

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah,
most Kind, most Merciful



Surat ar-Ra'd, 13:15

وَلِلَّهِ يَسْجُدُ مَنْ فِي
السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

And to Allah prostrates whoever
is in the heavens and the earth.

Learning Objectives

- To appreciate the different occasions of *sujud*
- To identify the *ayat* of *wajib* and *mustahabb sajdah* in the Qur'an
- To explain the history and philosophy of *sujud*

Key Words

سَجْدَة

Sajdah
the act of prostration

سُجُود

Sujud
plural of *sajdah*

تُرْبَة

Turbah
a small piece of clay, often a clay
tablet, used in *salah* for *sajdah*

آيَة

Ayah
sign; verse of the Qur'an



FIQH FACTS

With regards to performing a *wajib sajdah* for an *ayah* of the Qur'an:

Ruling 1079

In each of the four *surahs* of *as-Sajdah*, *Fussilat*, *an-Najm*, and *al-Alaq*, there is an *ayah* of *sajdah*, which means that if one recites this *ayah* or listens to it, he must immediately perform *sajdah* after the *ayah* has finished. If he forgets to do this, he must perform *sajdah* whenever he remembers. However, performing *sajdah* is not *wajib* if one hears such an *ayah* involuntarily, although it is better that he does.

Ruling 1083

It is not necessary to be in *wudhu*, or to face *qiblah*, and the conditions of clothing for *salah* also do not apply.

Ruling 1084

It is *ihhtiyat al-wajib* to place the forehead on a *turbah* or on something else on which it is permitted to perform *sajdah*.

Sajdah is the act of prostration. In *salah*, *sajdah* is done by placing one's forehead on a *turbah* or another acceptable surface in a special manner, with the intention of humility before Allah.

Sajdah is a gesture of humiliation which is permissible only for Allah. Although this gesture could be offered at any time or in any place, however, there are four main occasions for *sajdah*:

- 1 *Sajdah* performed in *salah*.
- 2 *Sajdah* performed after hearing certain *ayah* of the Qur'an.
- 3 *Sajdat as-sahw*, which is performed if one has forgotten or added a *ruk'n* in *salah*.
- 4 *Sajdat ash-shukr*, which is performed to thank Allah.

Let us now briefly look at each of these:

1 *Sajdah* performed in *salah*

The two *sajdahs* are an essential part of *salah*, and if they are left out or added intentionally, it makes *salah batil*; and if one of them is left out or added by mistake, it requires *sajdat as-sahw* to be performed after the *salah* to make the *salah* correct.

2 *Sajdah* performed after hearing certain *ayah* of the Qur'an

There are certain *ayah* in the Qur'an that require a *sajdah* to be performed when one hears them or recites them. These are divided into two categories:

a) *Wajib sajdah*

Upon hearing or reciting any of the following *ayah* of the Qur'an, it is *wajib* to do *sajdah*:

- 32:15
- 41:38
- 53:62
- 96:19

b) *Mustahabb sajdah*

If someone recites or listens to any of the following ten *ayat* of the Qur'an then it is *mustahabb* to perform *sajdah*:

- 7:206
- 13:15
- 16:50
- 17:109
- 19:58
- 22:18
- 25:16
- 27:26
- 38:24
- 84:21

3 *Sajdat as-sahw*

This is performed after the completion of a *salah* in which one has made certain mistakes.

Sajdat as-sahw is done because Shaytan distracted our attention and disturbed our *salah*. We perform two *sajdat as-sahw* to defy Shaytan and inform him that every time he creates disorder, we will again perform *sajdah* before Allah.

4 *Sajdat ash-shukr*

This is performed to thank Allah for His blessings and kindness, or for any other occasion that requires thanksgiving.

Although there is no specific time and place for *sajdat ash-shukr*, the best time is after every *salah*.



Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a) says:

'Whenever you remember a blessing, perform *sajdah* as a gesture of thanks.'



In *sajdat ash-shukr* any *dhikr* is allowed, but it is recommended to recite *shukran lillah* and *alhamdulillah*, and to thank Allah for making us among the followers of Ahlul Bayt (a).



FIQH FACTS

Ruling 1245.

Two *sajdat as-sahw* become necessary for five things, and they are performed after *salam*.

- 1 For talking forgetfully during prayers.
- 2 Reciting *salam* at the wrong place, like, forgetfully reciting them in the first *rak'ah*.
- 3 Forgetting *tashahhud*.
- 4 When there is a doubt in a 4 *rak'ah* prayers, after second *sajdah*, as to whether the number of *rak'ahs* performed is 4 or 5, 4 or 6.
- 5 When after *salah*, one realises that he has either omitted or added something by mistake, but that omission or addition does not render the prayers void.

These five situations call for *sajdat as-sahw*. As per recommended obligation, if a person performs only one *sajdah* forgetting the other, or if he erroneously sits down where he should stand, or vice versa, he should perform two *sajdat as-sahw*.



History of *Sujud*



The first command of Allah after creating man was the command of *sujud*.

