

## “It will be better for you”

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'Ubayy ibn Ka'b رضى الله عنه asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ:

يا رسول الله إني أكثر الصلاة عليك فكم أجعل لك من صلاتي فقال ما شئت قال قلت الربع قال ما شئت فإن زدت فهو خير لك قلت النصف قال ما شئت فإن زدت فهو خير لك قال قلت فالتلثين قال ما شئت فإن زدت فهو خير لك قلت أجعل لك صلاتي كلها قال : إِذَا تَكْفَى هَمَّكَ وَيَغْفِرَ لَكَ ذَنْبَكَ

"O Messenger of Allah, I send salat upon you abundantly, so how much (from my du'a) should I send salat upon you?' The Prophet ﷺ replied, 'However much you want'. To this I asked, 'a fourth?' He said, 'Whatever you want, but if you increase (in this), it will be better for you'. I then asked, 'a half?' He said, 'Whatever you want, but if you increase (in this), it will be better for you'. I then asked, 'a third?' He said, 'Whatever you want, but if you increase (in this), it will be better for you'. I then said, 'I'll make all of my salat upon you (in my dua)'. To this, he ﷺ replied, 'If you do that, you will be sufficed from your concerns, and you will be forgiven for your sins'." [1]

Sending salawat upon the Prophet ﷺ is from the greater deeds of ibadah; and making it in abundance is among the reasons to attain immense goodness and invite blessings to oneself, as well as deterrence against evil and calamities. The above noble hadeeth reflects the great care and attention the Companions paid towards this deed and showed keenness and responsibility for it. The hadeeth indicates necessity for us to praise the Prophet ﷺ by invoking Allah to send peace and blessings upon him.

Shaykh al-Islam, Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله (d.728H) said, "...and the questioner asked, 'how much of salutations should I send upon you?' Meaning 'from my du'a that I make; so this 'salat' is, from the point of language, du'a; as Allah the Most High Said, "...and invoke Allah for them. Verily! Your invocations are a source of security for them." [At-Tawbah, 103]

The Prophet ﷺ said, "**O Allah, send salah upon the family of Abi 'Awfa**" [2]. And a woman asked the Prophet ﷺ, "**O Messenger of Allah, invoke salah upon me and my husband**", at which he said, "**may Allah send salah upon you and your husband**". [3]

The meaning of such a request from the questioner is that, "O Messenger of Allah, make a du'a by which goodness is granted to us, and evil is warded off. Thus (the implication of the original question by 'Ubayy ibn Ka'b), 'how much of my du'a is due for you?' He ﷺ replied, "However much you want', until the Companion concluded, "I'll make all of my du'a as salat upon you". To which the Prophet ﷺ said, "If you do that, you will be sufficed from your concerns, and you will be forgiven for your sins."

And in another narration we find it (with the ending) as: **“Therefore Allah suffices whatever of your concerns from the matters of dunya and akhirah.”** [4]

This is the main purpose (of du'a) by which man seeks to achieve goodness for himself and push away from himself, all types of harms. Indeed du'a has an impact in fulfilling needs and removing fears; this is an explanation of that position." [end of quote]

The hadeeth doesn't mean (and Allah knows best) that people leave out making du'a for themselves and the believers, but it refers to sending plentiful salat upon the Prophet ﷺ and proclaiming its virtues, and understanding the favours gained through it. Muslims must strive in obedience to him ﷺ, and increase in their making du'a as it is from the most beloved deed to Allah; and to also increase in seeking mercy for themselves and all believing men and women. Such is (also) the resulting benefit of sending salat upon the Prophet ﷺ that has been explained clearly in the texts.

Ibn 'Uthaymeen رحمه الله (d.1421H) said in commenting on the title hadeeth, "There are two possibilities: the first possibility is what was extracted by shaykh al-Islam, that the Messenger ﷺ specified a du'a that was (only) for him. The second being: that the intention is to include the Prophet ﷺ in every du'a that you make. Otherwise, (it is known that) if a person takes the apparent meaning of the hadeeth, then he should not merely say, "O Allah forgive me", or "O Allah have mercy on me", and should not say, "O Allah, give me sustenance". Rather, it should be, "O Allah, send peace and blessings upon Muhammad ﷺ", in which case this would suffice in having his needs fulfilled. This is contrary to what the shari'ah brought, as we similarly find people are asked to make du'a for themselves in sujood, and when sitting in between the sujood, and in the opening du'a of any other acts that are narrated. This carries the concern either the Prophet ﷺ knew (and wanted to teach) a particular du'a in which du'a for the Prophet ﷺ was itself due; or the Prophet ﷺ wanted to include himself in the Companion's du'a inasmuch as to say ("my du'a" means): Whenever I make du'a for myself, I make du'a for you (too)."

The first position is supported, and is intended to dignify the question by seeking to make all of his du'a in a particular way by including the Prophet ﷺ in it, as occurs in some narrations (e.g. the wording of 'salawat Ibraheemiyah'). Mullah Ali Al-

Qari said in his 'Mirqatil Mafatih' (4/16) that, "...narrations from similar hadeeth are many, and from a narration is, 'In my prayers in the night, I send abundant salat upon you, so from this how much of my du'a is due for you' – this refers to "in lieu of my supplication at night."

