271679 - Is it permissible to say, “My pride does not allow me to do such and such”?

the question

Is there any sin on a person if he says of himself: “My pride (kibriya’) does not allow me to do such and such”? Is this contrary to the words of Allah, may He be exalted (interpretation of the meaning), {And to Him belongs [all] pride within the heavens and the earth, and He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise} [al-Jaathiyah 45:37].

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

We put this question to our shaykh, ‘Abd ar-Rahman al-Barrak (may Allah preserve him) and he replied:

What appears to be the case is that when ordinary people use the word pride (kibriya’), they do not mean that pride which it is forbidden for humans to have; rather what they mean by that is honour and dignity. In other words: My dignity does not allow me to do such and such. This meaning is valid and there is nothing wrong with it, but it is better to avoid referring to it as pride (kibriya’), because of the prohibition on ascribing that to oneself, even if one does not intend the characteristic that is prohibited. According to the hadith of Abu Sa‘id al-Khudri and Abu Hurayrah, they said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Might is His lower garment and pride (kibriya’) is His upper garment, [and Allah says:] ‘Whoever competes with me [in them], I shall punish him.’” Narrated by Muslim.

And Allah knows best.