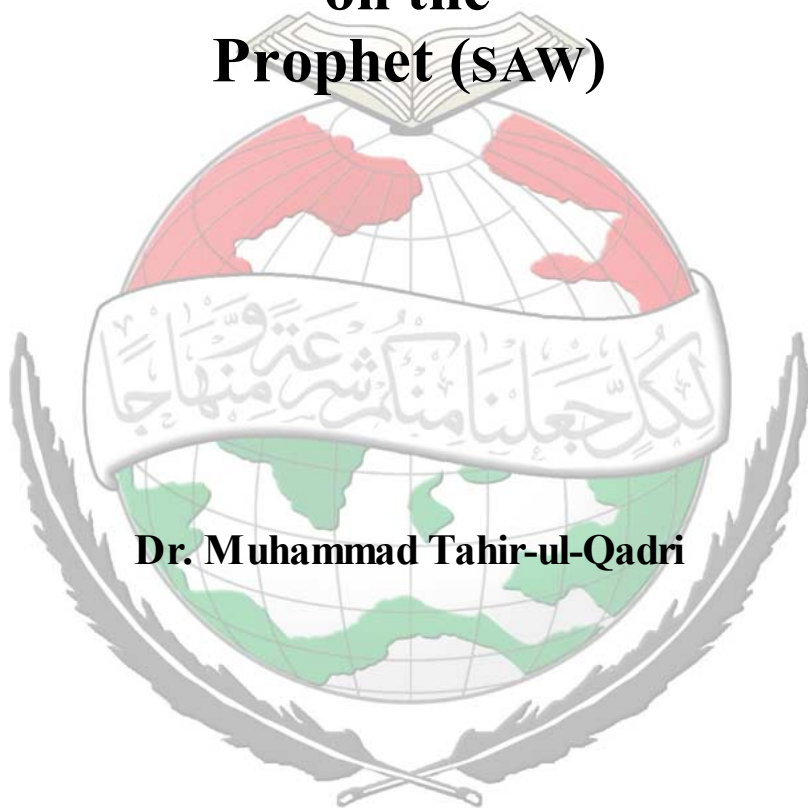


Greetings and Salutations on the Prophet (SAW)



Dr. Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri

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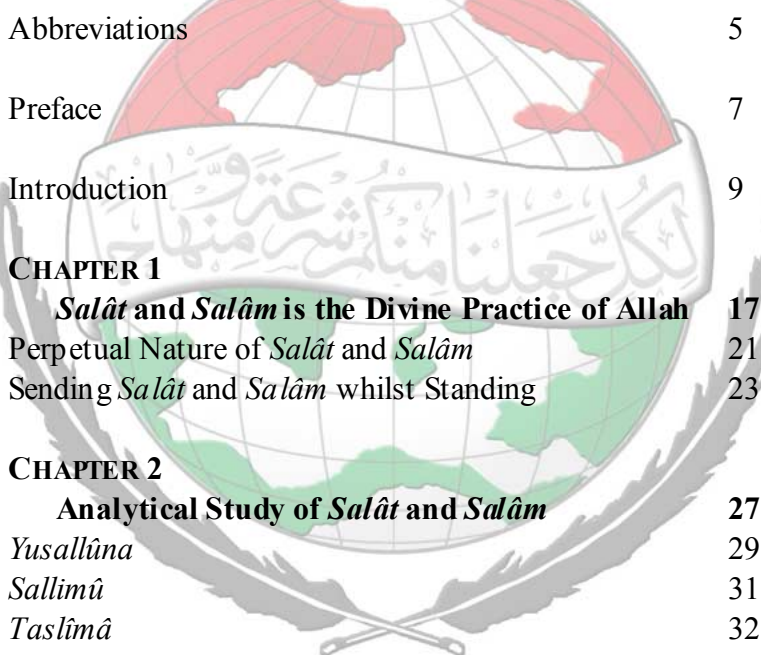
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Abbreviations

AS: an abbreviated form of *'alayh-is-salâm* – blessings on him; often spoken after the name of Allah's messengers and angels. When the names of two related persons come together, *'alayhim-as-salâm* is used and when the names of more than two prophets or angels come together, *'alayhim-us-salâm* is used.

RTA: abbreviation of *radiyallâhu ta'âlâ 'anhu* – Allâh be pleased with him; often spoken after the name of a Companion. When the names of two related companions come together *radiyallâhu ta'âlâ 'anhumâ* – Allâh be pleased with the two of them – is used; and when the names of more than two companions come together, *radiyallâhu ta'âlâ 'anhum ajma'in* – Allâh be pleased with all of them – is used.

SAW: an abbreviated form of *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* – may Allâh bless him and greet him – spoken after the name of Allah's last Messenger Muhammad (SAW).

SWT: an abbreviated form of *subhânahû wa ta'âlâ* – glory be upon Him and He is Exalted – spoken after the word Allah.

Preface

This short book has been compiled to give to English reading students of Islam, non-Muslims as well as Muslims an introduction to the basic concepts and philosophies regarding the sending of salutations and blessings on to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). A number of recent books have been published on this subject but they have failed to give the reader a correct and accurate portrayal according to mainstream Islam. Moreover they have sought to create controversy around it where none had existed before in Islamic history and tradition.

Greetings and Salutations on the Prophet (SAW) is one in a series of new titles recently published in order to present the fundamental tenets of the Islamic faith according to traditional and orthodox Islamic teachings. In this compilation use has been made not only of contemporary academic texts but also of original Arabic sources to ensure full authenticity. In doing so I would like to thank my team of researchers; Prof. M. Rafique, M. Farooq Rana, Yunus A. Buttor, A. Naveed, A. Jabbar Qamar and most of all Mrs. Ghazala Hassan Qadri for their resourceful endeavours in checking the references thoroughly and assisting in the publication of this book, and the efforts of A. Khaliq Baltistani for composing the book are also appreciable.

Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri
Summer, 2000.

Introduction

As we enter into the new millennium Muslims are facing many challenges, externally from outside forces as well as from within the Muslim world. In the last few decades there has been an enormous resurgence of Islamic thinking and an attempt to revive traditional orthodox teachings. Having witnessed the decay of 'western society'¹, its preoccupation with materialism and all over decadence, Muslims generally but in particular the new rising generation of Muslim youth have sought to discover their identities and origins.

In much of Europe and North America the Muslim community consists of settlers from the subcontinent² and Africa. They arrived during the post-Second World War economic expansion where the victorious allied forces of Europe and America sought to rebuild their economies. The migrants arrived from mainly British and French colonies, accommodated by their hosts who took advantage of the cheap labour being readily available. This was desperately needed to keep adrift with the demands of industrial development. Most of the migrants eventually hoped to return to their homelands after becoming financially secure. Instead though a period of chain-migration took place

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1. A term loosely used to describe the dominant culture prevalent in Europe, the Americas and elsewhere in the Western Hemisphere.
 2. Large numbers have arrived from South Asia, including India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and surrounding countries.

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where first close relatives and friends were sponsored to come over after which wives and children arrived and settled permanently.

When one faces a new more advance culture¹, comes in contact with technology only ever seen in dreams, observes the indigenous nation as *appearing* more educated, knowledgeable and dominant in their views, it becomes very difficult for any minority to retain its own identity and code of life. The migrant settlers huddled in their own small communities holding on to their culture and civilizations. They became inward looking and tried to recreate their original homelands in the face of changing life patterns. Although most of the settlers managed to retain their independent national cultures they failed in a large extent to pass much on to their first, and second generation inheritors. In the midst of these changes, Islamic values and ideas, the Islamic culture and all that accompanies any civilization became blurred and almost unrecognizable. Much of Islam had been already distorted in the eyes of Muslims by hundreds of years of colonial rule. Now sitting in the heart of their former colonial rulers it became even more difficult to retain an Islamic lifestyle.

Although mosques were built and Qur'anic classes were regularly attended by most of the first generation Muslims, formal Islamic education was not given. Any that was offered was done in an alien environment and style more suited to the traditional *madrasah* of the Indo-Pak subcontinent rather than the education techniques prevalent in the schools of the West. The new generation spoke or preferred English, French or German rather than Urdu,

1. A culture having being able to develop largely due to economic prosperity.

Punjabi, Bengali or Somali. They were more at ease with the pop culture of the 80s and 90s rather than learning about the birth of a distant Prophet and all that he preached. Islamic beliefs and teachings were inter mingled with the cultural lifestyles of the migrant settlers sometimes almost undistinguishable.

Parts of the Islamic teachings were distorted and exaggerated, especially so by parents who were worried about their children 'straying' from the 'right' path. Moreover the indigenous population did not understand this strange Eastern religion with all its apparent constraints and regulations. So the up and coming Muslim youth have found it very difficult to marry the demands of their cultural heritage, Islamic beliefs and the demands of a society perceived by most as modern and progressive but at odds with their faith.

Britain holds a large and expanding Muslim community who are key players in the cultural dynamics highlighted above. Perhaps they would have been content to live quietly and evolve passively along with the host community. However events in the 80s projected the Muslim community firmly into the limelight that not only surprised the British public at large but Muslims themselves. In the mid-80s Ray Honeford, the Head teacher of a Bradford inner city school with a majority of Muslim pupils, offended the Muslim community with remarks made about the education system and Islam. He argued against the policy of multi-culturalism, and concessions made by the education authority for special needs of the Muslims. Honeford made derogatory remarks about Islam and its followers. This was followed by huge demonstrations asking for his removal and became known as the 'Honeford Affair'. This was followed in 1989 by the

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now infamous ‘Rushdie Affair’. Muslims were deeply hurt not just by the book itself but by press coverage in which the media portrayed Muslims as mad book burning fanatics. During these two instances the Muslim community became united in their demands to be heard and their grievance to be addressed. Moreover they realized that having been dormant for so long, adopted much of the host culture at the expense of their own beliefs they were still considered as outsiders, unwelcome immigrants.

Many Muslim youngsters began to question their irreligious lives and sought for a new Islamic identity – an identity that surpassed nationality, not Pakistani or Indian, Arab nor British but Islamic in its totality. Disillusioned with many parents who failed to impart pure Islamic teachings, the new generation Muslims began to discover Islam again for themselves. However this is where hidden dangers have arisen, despite sincere attempts to the contrary. In an attempt to return to orthodox Islam, some Muslims have become over zealous. Many blamed the culture of their forefathers, particularly the Pakistani culture in having contaminated Islamic teachings. Where was the ‘pure’ Islam revealed 1400 years ago? What was this Islamic concoction preached to us by our parents? What does it really mean to be an active practising Muslim?

Impatient for revival many Muslim youth have adopted the outward obligations of Islam, praying five times a day, adhering to strict Islamic dress codes and implementing all the fundamental beliefs in their daily lives¹. They are able to quote readily sections of Qur’an and *hadīth*² and implore others to come to the path of Islam. Unfortunately in the

-
1. Much of which was lacking in the lives of their parents and surrounding communities.
 2. The sayings and traditions of Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

midst of reformation, there is often a lack of true understanding of Islam – its heritage and true moral values. These are essential if a balanced way of life is to be lived.