After creating Nabi Adam, Allah ordered the angels to do *sajdah* to him. All the angels obeyed, but Iblis refused; he felt he was superior to man. Due to his disobedience, Allah expelled him from His closeness.

Sajdah is a reminder that we must always be very humble and obedient to Allah. We must always trust Allah as He knows more than us, and knows what is best for us.

Philosophy of *Sujud*

Imam Ali (a) has said:

‘The external appearance of the *sujud* is the placing of the forehead on the ground with sincerity and humility, but its spiritual meaning is ... the relief from pride and all worldly attachments.’

Imam Ali (a), concerning the wisdom behind *sujud*, has said:

‘The first *sajdah* [in *salah*] means that I was dust in the beginning, and when I raise my head it means that I came to the world from dust. The second *sajdah* [in *salah*] means that I will again return to the soil, and as I raise my head it means that on the Day of Resurrection I will be raised from the grave and be summoned.’

DID YOU KNOW?

When Allamah Hilli was still a child, he did something mischievous at home, and his uncle chased after him to punish him. As his uncle got close to catching him, the boy recited an *ayah* of *wajib sajdah*. He knew that because he was not yet *baligh*, his uncle as his guardian would have to perform *sajdah*. His uncle immediately fell down in *sajdah*, and Allamah Hilli was able to escape. His uncle got back up and followed him again, but he recited another *wajib sajdah ayah* and the uncle was forced to do *sajdah* once again. After the fourth time, the uncle finally caught his nephew and hugged him for his brilliant and quick thinking.

Imam Zayn al-Abidin (a) performed *sajdah* constantly, and he was given the title of Sajjad (one who prostrates a lot). His *sajdahs* were so long that he would sweat a great deal. The marks of *sajdah* could be seen on his forehead.

A man came to Rasulullah (s) and said, “Ya Rasulullah! Pray that Allah resurrects me with you.”

Rasulullah (s) said, “If you like to be resurrected with me then perform prolonged prostrations before Allah the One, the Compelling.”

Philosophy of prostrating on earth

We prostrate on earth but not to the earth. This is a *sunnah* of Rasulullah (s), who said: 'The earth has been made a *masjid* and *tahir* for me.' Here, the word *masjid* means 'place of *sajdah*' and *tahir* refers to earth being a source for *tayammum*.

We use a *turbah* for *sajdah* for the following reasons:

- 1 It ensures that the place we do *sajdah* is *tahir* and *mubah*, and these are conditions of *sujud* in *salah*.
- 2 Nowadays, the *masajid* and our homes are floored with rugs and carpets, etc., and *sajdah* cannot be performed on them. A *turbah* is kept so that *sajdah* can be performed.
- 3 A *turbah* made from the soil near Imam Husayn's (a) grave has special spiritual properties. Many Shi'as use *turbahs* of Karbala.



FIQH FACTS

Ruling 1085.

Sajdah should be performed on earth, and on those things which grow from earth but are not edible nor worn, (e.g. wood and leaves of trees). It is not permissible to perform *sajdah* on things which are used as food or dress (e.g. wheat, barley and cotton etc.), or on things which are not considered to be parts of the earth (e.g. gold, silver, etc.).

HIGHER LEVEL



Read the following notes relating to the importance of *sujud*, and describe in your own words why *sajdah* is such an important act of *ibadah*.

- It is the best way to attain nearness to Allah

- It is the highest degree of obedience; in *sajdah*, one places the highest part of his body (his forehead) on the earth, and this shows humility in the presence of Allah

- It is a sign of a righteous servant of Allah

- It makes *salah* beautiful. Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a) says: 'Whenever you perform *salah*, perform the *ruku* and *sujud* well, as Allah will give seventy times the reward or even more.'





KEYPOINTS

- 1 *Sajdah* is the act of prostrating with the intention of humility before Allah.
- 2 There are four types of *sajdah*: in *salah*, after hearing and/or reciting

four certain *ayat* of the Qur'an, *sajdat as-sahw*, and *sajdat ash-shukr*.

- 3 There are ten *ayat* of the Qur'an that require *mustahabb sajdah*.
- 4 The first command of Allah after creating man was the command of *sajdah*. It is the best way to attain nearness to Allah because it is the highest degree of servitude as we place our forehead upon earth and expresses humility in front of Allah.
- 5 *Sajdah* must be performed on pure earth or what grows on it. This includes dust, stone, sand, and grass.
- 6 It is *mustahabb* to prostrate on the earth from near the grave of Imam Husayn (a).



- 1 What are the four types of *sajdah*?

- 2 What is the difference in conditions for a *wajib sajdah* as opposed to a *sajdah* performed in *salah*?

- 3 Why do we perform *sajdat as-sahw* if we add or forget a *rukn* in *salah*?

- 4 What is the philosophy of prostrating on earth?



Faith in Action

- 1 Familiarise yourself with the four *wajib sajdah ayat* of the Qur'an.
- 2 Get into the habit of performing *sajdat ash-shukr* after every *salah*, after every blessing, and whenever you are faced with a difficult situation.