

# The Merits of Sending Prayers Upon the Messenger ﷺ

Abridged translation from *al-Taqarrub ilā Allāh* and *al-Ṣalāh ‘alā al-nabī: aḥkāmuhā, faḍā’iluhā, wa fawā’iduhā* by the late scholar and *muḥaddith* ‘Abd Allāh Sirāj al-Dīn al-Ḥusaynī



## Increasing One's Nearness to God Through Sending Prayers Upon His Messenger ﷺ

From amongst the superogatory acts which increase one's proximity to God is to abundantly send prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ. God says in the Qur'an:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا ﴿٥٦﴾

God and His Angels send prayers upon the Prophet. O you who believe, invoke prayers upon him and greet him with a salutation of peace (Qur'an, 33: 56).

In this noble verse, God commands His believing servants to send prayers upon his venerable Prophet as a tribute to his status and a privilege to them (in the same way He has privileged the Angels with sending prayers upon His Messenger ﷺ) as well as to grant humans a means of increasing their rank [with God] and a way to erase wrong actions. In sending prayers upon the Prophet one is also bestowed with the opportunity to obtain the prayers and blessings of

God upon him as well as the prayers of the Prophet ﷺ and the Angels. In addition, humans are endowed with the prospect of becoming the most worthy of Messenger of God ﷺ, his intercession (*shafā'a*), his company, his favor (*ikrāmihi*), and his compassion on the Day of Judgment, hence acquiring the best of this world and the next. Each one of the above mentioned benefits is supported by Prophetic traditions which are discussed in greater detail below.

Muslim and the companions of the *Sunan* report on the authority of Abū Hurayra رضي الله عنه that the Messenger of God ﷺ said, “Whoever sends one prayer upon me, God sends upon him ten.”

It has also been narrated by Ahmad and others on the authority of Abū Talḥa al-Anṣārī رضي الله عنه that “The Messenger of God ﷺ came one day with a smile on his noble face. So we said, ‘O Messenger of God we see a smile on your face!’ He ﷺ said, ‘An Angel approached me and told me, ‘O Muḥammad, will it please you [to know] that God says that nobody sends prayers upon you from your community except that I send ten prayers upon him. Neither does anybody from your community send blessings upon you except that I send ten blessing upon him?’ So the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Indeed,’ meaning ‘it please me.’”

Thus each prayer and blessing sent upon him ﷺ is reciprocated with ten [prayers and blessings] from God. The prayers of God upon a person is a momentous affair (*sha'nuhu kabīr*) with tremendous benefit. As God has demonstrated this to his believing servants in the following verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٤١﴾ وَسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا ﴿٤٢﴾  
هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَلِّي عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَلَائِكَتُهُ لِيُخْرِجَكُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ  
وَكَانَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَحِيمًا ﴿٤٣﴾

O you who believe, remember God with much remembrance. And exalt him morning and afternoon. It is He who sends prayers upon you, and His angels

[ask Him to do so] that He may bring you out from darknesses into the light.  
And ever is He, to the believers, Merciful (Qur'an, 33: 41-43).

Thus as indicated in the verse, the prayers of God upon a servant brings him out of darkness and into light. What is intended here is not the darkness of disbelief because the verse is addressing the believers. Rather, the darkness that they are coming out of through sending prayers upon the Messenger ﷺ is the darkness of the hearts that evolves through the accumulation of sins, hardships and tribulations, the darkness of the intellect as a result of doubt, suspicion, and the whispers of Satan, as well as the darkness of the heart caused by its constriction and sullyng. Thus through sending prayers upon him, God takes one out of darkness and brings him into the light of worship, obedience, and varieties of spiritual manifestations (*anwa' al-tajalliyāt*).

If the darkness of the soul is withdrawn, and the light of the Sacred is manifested, one attains closeness to God and enters the sanctuary of intimacy and love for Him as mentioned in the hadith, "My servant does not cease to attain nearness to me until I love him."



