

The Verse of Prayer (*Salat*)

“Surely Allah (The Exalted) and His Angels send blessings on the messenger. O you who believe! Send Blessing (Salawaat) and Salutations (Salaams) on the Prophet with worthy Salutation.”ⁱ

This verse refers to the salutation *salawat*, which a Muslim is obliged to send on the Prophet (May Allah bless him and grant him peace) and his progeny during the five daily prayers.

In this verse, the Muslims are ordered here to send blessings on the Prophet (May Allah bless him and grant him peace) and his family. The emphasis on the Prophet’s family, in salutation, is yet another indication of their pivotal position after the Prophet (May Allah bless him and grant him peace). By asking the Muslims to exalt them, Allah (The Exalted) was reminding the Muslim communities that He had chosen the *Ahlul-Bayt*, for the role of leading the Muslim nation.

In his *‘Tafsir al-Kabir’*, Imam Fakhruddin Razi, commenting on the above verse, narrates the following quotation from the Prophet (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), who was asked by some of his companions on how to send blessings upon him. The Prophet (May Allah bless him and grant him peace) replied:

“O Allah, send blessings on Muhammad and on Muhammad’s progeny as You sent blessings on Abraham and on Abraham’s progeny; and send grace on Muhammad and on Muhammad’s progeny, as You sent grace on Abraham and on Abraham’s progeny, You are the Praiseworthy, the Glorious.”

It is necessary (Wajib) to send blessings upon the Prophet (May Allah bless him and grant him peace) and his family otherwise the Salaah will be incomplete as is the belief of Imam Shafi’i:

*“O Household of the Messenger of Allah, love for you
Is an obligation from Allah, revealed in the Qur’an.
It suffices as the greatest honour bestowed on you
That his prayer comes of nothing who does not salute you.”*

Imam Razi further states: “If Allah (The Exalted) and His angels send their blessings on the Prophet (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), then what need is there for our blessings?” He, himself, provides the answer: “When we send blessings on him, it is not because he is in need of them, but, because of already having Allah’s blessings, he does not even require the blessings of the angels. When we send, we send to glorify Allah, and, also, it (sending blessings) reveals our gratitude towards Allah, so that He may have compassion on us and reward us. That is why the Prophet said;

“Whoever sends blessings on me once, Allah will send blessings on him ten times.”

Imam Suyuti in his *Dur al-Manthur*, citing Imam Abdul-Razzaq, Imam Ibn Abi Shaiba, Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Imam Abd ibn Hamid, Imam Bukhari, Imam Muslim, Imam Abu Dawud, Imam Tirmidhi, Imam Nisa’i, Imam ibn Maja, Imam ibn Mardawaya, who have all narrated from Ka’b ibn Ujra, says: a man once said to the Prophet (May Allah bless him and grant him peace) that greeting him is clear to everyone, but, how does one send blessings on him. The Prophet replied:

“O Allah, send blessings on Muhammad and on Muhammad’s progeny as You sent blessings on Abraham and on Abraham’s progeny, You are the Praiseworthy, the Glorious.””

Imam Suyuti has cited eighteen different narrations other than this, with slight variations, stressing that the blessings on the Prophet (May Allah bless him and grant him peace) should include his progeny, also. The same has been narrated by compilers of all “*Sunan*” and “*Jawami*”, books quoting a number of the Prophet’s companions, such as; Sayyidina Abdullah ibn Abbas, Sayyidina Talha, Sayyidina Abu Sa’id Khidri, Sayyidina Abu Huraira, Sayyidina Abu Mas’ud Ansari, Sayyidina Buraida, Sayyidina ibn Mas’ud, Sayyidina Ka’b ibn Amra, and last, but not the least, Sayyidina ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib, himself.

Thus, all jurists agree that it is obligatory for Muslims to send blessings on the Messenger of Allah (May Allah bless him and grant him peace) and his progeny during the *Tashahud* in the five daily prayers.

We also find that the family of Sayyidina Ibrahim where all Prophet (upon whom be peace) i.e. Sayyidina Ismail, Sayyidina Ishaq, Sayyidina Musa and Sayyidina Isa etc. As the Messenger of Allah (May Allah bless him and grant him peace) is the final Prophet the responsibility of carrying the message and the secrets of Tawheed rests upon the shoulders of the family of the Prophet (May Allah bless him and grant him peace). The Family of the Prophet (May Allah bless him and grant him peace) have been raised in the blood line of the Prophets’ (upon them peace).

By analyzing this verse we easily discover the real objective behind this obligatory command; which is to revere the Messenger of Allah (May Allah bless him and grant him peace) pure progeny, from whom Allah (The Exalted) has kept away all uncleanness and error, and made them pure as pure can be. The emphasis on his “family” by the Prophet (May Allah bless him and grant him peace), is yet another indication to the Muslims of their pivotal position after him. By commanding Muslims, to send their blessings on them, Allah (The Exalted), was reminding Muslims of the *Ahlul-Bayt*’s eventual leadership. In other words, by taking them as exemplars and accepting their leadership, the Muslims would be spared from trials and controversies.

So, it is clear that Allah (The Exalted) has not mentioned them in the prayers for nought. Had it not been for their probity that was proved time and again and for their magnanimity of character, as well as, their deep knowledge, Allah (The Exalted) would not have ordered the Muslims to adhere to their straight course and seek blessings for them in every prayer. The very fact that this blessing should be invoked every day in each prayer a Muslim performs was but to draw the attention of the Muslim communities towards the significance of the *Ahlul-Bayt*; which should serve as a constant reminder that it is they who are the Messenger’s (May Allah bless him and grant him peace) rightful heirs. Or to put it more clearly, anyone ignoring their status deliberately or otherwise, has no excuses, whatsoever, and is deceiving his own self to be astray from Allah’s (The Exalted) command.

Imam Ash-Shaf’ii further states,

“It is sufficient for you as an honour that the one who does not send blessings (Durood) upon you (Oh Ahlul-Bayt), his Salaah is not valid.”

Allamah As-Sabaan states that this stanza (verse) is expressing how the Salaah of the person who does not send blessings (Salawaat and Salaam) upon the family of Allahs Beloved, is not complete unless he does so. The preferred teaching of Imam Ash-Shaf'ii is that such a person's Salaah is not correct. (*Ash-Sharf-ul-Mu'abbad page 88*)

i Surah Al-Ahzab; Surah No: ; Verse: 56