One such misunderstanding is the position of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) in Islam. Some of the new generation Muslim youth have in essence reduced him to a Prophet alone, who came with a message sent by God. They believe his value lies in the message he brought rather than in the personality itself. Unfortunately this is a misguided and erroneous concept. Perhaps this view is understandable since the original Muslim settlers seemed only to be attached with the personality of the Prophet rather than what he taught. They discussed his life, his personality and wonders rather than implement in their lives the Qur'anic injunctions that were Divinely revealed to him. They claimed to love him dearly and celebrated his birth but failed to act upon his *sunnah*¹ and live the way he lived.

Witnessing a dichotomy between belief and actions, sections of the Muslim youth have sought to readdress the balance. Unfortunately they have gone to the other extreme and become unbending. They argue that Islam is based not on love but on obedience alone. They are convinced that the purity of *tawhîd*² can only be achieved by eliminating from the faith, love, respect and all emotional attachments with the Holy Prophet (SAW). Extreme love and reverence for the Holy Prophet (SAW) for them has become irrelevant in Islam.

Unfortunately this is an erroneous and misguided view. By maintaining the outward practices and obligations of Islam, but departing from the idea of the fundamental

1. The practical actions, norms and customs of the Prophet (SAW).
2. Islamic Monotheism.

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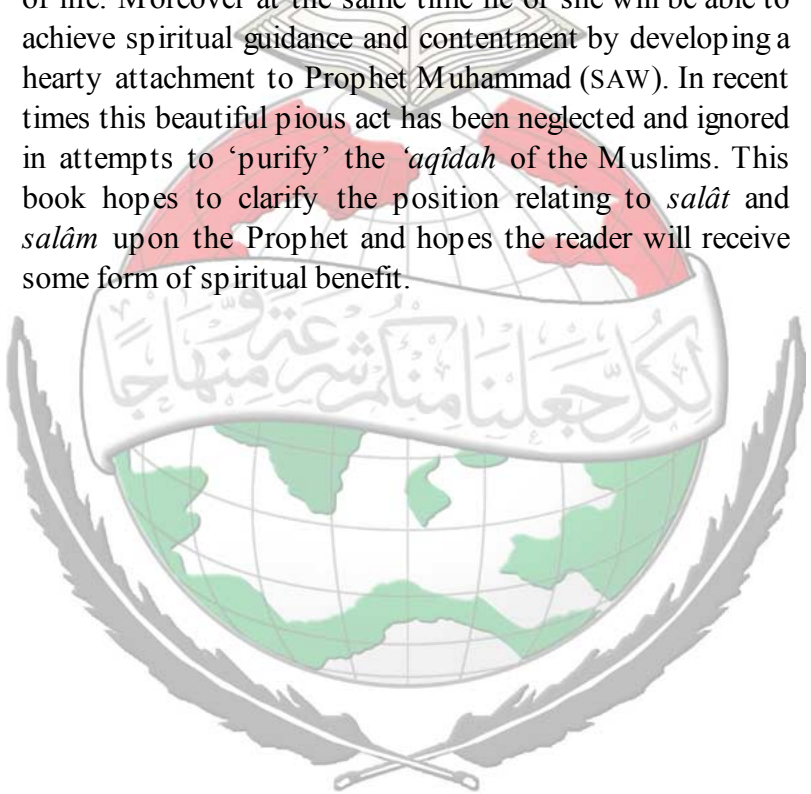
significance of the Holy Prophet (SAW) they have decentralized religion, belief and practice from the pivot of love of the Holy Prophet (SAW). Consequently this results in the denial of the necessary and final authoritativeness of the *sunnah* and *hadith*. By inculcating in the minds of the Muslim youth that love and extreme respect for the Holy Prophet (SAW) is contradictory to the teachings of Islam is a dangerous by product of the recent Islamic resurgence.

Religious practices such as offering prayer, performing *hajj*, giving *zakât*, keeping fasts, preaching, and spending in charities comprises the **body** of Islam. The extreme love and reverence of the Holy Prophet (SAW) constitutes the **soul** of the body. Both the body and the soul are combined to make a human. A soul can exist without a body as it did in the spiritual world. It exists in the material world and it will continue to exist until the Hereafter. However, a body without a soul cannot exist instead it decays. Similarly our practices and good acts *without* the love of the Holy Prophet (SAW) can never be proved to be fruitful, everlasting or rewardable. Like the soul, the love of the Holy Prophet (SAW), even in its abstract form can remain positive and earn reward. However, it would not be a complete and productive *imân*¹. Although the love of the Holy Prophet (SAW) helps a man to restore its relation with the body, an enlightened and strong *imân* can only be achieved by combining the soul and the body. Religious acts and obligations must be strictly adhered to as well as developing love for the Holy Prophet (SAW).

It is in this context that this series of books on '*aqâ'id*'² have been written in order to readdress the balance. Sending

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1. Arabic word for faith.
 2. (plural of '*aqidah*') doctrines.

salutations and peace upon the Prophet (SAW), *salât* and *salâm*, is one manner in developing a spiritual attachment to him. If it is done lovingly and with care then any Muslim will benefit practically by having the love of the Prophet (SAW) as motivation to adhere strictly to the Islamic way of life. Moreover at the same time he or she will be able to achieve spiritual guidance and contentment by developing a hearty attachment to Prophet Muhammad (SAW). In recent times this beautiful pious act has been neglected and ignored in attempts to 'purify' the 'aqîdah of the Muslims. This book hopes to clarify the position relating to *salât* and *salâm* upon the Prophet and hopes the reader will receive some form of spiritual benefit.



CHAPTER 1



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The Qur'anic verse pertaining to *salât* and *salâm* is highly meaningful and replete with wisdom. Allah proclaims in the Qur'an as follows:

Undoubtedly, Allah and His angels send blessings on the Prophet (SAW). O believers! You (too) send your blessings upon him and salute him with all respect.¹

All worships are accomplished under the subjection of Divine commandments. It is obligatory for Believers to show reverence to Divine commandments, as they have traditionally held a superior position. Divine laws have also changed with the passage of time and from nation-to-nation. New Prophets brought new Revelations often subjugating older Divine laws. In contrast to this Divine practice has been constant and abiding. Divine practice is an inevitable reality, entirely safe from all sorts of alterations and effects. The Qur'an states:

1. Qur'an (*al-Ahzâb*) 33:56.

Yet you will never find any change in Allah's practice.¹

With the passage of time Divine practice is abiding and eternal. If we ponder over the Qur'anic verse, we come to know that conveyance of greetings to the Prophet (SAW) is not a commandment but also a Divine practice. This Divine practice will be abode and last for all times to come. The conveyance of *salât* and *salâm* divulges the glory and sublimity of the Prophet (SAW) as well as exaltation of this pious act. Since there is no change and transition in the practice of Allah this act is free from any retrogression and change. It is incumbent upon the faithful to abide by Divine practice and to offer salutations to the Prophet (SAW).

As Allah Himself has acted upon this command this divine practice becomes the *sunnah* of Allah. This is unlike most of Allah's other commands. All worships such as prayers, fasting, the pilgrimage, charity and donations are the commandments of Allah but not His *sunnah*. Allah neither performs *hajj* nor fasts nor prays. He is above all these things. All these duties and deeds are not His *sunnah* but the *sunnah* of the Prophet (SAW). So if a person offers prayers or goes to Makkah for the pilgrimage or keeps the fasts of Ramadân or gives the poor due or does any other virtue, he is following the *sunnah* of the holy Prophet (SAW) not the *sunnah* of Allah.

However, the showering of blessings and salutations upon the Prophet (SAW) is the Divine practice of Allah, His *sunnah*. As the glory of Allah is the highest and the most exalted, so His *sunnah* is also the highest and the most

1. Qur'an (*Fâtir*) 35:43.

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exalted. The Prophet (SAW) is the faithful and devotee of Allah. Amongst all of creation, his ranking is the highest and the most reverend. Yet regardless of this ranking and reverence, no human can be equal to the Creator. So in the same way, the *sunnah* of the Prophet (SAW) cannot equate with the *sunnah* of Allah (SWT).

Secondly sending *salât* and *salâm* (blessings and greetings) upon the Prophet (SAW), being the *sunnah* of Allah, is deemed the most esteemed and glorified act as compared to all others, a unique and peerless act. *Salât* and *salâm* (blessings and greetings) is a Divine practice, whereas other acts are pertaining to humans. On account of being a Divine practice, it is preferential and exalted standing conspicuous and explicit. Allah is the Omnipotent, the One and Only and none is equal to Him. He is Infinite in His attributes, His qualities being above everything. So his *sunnah* is also unique, peerless and infinite. Contrary to Allah's attributes, human attributes are limited. Human beings are Allah's creation so they are limited in their powers and traits. They are subject to natural human constraints whereas Divine practice and attributes are not.

What is unique about this verse is that in order to convey the exalted status of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) Almighty Allah did not solely allow the Prophet (SAW) to convey this message to his followers but deemed it necessary to do so himself. This ensured for all times the paramouncy of Prophethood.

Perpetual Nature of *Salât* and *Salâm*

If one studies commands relating to worship it can be noted that they are mostly conditional and subject to rules and regulations. There are different conditions for all kinds of

worship. Take the example of the Muslims' prayer. It has the binding of time. If time elapses, the specific prayer is deferred. If someone wants to perform the night prayer ('*Ishâ*') the next day, he is not allowed to do so because the time has elapsed. In the same way the afternoon prayer ('*Asr*') cannot be performed in the evening. Similarly if someone wants to perform his sunset prayer (*Maghrib*) before sunset, he cannot do so.

Moreover, the Muslims' prayer has some external form to be followed, namely the way the Prophet (SAW) performed it. Standing, bowing and prostration are required to be maintained in the prayer similar to the Prophet's *sunnah*. The prayer will only be acceptable if all the parts of the prayer are executed as taught by Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

Fasting is also conditional and stipulated with time. The duration for the fast is from dawn to dusk. During this time, the observer of the fast abstains from eating, drinking and other religious prohibitions. If the observer of the fast does not abide by time, his fast will not be acceptable or if he eats during the fast, his fast will be futile. Since the fast warrants the observance of all its requisites it is also conditional in its apparent form.

All these examples indicate that the acts, which are the Prophet's *sunnah*, have the binding of time and compliance with all its respective requisites. They are subject to the observance of forms and conditions of the acts because they belong to the *sunnah* of the creation. But *salât* and *salâm* are the *sunnah* of the Creator, so they are free from all bindings of time and other subsidiary obligations.

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A simple grammatical analysis of this verse helps elucidate this point further. In the Arabic language there are two types of sentences, *jumlah fi'liyyah* — a verbal clause or sentence — and *jumlah ismiyyah* — a nominal clause or sentence. A verbal sentence is related to some specific time (past, present or future) and falls within the confines of any of the three specific times. Time is also temporal and transient. If it is present, it is about to elapse; if it is future, it is yet to come.

