

Prostration (Sajdah) Of Thanks To Allah After Salat

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Prostration (Sajdah) Of Thanks To Allah After Salat

Answer Provided By

The Porch of Wisdom Institute

Under The Guidance Of Ayatullah Shaykh Hadavi Tehrani

The below Question and Answer was extracted from:

<https://www.islamquest.net/fa/archive/fa40006> [9]

Translated by Saleem Bhimji

Edited by Arifa Hudda

Published by the Islamic Publishing House – iph@iph.ca [10]

Question

What are the religious evidences for the recommendation of performing a prostration (*sajdah*) after completing the daily prayers (*salat*)? Please explain more about this – including how it should be performed, and what the rewards are.

Brief Answer

Prostration (*sajdah*) is the ultimate act of humility and submission of a servant before one's Lord, and the highest state in which a person feels closeness and proximity to Allah.

Among the recommended prostrations is one that is done after the obligatory prayers, which has been emphasized in the *ahadith* (narrations). Various remembrances (*adhkar*) for the prostration of gratitude (*sajdah al-shukr*) have been narrated, including where we are told that in this position, one can say: "Thanks, thanks [O Allah]" (*shukran, shukran*), or "Forgiveness, forgiveness [is what I seek from You – O Allah]" (*ʿafwan, ʿafwan*) – one hundred times.

However, the essence of the prostration of gratitude is placing the forehead on the ground with the intention of thanking Allah [regardless of the words used].

Detailed Answer

One of the highest states of a servant's closeness to one's Creator is the state of prostration, which expresses ultimate humility before Allah.

Prayer (*salat*) – which is one of the greatest and most important Divinely mandated obligations – is obligatory for every Muslim to perform daily. Along with standing (*qiyam*) and bowing (*rukuʿ*) in each unit (*rakʿat*), it also has two prostrations (*sujud*). We know, from studying our religious texts, that in addition to the obligatory prostrations in the daily *salat*, there are also numerous recommended prostrations which have been mentioned in Islam.

Imam Jaʿfar al-Sadiq says about the importance of prostration: "The closest state of a servant to Allah during supplication is when they supplicate in the position of prostration."¹

One of the [recommended] prostrations mentioned in the *ahadith* is the prostration of gratitude (*sajdah al-shukr*). This prostration is not specific to after completing the obligatory prayer, so a person can perform this prostration of gratitude outside of prayer to thank Allah – at any time.

Imam Jaʿfar al-Sadiq is reported to have said: "Any believer who prostrates to thank Allah for His blessings outside of prayer, Allah will write ten rewards for that person, forgive ten sins from that person, and increase that person ten degrees in their ranks in Paradise."²

Prostration of Gratitude After Prayer

One of the emphasized practices to do after each salat is to perform a prostration of gratitude. Below, we mention some points related to this:

A. Importance Of The Prostration Of Gratitude

In speaking to one of his companions about this act, Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq said: "The prostration of gratitude (*sajdah al-shukr*) – after every prayer – is necessary for [you and] every Muslim (emphasizing the recommendation of the prostration of gratitude), and through it, you increase the value of your prayers, make Allah pleased with you, and amaze the angels.

When a servant prays (the *salat*), then performs the prostration of gratitude, Allah removes the veil between that servant and the angels; then He says: 'O My angels! Look at this servant of Mine who fulfilled their obligation and completed their covenant with Me, and then thanked Me for the blessings I have given them. So, what is their reward with Me?'

The angels reply: 'O Allah! Their reward will be Paradise.'

Again, Allah asks: 'What is after Paradise?'

The angels answer: 'O Allah! Sufficiency in all of their affairs.'

Again, Allah questions: 'What is after that?'

So, the angels suggest (various) goodness's, and this act is repeated until the angels mention everything [possible].

Thereafter Allah asks: 'What is after all of those?'

The angels reply: 'O Allah! We do not know of anything more.'