## 20 Merits of Sending Prayers Upon the Messenger of God ﷺ

### 1) Sending Prayers Upon the Prophet ﷺ is a Means of Becoming Close to Him on the Day of Judgment

Tirmidhī and Ibn Hibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* relate on the authority of Ibn Mas'ūd that the Messenger of God ﷺ said, "The most worthy people of me on the Day of Judgment will be those who sent the most prayers upon me."

Al-Bayhaqī relates in a sound chain of transmission on the authority of Abū Umāma al-Bāhili رضي الله عنه saying, “I heard the Messenger of God ﷺ say: ‘Make abundant your sending of prayers upon me on Fridays because the prayers of my community are presented to me every Friday and whoever is more abundant in their prayers upon me, will be the closest to me in his rank.’”

Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar relates that Sufyān al-Thawrī said, “If the narrators of hadith obtain no benefit other than the prayers they send upon the Prophet ﷺ, this would suffice them. For, they send prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ throughout [their work with] the books [of hadith].”

## 2) Sending Prayers Upon the Messenger of God ﷺ is a Means to Have a Claim on His Exclusive Intercession (*shafā'a khaṣṣā*) on the Day of Judgment

Al-Ṭabarānī relates on the authority of Ruwayfi' b. Thābit al-Anṣārī رضي الله عنه saying, “The Messenger of God ﷺ said, ‘Who supplicates: ‘O God send prayers upon Muḥammad and grant him a rank near You, my intercession for him will become obligatory upon me on the Day of Judgment.’”

## 3) Sending Prayers Upon the Prophet ﷺ is a Means of the Purification of the Heart of their Sender

Ibn Abī Shayba, Abū al-Shaykh, and others relate on the authority of Abū Hurayra رضي الله عنه saying, “The Messenger of God ﷺ said: “Send prayers upon me, for prayers upon me are a purification for you.”

Ibn Abī 'Āṣim has related on the authority of Anas رضي الله عنه saying, “The Messenger of God ﷺ said: ‘Send prayers upon me because your prayers are a [source of] expiation (*kaffāra*) for you. Whoever sends a prayer upon me [once] God sends a prayer upon him tenfold.”

The first hadith indicates that sending prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ is a means of purification (*zakāt*) for the one sending it. It is known that the meaning of the word “*zakāt*” is increase, blessing, and purity. This is why the word *zakāt* is used for the obligatory pillar of charity since its practice increases and purifies one’s wealth. The second hadith regarding expiation (*kaffara*) indicates that sending prayers on the Prophet ﷺ erases wrong actions which will inevitably have an effect on the soul and one’s records of deeds (*ṣaḥīfa*).



Thus these two hadiths demonstrate that in sending prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ one purifies his heart from the effects of sins through their atonement. As a result, faith grows and the spirit becomes refined. It is based on this principle that some of the people of God ﷺ have concluded that if one is unable to find an accomplished spiritual guide, then one should take up sending prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ because it serves as a guide and purifier of the soul. This is mentioned specifically by the gnostic, Aḥmad al-Zarrūq in his maxims under rule one hundred and fourteen.

#### 4) Sending Prayers Upon the Prophet ﷺ has the Rank of Charity and Possesses the Reward Associated With It

Ibn Ḥibbān has related in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* on the authority of Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Any Muslim who does not have the means to give charity should pray: ‘O God, send prayers upon Muḥammad, Your servant and Your Messenger. And send prayers upon the Believers and Muslims (*Allāhumma ṣallī ‘alā Muḥammadin ‘abduka wa rasūluka wa ṣallī ‘alā al-mu’minīna wa al-mu’mināt wa al-muslimīna wa al-muslimāt*),’ for it is a charity.”

