

A photograph of a man in traditional white Arab attire (thobe and ghutra) performing a prostration (sujood) on a patterned prayer rug. He is lying on his forehead on the rug, with his hands and knees on the floor. The background is a brick wall. The title text is overlaid on the image.

THE CONCEPT OF PROSTRATION IN ISLAM

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PREFACE

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلاة والسلام
على سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين

There are two types of prostrations in Islam; namely, (i) Prostration of Worship (Sajdah-e-Ibadah), and (ii) Prostration of Reverence (Sajdah-e-Tahiyya or Sajda-e-Ta'azeem).

Sajda-e-Ibadah (Prostration of Worship) to anyone other than Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) is Shirk in Islam. A person who commits shirk is treated as out of Islam.

Sajda-e-Tahiyya is a kind of greeting. In earlier times, when a person used to meet a dignitary, he used to prostrate in front of him.

Sajda-e-Tahiyya has never been an act of Shirk. Angels prostrating to Adam (عليه السلام) and brothers of Youssef (عليه السلام) prostrating in front of him are the examples of Sajda-e-Tahiyya. Since Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) stopped people from doing Sajda-e-Tahiyya, it is forbidden in Islam. Now, if a Muslim greets a dignitary with Sajda-e-Tahiyya, it will be treated as undesirable and sin.

This book is written to clarify certain misconceptions of the Muslim sects in this context. It is an important read for all Muslims.

Table of Contents

1. PROSTRATION IN ISLAM.....	1
2. SALAFI WORSHIP.....	3
3. HOW SALAFIS MISLEAD INNOCENT MUSLIMS.....	7



1. PROSTRATION IN ISLAM

The reward (Thawab) or torment (Azaab) for an action depends upon the intention.

It is in Hadith - Narrated Umar bin Al-Khattab (رضي الله تعالى عنه) : I heard Allah's Apostle (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) saying, "The reward of deeds depends upon the intentions and every person will get the reward according to what he has intended. (Bukhari - Book #1, Hadith #1).

Thus, a person's act of prostration will be judged according to his intention.

(i) If we see a person of Sahih Iman, Sahih-ul-Aqeedah Muslim, prostrating in a mosque towards Qibla (Kabatullah), it will be considered that this is 'Prostration of Ibadah'.

(ii) If a Non-Muslim is seen prostrating in front of a Deity or Idol, it will be concluded that his prostration is 'Idol Worship' because he associates divinity (Uloohiyah) with that Idol.

(iii) If a Hindu is prostrating in his house or in a Muslim mosque where there is no idol or picture of an idol, still it will be concluded that his action is Idol worship because while prostrating he imagines a particularly shape in his mind and considers that shape to be his God.

(iv) Suppose a Non Muslim declares himself Muslim and goes to Masjid-e-Haram in Makka and Masjid-e-Nabawi in Madina and performs congregation Salah there, but in his mind he continues to imagine a particular shape to be his God, then the Angels who record peoples' deed will write his actions to be Idol Worship, even though he is apparently doing Salah in front of Kabatullah or in Masjid-e-Nabawi. The Angels may add an extra qualification of that person in their records and write him a 'hypocrite' (Munafiq) also.

It is in Quran - يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَمَا يُخْدَعُونَ إِلَّا أَنفُسُهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ - فِي [They seek to deceive Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) and those who believe. Nay, themselves do they deceive, though they are not conscious of it. There is a disease in their hearts, so Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) lets them increase their disease and for them there is a grievous torment (Azaab) for the false assertions they have made.] (**Al-Baqara - 9-10**)

It is in Quran - يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ بَشِّرِ الْمُتَافِقِينَ بِأَنَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا - (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) Convey the hypocrite the tiding that for them there is a painful torment.] (**An-Nisa - 138**).

It is in Quran - [Indeed, the hypocrites (will be) in the lowest depth of the Hell Fire and you (O' Prophet - صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) will not find any helper for them.] (**An-Nisa - 145**).