Then Allah says: 'I thank them as they thanked Me; and I turn to them with My Grace and show them My Mercy.'³

B. Reason And Purpose Of The Prostration Of Gratitude

Imam ʿAli ibn Musa al-Riḍa said: "The prostration after the obligatory prayer is for a servant to thank Almighty Allah, who granted them success in performing their obligations; and the least phrase which can be said in it is to say three times: 'Thanks be to Allah (*shukran lillah*).'"

He was then asked: "What is the meaning of 'Thanks be to Allah?'"

The Imam replied: "It means: 'My prostration is for Allah because He granted me success in performing His obligations and duties.' So, gratitude causes increase, and if there is any deficiency in the prayer, it

can be compensated by this prostration.”[4](#)

C. Various Recitations (Adhkar) In The Prostration Of Gratitude

Various *adhkar* have been narrated in traditions that a person can recite in the prostration of gratitude, although the essence of these prostrations, as mentioned, is placing the forehead on the ground with the intention of thanking Allah [even without saying anything].

1. Sulayman ibn ʿAfs al-Marwazi narrates that Imam ʿAli ibn Musa al-Riʿa wrote a letter to him and said: “In the prostration of gratitude, say: ‘Thanks, thanks’ (*shukran, shukran*), or ‘Forgiveness, forgiveness’ (*ʿafwan, ʿafwan*) – one hundred times.”[5](#)

2. Imam Jaʿfar ibn Muhammad al-Sadiq said: “A worshipper should prostrate oneself after obligatory prayers to thank Allah, and express gratitude to Him for the success He has granted (the person) to be able to perform one’s obligations; and the least one should recite is: ‘Thanks be to Allah’ (*Shukran lillah*) three times.”[6](#)

Of course, other *adhkar* have also been mentioned which can be found in various books of supplications; however, due to their length, we will not mention them here.

D. Manner Of The Prostration Of Gratitude

Yahya ibn ʿAbdul Rahman ibn Khaqan says: “I saw Imam al-Hadi perform the prostration of gratitude – he placed his forearm on the ground and put his chest on the earth (brought it close to the ground).”[7](#)

E. Ruling On The Prostration Of Gratitude

Due to these narrations, in Shi’a Jurisprudence, performing the prostration of gratitude is highly recommended. Shaykh al-Tusi says about this: “The recommendation of (performing) a prostration of gratitude is during several instances:

First: When a blessing reaches a servant.

Second: When an affliction or hardship is removed from a person.

Third: After the daily prayers.”[8](#)

In the religious verdicts (*fatawa*) of the great *maraji taqlid*, it is also stated:

“It is recommended to perform the prostration of gratitude after (the daily) prayers, and it is sufficient to place the forehead on the ground with the intention of gratitude; however, it is better to say ‘Thanks be to Allah’ (*Shukran lillah*), or “Thanks, thanks” (*shukran, shukran*), or (ask for) “Forgiveness” (by saying *ʿafwan*) one hundred times, three times, or even once. It is also recommended to perform the prostration of gratitude whenever a blessing reaches a person, or an affliction is removed from the

individual.”[9](#) and [10](#)

In the prostration of gratitude, as a precaution, the seven parts of the body [which are normally placed on the ground while in *sajdah*] should be placed on the ground, and it is recommended that the forehead be placed on something on which prostration is valid, (and the condition of prostration on something that is not wearable or edible is the same here, just as is the ruling for the obligatory prostrations of the Quran). Furthermore, in the prostration of gratitude, it is recommended to spread the arms on the ground, and attach the upper part of the chest, the chest itself, and the abdomen to the ground.[11](#)

It is worth noting that in the narrations (*ahadith*) and rulings (*fatawa*) of the senior scholars, what has been referred to is performing the prostration of gratitude (*sajdah al-shukr*) after prayers – but its immediacy has not been proven.[12](#)

F. Characteristics Of The Prostration Of Gratitude After Some Obligatory Prayers

Although a prostration of thanks after the obligatory prayers are mentioned in narrations, performing it after certain specific obligatory prayers has been emphasized more.