## 5) Sending Prayers Upon the Prophet ﷺ Extinguishes Concerns in this World and in the Next

It has been reported on the authority of Ubayy b. Ka'b ؓ saying, "The Messenger of God ﷺ got up after a quarter of the night had passed and said: 'O people, remember God! Remember God! The trembling of the earth and blowing of the trumpet have arrived (*jā'at al-rājifa wa tatba'uhā al-rādifa* in reference to Qur'an, 79:6-7). Death and all its consequences have neared.'" Ubayy b. Ka'b said, "I said, 'O Messenger of God I send prayers upon you abundantly. What portion of my prayers should be devoted to sending prayers upon you?' He replied, 'Whatever you wish.' I said, 'One quarter?' He said, 'As you wish but if you increase this it would be better for you.' I said, 'Half?' He said, 'As you wish and if you increase this it will be better for you.' I said, 'Two-thirds?' He said, 'As you wish and if you increase this it will be better for you.' I said, 'Should I make all of it for your sake?' The Messenger of God ﷺ said, 'In this case your concerns will be relieved and your sins will be forgiven.'" Al-Hāfiẓ al-Mundhirī has said, "It has been transmitted by Aḥmad, al-Tirmidhī, and al-Ḥākim who ranked [the hadith] as sound *ṣaḥīḥ*. Al-Tirmidhī has said: It is a hadith which is *ḥasan-ṣaḥīḥ*."

صَلَّى عَلَى  
عَلَيْهِ  
وَسَلَّمَ

Al-Mundhirī relates in a transmission found in Aḥmad, "A man said, 'O Messenger of God, what would you say if I made the entirety of prayers upon you?' He said, "Then God will relieve you of what troubles you in this life and in the next.'" Its chain of transmission is good (*jayyid*).

Al-Mundhirī has said regarding the interpretation of Ubayy's b. Ka'b's words; "I send prayers upon you abundantly. What portion of my prayers should be upon you?" the meaning here [by prayers or *ṣalāh*] is supplication (*du'ā*). So [what he is asking is], 'how much of my supplications (*du'ā*) should entail sending prayers upon you?"



From the numerous hadiths in which the Prophet ﷺ was asked about the amount of prayers that should be sent upon him, we can discern the great importance the Companions (*ṣaḥāba*) attributed to sending prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ and the magnitude of its significance.

Al-Sakhāwī says that this hadith supports the position of those who supplicate after their [Qur’anic] recitation saying, “O God, make the reward (*thawāb*) of this to go to our master the Messenger of God ﷺ,” since they are in this way making all of their supplications for the Messenger of God ﷺ and are in turn relieved of their concerns in this life and the next.

#### 6) Sending Prayers Upon the Prophet ﷺ is an Important Means of Protection from Hypocrisy and from Hellfire

Al-Tabarānī has related on the authority of Anas رضي الله عنه saying, “The Messenger of God ﷺ said, ‘Who sends upon me one prayer, God will reciprocate it by sending ten prayers upon him. Who sends upon me ten prayers, God will send one hundred prayers upon him. Who sends prayers upon me one hundred times, God will bestow upon him relief from hypocrisy and Hellfire, and grant him the companionship of the martyrs on the Day of Judgment.



This is indeed a great affair! Relief from hypocrisy reflects completeness in faith. Relief from Hellfire reflects an individual’s refraining from disobedience. Companionship of the martyrs in Paradise reflects the attainment of God’s immense satisfaction (*riḍwān al-akbar*) with them.

**7) Sending Prayers Upon the Prophet ﷺ is a Means of Fulfilling One's Needs in this Life and the Next**

Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Manda relates on the authority of Jābir رضي الله عنه saying, “The Messenger of God ﷺ said, ‘Who sends blessings upon me one hundred times each day, God will fulfill one hundred of his needs; seventy in the next life and thirty in his worldly life.’”

It has been related by *al-Ḥāfiẓ* Aḥmad b. Mūsā in his chain of transmission going back to Jābir رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Who sends prayers upon me one hundred times after praying the dawn prayer without speaking [in between], God will fulfill one hundred of his needs; thirty of which will be fulfilled earlier—meaning in this life—and seventy of which will be fulfilled later. After the evening [prayer] is also of its likeness.”

**8) Sending Prayers Upon the Prophet ﷺ Opens Doors of Goodness and Repels Poverty**

Al-Bayhaqī has related on the authority of Abū Hurayra رضي الله عنه, “Who recites the Qur’an, thanks the Lord, and sends prayers upon the Prophet ﷺ and repents (*astaghfara rabbahu*) to his Lord has sought goodness from its original source.”