(v) If we see a Muslim, Ahle Sunnah Wal Jama'a whose Aqeedah about Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) is correct, prostrating in front of a Mazaar of a Wali Allah, we will question him about his intention of prostration. If he says that he was not prostrating, rather he was kissing the Grave of Wali Allah, or kissing the entrance or threshold of the Dargah out of reverence, it will be concluded that he was acting upon Sunnah and the widespread practice of Sahabah (رضى الله تعالى عنهم اجمعين).

If the person says that he was prostrating in view of his excessive love of Wali Allah, then he will be counseled that though 'prostration of reverence' (Sajda-e-Tahiyya) is not shirk, however it is forbidden in Islam. What he was doing is not appropriate, and is sin; therefore, he should stop it because Awliya Allah get annoyed if someone prostrate in front of them. Kissing of their graves is allowed because it has been the practice of Sahabah (رضى الله تعالى عنهم اجمعين).

It is in Hadith - Narrated Anas (رضى الله تعالى عنه). "A camel came and prostrated in front of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم). A goat came and prostrated in front of him. (Looking at this) Abu Bakr Siddique (رضى الله تعالى عنه) and other companions also sought permission to prostrate (in front of him). But the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) said, 'It is not appropriate for a human being to prostrate in front of another human being'. (**Ahmad, al-Bazzar**).

It is in Hadith - Narrated Abu Huraira (رضى الله تعالى عنه): Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) said: "If I were to command anyone to prostrate to anyone other than Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ). I would have commanded women to prostrate to their husbands (as Sajda-e-Tahiyyah). (**Tirmidhi, Ibn Maajah**).

It is in Hadith - It is narrated that when Mu'adh ibn Jabal (رضى الله تعالى عنه) came back from Syria he prostrated to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) and the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) said: "What is this, O' Mu'adh (رضى الله تعالى عنه)?" He said: "O Apostle of Allah (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم), I saw them in Syria prostrating to their bishops and patriarchs and they narrated that from their Prophets." He said, "They are lying, O' Mu'adh (رضى الله تعالى عنه) if I were to command anyone to prostrate to anyone else, I would have told the women to prostrate to their husbands because of their rights (and responsibilities) over them. O' Mu'adh (رضى الله تعالى عنه), do you think that if you pass by my grave you will prostrate?" He said, "No." He said: "Do not do that." (**Ahmad and others**).

(vi) If we see a Sahih-ul-Aqeedah Muslim, Ahle Sunna Wal Jama 'a kissing the feet of his parents or his Shaikh or bowing to kiss their hands, it will be treated that he is acting upon Sunnah.

2. SALAFI WORSHIP

If a person who follows Salafism/Deobandism in any of its formats is seen prostrating in a mosque or in front of Kabatullah or in Masjid-e-Nabawi, the Angels who record his deeds will write his name as Idol worshiper only because he is prostrating to an Idol God who is made up of a physical body and who is sitting physically on the Skies. There cannot be two opinions in this context because his intention is very well known to the Angels. He will also be recorded as a hypocrite (Munafiq) in angels' books because he is claiming himself to be a Muslim.

It is important to understand the perception of God by Salafis, Christians and Hindus who worship Idol Gods in different formats. Salafis call their Sky God as Allah because God is translated in Arabic as Allah.

Islamic perception of Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) is completely different from the idolized perception of Hindus, Salafis, Christians and other people.

Salafis also claim that their Sky Idol God is one of its kind, self-made, independent, neither beget nor begotten. They also claim that their Sky God has created this Universe. They worship this Sky Idol and prostrate in front of him 5-times a day during their prayer.

Ibn Baz (1910-1999) the Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia wrote: (Their Sky) God has (i) a physical body (al-jism), (ii) He is physically sitting on the sky, and (iii) He has limbs, hands, eyes, tongue, face and other body parts.

