

**A DETAILED RESEARCH ON  
FOLDING THE HANDS BELOW THE  
NAVEL (IN SALAAH)**

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A DETAILED RESEARCH ON FOLDING THE HANDS BELOW  
THE NAVEL

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## FOREWORD

All praises are due to Allah, Lord of the Universe, and Salutations be upon Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihi wasallam). Allah *Ta'ala* has preserved this *Deen* from all discrepancies and throughout time will continue to do so by means of Scholars. Many trials will come and the '*Ulama* will provide solutions for, and act against these trails. One great trial today is an ideology and effort which can remove the general masses from the following of authentic Scholarship, whereas this is a command of Allah *Ta'ala* and something passed down from the first generation of Muslims up until today. Allah *Ta'ala* says, "O those who believe obey Allah, his Messenger and those of authority amongst you." *Sura Nisaa, verse 59, Mufasssireen* have mentioned that this refers to the Scholars (*Tafseer Tabari*). The *Sabaabah* followed Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihi wasallam), *Taabi'een* followed the *Sabaabah*, and the *Tab' Taabi'een* followed the *Taabi'een*. This chain of Knowledge goes on till today. The '*Ulama* have prescribed the complete way of following this *Deen* after studious and in-depth research of the sources of *Shariah*, namely the *Qur'aan*, *Hadith*, *Ijmaa'* and *Qiyaas*. This is not something any layman can do, nor is he capable of, or obliged to. They also understood the *Deen* better as they were closer to the era of Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihi wasallam). Every layman cannot involve himself in the in depth and intricate study of all the sciences of *Deen*, this is why Allah *Ta'ala* has mentioned in *Sura Tawba, Ayah 122* that only a group may take up this task.

We at Darul Uloom New York in order to keep this pristine *Deen* in its original form, under the supervision of Shaykh Arshad Madani; Teacher of *Hadith* in the great seminary of India, Darul Uloom Deoband and the President of Jamiatul Ulama, have taken the task of translating a number of booklets. The booklets were given to us by the *Shaykh* and translated by the students of the third year of the Darul Uloom New York. We hope that this will prove beneficial for the general masses and remove the confusion that has been created.

We are of the opinion that the *Ahlus sunnah wal Jama'ah* are on the correct path and they comprise of those who follow Authentic Scholarship including the four *Imaams* of *Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence), namely Imaam Abu Hanifah, Imaam Malik, Imaam Shafi'ee, and Imaam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (رحمهم الله). Although they may differ in many cases, all are correct in their effort to understand, implement, and present *Deen*.

The original articles discuss in details, proof of specific *Masaa'il* that are generally followed by the *Hanafi* School of thought. This work is aimed towards educating the masses of the authenticity of their position and not to creation friction, strife, and debates. As we are human, we are prone to err therefore if anyone were to point out our mistakes, we would be ever grateful. *Inshallah* in the future we plan to reprint them emitting those errors. May Allah *Ta'ala* accept this effort and grant us all the true understanding of *Deen*. *Aameen*.

Translation Committee  
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## **The Evidence of Folding the Hands below the Navel from *Ahaadith***

In *Salaah*, there are some differences of opinion (*Ikhhtilaaf*) between the Imaams of truth, regarding whether the hands should be folded; on the chest or below the navel.

Imaam Abu Hanifah (R) holds the opinion that it is better and preferred to fold the hands below the navel whilst Imaam Shaafi'i (R) opines that it is better to fold the hands above the navel.

Imaam Ahmad bin Hanbal (R) gives a choice of either to fold the hands above the navel or below the navel.

It is preferred to fold the hands below the navel because of the *Sabih*<sup>1</sup> *Marfu*<sup>2</sup>, and *Muttasil*<sup>3</sup> narration of Waa'il bin Hujr, , but some have made 'folding the hands below the navel' an issue between truth and falsehood.

They have also made 'folding the hands below the navel' a target of criticism. Now, in regards to this, it becomes necessary for us to ponder over the *Ahaadith*. We have studied all the treasures of the *Ahaadith* regarding this case and have seen the *Ahaadith* that support both sides. Folding the hands on the chest is found in the books of *Ahaadith*, but all those narrations are *Mutakallam-fee*<sup>4</sup>. To fold the hands below the navel is also found in numerous narrations. *Marfu'* and *Ghair Marfu'* narrations from countless Sahaabah exist regarding this.

Besides the narration of Ali (RA), there are narrations from countless Sahaabah regarding 'folding the hands below the navel', among which there are *Sabih*, *Marfu'*, and *Muttasil* narrations. For this reason, we will put forward *Ahaadith* supporting both sides. After that, we will put forward the actual *Mas'alah* Inshallah.

## **The Narrations of Folding the Hands on the Chest:**

We have found three *Ahaadith* regarding folding the hands on the chest:

1. The narration of Waa'il bin Hujr (RA):

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<sup>1</sup> Describes the *Hadith* whose narrators are 'Aadil( those who do not commit sin nor do undignified acts) and have perfectly sound memories; its chain of narration are *Muttasil* and it is not *Mua'llal* (it has a hidden defect) nor is it *Shaa'x* (contradicting a *Hadith* which is narrated by someone who is more *Thiqaa* [someone who is A'adil and *Daabit* [ *Hadith* which is well preserved by the narrators, either by memory or writing it down]).

<sup>2</sup> The *Hadith* in whose sanad (chain of narration), every narrator is mentioned.

<sup>3</sup> The text in which sayings, actions, and approvals are attributed to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam).

<sup>4</sup> A *Hadith*, the authenticity of which *Muhadditheen* (experts of *Hadith*) have criticized.