**9) Prayers Upon the Prophet ﷺ are a Light for their Sender when Crossing the *Ṣirāt* on the Day of Judgment**

Abū Sa’īd has related in his book (*Sharaf al-muṣṭafa ṣalla Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*) that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Prayers upon me are a light on the *ṣirāt* (bridge in the hereafter) on the Day of Judgment.”

Al-Daylamī has reported in his chain of transmission on the authority of Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Ornament your gatherings with prayers upon me. For, prayers upon me are a light for you on the Day of Judgment.”



#### 10) Prayers Upon the Prophet ﷺ are a Safety for their Sender from the Perils of the Day of Judgment

It has been related on the authority of Anas رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said, “O people, the most secure amongst you on the Day of Judgment is the one who used to send the most prayers upon me in the worldly realm. It suffices God and His angels given that God the Exalted says [in the Qur’an]: ‘God and His Angels send prayers upon the Prophet. O you who believe, invoke prayers upon him and greet him with a salutation of peace (Qur’an, 33: 56).’ So order the believers to do the same in order that they may be rewarded.”

#### 11) Sending Prayers Upon the Prophet is an Important Means of Attaining Forgiveness for Past Wrong Actions and Sins

The hadith above mentioned that the sender of prayers upon the Prophet will have ten sins erased. In another transmission, “Ten sins will be removed and he will be raised by ten degrees.

#### 12) Prayers Upon the Prophet ﷺ are a Cause of the Descension of God’s Mercy

Al-Bazzār has related on the authority of Anas رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said, “God has a troop of angels that seek gatherings of His remembrance, when they find them they surround them. Then they raise their hands to the Heavens and pray to the Exalted Lord of greatness saying: ‘O God, we have

come upon servants from amongst your servants who venerate Your excellence, recite Your Book, send prayers upon Your Prophet, and ask for [the provisions] of their worldly life and the afterlife.’ Hence God replies, ‘Cover them with My mercy. For, they are the people of gatherings who will



not distress those who join them.”

### **13) Prayers Upon Him are a Significant Means of Easing the Crossing of the *Ṣirāṭ* (Bridge in the Hereafter)**

Al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū Mūsā al-Madīnī and others have related on the authority of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Samura رضي الله عنه saying that the Messenger of God ﷺ came out of the mosque one day and said, “...I saw a man from my community who was dragging himself on the *ṣirāṭ* one time and crawling another time, then the prayers he sent upon me took him by the hand and made him firm on the *ṣirāṭ* until he crossed it.”

### **14) Sending Prayers Upon Him are a Means of Having the Name of the Sender Presented to the Prophet ﷺ and its Being Mentioned in His Noble Presence**

Al-Bazzār has related on the authority of ‘Ammār b. Yāsir رضي الله عنه saying, the Messenger of God ﷺ said, “God the Exalted has assigned an angel by my grave who has been given the names of all creation. Nobody sends prayers upon me until the Day of Judgment except that he informs me with his name and the name of his father that: ‘So and so the son [or daughter] of so and so has sent prayers upon you.’”

Al-Ṭabarānī has related in *al-Kabīr* that the Messenger of God ﷺ said, “God has an angel to whom he gave the ability to hear the servants [on the earth]. There is not a person who sends prayers upon me except that I am informed of it. And I have asked of my Lord that nobody sends a prayer upon me except that God reciprocates him with ten of its likeness.”

It is of sufficient honor, nobility, and esteem for a Muslim that his name be mentioned in the noble presence of the Messenger of God may peace and blessings be upon him!