Ibn Taymiyyah (1263-1328), one of the founders of Salafism, described the physical characteristics of their Sky God as follows:

The Sky God needs (Meaning the God is not independent and not self subsistent) (ii) He is divisible (Meaning the Gods can be many, but ultimately it is one entity only - This belief is exactly identical to the belief of Christians and Hindus). (iii) He settles in a place. (iv) He has six directions - up - down - left - right - front - back. (Meaning, the Sky God has a physical body). The Sky God is sitting above the skies and his face is in a certain direction. (v) He has limitations; no one but he knows about it. Even his place (dwelling) has a limitation which is on the seventh sky. Thus, the Sky God has two limitations of movements. (vi) He has a size (of his body). (vii) He must be creating continuously. He can choose what to create but he cannot choose whether to create or not. (Meaning, he is helpless, has no choice but to create continuously). (viii) He is not mixed with his creation but is sitting alone separately on the

sky. (ix) He has two real eyes, two real hands, a real (human like) face and other limbs. His face and other limbs are known to him only.

Ismail Dehelwi, (1779-1831) one of the most famous scholar who is held in high respect by Deobandis wrote: "To believe Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) to be free from time, place, form and being is a composite innovation. (Izaahul Haqq - Ismail Dehelwi).

The Idol worship of Salafi Groups is more serious than Hindu and other Idol worshipers in the sense that they have created a Sky Idol God for themselves by misinterpreting Quranic verses and Ahadith. This is similar to the people of Musa (عليه السلام) who made an Idol of Calf as their God and started worshipping the Calf God in the absence of Prophet Musa (عليه السلام).

It is in Quran - [And who is more unjust than he who forges a lie against Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) or (he who) gives the lie to His communications (verses of Quran); surely the unjust will not be successful.] (Al-An-A'am - 21).

Salafis and their like-minded people have been told for centuries by sincere Ahle Sunnah Ulema that 'what they are doing is Idol worship on one hand, and disrespect of Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) and Sahabah and Awliya Allah on the other, and that they should sincerely repent, pray for Allah's (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) forgiveness and come back to the mainstream Islam. But they insist upon their Idol worship and disrespect of Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم). Since all these facts are known to the Angels who record people's deeds, there is no hope that the Salafi Groups will get salvation in Hereafter.

Salafis have changed the entire books of Ahadith, removed hundreds of chapters containing thousands of Ahadith from the authentic Ahadith books. They changed the meanings of Quran by publishing "Noble Quran". If their beliefs were as per Quran and Ahadith, then where was the need for them to change authentic Ahadith books like Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, Ibn Maja, Abu Dawood and many other famous books at this massive scale. They are like Jews and Christians who have changed their books completely.

It is in Quran - وَإِنَّ مِنْهُمْ لَفَرِيقًا يَلُؤُونَ أَلْسِنَتَهُم بِالْكِتَابِ لِتَحْسَبُوهُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَقُولُونَ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكُذْبَ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ [And there is a party of them who distort the Scripture with their tongues, that you may think that what they say is from the Scripture, when it is not from the Scripture. And they say: It is from Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) when it is not from Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ); and they speak a lie concerning Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) knowingly.] (Aal-e-Imran - 78).

Salafis destroyed entire Islamic Heritage, humiliated Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) and his family and Sahabah (رضى الله تعالى عنهم اجمعين) by destroying their graves and houses, mosques and changed Prophet Mohammad's (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) house into a Public Toilet in Makka. Anyone who has a little common sense or has an idea about the history of nations, whether Muslim or a Non-Muslim, will understand this simple fact that all Salafi Groups have contributed and helped each other in destroying original Islam.

Salafis quote a Hadith narrated by Abu Huraira (رضي الله تعالى عنه): The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) said 'Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) created Adam (عليه السلام) on his image (Bukhari - 2/434, Muslim - 2560, Ahmad - 2612).

They misinterpret the above Hadith and claim that since Adam (عليه السلام) has a face, eyes, hands, foot, therefore Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) is a big human being and others are small human beings. (La haula wal Quwwata Illa Billah).