The saying of 'Ubayy: "how much (from my dua) should I send salat upon you?" indicates the meaning, "from the du'a that I make for myself". And Al-Mundhiri said in his Targheeb that it means to, "make du'a abundantly". About the part, "how much (from my du'a) should I send salat upon you? His ﷺ reply, "However much you want" means to determine an amount of your own estimation". The Companion's saying, "I'll make all of my salat upon you (in my dua)" means that, "I will invoke salawat upon you with all the du'a I make for myself".

And in the last explanation, indeed this is what is sought from our du'a. If someone makes time in his du'a for sending salawat and praise upon the Prophet ﷺ, then his concerns will be addressed and his wishes in the dunya and akhirah will be fulfilled by Allah. And when someone sends salawat upon the Prophet ﷺ ten times, Allah will ﷻ send salawat upon him a hundred times. And if someone makes du'a to Allah for a fellow believer, the Angels respond with, "Ameen, and for you too". Thus making du'a for ourselves by sending salawat upon the Prophet ﷺ is a greater priority and favour for ourselves.

Ibn 'Allaan al-Sideeqi al-Shafi'i رحمه الله (d.1057H) said that one who engages in this great praise of the Prophet ﷺ, "will attain something better than what he had been asking for himself, and in addition to that he'll attain the ten-fold blessing of Allah and the prayer of His Angels. Additionally what may be added to that of great reward cannot be matched by anything else. What benefits could be greater than these? How could a worshipper attain anything like it or more precious than it? How could his du'a for himself equal any of these unmatched virtues?" [5]

In 'Tuhfat Al-Ahwadhi', it mentions there are many renderings of the original hadeeth in discussion. Some of which contain the phrase, "Verily I pray (i.e. make du'a) at night" is interchanged for, "many (of my du'a) are made for you." Therefore, the saying, "how much (from my du'a) should I send salat upon you?" is changed to "my prayer (i.e. du'a) at night (time)."

The Shari'ah has specified the times and places where some of the du'a and adhkar are supposed to be made; therefore it is preferable to dedicate time during the night - and especially the night of jumu'ah - to send abundant salawat upon the Prophet ﷺ. Leaving or missing out on this opportunity is akin to forfeiting a huge amount of good – thus we should become accustomed to performing it and encouraging others to do likewise. This is critical when we consider that our du'a is raised to Allah on one of the conditions that salat upon the Prophet ﷺ is included. The Prophet ﷺ said:

كل دعاء محجوب حتى تصلي على النبي ﷺ

**"Every du'a is withheld until you send blessings upon the Prophet ﷺ." [6]**

Sending salawat upon the Prophet ﷺ is therefore an inherent part of ibadah and integral to a Muslim's life. It is a means towards success and a way of being granted our wishes and being kept away from harm. Ibn Al-Qayyim wrote a unique and a valuable lengthy work entitled جلاء الأفهام في الصلاة والسلام على خير الأنام dedicated to the topic on the merits of salawat upon the Prophet ﷺ, times when salawat is beneficial and what exactly are the benefits achieved through them etc. He also included insightful statements of our righteous predecessors whom used to frequently enact the salawat and be persistent in it.

In summary, every Muslim yearns to increase in his perpetual love towards the Prophet ﷺ, and indeed to draw near to him with his speech and action - hoping for his companionship in the Hereafter. Such was also the desire of the Companions, and it is earnestly reported from Abu 'Umamah رضي الله عنه that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said the following words of comfort:

فمن كان أكثرهم عليّ صلاةً كان أقربهم مني منزلةً

**"...and whoever sends abundant salat upon me, will draw closer to me." [7]**

#### References:

[1] Tirmidhi, 2457 who said it was hasan saheeh. Ibn Hajar said it was hasan in his 'Muwafaqatil al-Khabaril khabar', 2/340 and 'Fath al-Bari', 11/172; Al-Bayhaqi said the hadeeth had (other) witnesses and evidence in support of it ('Shu'b al-Iman', 2/686); Al-Albani said it was hasan in his checking of Tirmidhi, and also graded it as hasan saheeh in his 'Saheeh at-Targheeb', 1670.

[2] Saheeh Muslim, 1078.

[3] Abi Daw'ud, 1533. Al-Dhahabi said the chain was 'upright and reconciled' in 'Al-Mahdhab', 2/600; graded as hasan by Ibn al-Arabi in 'Aaridatil Ahwadhi', 1/147; and saheeh by Al-Albani in his checking of Abi Daw'ud.

[4] Musannaf ibn Abi Shaybah, 8512. Graded as hasan by Al-Haythami in 'Majma az-Zawa'id', 10/163; Ibn Muflih in 'Aadaab al-Shar'iyah', 1/173 and others; Al-Albani said it was hasan saheeh in 'Saheeh at-Targheeb', 1670.

[5] Daleel al-Faliheen, 5/6

[6] Al-Tabarani, 'Mu'ajam al-Awsat', 1/220. Graded as saheeh by al-Albani in his, 'Saheeh al-Jaami', 4399. See also 'Al-Tirmidhi', 3476 & 3477 for further read.

[7] Bayhaqi, 3/249 and others. Graded as hasan by Al-Sakhawi in 'al-Qawl al-Badi', 233; al-Ajluni in 'Kashaf al-Khafa', 1/190; al-Mundhiri in his 'Targheeb', 2/404; Shawkani in his 'Tuhfat al-Dhakireen' 57. Ibn Hajar said the isnad was without problem in his 'Fath al-Bari', 11/172; al-Albani said it was hasan li-ghayrih in his 'Saheeh Targheeb', 1673. Ibn Taymiyyah said it was a very well-known narration (Majmu' Fatawa, 1/237).