Allāh for something then commence with blessings upon the Prophet ﷺ and finish too with blessings upon him. For indeed this is a supplication that is not rejected. So it is not befitting for Allāh to reject what is in between the two.’

7. There are countless other benefits, but let us share the beautiful report of Ubayy ibn Ka‘b, which basically summarises what happens to us when we in abundance send *ṣalawāt* and *salām*:

It was narrated that Ubayy ibn Ka'b (رضي الله عنه) said: When two-thirds of the night had passed, the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) would say: “O people, remember Allāh, remember Allāh. The first Trumpet is about to sound, and will soon be followed by the second; death has come with all that it entails, death has come with all that it entails, death has come with all that it entails.” Ubayy said: I said: O Messenger of Allāh, I send blessings upon you a great deal; how much of my prayer (*du‘ā*) should be for you? He said: “Whatever you wish.” I said: One quarter? He said: “Whatever you wish, and if you do more it is better for you.” I said: Half? He said: “Whatever you wish, and if you do more it is better for you.” I said: Two-thirds? He said: “Whatever you wish, and if you do more it is better for you.” I said: Should I make all my *du‘ā* for you? He said: “Then your concerns will be taken care of and your sins will be forgiven. (*al-Targhib*, 337)

وعن أبي بن كعب رضي الله عنه: كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إذا ذهب ثلث الليل، قام فقال: “يا أيها الناس اذكروا الله جاءت الراجفة تتبعها الرادفة، جاء الموت بما فيه، جاء الموت بما فيه” قلت: يا رسول الله إني أكره الصلاة عليك، فكم أجعل لك من صلاتي؟ قال: “ما شئت” قلت الربع؟ قال: “ما شئت، فإن زدت فهو خير لك” قلت: فالنصف؟ قال: “ما شئت، فإن زدت فهو خير لك” قلت: فالثلثين؟ قال: “ما شئت، فإن زدت فهو خير لك” قلت: “أجعل لك صلاتي كلها؟ قال: “إذا تكفي همك، ويغفر لك ذنبك” رواه الترمذي وقال: حديث حسن.

In short, spend your time reciting the Qur’ān and sending ṣalawāt upon the Prophet ﷺ. Allāh - the Knower of what is in your hearts - will answer your prayers without you even having to ask.

- Perhaps most importantly, when you send ṣalawāt and salām upon him, the Prophet ﷺ shows unparalleled elation. He is happy when we send ṣalawāt upon him. We tend to reserve a *sajda shukr* (Prostration of Thanks) for the really big happinesses in

our lives; the degree, the marriage and the new born child. Our Prophet ﷺ did a prolonged *sajda shukr* to Allāh - so long that the observing Companion ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf thought he had died in that state - when he learned the immense reward on offer for the one who sends *ṣalawāt* and *salām* upon him from this Ummah:

عن عبد الرحمن بن عوف رضي الله عنه قال خرج رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فاتبعته حتى دخل نخلا فسجد فأطال السجود حتى خفت أو خشيت أن يكون الله قد توفاه أو قبضه قال فجيئت انظر فرفع رأسه فقال ما لك يا عبد الرحمن؟ قال فذكرت ذلك له فقال إن جبريل قال لي إلا يسرك أن الله عز وجل يقول من صلي عليك صليت عليه و من سلم عليك سلمت عليه فسجدت لله شكراً

‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf ﷺ reports that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ once left and so I followed him until he entered a date-tree garden. The Messenger ﷺ performed a *sajda*, which he prolonged so much that I thought perhaps Allāh has taken his soul. He lifted his head [eventually]. He asked: ‘What is it, O ‘Abd al-Raḥmān!’ I mentioned what happened to which he replied: ‘Jibrīl came to me. And he said: ‘Does it not please you that Allāh Almighty says that whosoever sends *ṣalawāt* upon you once, Allāh sends *ṣalawāt* upon him. And whosoever sends *salām* upon you, Allāh send *salām* upon him.’ So I fell into prostration to thank Him.”

On another occasion, the Prophet ﷺ came to Fajr all smiling. When he was asked why, he explained that Jibrīl had come at night, informing him of the reward for the one who sends *ṣalawāt* upon him:

On the authority of Abū Ṭalḥa al-Anṣārī رضي الله عنه that the Messenger of Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم came one day and happiness was evident on his [blessed] face. We said: ‘We certainly see happiness on your face!’ He said: “Indeed, an angel came to me and said: ‘O Muhammad! Your Lord says: ‘Are you not pleased that no one sends blessings upon you except that I send ten blessings upon him, and no one sends salutations (*salām*) upon you except that I send ten salutations upon him.’”

عن أبي طلحة الأنصاري رضي الله عنه أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم جاء ذات يوم والبشر في وجهه فقلنا إنا لئرى البشر في وجهك فقال إنه أتاني الملك فقال يا محمد إن ربك يقول أما يُرضيك أنه لا يُصلى عليك أحدًا إلا صليت عليه عشرا ولا يُسلم عليك إلا سلمت عليه عشرا

You send *salām*, he صلى الله عليه وسلم shows happiness. Is that not the whole purpose of our life?