However, a nominal sentence is not related to time but spread over all times. It is lasting and abiding. After adhering to a name, it relates to all times; past, present and future. In this verse Allah the Almighty has opted to use a nominal sentence. Instead of using the past tense “.....*Allah and His Angels sent blessings...*” or the future tense of “...*Allah and His angels will send blessings....*”, Allah has stated “*Allah and his Angels send blessings...*”. This is not a command or directive but a declaration and announcement of an event that is continuing to occur or news that is happening. As such blessings and salutations upon the Prophet (SAW) is an ongoing process, an act for all times, securing its perpetual nature.

Sending *Salât* and *Salâm* whilst Standing

Allah has subjected His worship and the *sunnah* of His beloved Prophet (SAW) to bounds and binding but He has set His *sunnah* free from the same. That is why Allah has made His devotees free from restraint and binding whilst offering *salât* and *salâm*. Greetings can be sent in any language. We can send our greetings to the Prophet (SAW) in Arabic, English, Hindi, Persian, Punjabi, Urdu or in any

other language. *Salât* and *salâm* can be sent in the form of prose or verse, silently or loudly, collectively or individually, It can be sent in *imâm* Bawsîrî's invocation or in the melody of *imâm* Ahmad Razâ Khân because it is Allah's *sunnah*. It is free from all restraints. In view of this, no one has the right to subject *salât* and *salâm* to any condition of time, condition of place and condition of posture, i.e. of standing, sitting or lying down.

Unfortunately though this has become an unnecessary issue of controversy. Many recent commentators have declared that standing and reciting *salât* and *salâm* upon the Prophet (SAW) is a form of innovation, *bid'ah* and must never be done. Unfortunately this is a misguided view acted upon due to ignorance of the nature of *sharî'ah*. A principle of *sharî'ah*, denotes that any order in the Qur'an or *sunnah* which is in an absolute form, cannot be qualified. No conditions can be placed upon it. Similarly if a basic command has been revealed with qualifications then it too cannot be changed into an absolute command. By applying this Qur'anic principle to the verse in question, the commands of *sallû 'alayh* and *sallimû taslîmâ*, as far as their format and modality are concerned, are in the absolute form. There is no specification of type, no qualification in their form and thus no condition can be added to it.

In Islamic terminology the concept of '*ibâdah*, worship, is a broad based one encompassing all acts that are done to seek the pleasure of Almighty Allah. Through this verse it has already been established that sending *salât* and *salam* on to the Holy Prophet (SAW) is considered a *dhikr*¹ of

1. remembrance.

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Allah, and the *dhikr* of Allah can be done in any manner – standing, sitting or lying down. There is no exclusion in manner or exclusivity in type. Allah the Almighty states in the Holy Qur’an:

Those who remember Allah while standing, sitting and lying on their sides.¹

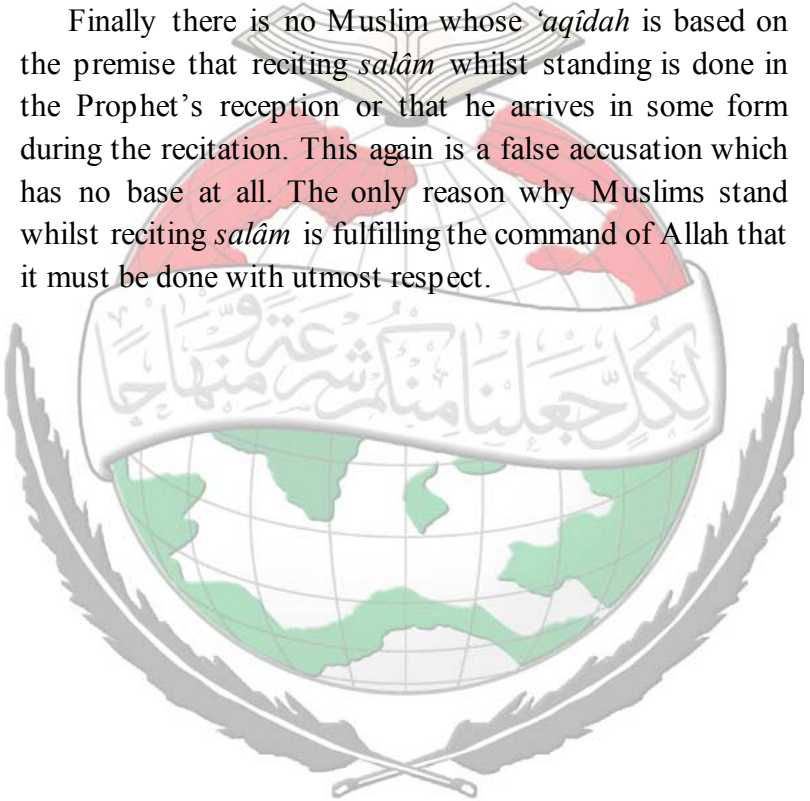
Sending *salât* and *salâm* upon the Holy Prophet (SAW) is one of the *as qar*, remembrances of Allah (SWT). So according to the above verse it is permissible to send the blessings in any of the three ways. There is no specific Qur’anic verse or command which stipulates that sending blessings whilst standing is prohibited nor is there any contrary verse saying standing is preferable. The Qur’an is silent on this issue. This comes under the law of generality, which applies to all of the remembrances of Allah (SWT) as pointed out in the verse above.

Despite this clear-cut view some people continue to criticize those who stand and recite *salât* and *salâm* claiming standing constitutes a way of worship permissible only for Allah (SWT). Again this is a self-concocted argument with no base or rationale from the Qur’an or *sunnah*. The Qur’anic verse is clear-cut and concise in that remembrance of Allah is not solely restricted to the standing position but can be done in all three positions. Moreover, there is no differentiation or speciality in any one of the positions. Each holds an equal standing in merit.

1. Qur’an (*Āl-i-‘Imrân*) 3:191.

If the standing position is said to be disliked as it constitutes a position reserved for the worship of Allah (SWT) alone, then sending blessings whilst sitting or lying down should also be banned as they are of equal merit and stature!

Finally there is no Muslim whose *'aqidah* is based on the premise that reciting *salâm* whilst standing is done in the Prophet's reception or that he arrives in some form during the recitation. This again is a false accusation which has no base at all. The only reason why Muslims stand whilst reciting *salâm* is fulfilling the command of Allah that it must be done with utmost respect.



CHAPTER 2



Analytical Study of
Salât and Salâm

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In order to fully appreciate the Qur'anic verse relating to *salât* and *salâm* it is helpful to have a close and analytical study of its contents. Almighty Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:

Undoubtedly, Allah and His angels send blessings on the Prophet (SAW). O believers! You (too) send your blessings upon him and salute him with all respect.¹

There are three important words in this verse, namely:

- 1) *Yusallûna* — they send blessings
- 2) *Sallimû* — salute
- 3) *Taslimâ* — respect

Yusallûna

The Arabic word of *yusallûna* is derived from the root word of '*salât*'. Taken in its original form it means worship or *du'â*, prayer. In this context it also signifies a sense of nearness and proximity, a consequence of people gathering in mosques for prayers. This is a physical and spiritual congregation. This theme of connection and nearness can also be seen in other derivatives of the word *salât*:

1. Qur'an (*al-Ahzâb*) 33:56.

- * **mussalî:** the runner up in a horse race since he is the companion of the winner, the closest to him than any other
- * **salâ:** the middle part of the human body which joins the upper and lower limbs together
- * **salâyah:** a flat stone on which condiments are added together and ground with a muller
- * **miswalah:** a broom that collects segments of dust

In short all of the derivatives of *salât* convey the meaning of relation, nearness, togetherness and connection. *Yusallûna* creates a beautiful imagery of Allah blessing the Holy Prophet (SAW) with His proximity and close relation abolishing the distances between them.

Then he (Muhammad) approached, came closer and was at the distance of two bow-lengths or (even) nearer.¹

Traditional concepts of separation vanish away and the Noble Prophet (SAW) gradually rises up to the stages of Divine proximity. This process continues and will continue forever. Moreover, it is not only Allah (SWT) who is pleased with His servants sending salutations upon the Prophet (SAW) but that Allah (SWT) is pleased with the pleasure of His beloved Prophet (SAW). As He says:

And Allah and His Messenger have greater right, that he should be gratified.¹

1. Qur'an (*an-Najm*) 53:8-9.

When Muslims send blessings upon the Holy Prophet (SAW) they do so with humility, modesty and reverent respect. *Salât* is also taken to mean the heat of fire which straightens the crookedness of wooden sticks. In the same manner *yusallûna* signifies a worshipper wanting correction of his inner and outer self by prayers and other worships.

Sallimû

In this verse Believers are also being asked to salute, '*sallimû*' the Prophet (SAW). The Arabic word of *sallimû* is derived from the word *salâm*, meaning peace. It is not sufficient just to send simple *salât* upon the Prophet (SAW) but to salute him too, acknowledging his high rank and status. A salute is normally given to a person of seniority, a leader or a statesman. The Prophet (SAW) is deemed by Allah (SWT) to be the worthiest of all those who deserve to be saluted. One of the Companions, Ibn 'Abbâs (RTA) comments that the command of *salât* and *salâm* is the magnification of Divine remembrance. Allah the Almighty continues to arrange such conditions as to pave the way for the exaltation and dissemination of the Holy Prophet's dignity, excellent qualities and matchless lifestyle.

Taslîmâ

Allah Almighty also informs the believers as to the manner of giving salute and offer *salâm* namely with respect, *taslîmâ*. Reverence and respect for the holy Prophet (SAW) must never be absent in any matters pertaining to him. Time and time again, Allah has given

1. Qur'an (*at-Tawbah*) 9: 62.

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us strict guidelines to honour him and hold him in the highest of esteem. Allah (SWT) says:

. . . . that you may assist and honour him, and celebrate His praises morning and evening.¹

The Companions in particular were ordered to speak softly and quietly in the Prophet's presence, to be humble and modest in their behaviour towards him:

O you who believe! Raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet, nor speak aloud to him in talk, as you may speak aloud to one another, lest your deeds become vain and you perceive not.²

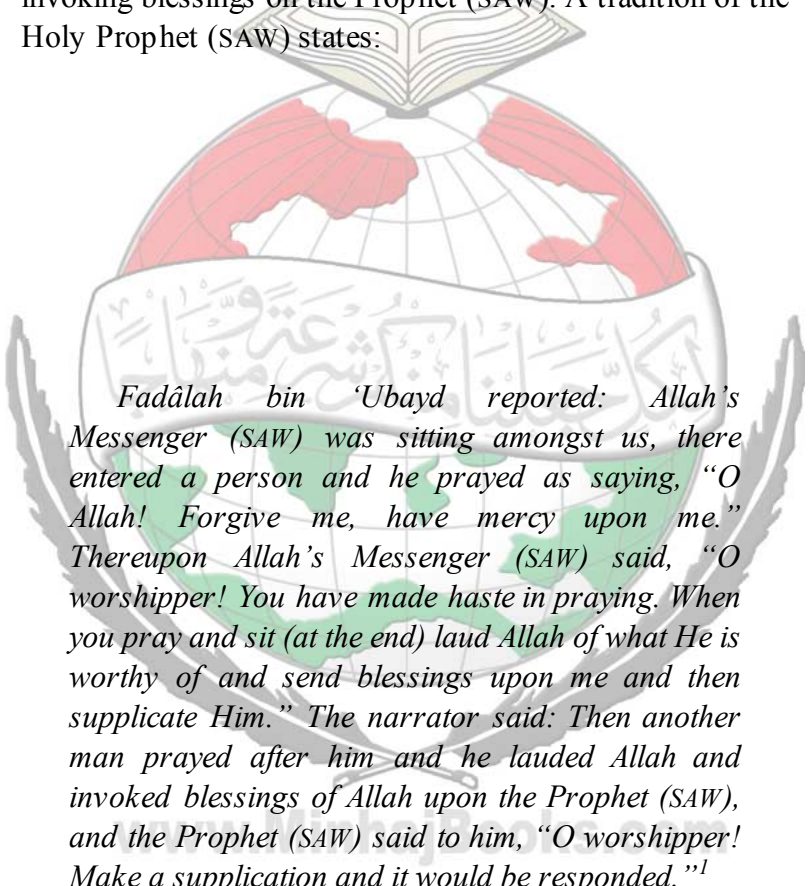
So sending salutations upon the Prophet (SAW) is no exception. It must be done in a most honourable manner, with sincerity, love and affection.

