

The Mawlid of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

Those who celebrate the mawlid,¹ do so by asking Allah to grant blessings and peace on the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. Allah says in the Qur'an :

Allah and His angels call down blessings on the Prophet.
You who have iman!² call down blessings on him
and ask for complete peace and safety for him.
As for those who abuse Allah and His Messenger,
Allah's curse is on them in the dunya³ and the akhira.⁴
He has prepared a humiliating punishment for them.
And those who abuse men and women who are muminun,⁵
when they have not merited it,
bear the weight of slander and clear wrongdoing. (*Qur'an* : 33. 56-58)

The best of those who ask for the blessings and peace of Allah on the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, are those who do so not simply out of obedience to Allah's command – but out of love which cannot be measured :

Anas said that a man came to the Prophet and asked, "When will the Last Hour come, Messenger of Allah?" He said, "What have you prepared for it?" He said, "I have not prepared a lot of prayer or fasting or charity for it, but I love Allah and His Messenger." The Prophet said, "You will be with the one you love." [Al-Bukhari] (*Ash-Shifa* of Qadi 'Iyad : 2.2.2)

One of the best of the best of those who ask for the blessings and peace of Allah on the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was Shaykh Muhammad ibn Al-Habib, may Allah be pleased with him, who wrote the following Qasida :

The Qualities of Muhammad

Muhammad is the fountain-head of lights and darkneses and the source of their emergence from the presence of pre-endless-time.

So his light was the first of lights when He determined the manifestation of His names in the first world.

From him all things were clothed in their origination in existence, and their continuity is uninterruptedly from him.

The prophets and messengers have come from him one by one, and all the kings and all the creatures.

The relationship of the Seal and the Poles to his light is that of a drop to oceans of light and refreshment.

The sun and the moon and the stars have appeared from him, as have the throne, the tablet of forms, the footstool and the dynasties.

So witness the light which has spread through existence and do not see other-than-it, and you will soon arrive.

For he is the highest manifestation of Allah's names and the perfect secret of the attributes.

So Allah chose him in His timeless knowledge and sent him to the whole of creation and to the other messengers.

After awakening him Allah conveyed him one night to the distance of two bow-spans until he achieved his desire.

The higher world rejoiced when he ascended, and the throne gave him security from fear.

He perceived the veils and the lights until he drew near and it was proclaimed: 'Draw near My Beloved, and set aside your shyness.'

'Rejoice in the sight of Our lights and demand all you want and it will be given without delay.'

So the Chosen One returned with every noble quality and he informed the people about al-Aqsa and the paths to it.

Take refuge with him in every dilemma, oh my brother, and your speech among the people will become like honey.

Delight in hearing of his good character and qualities, and evoke his virtues, and be on guard against mistakes.

How many miracles have come from his hand? They have left the envious and all other spiritual teachings powerless.

The greatest of the miracles which were manifested for him is that Book which brought us deeds.

In every act there are benefits which come from it, whose number cannot be numbered, and which are not perceptible to the eyes.

The Book of Allah itself contains some of these benefits by which every one who is sick of heart is healed of his sickness.

No hero is capable of his mighty power, so the inability to praise him is the best of ways.

I have copied you in my praise and I have come to your compassion seeking intercession with Allah, so intercede on my behalf.

With Allah you are the greatest of creation in degree, so bring our hearts closer to what we hope for, oh my desire!

By your rank, created beings serve whoever seeks shelter with you, oh helper of every wali.⁶

O my support! I have sought shelter with you so do not leave me to my body and my self, but heal us of our ill feelings.

Nothing befalls the slave whose helper you are: on the level land and on the mountains you are my staff.

I have become confused about myself, so take me by the hand. For me there is no turning away from your first light.

May the God of the throne bless you as long as the sun of reality is manifested with the names and the acts.

And so with your family and Companions as long as the grass grows and the sky pours down abundant rain.

Then I ask for acceptance for all the Men of Allah as long as created beings give praise to the One Who is above identification with forms.

And unfold all blessings on our brothers, in this world and the next, and do not abandon us to our actions.

Forgive our parents all their mistakes, and the Muslims, by an outpouring from You – oh One before-endless-time!

(*Diwan of Shaykh* Muhammad ibn al-Habib)

It is clear that as well as asking Allah to grant blessings and peace on the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, the wise also ask the Prophet Muhammad to intercede on their behalf :

Abu Humayd said, “Abu Ja’far, the *Amir al-Mu’minin*,⁷ had a dispute with Malik in the Prophet’s mosque. Malik said to him, ‘*Amir al-Mu’minin*, do not raise your voice in this mosque. Allah taught the people how to behave by saying, “Do not raise your voices above the voice of the Prophet ...” (49: 2) He praises people with the words, “Those who lower their voices when they are with the Messenger of Allah ...” (49: 3) He censures people, saying, “As for those who call out to you ... (49: 4) Respect for him when he is dead is the same as respect for him when he was alive.’

“Abu Ja’far was humbled by this. He asked Malik, ‘Abu ‘Abdullah, do you face qibla⁸ when you supplicate or do you face the Messenger of Allah?’ He replied, ‘Why would you turn your face from him when he is your means and the means of your father, Adam, to Allah on the Day of Rising? I face him and ask him to intercede and Allah will grant his intercession. Allah says, “If only when they wronged themselves they had come to you and asked Allah’s forgiveness and the Messenger had asked forgiveness for them ...”’” (4: 63) (*Ash-Shifa* of Qadi ‘Iyad : 2.3.3)

If anyone should ask you, “Is it permissible or necessary to celebrate the mawlid of the Prophet Muhammad,” may Allah bless him and grant him peace, ask them, “Is it permissible or necessary to breathe?” and tell them, “In the hadith of Anas, the Prophet said, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, “Whoever loves me will be with me in the Garden.”

Hajj Ahmad Thomson

Notes :

¹ *mawlid* : or *mawlud*, a time, place and celebration of the birth of anyone, especially that of the Prophet Muhammad, who was born on the 12th Rabi‘al-Awwal/30th August 570 CE.

² *iman* : belief, faith, acceptance in the heart of Allah and His Messenger. Iman consists of believing in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, the Garden and the Fire, and that everything, both good and bad, is by the decree of Allah.

³ *dunya* : this world, not as cosmic phenomenon, but as experienced.

⁴ *akhira* : the Next World, what is on the other side of death.

⁵ *muminun* : the plural of *mumin*, a believer, someone who possesses *iman*, who trusts in Allah (see note ⁵).

⁶ *wali* (plural *awliya*) : someone who is “friend” of Allah, thus possessing the quality of *wilaya*, friendship, in particular with Allah, referring to the wali’s station of knowledge of the Real by direct seeing.

⁷ *Amir al-Mu’minin* : the commander of the believers, a title usually given to the *khalif*.

⁸ *qibla* : the direction faced in the prayer which is towards the Ka’ba in Makka.

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