

Are the Transitional Takbīrāt of Salāh Sunnah Mu'akkadah or Ghair Mu'akkadah?

Darulifta Ahlesunnat (Dawateislami)

Question

What do the noble scholars and jurists of Islamic law say about the following: Are the takbīrāt-e-intiqāl (transitional takbīrāt) of salāh sunnah mu'akkadah or ghair mu'akkadah, such as the takbīr uttered when going into rukū', going into sajdah, and when returning from sajdah?

Answer

The transitional takbīrāt are sunnah mu'akkadah. In the books of fiqh, it is explicitly mentioned that the transitional takbīrāt are sunnah, but no clarification was found on whether they are sunnah mu'akkadah or ghair mu'akkadah. However, Sultān al-'Ulamā' 'Allāmah 'Alī Qārī عليه الرحمة has explicitly mentioned in his commentary of ḥadīth, Mirqāt al-Mafātīḥ, that they are sunnah mu'akkadah.

Regarding the transitional takbīrāt being sunnah, it is stated in Sharḥ Mukhtasar al-Karkhī, Badā'ī' al-Sanā'ī', Sharḥ al-Wiqāyah, and its commentary Ḥāshiyah 'Umdah al-Ri'āyah (the following text is cited from the latter):

(ثم يكبر للركوع) وهذا التكبير وكذا تكبير جميع الانتقالات سنة ثابتة بأحاديث كثيرة

Translation: Then one should utter the takbīr for rukū'. This takbīr and all other transitional takbīrāt are a sunnah which are proven from numerous aḥādīth.

('Umdah al-Ri'āyah 'Alā Sharḥ al-Wiqāyah, Vol. 02, p. 92, Publ. Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah)

'Allāmah 'Alī Qārī عليه الرحمة states regarding the transitional takbīrāt being sunnah mu'akkadah:

التكبيرات التي للانتقال من السنن المؤكدة

Translation: The takbīrāt for transitioning are from among the sunnah mu'akkadah acts. (Mirqāt al-Mafātīḥ, Vol. 02, p. 659, Publ. Dār al-Fikr, Beirut)

The following reasonings support the statement of 'Allāmah 'Alī Qārī عليه الرحمة:

(1) The basic difference which distinguishes sunnah mu'akkadah from ghair mu'akkadah is whether the Noble Rasūl ﷺ would perform the act consistently or not. If he performed it consistently, then it becomes mu'akkadah. In light of this principle, it becomes clear that the transitional takbīrāt are sunnah mu'akkadah because the Noble Rasūl ﷺ continued to utter, until his apparent demise, the transitional takbīrāt in salāh when going into any rukn, and it is not proven that he omitted them even once.

The Noble Prophet ﷺ consistently performing an action or performing it only occasionally is the distinguishing factor between sunnah mu'akkadah and ghair mu'akkadah, as mentioned in al-Wajīz Fī Usūl al-Fiqh:

السنة المؤكدة: والضابط لهذا القسم أنه ما واطب عليه النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ولم يتركه إلا نادراً ليبين جواز الترك -- السنة غير

المؤكدة: والضابط لهذا القسم أنه ما لم يواظب عليه النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، وإنما كان يفعله النبي في بعض الأحيان

Translation: Sunnah mu'akkadah: The principle of this division is that this is whatever the Noble Prophet ﷺ consistently performed and did not omit except to prove that it is permissible to omit it... Sunnah ghair mu'akkadah: The principle of this division is that this is whatever the Noble Prophet ﷺ did not perform consistently, but He ﷺ would perform it occasionally. (Al-Wajīz Fī Usūl al-Fiqh al-Islāmī, Vol. 01, p. 340, Publ. Dār al-Khayr Lil-Tabā'ah Wal-Nashr, Damascus)
It is stated in al-Nahr al-Fā'iq with reference to Faṭḥ al-Qadīr:

هي ما واطب عليه النبي صلى الله تعالى عليه وآله وسلم مع الترك أحياناً

Translation: (Sunnah mu'akkadah) is what the Noble Prophet ﷺ performed consistently but occasionally omitted it. (Al-Nahr al-Fā'iq, Vol. 01, p. 36, Summarized, Publ. Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyah)
It is stated in Radd al-Muḥtār:

يَأْتُم لَالْنَفْس التَّرْكَ بَلْ لَأَنَّهُ اسْتِخْفَافٌ وَعَدَمُ مِبَالَاةٍ بِسُنَّةٍ وَاظَبَ عَلَيْهَا النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَدَّةَ عَمْرِهِ، وَهَذَا مَطْرَدٌ فِي جَمِيعِ السُّنَنِ

