

PROSTRATION OF FORGETFULNESS [*SUJUD AS-SAHW*]

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PROSTRATION OF FORGETFULNESS [*SUJUD AS-SAHW*]

DUE TO DOUBT

“When anyone of you stands for the *salah*, Satan comes and puts him in doubts till he forgets how many *raka’ah* he has offered. So if this happens to anyone of you, he should perform two prostrations [of *sahw*] while sitting.”¹

“Allah’s Messenger [saws] said, ‘When the call for *salah* is made, Satan takes to his heels passing wind so that he may not hear the *adhan*. And when the call is finished he comes back and when the *iqamah* is pronounced Satan takes to his heels; and when the *iqamah* is finished, he comes back again and tries to interfere with the person and his thoughts and say, ‘Remember this and that till the person offering *salah* forgets how much [*raka’ah*] he has offered. If anyone of you does not remember whether he has offered three or four *raka’ah*, then he should perform two prostrations [of *sahw*] while sitting.’”²

“I [‘Iyad bin Hilal (ra)] said to Abu Sa’id [ra], ‘One of us performs *salah* and we do not know how [much] prayed.’ So he said, ‘Allah’s Messenger [saws] said, “When one of you performs *salah*, and he does not know how [much] he prayed then let him perform two prostrations while he is sitting.’””³

“If one of you prays and is unsure whether he has prayed more or less let him prostrate twice while he is sitting. And if the *Shaitan* comes to him and says, ‘You have nullified [your ablution]’ then say, ‘You have lied!’ Unless he detects some odour with his nose or some sound with his ears.”⁴

DUE TO ADDITION OR OMISSION

“The Messenger of Allah [saws] offered *salah*, and he added or omitted something. It was said, ‘O Messenger of Allah [saws] has something been added to the prayer?’ He said, ‘I am human like you, and I forget as you forget. If one of you forgets something, let him prostrate twice while he is sitting.’ Then the Messenger of Allah [saws] turned around and prostrated twice.”⁵

BEFORE THE *TASLIM*

WHEN IT IS DUE TO OMISSION AND YOU KNOW BEFORE THE *TASLIM*

Abu Al-Muhallab [ra] narrated from ‘Imran bin Husain [ra] that the Prophet [saws] led them in *salah* and he forgot [something], so he performed two prostrations then the *Tashahhud* then the *Salam*.⁶

¹ Sahih Al-Bukhari 1232; Sahih Muslim 1265 [82/389]; Sunan An-Nasa’i Sahih 1253; Jami’ At-Tirmidhi Sahih 397; Sunan Abu Dawud Sahih 1030

² Sahih Al-Bukhari 1231; Sahih Muslim 1267 [83/389]; Sunan An-Nasa’i Sahih 1254

³ Jami’ At-Tirmidhi Hasan 396

⁴ Sunan Abu Dawud Hasan 1029

⁵ Sahih Muslim 1285 [94/572], 1287 [96/572]

⁶ Jami’ At-Tirmidhi Sahih 395

PROSTRATION OF FORGETFULNESS [*SUJUD AS-SAHW*]

HADITHS OF 'ABDULLAH BIN BUHAINAH [RA]

“Allah’s Messenger [saws] stood up for the *dhudhr* prayer, and he should have sat, and when he finished the *salah*, he performed two prostrations [of *sahw*] and said *Takbir* on each prostration while sitting before ending with *Taslim*, and the people too performed the two prostrations with him for that sitting which he forgot.”⁷

It was narrated from ‘Abdullah bin Buhainah Al-Asadi [ra] the allies of Banu ‘Abdul-Muttalib that the Messenger of Allah [saws] stood up during *dhudhr* prayer when he should have sat. When he finished his prayer, he prostrated twice saying the *Takbir* with each prostration while he was sitting and before saying the *Taslim* and the people prostrated with him to compensate for the sitting that he had forgotten.⁸

“Allah’s Messenger [saws] got up after the second *raka’ah* of the *dhudhr* prayer without sitting in between. When he finished the *salah*, he performed two prostrations and then finished the *salah* with *Taslim*.”⁹

“Allah’s Messenger [saws] once led us in a *salah* and offered two *raka’ah* and got up [for the third *raka’ah*] without sitting [after the second *raka’ah*]. The people also got up with him, and when he was about to finish his *salah* we waited for him to finish the *salah* with *Taslim*, but he said *Takbir* before *Taslim* and performed two prostrations with *Taslim*.”¹⁰

It was narrated from Ibn Buhainah that the Prophet [saws] prayed and stood up following the first two *raka’ah* and they said [*Subhan Allah*]. He carried on then when he had finished his prayer he performed two prostrations then he said the *Salam*.¹¹