Difference between *Salât* and *Salâm*

In the preceding pages it is very apparent the extent to which Allah (SWT) loves His beloved Prophet (SAW) and wishes His servants to remember and respect the exalted status through the greetings and salutations sent upon him. However, Allah (SWT) in all His mercy has also allowed

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1. Qur'an (*al-Fath*) 48:9.
 2. Qur'an (*al-Hujurât*) 49:2.

Muslims to benefit too. One who offers *salât*, Allah exalts him, forgives his sins and Allah's blessings are upon him. *Salât* ascends the seeker's supplication and gets a favourable reception from Allah. There is also no guarantee of the acceptance of a *du'â'* (supplication) without invoking blessings on the Prophet (SAW). A tradition of the Holy Prophet (SAW) states:



*Fadâlah bin 'Ubayd reported: Allah's Messenger (SAW) was sitting amongst us, there entered a person and he prayed as saying, "O Allah! Forgive me, have mercy upon me." Thereupon Allah's Messenger (SAW) said, "O worshipper! You have made haste in praying. When you pray and sit (at the end) laud Allah of what He is worthy of and send blessings upon me and then supplicate Him." The narrator said: Then another man prayed after him and he lauded Allah and invoked blessings of Allah upon the Prophet (SAW), and the Prophet (SAW) said to him, "O worshipper! Make a supplication and it would be responded."*¹

Once 'Umar bin Khattâb (RTA) said to his nation:

1. Tirmidhî related in *al-Jâmi'us-sahîh*, b. of *da'wât* (supplications) ch.65 (5: 516 # 3476) and graded it *hasan* (fair).

The supplication is stopped between the heaven and the earth and nothing of it ascends, till you invoke blessing on your Prophet (SAW).¹

There is also a distinction in the type of reward given to Believers, dependent upon whether they send *salât*, *du‘â*, prayers on to the Prophet (SAW) or send *salâm*, peace on to the Holy Prophet (SAW). The difference in reward is of type and degree. In the case of sending *salât* upon the Prophet (SAW), believers receive *ujrat*, ‘spiritual wages’ for their act. Just as a labourer will be given reward for his hard work in the form of monetary wages, a Believer who sends prayers receives spiritual wages in the form of forgiveness and blessings from Allah (SWT). The Noble Prophet (SAW) has guaranteed the intercession for those who send salutations if they ask Allah (SWT) for it. ‘Abdullâh bin ‘Amr bin al-‘Âs (RTA) reported that he heard the Prophet (SAW) saying:

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When you hear the mu‘adhdhin, repeat what he says, then invoke blessings on me for every one who invokes blessings on me once, will receive ten

1. Tirmidhî related in *al-Jâmi‘-us-sahih*, b. of *salât* (prayer) ch.352 (2: 356 # 486).

*blessings from Allah. Then ask Allah for the wasīlah to be granted to me. It is a position in paradise that may not be granted to any but one of Allah's servants, and I dearly hope that I will be that servant. Whoever asks Allah for the wasīlah for me, my intercession is guaranteed for him.*¹

This reward has also been carefully designated by Almighty Allah and its degree fixed. The Holy Prophet (SAW) said:

*He who invokes blessings upon me once, Allah showers ten blessings upon him and obliterates (his) ten sins and elevates him by ten ranks.*²

*He who blesses me once, Allah blesses him ten times.*³

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1. Muslim, *as-Sahīh*, b. of *salāt* (prayer) ch.7 (1: 288-9 # 384); Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, b. of *salāt* (prayer) 1: 144 (# 523); Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi'us-sahīh*, b. of *manāqib* (virtues and merits of the Prophet and his companions) ch.1 (5: 586-7 # 3614); Nasā'ī, *Sunan*, b. of *adhān* (the call to prayer) 2: 25-6; Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (2:168); Ibn Khuzaymah, *as-Sahīh*, 1: 219 (# 418); Muhammad Khatīb Tabrīzī, *Mishkāt-ul-masābih*, b. of *salāt* (prayer) ch.5 (1: 215 # 657); Husayn bin Mas'ūd Baghawī, *Sharh-us-sunnah*, 2: 284-5 (# 421); 'Alā'-ud-Dīn 'Alī, *Kanz-ul-ummāl*, 7: 700 (# 20998).
 2. Nasā'ī, *Sunan*, b. of *sahw* (unintentional mistake), 3: 50; Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad*, 3: 102 & 261; Muhammad Hākīm, *al-Mustadrak*, 1:550, and Dhahabī also graded it *sahīh* (sound).
 3. Muslim, *as-Sahīh*, b. of *salāt* (prayer) ch. 17 (1: 251 # 408).

34 GREETINGS AND SALUTATIONS ON THE PROPHET (SAW)

‘Abdullâh bin Mas‘ûd (RTA) reported Allah’s Messenger (SAW) as saying:

The one who will be nearest me on the Day of Resurrection will be the one who invoked most blessings on me.¹

Abû Talhah (RTA) narrated assigning it to his father:

Allah’s Messenger came one day with a gleaming countenance and said, “Jibrîl came to me and said, “(Verily your Lord says,) “Muhammad! Does it not please you that one amongst your Ummah should invoke blessings on you and I should bless him ten times and one amongst your Ummah should send greetings of peace to you and I should send ten greetings of peace upon him.²

If a believer sends *salâm* upon the Prophet (SAW) the reward is much higher in rank and degree. Muslims who pay *salâm* upon the Prophet (SAW) will be given a reply

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1. Transmitted by Tirmidhî in his *Sunan*, b. of *salât* (prayer), ch. 352 (2: 354 # 484); Bukhârî, *at-Târikh-ul-kabîr*, (5: 177 # 559); Baghawî, *Sharh-us-sunnah*, (3: 197 # 686); Muhammad Khatîb Tabrîzî, *Mishkât-ul-masâbih*, b. of *salât* (prayer), ch. 16 (1: 278 # 923); Dhahabî, *Mizân-ul-i’tidâl fî naqd-ir-rijâl*, (4: 228 # 8945).
 2. Nasâ’î, *Sunan*, b. of *sahw* (unintentional mistake), 3: 50.

and have the same returned to them by Almighty Allah and the angels. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) stated:

There is no Muslim who invokes blessings upon me (salutes me), but Allah returns to me my soul till I respond to him in return.¹

Abû Hurayrah (RTA) reported the Prophet (SAW) said:

There is no Muslim in the east and the west who salutes me, but I and the angels of my Lord answer him.²

‘Abd-ur-Rahmân bin ‘Awf (RTA) narrates that the Prophet (SAW) said:

I met Jibril who said: I give you good news that Allah has said, “Whosoever asks for peace for you, I ask for peace for him, whosoever blesses you, I bless him.”³

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1. Abû Dâwûd, *Sunan*, b. of *manâsik* (rituals of *hajj*), (2: 218 # 2041); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad*, 2:527.
2. Abû Nu‘aym Asbahânî, *Hilyat-ul-awliyâ’ wa tabaqât-ul-asfiyâ’*, 6: 349.
3. Muhammad Hâkim transmitted it in *al-Mustadrak* (1:222-3) and Dhahabî also confirmed it; Bayhaqî in *Sunan-ul-kubrâ* (2:371 & 9:286); Qâdî ‘Iyâd in *ash-Shifâ*, 2:650.

‘Âmir bin Rabî’ah (RTA), on his father’s authority, said that he heard the Prophet (SAW) saying:

The angels will continue to bless anyone who blesses me, as long as he continues to do so, so the servant should either reduce or enhance this.¹

Ibn Wahb (RTA) related that the Prophet (SAW) said:

Whosoever asks for peace on me ten times, it is as if he has freed a slave.²

To be honoured with a reply and blessings is a great and prestigious reward. Sending the salute of peace upon the Prophet (SAW) is the fulfillment of the command of Allah (SWT) but the reward of a reply is the love of the Prophet (SAW) for his Ummah. Through a reply a believer obtains spiritual attachment, nearness and proximity known as *qurbat*. In sending *salât*, the reward is fixed by Allah (SWT). A Muslim will receive his tenfold reward or expiation of ten sins. In the case of sending peace and blessings, a Muslim receives manifold blessings in return. These blessings are multiple and great in number since the Prophet (SAW) is grand in his mercy.

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1. Ibn Mâjah, *Sunan*, b. of *iqâmat-us-salât was-sunnah fihâ* (establishing prayer and its *sunnahs*) ch.25 (1:294#907); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad* (3:445); Husayn bin Mas‘ûd Baghawî, *Sharh-us-sunnah* (3:198#688); Qâdî ‘Iyâd, *ash-Shifâ* (2:651).
 2. Qâdî ‘Iyâd, *ash-Shifâ*, 2:653.

Through *salât* the conveyance of a *du‘a*, prayers to be sent to the Prophet (SAW) create an indirect link with him, since sins will be forgiven through the Prophet’s intercession. However sending *salâm* is an opportunity to send a direct address upon him creating a direct link with him. Out of his love and compassion Prophet Muhammad (SAW) has made it incumbent upon himself to reply. He becomes happy from the addresses of his followers and blesses them too.

Despite this distinction this does not mean that we should only send *salâm* upon the Prophet (SAW) as opposed to *salât*. In fact both of them should be sent according to the commandment. However, Allah out of His infinite mercy has allowed Muslims to benefit manifold from their acts.

Angels’ Salutations

In the Qur’anic verse under discussion, it has been denoted that angels also shower blessings and salutations upon the Prophet (SAW):

Undoubtedly, Allah and His angels send blessings on the Prophet (SAW). O believers! You (too) send your blessings upon him and salute him with all respect.¹

According to Islamic traditions there are different groups of angels engaged in various forms of worship. Some

1. Qur’an (*al-Ahzâb*) 33:56.

angels are reciting *Allahu Akbar*¹ and some are reciting *Subhân-Allah*². Others are worshipping in the standing position; some in a bowing position and some are worshipping in the state of prostration. In short their worships and positions are numerous and multifarious.. In contrast this restriction is not valid for the greetings and salutations upon the Prophet (SAW). All these groups of angels are equally and unexceptionally engaged in showering blessings and salutations upon the Prophet (SAW) together.