**15) Sending Prayers Upon the Prophet ﷺ is an Essential Means of Instilling Love in the Servant's Heart for the Messenger of God ﷺ and It is in Turn a Means of Evoking the Prophet's ﷺ Love for their Sender**

Al-Tirmidhī relates on the authority of Ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه saying, "The Messenger of God ﷺ said, 'The most worthy people of me on the Day of Judgment are those who used to send the most prayers upon me.'" Ibn Ḥibbān has also transmitted this in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

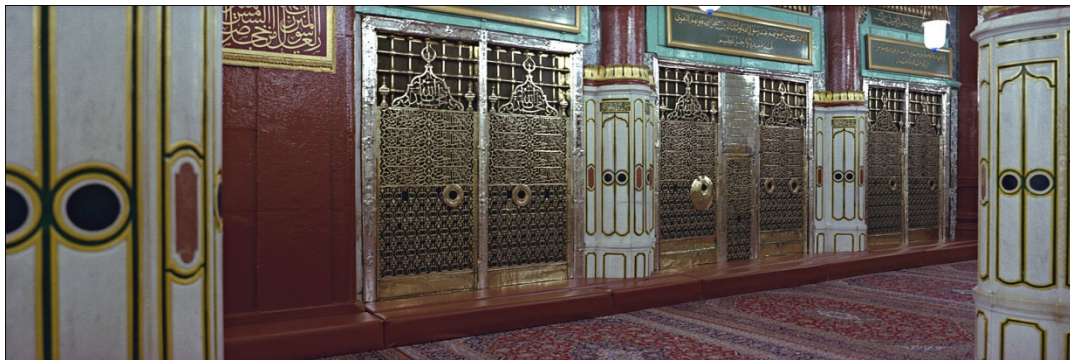
Thus the most worthy people of his ﷺ love, nearness, and his exclusive intercession are those who used to send the most prayers upon him. It is said in poetry:

ومن مذهبي حب النبي وآله

From my way is the love of the Prophet and his family

وللناس فيما يعشقون مذاهب

People are of the doctrine of that which they are passionate about



**16) Prayers Upon the Prophet are a Means of Recalling what One has Forgotten**

Al-Daylamī relates on the authority of 'Uthmān on the authority of Abū Ḥarb al-Bāhilī saying, "Who wishes to speak of something and forgets should send

prayers upon me for these prayers will be a continuation of his words and he may perhaps remember it.”

**17) Prayers Upon the Prophet ﷺ are a Means for the Sender to be Admitted Under the Shade of the Throne on the Day of Judgment**

Al-Daylamī relates on the authority of Anas رضي الله عنه, “Three will be under the shade of the Throne on the Day of Judgment: Who relieves a troubled person from my community, who renews [the practice of] my example (*sunna*), and who is abundant in their prayers upon me.”

**18) The Blessings of Sending Prayers Upon the Prophet ﷺ Covers the Entirety of the Muslims and Believers with Their Light and Goodness**

Ibn Hibbān has related in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* on the authority of Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī رضي الله عنه that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Anybody from amongst the Muslims who does not possess the means to spend in charity should say: ‘O God, send prayers upon Muḥammad Your servant and Your messenger. And [send prayers] upon the believers, male and female.’ For, this is a charity.”

**19) Sending Prayers Upon the Prophet is an Important Means to Having Prayers Answered**

Al-Ḥāfiẓ ‘Abd al-Razzāq relates in his chain of transmission on the authority of Ibn Mas‘ūd saying, “If one you wishes to ask his Lord the Exalted he should begin with thanking Him and praising Him according to what praise is befitting of Him (*al-thanā’ ‘alayhi bimā huwa ahluhu*). Then he should send prayers upon the Prophet. Then he should ask, for it is more likely to be accepted and fulfilled.

## 20) Prayers Upon the Prophet is an Outstanding Way of Attaining Reward that is Immense and Multiplied

On the authority of the commander of the believers, ‘Alī عليه السلام in a hadith saying, “Who sends prayers upon me will be rewarded a hefty amount (*qirāt*) and this amount is like the mountain of Uḥud.”

Al-Munawī explains in his commentary on this hadith that the meaning of the word “*qirāt*” is a proportion of reward. The immensity of this reward is described through the allusion made to the mountain of Uḥud which is massive in its size and substantial in its dearness to the hearts of the believers.