WHEN IT IS DUE TO DOUBT AND YOU CANNOT DECIDE WHICH OF THE TWO IS MORE LIKELY

“When one of you becomes forgetful in his *salah* so that he does not know if he prayed one or two then let him consider it one. When he does not know if he prayed three or four, then let him consider it three and let him perform two prostrations before he says the *Taslim*.”¹²

“If one of you is doubtful in his prayer and is not sure how much he prays three or four then let him pray a *raka’ah* and prostrate twice while he is sitting – before he says the *Taslim*. So if the *raka’ah* that he prayed was actually a fifth, then he would have made [the prayer] even with these two prostrations. And if it were the fourth *raka’ah*, then these two prostrations will infuriate the *shaytan*.”¹³

“The Messenger of Allah [saws] said, ‘If one of you is unsure when in prayer and does not know how many *raka’ah* he has prayed whether it is three or four let him ignore what is uncertain and proceed on the basis what is certain. Then let him prostrate twice before saying the *Taslim*. Then if he has prayed five [*raka’ah*] that will make his prayer even and if he has prayed it properly with four, it will annoy the *Shaitan*.”¹⁴

⁷ Sahih Al-Bukhari 1230; Jami’ At-Tirmidhi Sahih 391

⁸ Sahih Muslim 1270 [86/570], 1271 [87/570]; Sunan An-Nasa’i Sahih 1262

⁹ Sahih Al-Bukhari 1225

¹⁰ Sahih Al-Bukhari 1224; Sunan Abu Dawud Sahih 1034; Sunan An-Nasa’i Sahih 1223; Sahih Muslim 1269 [85/570]

¹¹ Sunan An-Nasa’i Sahih 1179, 1178, 1224

¹² Jami’ At-Tirmidhi Hasan 398

¹³ Sunan Abu Dawud Sahih 1026

¹⁴ Sahih Muslim 1272 [88/571]; Sunan Abu Dawud Sahih 1024; Sunan An-Nasa’i Sahih 1239, 1240

PROSTRATION OF FORGETFULNESS [*SUJUD AS-SAHW*]

AFTER THE *TASLIM*

WHEN IT IS DUE TO ADDITION

“The Messenger of Allah [saws] once led us in a prayer and prayed five [*raka'ah*]. When he had turned around, the people started mumbling among themselves. So he asked them, ‘What is the matter?’ They said, ‘O Messenger of Allah [saws] has the prayer been increased?’ He said, ‘No.’ So they said, ‘But you have prayed five [*raka'ah*]!’ So he turned around prostrated twice then said the *Taslim*. Then he said, ‘I am only human – I forget as they forget.’”¹⁵

“Alqamah [ra] led us in the prayer and prayed five [*raka'ah*]. When he said the *Taslim*, the people said, ‘O Abu Shibl [ra] you prayed five [*raka'ah*].’ He said, ‘No, I did not.’ They said, ‘Yes, you did.’ I [Ibrahim bin Suwaid (ra)] was at the edge of the crowd, and I was still a boy, but I said, ‘Yes you did, you prayed five.’ He said to me, ‘You too, O one-eyed one, you also say that?’ I said, ‘Yes.’ So he went and prostrated twice then he said the *Taslim*. Then he said, “Abdullah [ra] said, “The Messenger of Allah [saws] led us in prayer and prayed five and when he finished the people whispered amongst themselves. He said, ‘What is the matter with you?’ They said, ‘O Messenger of Allah [saws] has something been added to the prayer?’ He said, ‘No.’ They said, ‘But you prayed five.’ He went and prostrated twice then he said the *Taslim*. Then he said, ‘I am human like you. I forget as you forget.’””¹⁶

“I [Malik bin Mighwal (ra)] heard Ash-Sha’bi [ra] say, ‘Alqamah bin Qais [ra] forgot [and made a mistake] in his prayer and they told him about that after he had spoken. He said, ‘Is that true, O odd-eyed one?’ He said, ‘Yes.’ So he undid his cloak then he performed two prostrations of forgetfulness and said, ‘This is what the Messenger of Allah [saws] did.’ He said, ‘And I heard Al-Hakam [ra] say, ‘Alqamah [ra] had prayed five.’”¹⁷

WHEN IT IS DUE TO OMISSION AND YOU KNOW SHORTLY AFTER *TASLIM*

“The Messenger of Allah [saws] said the *Taslim* after three *raka'ah* of the ‘*Asr* prayer then he entered the apartment. A man by the name of Khirbaq [ra] – and he was one who had long hands – stood up and said, ‘Has the prayer been shortened O Messenger of Allah [saws]?’ So he came out his *rida'* trailing behind him in a state of anger and said, ‘Has he told the truth?’ They replied, ‘Yes.’ So he prayed that *raka'ah* then said the *Taslim* then prostrated the two prostrations then said the *Taslim*.”¹⁸