It is often the case that if one loves somebody dearly, holds him close to the heart then the lover will always look for ways and means of hearing about his beloved. He will become happy if others praise his beloved, become pleased if they salute and respect him and become delighted if they remember him in their prayers. If onlookers are scattered, busy in their own affairs, the lover will desire that they concentrate upon his beloved just as he himself has become engrossed in him. In order to demonstrate his love, he may wish that he alone should not praise his beloved but that it should be done by all of creation. It is therefore quite significant that Allah (SWT) states that all of His Angels send blessings upon His Noble Prophet (SAW). Allah the Almighty has said that this Prophet (SAW) is the best of all Prophets and His love for him is above the love for all else.

So the angels convey the loving greetings and salutations of the faithful from dawn to dusk. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) likes these presents and invokes blessings upon the senders. As he (SAW) stated:

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1. Allah is the Greatest.
 2. Glory be upon Allah.

The mobile (squad) of angels in the earth conveys to me the blessings invoked upon me by my Ummah.¹

Invoke blessings upon me, since blessings invoked by you are conveyed to me wherever you may be.²

He who invokes blessings upon me by my grave, I will hear him and he who invokes upon me at a distance it will be conveyed to me.³

It is also a reflection of his exalted status that Allah (SWT) not only commands His earthly creation to send blessings but that He orders the heavenly creation, pure, pious and made of light to do the same. The Prophet (SAW) listens to the blessings invoked on him but they are also presented to him in a magnificent manner by the angels. This is just intended to exalt and elevate the stature of the Noble Prophet (SAW) as Allah knows the deeds of people but the angels also inform Him about them.

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1. Nasa'î, *Sunan*, b. of *sahw* (unintentional mistake) 3: 43; Sulaymân bin Ahmed Tabarânî, *al-Mu'jam-ul-kabîr*, (10: 219-20 # 10528-9); Ahmad bin Husayn Bayhaqî, *Shu'ab-ul-îmân*, (2: 218 # 1582).
2. Abû Dâwûd, *Sunan*, b. of *manâsik* (rituals of *hajj*) (2: 218 # 2042); 'Alî bin Abû Bakr Haythamî, *Majma'uz-zawâ'id*, 2: 247.
3. Ahmad bin Husayn Bayhaqî, *Shu'ab-ul-îmân*, (2: 218 # 1583); 'Alâ'ud-Dîn 'Alî, *Kanz-ul-'ummâl*, (1: 498 # 1583).

Invoke Blessings on the Prophet's Name

In accordance with the Qur'an and the *sunnah*, it is also obligatory to invoke blessings on the Prophet (SAW) to elevate his status and pay glorious tribute to the greatest benefactor of humanity. Whenever the Prophet's name is pronounced, it is compulsory to invoke blessings on him, because this is the *sunnah* of Almighty Allah, Prophet Âdam (AS), His angels and the commandment of His beloved Prophet (SAW). The Prophet (SAW) himself condemned those who do not invoke blessings upon him. The reason is that Allah has raised the remembrance of his beloved Prophet (SAW) and none has the authority to lessen it:

The miserly is he, before whom I am mentioned and he does not invoke blessings on me.¹

Verily the most miserly amongst people is he, before whom I am mentioned and he does not invoke blessings on me.²

Let his nose be smeared with dust, in whose presence I am mentioned, and he does not invoke blessings upon me.³

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1. Tirmidhî, *al-Jâmi'us-sahîh*, b. of *da'wât* (supplications) ch.101, (5: 551 # 3546).
 2. 'Alâ'-ud-Dîn 'Alî, *Kanz-ul-'ummâl*, (1: 489 # 2146).
 3. Tirmidhî, *al-Jâmi'us-sahîh*, b. of *da'wât* (supplications) ch.101, (5: 550 # 3545).

The Prophet (SAW) called him astray who does not invoke blessings upon him. It is stated as follows:

He who forgets (abandons) to invoke blessings on me, misses the road (leading) to the Paradise.¹

Abû Hurayrah (RTA) also reported that the Prophet (SAW) said:

If people sit in an assembly in which they do not remember Allah nor invoke a blessing on their Prophet (SAW), it will be a cause of grief for them (on the Day of Judgement).²

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2. Ibn Mâjah, *Sunan*, b. of *iqâmat-us-salât was-sunnah fîhâ* (establishing prayer and its *sunnahs*) ch. 25 (1: 294 # 908); Ahmad bin Husayn Bayhaqî, *Sunan-ul-kubrâ*, 9:286.
 2. Narrated by Tirmidhî in his *al-Jâmi'-us-sahîh*, b. of *du'â'* (supplication) ch.8 (5: 461 # 3380), and he graded it *hasan* (fair) and *sahîh* (sound).

CHAPTER 3



**The Acceptability of
*Salât and Salâm***

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Man demonstrates his allegiance to Allah at the behest of his virtuous deeds. He reverently complies with Divine commands. However, man cannot positively say that Almighty Allah has accepted his deeds, since deficiencies in his deeds may occur on account of human frailty and imperfection. So all deeds inclusive of charity, alms, prayers, fasting, pilgrimage stand uncertain in the context of acceptance and acknowledgement. It is only hoped that they will (if Allah is Willing) be accepted.

Towards Him do (all) words of purity ascend; it is He who exalts each deed of righteousness.¹

In contrast to this, *salât* and *salâm* is accepted by Allah in any instance and is always definitely acknowledged. Even if a sinful person recites *salât* and *salâm*, his act of sending the greetings to the Prophet (SAW) will be acknowledged by all means.

One may question as to why *salât* and *salâm* sent by an inadequate and sinful person is acceptable. What wisdom lies behind it? A close examination of the meanings of *salât* and *salâm* reveals they are sent to bestow blessings; to bestow nearness and to elevate the name and fame of the Holy Prophet (SAW). All the aforesaid benedictions have already been bestowed upon the Prophet (SAW) by Allah

1. Qur'an (*Fâtir*) 35:10.

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through His divine Practice. The Prophet (SAW) has the utmost nearness of Allah, with ascension and elevation bestowed in abundance. Allah (SWT) says in the Holy Qur'an:

Then he (Muhammad) approached and came closer and was at the distance of two bow-lengths or (even) nearer.¹

At another place, Almighty Allah states the exaltation and greatness of the Prophet (SAW) in these words:

And We have exalted for you your remembrance.²

So all the benefits and rewards of *salât* are already bestowed to the Prophet (SAW). When a person implores Allah to bestow the blessings upon the Prophet (SAW), Allah says, "I am already blessing My Prophet (SAW), elevating his name and bestowing him nearness. However, O My devotee, as you have not demanded anything for your own self and sent greetings and salutations to the Prophet (SAW) without seeking reward, so your supplication is granted." This is regardless of the fact if he is a sinner. That is why *salât* and *salâm* will always be definite and certain in acceptance.

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1. Qur'an (*an-Najm*) 53:8-9.
 2. Qur'an (*ash-Sharh*) 94:4.

Salutations and the Acceptance of other Worships

As *salât* and *salâm* upon the Holy Prophet (SAW) is always accepted by right, it in itself becomes a vehicle for the acceptance of other acts of worship. Man bears hardship while worshipping His Creator so he aspires that all his worships may be acceptable in the court of Allah (SWT). The Mercy of Allah is such that He does not frustrate man's intrinsic desire for the acceptance of his deeds. Allah has bestowed a means on man for the materialization of his intrinsic desire. In all His benevolence He has informed man that he should recite *salât* and *salâm* before and after each worship and deed. As *salât* and *salâm* is a positive and definite act, therefore, Allah will accept it with any worship thereafter attached.

It is not behooving on the part of Allah, that He may accept *salât* and *salâm* and not accept the other prayers in between *salât* and *salâm*. The noble Prophet (SAW) is the beloved of Allah (SWT). Thus Allah is pleased with anyone of His creation who sends *salâm* upon him. His pleasure is such that *salât* and *salâm* becomes the most effective, magnificent and certain method for making deeds positively acceptable.

The Prophet (SAW) emphasized his closest companion, Ubayy bin Ka'b (RTA) to recite *salât* and *salâm* abundantly. Ubayy bin Ka'b narrated:

I said, "O Allah's Messenger, I invoke blessings upon you very frequently. How much of my supplication should I devote to you?" He said, "As much as you like." I said, "May it be a quarter?" He said, "As much as you like, but if you make an increase in that it would be better for you." I said, "May it be a half?" He said, "As much as you like, but in case you make an increase in it that would be better for you." I said, "May these be two thirds?" He said, "As much as you like but if you make an increase in it, it would be better." I said, "May I devote the whole of my supplication to you (that I make in my prayer)?" Thereupon he said, "In that case you would be free from care and your sins would be forgiven."¹

This preference and privilege to salât and salâm is due to the vein of love and allegiance whereas all the other acts are under obedience and love has a better degree than submission.

***Salât* and *Salâm* and Love for the Prophet (SAW)**

Finally *salât* and *salâm* is a symbol of love and affection for the Prophet (SAW). We love him, therefore, we have a desire to send blessings and peace upon him. We have to seek to be near him, and hope through his nearness we receive the nearness of Allah (SWT). Intense and

1. Tirmidhî has graded it *hasan* (fair) and *sahîh* (sound) in his *al-Jâmi'us-sahîh*, b. of *sifat-ul-qiyâmah* (description of Doomsday) ch.23, (4: 637 # 2457).

overwhelming love too acts as a vehicle for the acceptance of worship. Man may appear humble and subservient in the eyes of Allah (SWT), spend days and nights in his remembrance but acceptance is still not guaranteed.

The most pious predecessors have always commented, “O Allah, we could not worship You as You deserved.” If this was the state of affairs with the pious, what would be the fate of the less fortunate? It is the most difficult thing to proffer the worship behooving the Glorified Creator. But love is an efficacious force that revamps frail and faulty deeds. If the tree of subservience dries up but its roots of love remain intact, there is an ample chance that the tree may become green and its shoots may sprout some day. But if the roots of love are absent some day the tree will fall. Love is everything. If there is any deficiency in subservience, it can be compensated with love. Any deficiency in love cannot be compensated with subservience. Subservience without love is ostentation and hypocrisy. Such subservience is spurned on the face of the performer. A person came to the Prophet (SAW) and asked:

When will the Hour be established, O Allah's Messenger?

The Prophet (SAW) asked:

What have you prepared for it?

The man said:

I have not prepared for it much of prayers, fast or alms, but I love Allah and His Messenger.

The Prophet (SAW) said:

You will be with those whom you love.¹

In this *hadith* the Prophet's Companion has confessed lapses in his deeds and deficiency of worship deeming them the significant factors for salvation in the Divine Court. But the Prophet (SAW) made it clear that love compensates this deficiency of subservience and faithfulness. He should not worry about his lapses in his deeds and assured him that love of Allah and His beloved Prophet (SAW) will make him succeed.