The above Hadith is not to be interpreted to anthropomorphize (attach a human body and organs to Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ)). It refers to the fact that Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) created Adam (عليه السلام) with the attributes to see, hear, speak, etc., which are the also the attributes of Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ).

It is in Quran - لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ ۚ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ (There is nothing is like Him and He is all Hearer and all Seer' (Ash-Shura - 11).

Imam Bukhari translated 'Wajhu' as 'dominion and sovereignty (mulk) in verse كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ ۚ (Everything will perish save His countenance (Al-Qasas - 88) in the 'Book of Tafsir in Sahih Bukhari.

Salafis also mention a Hadith related by Malik in Muwatta and by Muslim in his Sahih, that Muawiyah Ibn al-Hakam came to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) and told him " I am very new from the Jahiliya and now Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) has brought Islam" and he proceeded to ask about various Jahiliya practices, until at last he said that he had slapped his slave girl, and asked if he should free her, as was obligatory if she was a believer. The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) asked that she be brought and then asked her, "Where is Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ)? and she said, "In the sky (fi al-sama)"; whereupon he asked her, "Who am I"? and she said, "You are the Apostle of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم)"; at which the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) said 'Free her, for she is a believer (Sahih Muslim).

Salafis try to interpret the above Hadith to prove a physical body for Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) and his sitting on the skies? It is important to note that this Hadith is Ahad (singular). It comes from Muawiyah Ibn al-Hakam via the route of At'a bin Yassar, therefore it is Ahad. The fundamental principle is that 'Ahad Narrations' cannot be taken as conclusive proof in Aqeedah issues.

When someone says that Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) is in Skies, does it mean that He is only in Sky and nowhere else?

It is in Quran - وَهُوَ الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ إِلَهُهُ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَهُهُ ۚ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْعَلِيمُ [It is He, Who is Allah in skies and Allah on Earth; and He is full of Wisdom and Knowledge.] (Az-Zukhruf - 84).

Salafis misinterpret these verses and try to convince Salafi followers that their Sky Idol God is the real God of all and they call their God as Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ). To create confusion in Muslims' minds, they claim that Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) has limitations, as He cannot move out of Sky; therefore, his nearness to creatures is only by his knowledge. (Astaghfirullah). This belief is Shirk-e-Akbar.

It is in Quran - اللهُ نُورُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ [Allah is the light (existence) of the Heavens and Earth'. (An-Noor -35).

It is in Quran - وَبِاللَّهِ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ ۚ فَأَيْنَمَا تُولُوا فَتَمَّ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ [Whichever side you turn, you will find Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ); Verily (in truth) Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) is Omnipresent (existing everywhere every moment) and Omniscient (infinitely wise)]. (Al-Baqra - 115).

It is in Quran - وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ [Wherever you are, He is with you.] (Al- Hadeed - 4).

It is in Quran - وَفِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ [He is in your own self; will you not then see.] (Adh-Dhariyat - 21).

It is in Quran - هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ [He is the First, and the Last, He is the Manifest (apparent) and the Immanent (actually present through out the material world) and is knower of all things]. (Al-Hadeed - 3).

It is in Quran - وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ [We (Allah) are closer to you than your jugular vein]. (Qaf - 16).

It is in Quran - وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۚ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي [When My servants ask you (O' Prophet- صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) concerning Me, (tell them) I am ever present (with them) and I listen to the call of him that calls Me].(Al-Baqara - 186).

It is in Hadith - Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) said "There was Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) and nothing existed but Him". He existed from eternity and there was nothing else." (Bukhari, Baihaqi).

Consider the above, it is very clear. It is important for a physical body to have a place to exist. When Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) existed when there was nothing, no sky, no universe then where was He sitting. There has to be place for a body to exist. The Hadith also clarifies that Allah's (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) existence is pure from the requirement and consideration of a body, form and shape.

3. HOW SALAFIS MISLEAD INNOCENT MUSLIMS

What Salafis do is, they misinterpret categorical verses (Ayaat-e-Muhkamaat) of Quran to establish their self-concocted beliefs.