Mu’awiyah bin Khudaij [ra] narrated that the Messenger of Allah [saws] once led them in prayer and said the *Taslim* while one *raka'ah* was still remaining. A person caught up to him [after he had left] and said, “You have forgotten one *raka'ah* of the prayer.” So he returned, entered the *masjid* and ordered the Bilal [ra] to call the *iqamah* for the prayer. He then led the people for one *raka'ah*. So I informed the people about this. They asked me, “Do you know the man [who informed him]?” I said, “No, but if I see him [I should recognise him].” The man then passed by me, and I said, “This is the man!” They said, “This is Talhah bin ‘Ubaidullah [ra].”¹⁹

¹⁵ Sunan Abu Dawud Sahih 1022, Sahih 1019; Sunan An-Nasa'i Sahih 1260, Sahih 1256, Sahih 1255; Sahih Muslim 1284 [93/572], 1281 [91/572]; Jami' At-Tirmidhi Sahih 392; Sahih Al-Bukhari 1226

¹⁶ Sahih Muslim 1283 [572]; Sunan An-Nasa'i Sahih 1257, Sahih 1259

¹⁷ Sunan An-Nasa'i Sahih 1258

¹⁸ Sunan Abu Dawud Sahih 1018; Sunan An-Nasa'i Sahih 1238, Sahih 1332; Sahih Muslim 1294 [102/574], 1293 [101/574]

¹⁹ Sunan Abu Dawud Sahih 1023

PROSTRATION OF FORGETFULNESS [*SUJUD AS-SAHW*]

HADITHS OF ABU HURAIRAH [RA]

“The Messenger of Allah [saws] led us in one of the two afternoon prayers [either] *dhudhr* or *‘Asr*, and he only prayed two *raka’ah* and said the *Taslim*. Then he went to a piece of wood in the front of the *masjid* and placed his hands on it – one on top of the other. Anger could be seen on his face. Those who would usually leave the prayer quickly left saying, ‘The prayer has been shortened! The prayer has been shortened!’ Abu Bakr [ra] and ‘Umar [ra] were present among the people, but they were hesitant in addressing him out of respect for him. A person whom the Messenger of Allah [saws] had nicknamed Dhul-Yadain [ra] stood up and said, ‘O Messenger of Allah [saws]! Have you forgotten or has the prayer been shortened?’ The Messenger of Allah [saws] replied, ‘I have neither forgotten nor has the prayer been shortened.’ So he said, ‘Rather you have forgotten O Messenger of Allah!’ The Messenger of Allah [saws] turned to face the people and said, ‘Has Dhul-Yadain [ra] spoken the truth?’ They motioned to him, ‘Yes.’ So the Messenger of Allah [saws] returned to his place and prayed the remaining two *raka’ah* and then said the *Taslim*. Then he said the *Takbir* and went into prostration like he usually did or even longer. Then he raised [his head] and said the *Takbir*. Then he said the *Takbir* and prostrated as he usually did or even longer then he raised [his head] and said the *Takbir*.”²⁰

“The Prophet [saws] offered one of the evening *salah*, and he finished it after offering two *raka’ah* only. He then stood near a piece of wood in front of the mosque and put his hand over it. Abu Bakr [ra] and ‘Umar [ra] were amongst those who were present, but they dared not talk to him about that and those who were in a hurry went out. They said, ‘Has the *salah* been reduced?’ A man who was called Dhul-Yadain [ra] by the Prophet [saws] said, ‘Has the *salah* been reduced or have you forgotten?’ He said, ‘Neither have I forgotten nor has the *salah* been reduced.’ He said, ‘Certainly you have forgotten.’ So the Prophet [saws] offered two more *raka’ah* and performed *Taslim* and then said *Takbir* and performed a prostration [of *sahw*] like his ordinary prostration or a bit longer and then raised his head and said *Takbir* and then put his head down and performed a [second] prostration like his ordinary prostration or a bit longer and then raised his head up and said *Takbir*.”²¹

Narrated Abu Hurairah [ra], “Once Allah’s Messenger [saws] offered two *raka’ah* and finished his *salah*. So Dhul-Yadain [ra] asked him, ‘Has the *salah* been reduced or have you forgotten?’ Allah’s Messenger [saws] said, ‘Has Dhul-Yadain [ra] spoken the truth?’ The people replied in the affirmative. Then Allah’s Messenger [saws] stood up and offered the remaining two *raka’ah* and perform *Taslim* and then said *Takbir* and performed two prostrations like his usual prostrations or a bit longer and then raised [his head] up.”²²

WHEN IT IS DUE TO DOUBT AND YOU CAN DECIDE WHICH OF THE TWO IS MORE LIKELY

“They used to say, ‘If one is not sure of what he estimates is correct then prostrates twice.’”²³