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1. Bukhârî has narrated it in his *as-Sahîh*, b. of *adab* (good manners) ch.97 (8: 123-4 # 192). Tirmidhî has also narrated this *hadith* in his *Sunân*, b. of *zuhd* (piety) ch.50 (4: 595 # 2385), with an addition of few words. He graded it *hasan* and *sahîh*. He reported that the Prophet (SAW) said to the inquirer giving him a good news, "Everyone will be with those whom he loves (*al-mar' ma'a man ahabba*)." Bukhârî also narrated these words in other narrations (# 190 & 191); Ahmad bin Hambal in his *Musnad* (3: 104, 200).

CHAPTER 4



**Reception of
Salât and *Salâm*
By the Prophet (SAW)**

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An area of dispute often occurs regarding as to whether the Prophet (SAW) receives the blessings sent to him. It is clearly apparent from the previous discussion that offering *salât* and *salâm* in the court of the Holy Prophet (SAW) is an extraordinary and highly acceptable act. Avoidance of this act is in no way a plus point for the believers of Islam but a sign of deploration. Therefore, whether or not *salât* and *salâm* reaches the Prophet (SAW), whether it reaches itself or is carried away by angels is a question of pedantics serving to deviate from the actual act itself. These disparities are not for the believers to worry about. We have to concentrate on the command to offer and recite *salât* and *salâm*.

Unfortunately man is a curious creature by nature and apt to query and debate regardless of its benefits. We should be satisfied that if it is carried away by angels, they perform their duties and if it reaches directly, it is the quality of divinely bestowed excellence and miracles of the Holy Prophet (SAW). If it does not reach and is not responded to, why was it ordered? Its commandment is the reason for it's being accepted. However, since this has become an area of confusion let us look at the controversy surrounding this debate.

The Bodies of Prophets (AS) are Immune from Decay

It is an undisputed fact that Allah keeps the bodies of the Prophets (AS) immune and intact in their graves. This is

symbolically a benignity of Allah to preserve the Prophets' bodies so as to elevate the station of their personages. Shaddâd bin Aws (RTA) reported that Allah's Messenger (SAW) said:

The most excellent day is the day of Jumu'ah (Friday). Âdam was created on that (day) and on it the Trumpet will be blown and on it will (the people) loose their senses. So invoke blessings on me abundantly on that (day) for your blessings are presented to me.

Upon this, a man said:

Allah's Messenger, how are our blessings presented to you while you will decay, i.e. you will be rotten and antiquated?

The Holy Prophet (SAW) said:

Certainly Allah has made it unlawful (harâm) for the earth to eat the bodies of the Prophets.¹

1. Ibn Mâjah, *Sunan*, b. of *iqâmat-us-salât was-sunnah fihâ* (establishing prayer and its *sunnahs*), ch. 79 (1: 345 # 1085); *ibid*, b. of *janâ'iz* (funerals), ch. 65 (1: 524 # 1636); Abû Dâwûd, *Sunan*, b. of *salât* (prayer), 1: 275 (# 1047).

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At another place, it is reported that the Prophet (SAW) said:

Invoke blessings on me abundantly on the day of Jum 'ah (Friday). Verily it is attended and the angels attend it, and none invokes blessings on me but his supplication is presented to me till he finishes it.

The narrator, Abû Dardâ' (RTA), asked:

(Is it also compulsory for us) even after your demise?

The Holy Prophet (SAW) replied:

And even after my demise because Allah has forbidden the earth to eat up the bodies of the Prophets. Therefore, a Prophet of Allah is alive (and) is granted provisions (from Heaven).¹

Hasan Basri (RTA) narrates that he heard the Prophet (SAW) saying:

1. Ibn Mâjah, *Sunan*, b. of *janâ'iz* (funerals) ch. 65 (1: 524 # 1637).

*Spread plush for me in my grave because earth has not been empowered upon the bodies of the Prophets.*¹

At another occasion Hasan (RTA) reported:

*Allah's Messenger (SAW) said, "Earth has not been allowed to eat the flesh of one with whom the Holy Spirit conversed."*²

Qâsim Nânotwî says about the immunity of the Prophets' bodies in their graves in the following words:

"Reverence is offered to the Prophet's bodies because they are alive. Soulless bodies do not have any power over the earth."³

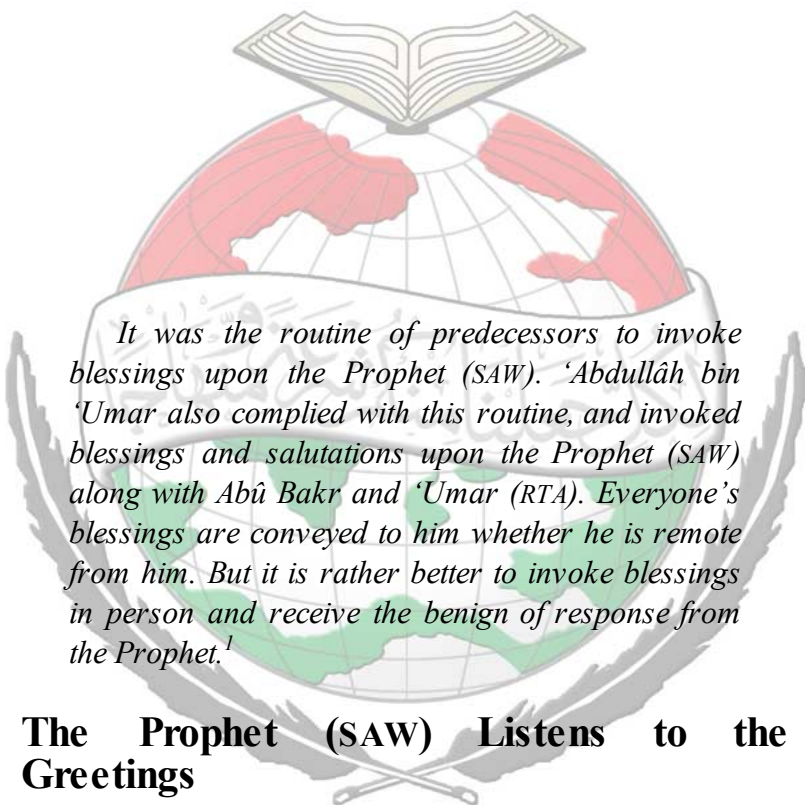
The Prophet (SAW) Receives the Greetings

Although angels are commissioned by Almighty Allah to convey the blessings on the Noble Prophet (SAW), *salâm* is directly received by the Prophet (SAW). He has categorically and unambiguously said:

*Invoke blessings on me, since blessings invoked by you are conveyed to me wherever you may be.*⁴

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1. Ibn Sa'ad, *at-Tabaqât-ul-kubrâ* (2:299); 'Alâ'-ud-Dîn 'Alî, *Kanz-ul-'ummâl*, 15:577 (#42245).
 2. Jalâl-ud-Dîn Suyûti, *ad-Durr-ul-manthûr*, 1: 87.
 3. Muhammad Qâsim Nânotwî, *Âb-i-hayât*, p.32.
 4. Abû Dâwûd, *Sunan*, b. of *manâsik* (rituals of *hajj*) (2: 218 # 2042); 'Alî bin Abû Bakr Haythamî, *Majma 'uz-zawâ'id*, 2: 247.

We have mentioned two sayings of the Prophet (SAW) substantiating the same theme in the preceding pages. Ahmad Shahâb-ud-Dîn Khafâjî says in this context as follows:



It was the routine of predecessors to invoke blessings upon the Prophet (SAW). ‘Abdullâh bin ‘Umar also complied with this routine, and invoked blessings and salutations upon the Prophet (SAW) along with Abû Bakr and ‘Umar (RTA). Everyone’s blessings are conveyed to him whether he is remote from him. But it is rather better to invoke blessings in person and receive the benign of response from the Prophet.¹

The Prophet (SAW) Listens to the Greetings

Different traditions reveal that the Prophet (SAW) himself directly listens to those who invoke blessings on him irrespective of their nearness and remoteness. As Abû Dardâ’ narrated Allah’s Messenger (SAW) said:

1. Ahmad Shahâb-ud-Dîn Khafâjî, *Nasim-ur-riyâd*, 3: 516.

Invoke blessings on me abundantly on Friday. Verily it is an attended day and the angels attend. Whoever invokes blessings on me, his voice reaches me regardless of the distance. We asked, "Even after your demise?" The Prophet (SAW) replied, "(Yes), even after my demise because Allah made unlawful for the earth to eat up the bodies of the Prophets."¹

This *hadīth* reveals the vastness of the Prophet's sense of hearing. At another occasion, the Prophet (SAW) was asked about those who invoke blessings on him from far and wide. The Prophet (SAW) replied:

I listen to the blessings of my lovers and know them.²

It is revealed that the Prophet (SAW) knows his lovers and listens to them. Once he said to his companions about Hadrat 'Īsā (AS) that he will return to this world. Then Hadrat 'Īsā (AS) will visit Madīnah and the Prophet (SAW) said:

And when he ('Isā) will stand beside my grave calling: "O Muhammad!" I will respond to him.³

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1. Yūsuf bin Ismā'īl Nabhānī, *Hujjatullāhi 'alal-'ālamīn*, p.713.
 2. Muhammad Mahdī, *Matāli 'ul-masarrāt*, p.81.
 3. Ibn Hajar 'Asqalānī, *al-Matālib-ul-'āliyah*, (4: 23 # 3853).

The Prophet (SAW) Answers the Greetings

It is absolutely clear that the Noble Prophet (SAW) also answers the one who invokes blessings (*salâm*) on him. Which other reward could be worthier than this for a faithful? Obviously greetings answered by the beloved Prophet of Allah, in itself, it is the greatest and worthiest reward for a Muslim. As the Noble Prophet (SAW) said:

There is no Muslim who invokes blessings upon me (salutes me), but Allah returns to me my soul till I respond to him in return.¹

Abû Hurayrah (RTA) reported the Prophet (SAW) said:

There is no Muslim in the east and the west who salutes me, but I and the angels of my Lord answer him.²

Taqiyy-ud-Dîn Subkî says about the mentioned traditions in the following words:

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1. Abû Dâwûd, *Sunan*, b. of *manâsik* (rituals of *hajj*), (2: 218 # 2041); Ahmad bin Hambal, *Musnad*, 2:527.
2. Abû Nu'aym Asbahânî, *Hilyat-ul-awliyâ' wa tabaqât-ul-asfiyâ'*, 6: 349.