One of the companions of Imam Musa ibn Jaʿfar al-Kazim says: “I saw the Imam prostrate after his three-unit prayer (Maghrib prayer), I said to him: ‘You prostrated after Maghrib prayer?’

He said: ‘Did you see me like this?’

I said: ‘Yes.’

He said: ‘Do not abandon this prostration (after the Maghrib prayers); for supplications in it are answered.’”[13](#)

In Conclusion:[14](#) The prostration of gratitude (*sajdah al-shukr*) after completing prayers is a highly recommended act in Islam, supported by various narrations and religious evidences. Here are some key points about this practice:

1. **Importance:** It is considered to be one of the highest states of closeness to Allah, and expresses one’s ultimate humility before the Almighty Creator.
2. **Timing:** It should be performed after each of the obligatory prayers; at any time to thank Allah for His immense blessings; or after the removal of a difficulty or affliction.
3. **Method:** The essential act is placing the forehead on the ground [upon something permissible to do *sajdah* on] with the intention of gratitude. It is recommended to place all seven parts of the body used in regular prostration on the ground as well.
4. **Adhkar (Remembrances):** Various phrases can be recited, including “Thanks be to Allah” (*Shukran lillah*) three times, or “Thanks, thanks” (*shukran, shukran*), or “(I am seeking) Forgiveness, forgiveness”

(**ʿafwan**, **ʿafwan**) one hundred times.

5. **Rewards:** It increases the value of one's prayers, pleases Allah, amazes the angels, and can lead to various blessings including Paradise and sufficiency in worldly affairs.

6. **Rulings:** It is recommended (*mustahabb*), especially after the daily prayers, when receiving a blessing, or when a hardship is removed.

7. **Emphasis:** Some narrations particularly emphasize its performance after the Maghrib (sunset) prayer, stating that supplications during this prostration are answered.

This practice serves as a means to express one's gratitude, seek forgiveness from the Almighty, and draw closer to Allah after fulfilling the obligation of prayer.

Prostration of Gratitude (Sajdah al-Shukr)

Extracted from the four-volume *Tawzih al-Masa'il Jami'* (Comprehensive Explanation of Issues – Volume 1).

Issue 1474: It is recommended (*mustahabb*) for a person to perform the *Sajdah al-Shukr* (prostration of gratitude) after completing any prayer, whether it is an obligatory (*wajib*) or recommended (*mustahabb*) prayer. Simply prostrating and placing the forehead on the ground with the intention of gratitude is sufficient, even if no specific supplication (*dhikr*) is recited. However, it is better to say *Shukran Lillah* (Thanks to Allah), *Shukran* (Thanks), or **ʿAfwan** (Forgiveness) either 100 times, three times, or even just once.

It is also preferable to perform two prostrations of gratitude in the following manner:

1. Place the forehead on the ground with the intention of performing the first prostration.
2. Then place the right side of the forehead or the right cheek – or both – on the ground.
3. Afterward, place the left side of the forehead or the left cheek – or both – on the ground.
4. Finally, place the forehead on the ground again with the intention of performing the second prostration.

Additionally, it is recommended to perform *Sajdah al-Shukr* whenever one receives a blessing or when a calamity is averted.

Issue 1475: In *Sajdah al-Shukr*, it is recommended (*mustahabb*) for a person to touch both arms (from elbows to fingertips), their chest, and their stomach to the ground. After lifting their head from prostration, they should wipe their place of prostration with their hand and then pass their hand over their face and

the front portion of their body.

Issue 1476: As a matter of obligatory precaution (*al-ihiyat al-wajib*), one should place their forehead on a *mohr* (a piece of clay used for prostration) or another object that is permissible for prostration during *Sajdah al-Shukr*. Additionally, as a recommended precaution (*al-ihiyat al-mustahabb*), other parts of the body should be placed on the ground in accordance with how they are positioned during regular prostration in prayer.

