

Fast 29: Salat-un-nabi or Darood

“Surely Allah and His angels bless the Prophet. O you who believe, call for blessings (*ṣalāt*) on him and salute him (*salām*) with a (becoming) salutation.” — 33:56

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ
أَمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا ﴿٣٣﴾

The invocation of Divine blessings on the Holy Prophet **by God and the angels** means that all false accusations made against him would be shown to be false and his mission would prosper by the blessings which Allah would shower on him. That is the decree **of God** which would be brought about. The **angels** act on the hearts of human beings. The meaning of angels blessing the Holy Prophet is that good and noble thoughts about him will enter the hearts of people as they study his life and work.

The believers are required to join in the sending of blessings upon the Holy Prophet. This means that **they must strive hard** to present the true picture of his life to the world, dispel misconceptions about him, and refute the false charges and objections made against him. The sending of blessings by the believers upon the Holy Prophet should **not only** be by reciting certain words and expressions but also by doing practical work of propagating his true message.

- The words of the *Darood* (as it is known in Urdu and Persian) or *Ṣalāt-un-Nabī* (as it is called in Arabic) are given in a hadith in Bukhari (hadith 3370) as follows:

We asked the Messenger of Allah, saying, O Messenger of Allah, How should one (ask Allah to) send blessings (*ṣalāt*) on you, and the members of your family, for Allah has taught us how to salute you (*salām*)? He said, Say:

*Allāhumma, ṣalli ‘alā Muḥammad-in wa
‘alā āl-i Muḥammad-in kamā ṣallai-ta
‘alā Ibrāhīma wa ‘alā āl-i Ibrāhīma,
inna-ka Ḥamīd-un Majīd.*

*Allāhumma, bārik ‘alā Muḥammad-in
wa ‘alā āl-i Muḥammad-in kamā bārak-
ta ‘alā Ibrāhīma wa ‘alā āl-i Ibrāhīma,
inna-ka Ḥamīd-un Majīd.*

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ، وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، كَمَا
صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، إِنَّكَ
حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ
اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ، وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، كَمَا
بَارَكْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، إِنَّكَ
حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ

The meaning is:

“O Allah, **exalt** Muhammad and the true followers of Muhammad as You did **exalt** Abraham and the true followers of Abraham, You are the Praised, the Magnified.

O Allah, **ble**ss Muhammad and the true followers of Muhammad as You did **ble**ss Abraham and the true followers of Abraham, You are the Praised, the Magnified.”

The word *āl*, as in *āl-i Muḥammad* and *āl-i Ibrāhīm* above, means ‘descendants’ but in case of a prophet his *āl* has the broader meaning of his ‘true followers’.

- This prayer, taught to Muslims by the Holy Prophet, **shows his humility in three ways**:
 1. While in other religions the followers pray *to* the founder of the religion, or in his name, here Muslims pray *for* the founder of their religion.
 2. The Prophet has asked for the above prayers to be said **not only for himself but also for his true followers**. According to the Quran itself, just a few verses earlier than the verse 33:56 quoted at the beginning, it is said addressing *all* believers:

“He (Allah) it is Who sends blessings (*ṣalāt*) on you, and so do His angels” (33:43).

Thus the believers gain the same blessings as those bestowed upon the Prophet due to their connection with him. The Holy Prophet himself used to send blessings on his followers. It is reported in a hadith:

“A woman said to the Prophet: Invoke blessing on me as well as on my husband (*ṣalli ‘alayya wa ‘alā zaujī*). The Prophet said: May Allah send blessing on you and your husband (*ṣallallāhu ‘alai-ki wa ‘alā zaujik*).” (Abu Dawud, hadith 1533)

3. The *Darood* calls for the same exaltation and blessings to be bestowed upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad and his true followers **as those granted to Abraham and his true followers**. Thus Muslims remember in this prayer that others before them — in fact those whose later descendants were in many ways opposed to Muslims — were granted blessings, and that Muslims be made heirs to the same blessings.

What were those blessings bestowed earlier upon Abraham and his true followers? These are mentioned in the form of **promises** to Abraham in the Bible, for example:

“I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you ... and by you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves.” (Genesis, 12:2–3)

But the earlier followers of Abraham, namely, the Jews and Christians, deviated from his teachings in their beliefs as well as their deeds. They were therefore deprived of this promise. Allah then raised the Prophet Muhammad to re-establish Abraham’s religion and to fulfil this promise of making a great and blessed nation in the world through him and his followers.

We as Muslims **must heed the warning** that previous nations, to whom God promised greatness, were deprived of this promise when they deviated from His teachings and committed misdeeds.