The aforesaid sayings of the Prophet (SAW) substantiate that the Prophet's soul has been returned to him. Certainly he listens to the salutations and responds in return.¹

Benefits of the Prophet's Life and Demise

Both the life and demise of the Prophet (SAW) are beneficial and advantageous for the Muslim Ummah. The Prophet's benignity is highly gainful for the Ummah because he (SAW) seeks forgiveness from Allah for us. The following traditions of the Holy Prophet (SAW) substantiate this:

My life is a great good for you and my death is (also) a great good for you.²

My life is a great good for you in whom you talk (to me) and we talk to you, and my demise is also a great good for you (because) your deeds will be presented to me. If they are good, I will praise Allah, and if they are bad, I will ask Allah's forgiveness for you.³

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1. Taqiyy-ud-Dîn Subkî 'Alî, *Shifâ'-us-siqâm fî ziyart khayr-il-anâm*, p.133.
 2. 'Alâ-ud-Dîn 'Alî, *Kanz-ul-'ummâl*, (11: 407 # 31904).
 3. Narrated by Ibn Hajar 'Asqalânî, through Hârith in his *al-Matâlib-ul-'âliyah*, (4: 22-3 # 3853).

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Bakr bin ‘Abdullâh (RTA) also reported that the Holy Prophet (SAW) said:

My life is a great good for you in whom you talk (to me) and you are responded. And when I will die my demise will be a great good for you. Your deeds will be presented to me, if I see goodness, I will praise Allah, and if I see wrongs, I will ask Allah’s forgiveness for you.¹

At another place, Anas bin Mâlik (RTA) narrates that the Prophet (SAW) said:

“My life is a great good for you”, and he (the Prophet) said it three times. “My demise is a great good for you”, and he (the Prophet) said it three times. Then the people kept silent and ‘Umar bin Khattâb asked, “May my parents be sacrificed for

1. Ibn Sa‘d, *at-Tabaqât-ul-kubrâ* (2: 194); ‘Alî bin Abû Bakr Haythamî related in *Majma‘-uz-zawâ'id* (9:24) and its men are those of *sahîh* (sound) *hadîth*.

you! How would it be?" He (the Prophet) said, "My life is a great good for you because I get Heavenly revelation and inform you what is allowed and what is disallowed for you. And my demise is good for you because your deeds are presented to me every Thursday. If they are good, I say, "Praise be to Allah." If they are bad, I seek forgiveness for you.¹

Other sayings of the Holy Prophet (SAW) include:

*Invoke blessings on me abundantly every Friday, because blessings of my Ummah are presented to me every Friday. And the nearest one to me in rank is one who invokes the greatest number of blessings upon me.*²

*Invoke blessings on me on the day and night of Jum'ah (i.e. Friday), because one who invokes blessing upon me once, Allah will shower ten blessings upon him.*³

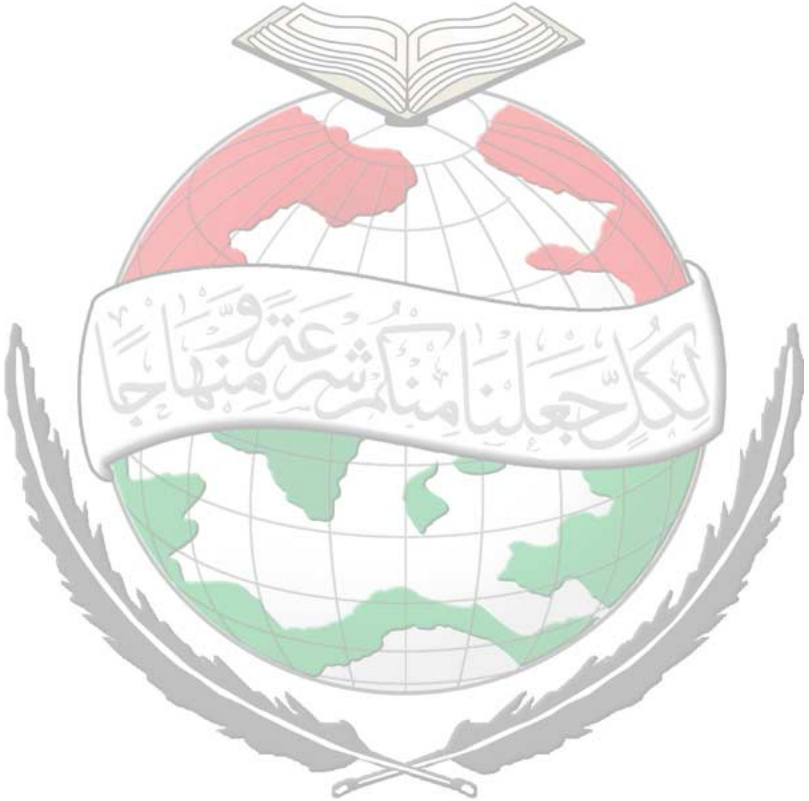
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Since the deeds of the believers are presented to the Holy Prophet (SAW), if we send *salât* and *salâm* upon the Prophet (SAW) this constitutes a very good deed and pious

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1. Yûsuf bin Ismâ'îl Nabhânî, *Hujjatullâhi 'alal-âlamîn*, p.713.
 2. Ahmad bin Husayn Bayhaqî, *as-Sunan-ul-kubrâ*, 3: 249.
 3. Ahmad bin Husayn Bayhaqî, *as-Sunan-ul-kubrâ*, 3: 249.

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act. It is presented to Prophet Muhammad (SAW) who praises Allah (SWT) in his happiness.

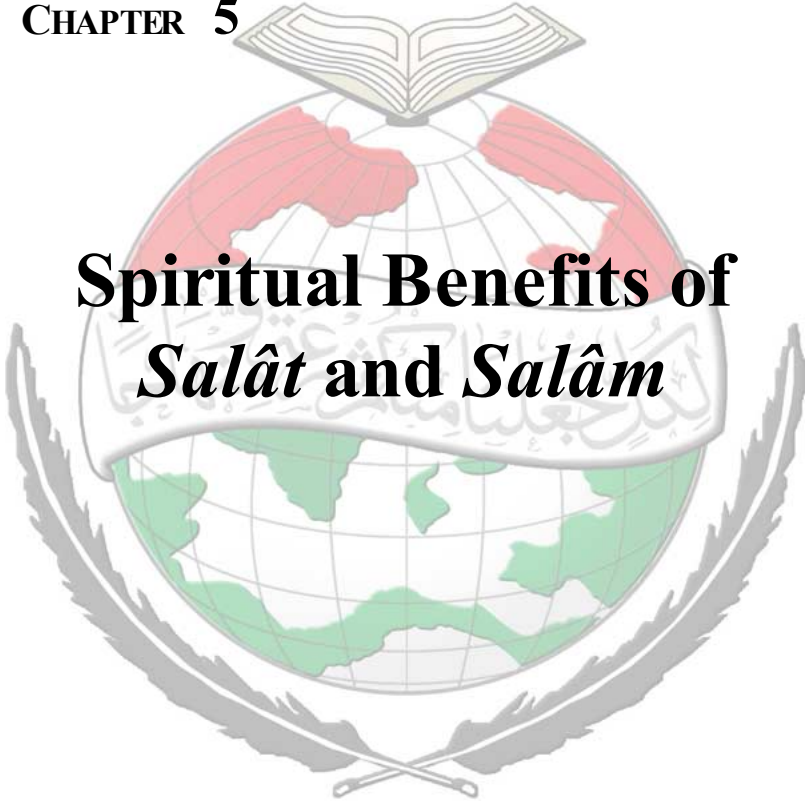


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CHAPTER 5



Spiritual Benefits of
Salât and Salâm



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Entering into a new millennium, we live in an age of technological advancements. World Wide Web sites and mass communication systems have brought mankind closer together, more so than ever before. Where once one would have waited months or even years to hear the fate of loved ones, news can now travel instantaneously. Yet despite this apparent closeness human kind has been left spiritually bereft. All materialistic demands and desires can be fulfilled in this world, but inner peace and contentment is difficult to find. This problem is being faced by Muslims themselves. Often due to a lack of knowledge and true understanding, Islam has been reduced to a *dîn*¹ of outward obligations and actions alone. Emphasis is being put upon completing legal requirements of worship alone without regard to the spiritual contentment of the heart.

The Muslim Ummah needs to create a spiritual attachment to the Holy Prophet (SAW) in order to fill this spiritual void. Love and affection for him can create a bond so strong that no materialistic onslaught can break. The creation of a powerful and resolute affiliation is the reason why the Companions (RTA) have been given such an elevated standing and enabled them to tackle the onslaught of the non-Muslim tribes. They are considered the best Muslim generation. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) stated:

1. Arabic – way of life.

*The best people are those living in my generation, then those who will follow them, and then those who will follow the latter.*¹

The primary reason for this honour was their close and indelible affinity to the Prophet (SAW). They lived with him, travelled with him, prayed with him, fought by his side and supported him fully. Moreover, they loved, revered and respected him like none other. In return for this loyalty, Allah the Almighty granted them a status unrivalled and unattainable by any other Muslim to be born after them. In Islamic history many Muslim scholars excelled in spiritual worship. They established their prominence in knowledge, became experts in the field of *tasawwuf*² and were renowned for their miracles. Some transcended in Islamic jurisprudence, grammar and logic. Others witnessed the enigmas of *imâm* Ghazâlî and *imâm* Râzî. Unrivalled are the lectures and wise words of *mawlânâ* Rûmî and *shaykh* ‘Abd-ul Qâdir Jîlânî. Yet despite this none of them could attain the status of Abû Bakr Siddîque (RTA), ‘Umar bin Khattâb (RTA), ‘Uthmân bin ‘Affân (RTA) or ‘Alî bin Abû Tâlib (RTA).

The latter had the close privilege and company of the Holy Prophet (SAW). Although in this day and age one cannot reach the highs of those mentioned above, we can at least try and emulate an important aspect of their lives,

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1. Bukhârî transmitted it in his *as-Sahîh*, b. of *shahâdât* (witnesses) ch.9 (3:498#820); *ibid.*, b. of *fadâ'il ashâb-un-nabî* (virtues of the Prophet's Companions) ch.1 (5:2#3); *ibid.*, b. of *riqâ'iq* (softening of hearts) ch.7 (8:292#437); Tirmidhî in his *al-Jâmi'us-sahîh*, b. of *manâqib* (virtues) ch.57 (5:695#3859), and graded it *hasan* (fair) and *sahîh* (sound).
 2. mysticism; sufism.

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namely creating our own link with Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Sending *salât* and *salâm* upon the Prophet (SAW) is one way of doing this. By observing this act, the hearty affiliation that results from it creates confidence in the sender and becomes the best credence to abide by the commands of Allah (SWT) and His Prophet (SAW).

This can be illustrated by a simple example. Suppose for instance a man, desiring to have a shave attends a barbers shop for this service. A barber's razor is a sharp-edged instrument that can cut the jugular vein of a man instantly. However, on account of soothing confidence, the man surrenders his neck to the barber during the course of the shave. He is quite content that nothing unpleasant will happen to him. If man can create this type of confidence and trust with another individual, surely he should be able to do the same with the Holy Prophet (SAW). One of the best ways of obtaining this hearty affiliation and confidence is complete submission to the Prophet (SAW) by his disciple and the finest means of submission is offering *salât* and *salâm*.

