

It is Necessary to Fulfill the Vow of Performing Sajdah al-Shukr

Darulifta Ahlesunnat (Dawateislami)

Question

What do the noble scholars and jurists of Islamic law say about the following: (1) Zaid made a vow that if he gets this job, he will perform one hundred sajdahs of Shukr (prostrations of gratitude). Now that he has secured the job, is it wājib upon him to fulfill his vow of performing one hundred sajdahs? (2) When performing sajdah al-shukr, is it fard to place one toe of either foot and wājib to place three toes of each foot on the ground, just like in the sajdah for salāh?

Answer

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
الْجَوَابُ بِعَوْنِ الْمَلِكِ الْوَهَّابِ اللَّهُمَّ هِدَايَةَ الْحَقِّ وَالصَّوَابِ

(1) In the inquired situation, it is wājib for Zaid to fulfill the vow of performing one hundred sajdahs of shukr because this is a shar‘ī vow (i.e., a legally binding vow) as it fulfills all the conditions of becoming a shar‘ī vow. That is, sajdah al-shukr is an ‘ibādah Maqsūdah (primarily intended worship), its category contains an act that is wājib (i.e., sajdah tilāwat), sajdah al-shukr is not wājib itself, etc. Thus, when all the conditions required for a valid shar‘ī vow are met, it becomes necessary to fulfill it.

If one made a vow of sajdah al-shukr, fulfilling the vow is necessary. Thus, Shaykh Hibatullah Ba‘lī رحمه الله عليه writes:

سجدة الشكر مستحبة وبه يفتي --- وعلى هذا لو نذر سجدة الشكر تجب

(Al-Taḥqīq al-Bāhir Sharḥ al-Ashbāh Wal-Nazā‘ir, Vol. 07, p. 370, Publ. Quetta)
Regarding sajdah al-shukr being an ‘ibādah maqsūdah, A‘lā Hazrat, Imām Aḥmad Raza Khan رحمه الله تعالى states:

مقصوده مشروطه جیسے نماز و نماز جنازہ و سجده تلاوت و سجده شکر کہ سب مقصود بالذات ہیں اور سب کیلئے طہارت کاملہ شرط، یعنی نہ حدث اکبر ہو نہ اصغر۔

Translation: (One type of ‘ibādah is) Primarily intended which requires purity: such as salāh, funeral salāh, sajdah tilāwat, and sajdah al-shukr. These are all intended in themselves and a complete purity is required for them, i.e., one must be free from ḥads akbar and ḥads asghar. (Fatāwā Razawiyah, Vol. 03, p. 557, Publ. Razā Foundation, Lahore)

Listing the requirements for a shar‘ī vow, Sadr al-Sharī‘ah Muftī Muḥammad Amjad ‘Alī A‘zamī رحمه الله تعالى states:

شرعی منّت جس کے ماننے سے شرعاً اس کا پورا کرنا واجب ہوتا ہے، اس کے لیے مطلقاً چند شرطیں ہیں۔ (۱) ایسی چیز کی منّت ہو کہ اس کی جنس سے کوئی واجب ہو۔ (۲) وہ عبادت خود بالذات مقصود ہو، کسی دوسری عبادت کے لیے وسیلہ نہ ہو۔ (۳) اس چیز کی منّت نہ ہو جو شرع نے خود اس پر واجب کی ہو، خواہ فی الحال یا آئندہ۔

Translation: A shar‘ī vow whose fulfillment becomes necessary upon making it has a few conditions: (1) The vow must concern something whose category includes an act that is wājib. (2) The worship should be a primarily intended worship; not a medium for another act of worship. (3) The vow should not be concerning an act

which the sharī'ah has already made wājib, whether it is wājib at that moment or can be in the future. (Bahār-E-Sharī'at, Vol. 01, pt. 5, p. 1015, Publ. Maktaba-Tul-Madīnah, Karachi)

(2) Yes, in sajdah al-shukr as well, it is fard to place the underside (the area between the front tip of the toe and the toe pad) of at least one toe of either foot on the ground, wājib to place the underside of three toes of each foot on the ground, and sunnah to place the underside of all ten toes on the ground. This is because the sharī'ah has mentioned this ruling about sajdah in an unrestricted manner, without any exceptions. Therefore, sajdah al-shukr is also included within this ruling. Furthermore, the wisdom behind this ruling is that the purpose of sajdah is to show reverence to Allāh Almighty and to express humility and submission before Him. In contrast, performing sajdah while raising both feet off the ground resembles mockery. Just as this consideration applies in the sajdah of salāh, it is likewise present in sajdah al-shukr.

The sajdah performed while raising both feet will not even count as sajdah, as mentioned in *Ḥalbī Kabīr*:

لا يجوز مع رفعهما لعدم تحقق السجود الذي هو وضع الجبهة على الارض معه -- ثم المراد من وضع القدم وضع أصابعها

(Ḥalbī Kabīr, p. 284-285, Publ. Quetta)

Regarding what constitutes a valid sajdah in Sharī'ah, it is stated in *al-Baḥr al-Rā'iq*:

السجود في الشريعة وضع بعض الوجه مما لا سخرية فيه، وخرج بقولنا "لا سخرية فيه" ما إذا رفع قدميه في السجود، فإنه لا يصح لأن السجود مع رفعهما بالتلاعب أشبه منه بالتعظيم والإجلال

(Al-Baḥr al-Rā'iq, vol. 01, p. 335, Publ. Dār al-Kitāb al-Islāmī, Beirut)

It is stated in *Fatāwā Razawiyah*:

سجدے میں فرض ہے کہ کم از کم پاؤں کی ایک انگلی کا پیٹ زمین پر لگا ہو اور ہر پاؤں کی اکثر انگلیوں کا پیٹ زمین پر جما ہونا واجب ہے۔

Translation: In sajdah, it is fard to place the underside of at least one toe on the ground, and having the underside of the majority of the toes of each foot firmly placed on the ground is wājib. (Fatāwā Razawiyah, Vol. 03, p. 253, Publ. Razā Foundation, Lahore)

It is stated in *Bahār-E-Sharī'at*:

سجدہ میں دونوں پاؤں کی دسوں انگلیوں کے پیٹ زمین پر لگانا سنت ہے اور ہر پاؤں کی تین تین انگلیوں کے پیٹ زمین پر لگانا واجب اور دسوں کا قبلہ رُو ہونا سنت۔

Translation: Pressing the underside of all ten toes of both feet on the ground during sajdah is sunnah. Pressing the underside of three toes from each foot on the ground is wājib, and directing all ten toes towards the qiblah is sunnah.

(Bahār-E-Sharī'at, Vol. 01, pt. 3, p. 530, Publ. Maktaba-Tul-Madīnah, Karachi)

وَاللّٰهُ اَعْلَمُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ وَرَسُوْلُهُ اَعْلَمُ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى عَلَيْهِ وَاٰلِهٖ وَسَلَّم

(Allah Almighty knows best and His Messenger صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَاٰلِهٖ وَسَلَّم knows best.)

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