It is worth noting that if there is a reason for performing *Sajdah al-Shukr*, but a person cannot physically prostrate on the ground, they may indicate it by lowering their head and placing their cheek on their palm (Note: The palm includes the fingers as previously mentioned) or its back while expressing gratitude to Almighty Allah.

O Allah! Send Your prayers upon Muhammad and the family of Muhammad!

1. Kulayni, Muhammad ibn Ya'qub, Al-Kafi, Vol. 3, Pg. 323, Dar Al-Kutub al-Islamiyya, Tehran, 4th edition, 1407 AH. The Arabic text of this is as follows:

أَقْرَبُ مَا يَكُونُ الْعَبْدُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ إِذَا دَعَا رَبَّهُ وَهُوَ سَاجِدٌ.

2. Shaykh al-Suduq, Thawab, al-A'mal wa 'Iqab al-A'mal. Pg. 35, Dar al-Sharif al-Radi lil-Nashr, Qum, 2nd edition, 1406 AH. The Arabic text of this is as follows:

أَيُّمَا مُؤْمِنٍ سَجَدَ لِلَّهِ سَجْدَةً لِشُكْرِ نِعْمَةٍ مِنْ غَيْرِ صَلَاةٍ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ بِهَا عَشْرَ حَسَنَاتٍ وَمَحَا عَنْهُ عَشْرَ سَيِّئَاتٍ وَرَفَعَ لَهُ عَشْرَ دَرَجَاتٍ فِي الْجَنَّةِ

3. Shaykh al-Saduq, Man la Yahduru al-Faqih, Vol. 1, Pg. 333, Islamic Publications Office, Qum, 2nd edition, 1413 AH.

The Arabic text of this is as follows:

سَجْدَةُ الشُّكْرِ وَاجِبَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ. تُبَيَّنُ بِهَا صَلَاتُكَ، وَتُرْضَى بِهَا رَبِّكَ، وَتَعْجِبُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ مِنْكَ. وَإِنَّ الْعَبْدَ إِذَا صَلَّى ثُمَّ سَجَدَ سَجْدَةَ الشُّكْرِ فَتَحَ الرَّبُّ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى الْحِجَابَ بَيْنَ الْعَبْدِ وَبَيْنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ، فَيَقُولُ: يَا مَلَائِكَتِي انظُرُوا إِلَى عَبْدِي أَذَى فَرَضِي وَأَتَمَّ عَهْدِي ثُمَّ سَجَدَ لِي شُكْرًا عَلَى مَا الْعَمْتُ بِهِ عَلَيْهِ مَلَائِكَتِي مَاذَا لَهُ عِنْدِي؟ قَالَ: فَتَقُولُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ: يَا رَبَّنَا رَحِمَتُكَ، ثُمَّ يَقُولُ الرَّبُّ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى ثُمَّ مَاذَا لَهُ؟ فَتَقُولُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ: يَا رَبَّنَا جَنَّتَكَ ثُمَّ يَقُولُ الرَّبُّ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى ثُمَّ مَاذَا؟ فَتَقُولُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ: يَا رَبَّنَا كِفَايَةُ مُهِمِهِ. فَيَقُولُ الرَّبُّ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى ثُمَّ مَاذَا؟ قَالَ: وَلَا يَبْقَى شَيْءٌ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ إِلَّا قَالَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ، فَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى: يَا مَلَائِكَتِي ثُمَّ مَاذَا؟ فَتَقُولُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ: رَبَّنَا لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا. قَالَ: فَيَقُولُ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى: أَشْكُرُ لَهُ كَمَا شَكَرَ لِي وَأَقْبِلْ إِلَيْهِ بِفَضْلِي وَأَرِهِ وَجْهِي.