It is a common thing that the inception of a relationship begins with greetings. A link is established with an unknown person through greetings. It is incumbent upon all Muslims to greet each other with salutations of *salâm* when they meet. This is regardless as to whether they are already acquainted. The obligation of paying *salâm* is a *sunnah* of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and failing to do so is considered abhorrent, ill-mannered and a minor sin. Once a person receives a greeting though, it becomes obligatory to reply. This obligation cannot be ignored. Failure to reply constitutes a major sin. A universal greeting such as this, which crosses all linguistic and cultural barriers, creates an immediate link and cooperation, a powerful unifying force.

This salutation is a cogent force which can melt and overwhelm all barriers and resentments. It can even bring enemies close together again. It allows warring parties to put aside their differences without 'losing face' and still address each other civilly.

So when a devotee starts his relationship with the inception of *salât* and *salâm* upon the Prophet (SAW) with steadfastness and constancy, the gradual process of appreciation by the Prophet (SAW) starts. Initially the Prophet (SAW) pays heed to his devotee. Then the Prophet (SAW) looks towards him with a smile and waits for his greetings. When there is a discontinuity in the greetings, the Prophet (SAW) asks the angels about the cause of this discontinuity. If the angels say that the person is sick, the Prophet (SAW) comes in his dream and soothes him. What more can a pious Muslim desire? *Salât* and *salâm* is thus one of the most blessed, meritorious, and useful deeds in Islam. All those who are desirous to acquire deeds that constitute treasures for them, to harvest the most flourishing and glowing of hopes will *Inshâ'Allah*¹ always present salutations upon the Noble Prophet (SAW).

Sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallama taslîman kathîrâ
May Allah bless him and greet him abundantly.²

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1. If Allah wills.
 2. Some of the mentioned spiritual benefits of *salât* and *salâm* narrated by Muhammad bin 'Abd-ur-Rahmân as-Sakhâwî in his *al-Qawl-ul-badî' fis-salât 'alal habîb-ish-shafi'*, pp.101-2.



Glossary

Âdam: name of the first Prophet of Allâh, i.e. Adam.

‘Asr: afternoon prayer time; midway between *zuhr* and *maghrib*.

bid‘ah: innovation.

dhikr: literally remembrance; reminder; evocation. The Qur‘ân stresses human forgetfulness, with continual imperatives to remember Allah, one’s own mortality, and the day of judgement. The Qur’an refers to itself and earlier revelations as a *dhikr* (reminder). *Dhikr* refers both to a divine name or Qur’anic phrase repeatedly chanted, and to the practice of chanting.

du‘â’: making supplication to Allâh.

hadîth: pl. *hadîths* or *ahâdîth*. The sayings, practice and approved traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

hajj: the yearly pilgrimage of the Muslims to Makkah.

harâm: unlawful, forbidden and punishable from the viewpoint of religion; also an inviolable place or object.

hasan: a *hadîth*, narrated by a reliable chain though not approaching the grade of *sahîh* (sound) *hadîth*, but records a complete chain of narrators up to the Prophet (SAW).

imâm: One who leads prayers; an eminent Islamic scholar.

îmân: literally faith or belief, *îmân* is technically faith in the religion of Islam, the person with *îmân* being a *mu'min*. The Arabic word connotes security: one who believes becomes secure against untruth and misguidance in this world and against punishment in the next. *Îmân*, in the sense of "to become a believer," distinguishes a Muslim from a non-Muslim. In sum, it represents beliefs in the following: the oneness of God, angels, Prophets, revealed books, and the Hereafter. The phrase *îmân bil-ghayb*, usually translated "belief in the unseen," stands for belief in metaphysical realities that are inaccessible to the senses but are presumably affirmed by reason.

‘Îsâ: name of Allâh’s penultimate Messenger, Jesus.

‘Ishâ’: evening and in particular, *‘Ishâ* prayer, the obligatory night prayer.

Jibrîl: the archangel Gabriel who brought the revelations of Allâh to His Messengers (AS).

madrasah: a college for higher studies where the Islamic sciences are taught. In the past, the *madrasah* was devoted primarily to teaching law, and the other Islamic sciences and literary philosophical subjects were optionally taught. Today, however, the designation *madrasah* is ambiguous.

Although originally the *madrasah* was created as an institution of Islamic higher learning in contrast to the *kuttab* or *maktab*, the children's schools in the Middle East, currently the term *madrasah* is sometimes used for establishments for elementary teaching of Qur'anic knowledge.

Maghrib: the time of sunset, lit. the west. In particular, the obligatory *Maghrib* prayer, which is just after the sunset.

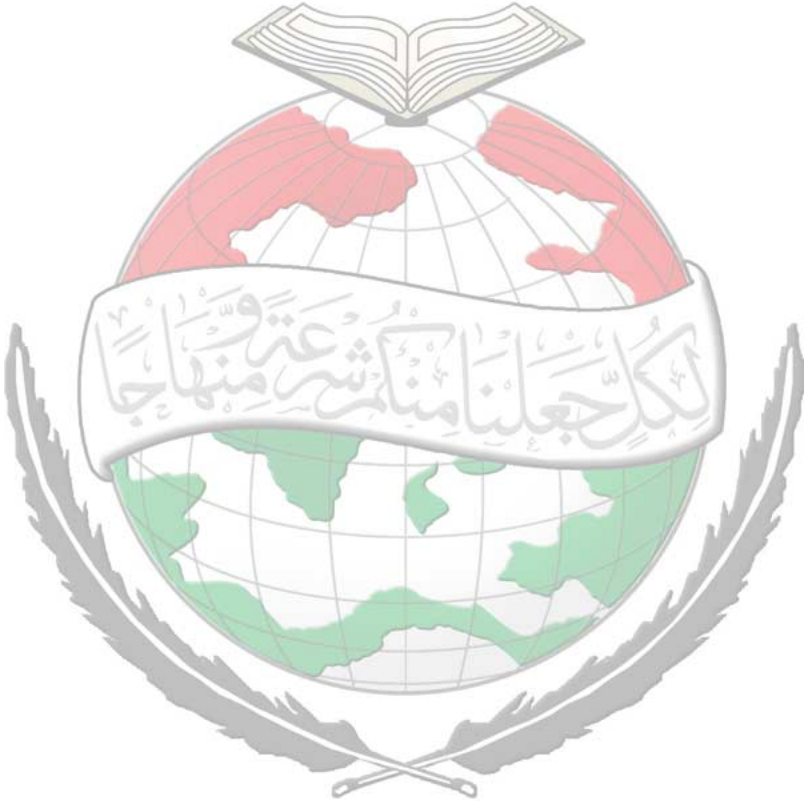
mu'adhdhin: one who gives the *adhân*, the call to prayer, loudly calling people to come and perform the *salât* (prayer).

sahîh: sound. A *hadîth* with an unbroken chain of narrators, ranging from the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and approaching an era through reliable reporters without being *shâdh* (odd) or *mu'allal* (faulty) in between the two cross relaters.

sunnah: pl. *sunan*. literally the path, way or a form, the customary practice of a person or a group of people. It has come to refer almost exclusively to the legal way or ways, orders, acts of worship and statements etc., of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) which have become models to be followed by the Muslims.

sharî'ah: literally road. It is a legal modality of a people based on the revelation of their Prophet (AS). The last *sharî'ah* is that of Islam that abrogates all previous *sharî'ahs*.

zakât: a yearly fixed percentage of wealth and property of the Muslims liable to *zakât* to be paid to the poor of the Muslim community. It is obligatory, as it is one of the five indispensable pillars of Islam.



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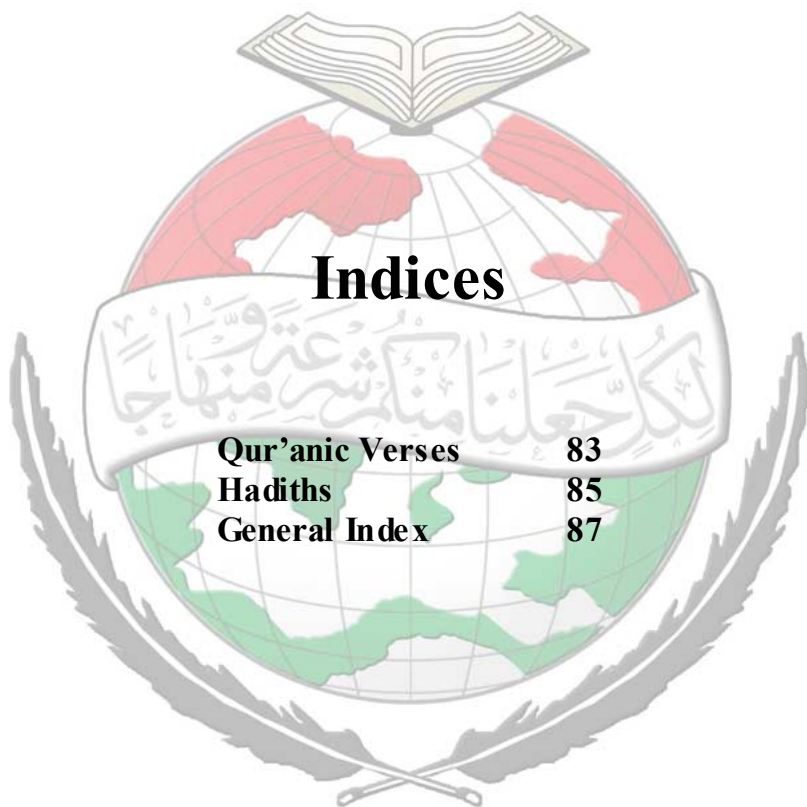
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 63 حياتي خير لكم، ومماتي خير لكم-
 70 خير الناس قرني، ثم الذين يلونهم، ثم الذين يلونهم-
 43 رغم أنف رجل ذكرت عنده فلم يصل عليّ-
 41, 59 صلوا عليّ، فإن صلاتكم تبلغني حيث كنتم-
 33 عجلت أيها المصلي! إذا صليت فقعدت، فاحمد الله
 38 لقيت جبريل فقال: إني أبشرك أن الله يقول: من سلم عليك
 43 ما جلس قوم مجلساً لم يذكروا الله فيه ولم يصلوا على نبيهم
 49 ماشئت، فإن زدت فهو خير لك
 37, 61 ما من أحد يسلم عليّ إلا رد الله عليّ روحي
 37, 62 ما من مسلم سلم عليّ في شرقٍ ولا غربٍ إلا أنا
 38 ما من مسلم يصلني عليّ إلا صلّت عليه الملائكة ما صلى عليّ
 38 من سلم عليّ عشراً فكأنما أعتق رقبة-
 35 من صلى عليّ صلاة واحدة، صلى الله عليه عشر صلوات
 41 من صلى عليّ عند قبري سمعته، و من صلى عليّ نائياً أبلغته-
 36 من صلى عليّ واحدة، صلى الله عليه عشراً-
 58 من كلمه روح القدس، لن يؤذن للأرض أن تأكل من لحمه-
 43 من نسي الصلاة عليّ، خطي طريق الجنة-
 57 وبعد الموت، إن الله حرم على الأرض أن تأكل أجساد الأنبياء
 61 ولئن قام عليّ قبري، فقال: يا محمد! لأجيبه-

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