A SUMMARY OF HOW ṢALAWĀT BENEFITS US

- A means of our forgiveness
- Closeness to the Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم on the Day of Judgement
- Ease of provision
- The key to his intercession رضي الله عنه
- The means by which our prayers are answered
- A means of pleasing Allāh and His Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Sending Ṣalawāt

How to send ṣalawāt upon the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

- Understand that we - most of the time - are too weak, sinful and feeble to send salutations and blessings directly. That's why most ṣalawāts that we have been taught start with *Allāhumma*. In other words, we are not sending ṣalawāt ourselves, we are requesting Allāh to do so. We are too sinful and disrespectful to address him ﷺ directly, hence we have asked Allāh to do so.²

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَيَّ مُحَمَّدٍ
مَوْلَايَ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ دَائِمًا أَبَدًا

- There are ṣalawāt that the Messenger ﷺ specifically taught us, like the one we recite in *Ṣalāh (Durūd Ibrāhīmiyyah)*. Then there are countless more from the Companions and the early Muslims. There is not one version or method of sending ṣalawāt upon him. *Durūd Ibrāhīmiyyah* cannot be the only one because it does not contain 'salām' and the verse from *Sūrah al-Aḥzāb* asks us to send ṣalawāt and salām.

2 'Allāma Badr al-Dīn 'Aynī writes that when the people of deep, spiritual knowledge ('*irfān*) are granted presence in the heavenly realm, they address him directly with the words: *al-salām 'alayka ayyuha 'n-Nabī* (MIH, *Sublime Messenger*, 69). Yes, in *Ṣalāh* we address him directly, when we say: *as-salām 'alayka ayyuha 'n-Nabī* in *tashah'hud*. But Allāh allows that because the Muslim is saying so in the state of *Ṣalāh*, in the best possible spiritual act. When you are worshipping Allāh as if you are observing Him. And if you cannot do that, then He certainly is observing you.

Conclusion

Do you want to build a personal relationship with the Prophet ﷺ?
Then send *ṣalawāt*:

عن عَمَارِ بْنِ يَاسِرٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَا عَمَارُ بْنُ يَاسِرٍ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى أَعْطَى مَلَكًا مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ أَسْمَاعَ الْخَلَائِقِ {وَفِي لَفْظٍ: أَسْمَاءَ الْخَلَائِقِ} وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ عَلَى قَبْرِي إِلَى يَوْمٍ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ لَيْسَ أَحَدٌ مِنْ أُمَّتِي يُصَلِّي عَلَيَّ صَلَاةً إِلَّا قَالَ يَا أَحْمَدُ فُلَانُ بْنُ فُلَانٍ - بِاسْمِهِ وَاسْمِ أَبِيهِ - يُصَلِّي عَلَيْكَ كَذَا وَضَمَّنَ الرَّبَّ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ أَنَّهُ مَنْ صَلَّى عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أُمَّتِكَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ عَشْرًا وَإِنْ زَادَ زَادَ اللَّهُ

On the authority of ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir ؓ who said that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: ‘O ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir! Indeed Allāh Almighty has granted one of the angels the ability to hear the entire creation - and in another version - the ability to recall the names of the entire creation - and he is standing at my grave until the Final Hour begins. There is no one from my Ummah that sends blessings upon me except that the angel says, “O Aḥmad! So and so, son of so and so (mentioning his name and his father’s name) has sent such and such blessings upon you.’ And the Lord Almighty has guaranteed that whosoever sends one blessing upon you from your Ummah, Allāh will send ten blessings upon him. And if they increase [the amount of *ṣalawāt*], Allāh will increase.’

What this hadith shows is that when you send *ṣalawāt* upon him, you are building a personal bond with him ﷺ, by which he knows you well.

2. We send *salām* to all prophets and messengers, and the main angels. Reflect on the beautiful verses from *al-Ṣaffāt*:

سلام علي نوح في العالمين
 سلام علي ابراهيم
 سلام علي موسى وهارون
 سلام علي ال ياسين
 و سلام علي المرسلين

Upon our Messenger, we send *salām* and *ṣalawāt*.

3. In the verse from *Sūrah al-Aḥzāb*, Allāh asks us to send blessings (*ṣalawāt*) upon him ﷺ, as well as *salām*. However, it is important to note that the *salām* has been stressed more, evident from the word ‘*taslīm*’ (*maf’ūl muṭlaq*). Why is the *salām* stressed more?

It is so we remember how important the concept of *salām* is in our religion. Everything is based on this very word of *salām*:

- Our religion derives its name from the same word as *salām*.
- Our greetings to one another is *salām*.
- The first thing we will hear from the angels in *Jannah* is *salām*.
- One of the names of *Jannah* is *Dār al-Salām*.
- Our response to the ignorant and troublesome people is *salām*.
- After every prayer we recite:

اللَّهُمَّ اَنْتَ السَّلَامُ وَمِنْكَ السَّلَامُ وَالِيكَ يَرْجِعُ السَّلَامُ

- And upon our Messenger ﷺ, we constantly send *salām*.

If *salām* is such a dominant concept in our religion, do you not think our how life should be governed by the philosophy of *salām*? Of peace? Of love and compassion? Of bringing people together?

The more you send *ṣalawāt* and *salām* upon the Messenger, the more your mind will open up to this very concept.