²⁰ Sunan Abu Dawud Sahih 1008; Sahih Muslim 1288 [97/573], 1290 [99/573]; Sunan An-Nasa’i Sahih 1227, Sahih 1228, Sahih 1231; Sahih Al-Bukhari 1227

²¹ Sahih Al-Bukhari 1229; Sunan An-Nasa’i Sahih 1225

²² Sahih Al-Bukhari 1228; Sunan An-Nasa’i Sahih 1226, Sahih 1229, Sahih 1230; Jami’ At-Tirmidhi Sahih 399

²³ Sunan An-Nasa’i Sahih 1248

PROSTRATION OF FORGETFULNESS [*SUJUD AS-SAHW*]

HADITHS OF 'ABDULLAH [RA]

“The Messenger of Allah [saws] prayed and did more or less [*raka'ah*]. When he had said the *Taslim* it was said, ‘O Messenger of Allah [saws] has there been some change concerning the prayer?’ He said, ‘If there had been some change concerning the prayer I would have told you. Rather I am a human being, and I forget as you forget. If any one of you is not sure about his prayer, let him consider an estimate of what is correct and complete his prayer on that basis then say the *Taslim* and prostrate twice.’”²⁴

“Whoever is not sure about his prayer let him estimate what is correct then let him prostrate twice after he finishes his prayer while he is sitting.”²⁵

TO RECITE *TASHAHHUD*

‘Imran bin Husain [ra] narrated that the Prophet [saws] once led them in prayer and made a mistake. So he prostrated twice then said the *Tashahhud* then the *Taslim*.”²⁶

TO PERFORM OMITTED *RAKA'AH* BEFORE *SUJUD AS-SAHW*

“The Messenger of Allah [saws] said the *Taslim* after three *raka'ah* of the ‘*Asr* prayer then he entered the apartment. A man by the name of Khirbaq [ra] – and he was one who had long hands – stood up and said, ‘Has the prayer been shortened O Messenger of Allah [saws]?’ So he came out his *rida'* trailing behind him in a state of anger and said, ‘Has he told the truth?’ They replied, ‘Yes.’ So he prayed that *raka'ah* then said the *Taslim* then prostrated the two prostrations then said the *Taslim*.”²⁷

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²⁴ Sunan An-Nasa'i Sahih 1243, Sahih 1245; Sahih Muslim 1274 [89/572]; Sunan Abu Dawud Sahih 1020

²⁵ Sunan An-Nasa'i Sahih 1246, Sahih 1242, Sahih 1241, Sahih 1247

²⁶ Sunan Abu Dawud Sahih 1039

²⁷ Sunan Abu Dawud Sahih 1018; Sunan An-Nasa'i Sahih 1238, Sahih 1332; Sahih Muslim 1294 [102/574], 1293 [101/574]

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TO FOLLOW THE IMAM IN *SUJUD AS-SAHW*

“Allah’s Messenger [saws] during his illness offered *salah* in his house sitting, whereas some people followed him standing, but the Prophet [saws] beckoned them to sit down. On completion of the *salah*, he said, ‘The Imam is to be followed. So bow when he bows and raise your head when he raises his head.’”³²

²⁹ Sunan Abu Dawud Sahih 1008; Sahih Muslim 1288 [97/573], 1290 [99/573]; Sunan An-Nasa’i Sahih 1227, Sahih 1228, Sahih 1231; Sahih Al-Bukhari 1227

³⁰ Sahih Al-Bukhari 1229; Sunan An-Nasa’i Sahih 1225

³¹ Sahih Al-Bukhari 1228; Sunan An-Nasa’i Sahih 1226, Sahih 1229, Sahih 1230; Jami’ At-Tirmidhi Sahih 399

³² Sahih Al-Bukhari 1236

PROSTRATION OF FORGETFULNESS [*SUJUD AS-SAHW*]

HADITHS OF 'ABDULLAH BIN BUHAINAH [RA]

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“Allah’s Messenger [saws] once led us in a *salah* and offered two *raka’ah* and got up [for the third *raka’ah*] without sitting [after the second *raka’ah*]. The people also got up with him, and when he was about to finish his *salah* we waited for him to finish the *salah* with *Taslim*, but he said *Takbir* before *Taslim* and performed two prostrations with *Taslim*.”³⁵

³³ Sahih Al-Bukhari 1230; Jami’ At-Tirmidhi Sahih 391

³⁴ Sahih Muslim 1270 [86/570], 1271 [87/570]; Sunan An-Nasa’i Sahih 1262

³⁵ Sahih Al-Bukhari 1224; Sunan Abu Dawud Sahih 1034; Sunan An-Nasa’i Sahih 1223; Sahih Muslim 1269 [85/570]