In addition, they insist on literal (textual) translation of allegorical verses (Ayaat-e-Mutashabihaat) of Quran to consolidate their self-fabricated notions.

This practice is exactly the opposite of what should be done. Meaning, the categorical verses (Ayaat-e-Muhkamaat) should be understood in their literal meanings and allegorical verses (Ayaat-e-Mutashabihaat) should be interpreted to get to the factual meanings. Look at the following Quranic verse.

It is in Quran - [Certainly, those who are doing 'the promise of allegiance' (b'aya) to you, O' Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم), they are actually doing the promise of allegiance to Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ). Allah's (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) hand is upon their hand.] (**Al-Fath - 10**).

Salafis claim that from the above verse Allah's (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) hands are established, therefore Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) has hands (La haula wala quwwata illah billah).

Even an average Muslim knows that it is an allegorical (metaphorical - symbolic) expression. It means that the people should take the hand of Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) in all the seriousness as if it is the hand of Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) while doing ba'ya.

Saudi Royal Family came to power in Arabian Peninsula with the help of Salafi ideology in early 20th Century. This kind of translations and understanding of Quran and Ahadith by Salafi scholars, in collusion with Saudi Ruling family, is a deliberate attempt to misguide people in order to hold them at ransom in the name of Islam and enjoy their hold on power and leadership eternally.

They have published a "Nobel Quran" which contains misleading translation of important verses of Quran.

Read the following Quranic verse to understand this issue clearly.

It is in Quran - هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ ۚ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ۗ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ ۗ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ۗ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا ۗ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ [He is who has sent down to you (O' Prophet - صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) the Book (Quran). Some verses of it are definite in meaning (Ayaat-e-Muhkamaat). These form the mother of the Book (the basic there in) and the rest are figurative (metaphorical) (Ayaat - e - Mutashabihaat). But they, in whose minds there is a tendency to deviate from truth, take the metaphorical (verses in their literal / textual sense) craving discord, and craving to give them their own interpretation, although none knows the reality about them except

Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ). And those who make it right approach to knowledge could only say 'we believe therein all that is from our Lord'. None can catch their significance except those gifted with insight.] (Aal-e-Imran - 7).

Who are the people who are gifted with insight by Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ)? They are Awliya Allah, Imams of Fiqh, and Sahabah.

The problem with Salafis is, they regard all Sahabah as bida'atees (innovators). One of the most famous Salafi Scholar of recent times Al-Bani (1914-1999) declared Sahabah, including Khulafa-e-Rashideen, Members of Prophet's (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) family, Muhajireen and Ansars (رضى الله تعالى عنهم) (الجمعين) as Bid'atees because they prayed 20 Raka Taraweeh in congregation.

Al-Bani's declaration is supported by all prominent Salafi Scholars in the world. Al-Bani also declared Imam Bukhari, Imam Abu Hanifa and other prominent Imams as Kafir. Salafis reject all Imams of Fiqh and Ahadith and claim their following as Shirk. They also reject Prophet's (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) Ahadith which clearly establish Salafi beliefs as un-Islamic. They changed almost all Ahadith books and removed over 5000 Ahadith from them. They denounce Awliya Allah and Shaikh's of Ihsan as Sufi innovators.

After all these rejections, how could they be treated as the people on the right path of Islam? As a matter of fact, Salafis are the sub-sect of Kharijis who were declared as out of Islam by Ijma (consensus of Islamic Ulema) long time ago.

Their insistence on self-study and self-understanding of Quran has led them to the greatest invention in human history - a Sky Idol God for their worship, who has hands, eyes, face, tongue and a huge human like physical body; who is sitting on a big chair over the skies. They claim that this Idol is self-made, only one of its kind, independent, neither beget nor begotten and none is like him. They also claim that this Idol has created this Universe. They prostrate in front of this Idol 5-times a day during their modified Salah.