المؤكدة

Translation: The one who leaves a sunnah mu'akkadah will be sinful, not due to leaving the sunnah itself, but because this indicates belittling and carelessness for that which the Noble Prophet ﷺ performed consistently throughout his life. This principle applies to all sunnah mu'akkadahs. (Radd al-Muḥtār Ma'a al-Durr al-Mukhtār, Vol. 01, p. 474, Publ. Dār al-Fikr)

This has also been mentioned by the Imām of Ahl as-Sunnah رحمه الله:

ایک بدیہی بات، سنیت کا ہے سے ثابت ہوتی ہے مواظبت حضور سید المرسلین صلی اللہ تعالیٰ علیہ وسلم سے مطلقاً یا مع ترک احياناً اور وجوب کو کیا چاہیے، انکار علی ترک بھی یا صرف مواظبت دائمہ، اب دیکھ لیا جائے کہ حضور اقدس صلی اللہ علیہ وآلہ وسلم نے کس جماعت پر مواظبت فرمائی اور کس کے ترک پر نکیر آئی، ظاہر ہے کہ وہ جماعت اولیٰ ہی تھی تو وجوب یا استئذان موکد اسی کا حکم ہے نہ مطلق ثانیہ کا۔

Translation: One fundamental point is this: from what is a sunnah established? It is established by the Noble Prophet ﷺ consistently performing an act either unconditionally or while occasionally omitting it. And what is required for an act to be deemed wājib? It is condemnation for omitting it (in addition to consistency), or uninterrupted consistency. One should therefore ponder which congregation the Noble Prophet ﷺ consistently attended and regarding the omission of which congregation there is condemnation. It is evident that this was the first congregation. Therefore, the ruling of being wājib or sunnah mu'akkadah applies only to the first congregation, not congregations as a whole (which would include the second congregation as well). (Fatāwā Razawiyah, Vol. 07, p. 110, Publ. Raza Foundation, Lahore)

The Prophet ﷺ would consistently utter the transitional takbīrāt. This is proven from the following ḥadīth of Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī:

عن عمران بن حصين قال: صلى مع علي رضي الله عنه بالبصرة فقال: ذكرنا هذا الرجل صلاة كنا نصلِّيها مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم،

فذكرناه كان يكبر كلما رفع وكلماً موضع

Translation: It is narrated that ‘Imrān Bin Hussain mentioned that he offered salāh with ‘Alī رضي الله تعالى عنه in Basrah. Then he said: He has reminded us of the salāh we used to offer with the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. Then he said that the Prophet ﷺ would utter takbīr at each raising and each bowing. (Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Ḥadīth No. 784)

And He ﷺ observed this consistently until his apparent demise. Regarding this, Imām Mālik رحمه الله narrates in his Muwattā and Imām Shāfi رحمه الله in his Musnad:

كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يكبر في الصلاة كلما خفض ورفع، فلم تزل تلك صلاته حتى لقي الله

Translation: The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ would utter takbīr in salāh at each bowing and each rising. This continued to be his method of salāh until his apparent demise. (Muwattā Imām Mālik, Vol. 01, p. 76, Publ. Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turās al-‘Arabiyy)

‘Allāmah ‘Alī Qārī رحمه الله writes in commentary on this ḥadīth:

(فلم يزل تلك أي: تلك الصلاة المقرنة بذلك التكبير صلاته حتى لقي الله تعالى)

Translation: He ﷺ continued to offer salāh with transitional takbīrāt until his apparent demise. (Mirqāt al-Mafātīḥ Sharḥ Mishkāṭ al-Masābīḥ, Vol. 02, p. 688, Publ. Dār al-Fikr)

It is not proven that He ﷺ omitted this even once. It is stated in al-Nihāyah:

فإن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم -- لم يصل صلاة أيضا بدون رعاية سننها كرفع اليد عند التحريمة، والتكبير عند كل خفض ورفع وغيرهما حيث لم ينقل أحدا أنه صلى الله عليه وسلم مارفع اليد عند التحريمة ولا ترك التكبير عند الخفض والرفع

Translation: The Prophet ﷺ never offered salāh without its sunnahs, such as raising the hands for taḥrīmah, uttering takbīr at every bowing and raising, etc. Moreover, it has not been narrated even once that the Prophet ﷺ did not raise his hands for taḥrīmah or did not utter takbīr when bowing or raising. (Al-Nihāyah Fī Sharḥ al-Hidāyah, Vol. 04, p. 71, Publ. Markaz al-Dirāsāt al-‘Islāmīyah Bi Jām‘ah Umm al-Qurā)