4. Shaykh al-Saduq, Ilal al-Shara'i, Vol. 2, Pg. 360, Davari Bookstore, Qum, 1st edition, 1426 AH. The Arabic text of this is as follows:

عَنْ أَبِي الْحَسَنِ الرِّضَا قَالَ: السَّجْدَةُ بَعْدَ الْفَرِيضَةِ شُكْرًا لِلَّهِ تَعَالَى ذِكْرُهُ عَلَى مَا وَفَّقَ الْعَبْدَ مِنْ أَدَاءِ فَرَضِهِ وَأَدْنَى مَا يُجْزِي فِيهَا مِنَ الْقَوْلِ أَنْ يُقَالَ شُكْرًا لِلَّهِ شُكْرًا لِلَّهِ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ قُلْتُ: فَمَا مَعْنَى قَوْلِهِ شُكْرًا لِلَّهِ؟ قَالَ: يَقُولُ هَذِهِ السَّجْدَةُ مِنِّي شُكْرًا لِلَّهِ عَلَى مَا وَفَّقَنِي لَهُ مِنْ خِدْمَتِهِ وَأَدَاءِ فَرَضِهِ وَالشُّكْرُ مُوجِبٌ لِلزَّيَادَةِ فَإِنْ كَانَ فِي الصَّلَاةِ تَقْصِيرٌ تَمَّ بِهِدِ السَّجْدَةَ.

5. Man la Yahduru al-Faqih, Vol. 1, Pg. 332. The Arabic text of this is as follows:

كُتِبَ إِلَيَّ أَبُو الْحَسَنِ الرِّضَا قُلْتُ: فِي سَجْدَةِ الشُّكْرِ مِائَةٌ مَرَّةً: شُكْرًا شُكْرًا وَإِنْ شِئْتَ عَفْوًا.

6. Man la Yahduru al-Faqih, Vol. 1, Pg. 333. The Arabic text of this is as follows:

إِنَّمَا يَسْجُدُ الْمُصَلِّي سَجْدَةً بَعْدَ الْفَرِيضَةِ لِشُكْرِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى ذِكْرُهُ فِيهَا عَلَى مَا مَنَ بِهِ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَدَاءِ فَرَضِهِ وَأَدْنَى مَا يُجْزِي فِيهَا شُكْرًا لِلَّهِ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ.

7. Tahdhib al-Ahkam, Vol. 2, Pg. 85. The Arabic text of this is as follows:

رَأَيْتُ أَبَا الْحَسَنِ الثَّالِثَ سَجَدَ سَجْدَةَ الشُّكْرِ فَافْتَرَشَ ذِرَاعَيْهِ وَالصَّوْقَ صَدْرَهُ وَبَطْنَهُ فَسَأَلْتُهُ عَنْ ذَلِكَ فَقَالَ كَذَا يَجِبُ.

8. Shaykh al-Tusi, Al-Khilaf, Vol. 1, pg. 434, Islamic Publications Office, Qum, 1st edition, 1407 AH.

9. Ayatullah Khomeini, Tawdih Al-Masa'il (annotated), Vol. 1, Pg. 607, Islamic Publications Office, Qum, 8th edition, 1424

AH.

[10.](#) See Appendix I for the rulings of Ayatullah al-Sistani with respect to the Prostration of Thanks. (Tr.)

[11.](#) Ayatullah Khomeini, Tahrir al-Wasila, Vol. 1, Pg. 323, Islamic Publications Office, Qum, 21st edition, 1412 AH.

[12.](#) In some Persian Treatises by scholars, it is stated: “Know that after finishing the post-prayer supplications (ta’qibat) after each prayer, the prostration of gratitude (sajdah shukr) after each prayer is an emphasized tradition;” meaning that the prostration of gratitude is a tradition after the post-prayer supplications; see: Majlisi, Muhammad Baqir, Twenty-five Persian Treatises, researcher and editor: Raja’i, Sayyid Mahdi, Pg. 270, Ayatullah Mar’ashi Najafi Library Publications, Qum, 1st edition, 1412 AH.

[13.](#) Man la Yahduruhu al-Faqih, Vol. 1, Pg. 331.

[14.](#) Conclusion provided by the translator.

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