(2) Another difference between sunnah mu‘akkadah and ghair mu‘akkadah is that omitting a sunnah mu‘akkadah causes karāhah and ‘isā‘ah, whereas omitting a ghair mu‘akkadah does not result in ‘isā‘ah. With regard to the transitional takbīrāt, it is explicitly stated in the books of fiqh that omitting them results in ‘isā‘ah, which proves that the transitional takbīrāt are sunnah mu‘akkadah. Thus, in the chapter of the sunnahs of salāh, the books of fiqh first state the ruling of the sunnah that: “omitting them results in ‘isā‘ah”, and then they include the transitional takbīrāt from amongst those sunnahs. For example, it is stated in al-Durr al-Mukhtār:

(وسننها) ترك السنة لا يوجب فسادا ولا سهوا بل إساءة لو عامدا غير مستخف -- (وتكبير الركوع) كذا (الرفع منه) -- (وتكبير

السجود) كذا نفس (الرفع منه) ... (و) كذا (تكبيره)

Translation: (The sunnahs of salāh) omitting a sunnah does not result in invalidation of the salāh or sajdah al-sahw, but leaving them intentionally without belittling it results in isā‘ah, (are: the takbīr for going into rukū‘) and (the takbīr for standing from rukū‘) ... (the takbīr for bowing into sajdah) and (raising from sajdah itself) and (the takbīr when raising from sajdah). (Al-Durr al-Mukhtār Ma‘a Radd al-Muḥtār, Vol. 01, p. 473-476, Publ. Dār al-Fikr)

Here, an objection could have been raised that, in al-Durr al-Mukhtār, the etiquettes are listed among the sunnah acts, leading to the possibility that the transitional

takbīrāt are from the sunnah ghair mu'akkadah, etiquettes, and mustahabbāt. However, Fatāwā Razawiyah explicitly ruled that omitting the transitional takbīrāt constitutes 'isā'ah and karāhah, thereby eliminating the possibility that they are from the sunnah ghair mu'akkadah or etiquettes.

The Imām of Ahl as-Sunnah رحمہ اللہ states that if the imām omits the transitional takbīrāt, the muqtadi should not follow the imām and he should utter the takbīrāt, and he also mentions that omitting them constitutes 'isā'ah and karāhah. Thus, he states:

اسی طرح ترک سنت میں امام کی پیروی نہیں بلکہ موجب اساءت و کراہت ہے اگر وہ چھوڑے مقتدی، بجالائے جبکہ اس کی بجا آوری سے کسی واجب فعل میں امام کی متابعت نہ چھوٹے ولہذا علماء فرماتے ہیں اگر امام وقت تحریمہ رفع یدین یا تسبیح رکوع و سجود یا تکبیر انتقال یا ذکر قومہ ترک کرے تو مقتدی نہ چھوڑے۔ کمانص علیہ فی نظم الزندویسی والخانیة والخلصة والبزازیة والهندیة وخزانة المفتین وفتح القدر والغنیة والدرالمحتار و حاشیة الدرر للعلامة شرنبلالی وغیرها وهذا نص البزازیة ملخصاً، تسعة اشياء اذا ترک الامام اتی بها المأموم رفع الیدین فی التحریمة و تکبیرة الركوع والسجود والتسبیح فیہما والتسمیع الخ

Translation: Similarly, one should not obey the imām in omitting sunnahs; rather this will constitute 'isā'ah and karāhah. If the imām omits them, the muqtadī should perform them, given that this does not cause him to miss following the imām in any wājib act of salāh. Therefore, the scholars state that if the imām omits raising the hands in takbīr taḥrīmah, the tasbīḥ of rukū' or sujūd, **the transitional takbīrāt**, or the invocations of qawmah, then the muqtadī should not omit it, as mentioned in Nazm al-Zandūsī, al-Khāniyah, al-Khulāsah, al-Bazzāziyah, al-Hindiyah, Khizānah al-Muftīn, Fath al-Qadīr, al-Ghunya, al-Durr al-Mukhtār, Ḥāshiyah al-Durar Lil-'Allāmah Shurumbulālī, etc. The following is summarized from the text of al-Bazzāziyah: There are nine things which the muqtadī should perform even if the imām abandons them: raising the hands in takbīr taḥrīmah, the takbīr for rukū' and sujūd, reciting tasbīḥ in them both, uttering tasmī' (سمع الله لمن حمده), etc." (Fatāwā Razawiyah, Vol. 06, p. 408, Publ. Raza Foundation, Lahore)

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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