عن وائل عن ابيه عن امه عن وائل بن حجر(رضى الله عنه) قال "حضرت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم اذا -او- حين نهض الى المسجد فدخل المحراب ثم رفع يديه بالتكبير ثم وضع يمينه على يساره على صدره" ورواه ايضا مؤمل بن اسماعيل عن الثور عن عاصم بن كليب عن ابيه عن وائل انه راى النبی صلى الله عليه وسلم "وضع يمينه على شماله ثم وضعهما على صدره" (السنن الكبرى للبيهقي ، نصب الراية ، تحفة الاحوذى ، صحيح بن خزيمة)

Waa'il bin Hujr (RA) narrates, "I came to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) while he was going toward the Masjid, so he entered the *Mibrab*, raised his hands for *takebeer*, thereafter he placed his right hand above his left hand on his chest. (*Sunanul Kubra* 2/317, *Nasbur Raayah* 1/315, *Tuhfatul Ahwazy* 2/79, *Sahib ibn Khuzaimah* 1/272)

## 2. The narration of Halab Taa'ee (RA):

عن قبيسة بن هلب عن ابيه قال "رأيت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ينصرف عن يمينه وعن يساره ورأيتته قال يضع هذه على صدره" ووصف يحيى اليمنى على اليسرى فوق المفصل (مسند احمد ، تحفة الاحوذى ، اعلاء السنن)

Halab Taa'ee (RA) says, "I saw Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) turning from his right to his left, and I saw him (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasalam) indicating to put this (his hands) on his chest." And the narrator of this Hadith, Yahyaa bin Saeed explained it as the right hand would be placed on the wrist of the left hand. (*Musnad imaam ahmed* 5/226, Hadith#22313, *Tuhfatul ahwazy* 2/80, *I'laaus sunan* 2/184)

## 3. The *Athar*<sup>5</sup> of Taaos bin Kaisan(RA):

وعن طاؤس (رضى الله عنه) قال "كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يضع يده اليمنى على يده اليسرى ثم يشبك بهما على صدره وهو فى الصلاة" (مراسيل ابى داؤد ، تحفة الاحوذى ، معارف السنن)

Taaos (RA) says, "Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) would place his left hand on his right hand, then tie them on his chest while he was in *Salaah*. (*Maraaseel Abu Dawud* (6), *Tuhfatul Ahwazy* 6/81 *Maarifus Sunan* 2/440)

These are the *Ahaadith* regarding 'Folding the hands on the chest'. The first one is the narration of Waa'il bin Hujr, and it is *Mutakallam-fee* and *Dha'eef*<sup>6</sup>. In its chain of narrators, Muhammad bin Hujr is a *Munkarul Hadith*<sup>7</sup>. There is much discussion regarding this in the commentary of Baihaqi '*Sunan al-Kubra*' and similarly the narration of Waa'il bin Hujr is also transmitted from Mua'mmal (*Sunanul-Kubra* of Baihaqi, 2/30).

<sup>5</sup> Saying or action of a Sahabi (sometimes used for *Hadith*).

<sup>6</sup> *Hadith* in which not a single condition of *Al-Sahib* from amongst the *Al-Sahib* are found.

<sup>7</sup> A *Munkarul Hadith* is a narrator who narrates many *Abadeeth* that are of the status of *Munkar*. *Munkar hadith* contradict *Sahib Hadith*. For details see *Tadrib Al Rawi* by Imam Suyooti.

In *Tabdhibul Kamaal* and *Mizānul I'tidal*, he is considered one who has made many mistakes. Imam Bukhari said that he is *Munkarul Hadith*. Abu Hatim and Abu Zur'ah and others considered him the one who has made many mistakes. The details are in *Sunanul- Kubra* 2/30.<sup>8</sup>

The *Hadith* of Halab (RA), which contains the word *Yadha'u 'alaa Swadrih*, is not specific. The *Muhadditheen* have severely criticized it. It is mentioned in *A'wnul Ma'bood*, and *Ta'liqul Hasan*, and as well as others, that the words '*Alaa Sadrih*' is from the category of *Tasheef* (error in the script). The writer has committed an error in the script. Yahya had added the word "*Al- Yumna*", which is not part of the original *Hadith*. The actual wording of the *Hadith* is "*Yadha'oo 'alaa Haa'zihi*". So the words of the Sahaabi are, "*Alaa Haa'zihi*", and not "*Alaa Sadrihi*". The details are mentioned in *I'laa us sunan* 2/169. As far as being an error of the script, 'Allaamah Shawq Nimwee has established with detailed proofs in his book, that the wording of the narration of Halab (RA) is not '*Alaa Sadrih*, but rather, it is an error in the script, and an addition to the narration. Thereafter, Simak bin Harb is considered *Layyinul Hadith*<sup>9</sup>. Therefore the narration of Halab is *Mutakallam-feeh*.

As far as the narration of *Taa'oos bin Kaisaan* is concerned, it is an *Athar*, not a *Marfu' Hadith*, and the narrators between Taa'ous and Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) are unknown. It is therefore unjust and unfair to persist on folding the hands on the chest, and criticizing those who don't by means of *Mutakalam-feeh* narrations.

## The Narrations of Folding the Hands Below the Navel:

There are many *Abaadith* regarding folding the hands below the navel. We will present seven below:

### 1. The narration of Waa'il bin Hujr (RA):

عن وائل بن حجر (رضى الله عنه) قال " رأيت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وضع يمينه على شماله في الصلاة تحت السرة" (رجاله كله ثقات إثبات) (مصنف ابن أبي شيبة)

<sup>8</sup> Muhammad bin Marwazy said, "When Muammal alone narrates a *Hadith*, it is essential to abstain from using it as an evidence because he is deficient in his memory and his errors are abundant."

<sup>9</sup> A narrator who has not preserved the *Hadith* perfectly.

Waa'il bin Hujr (RA) says, "I saw Nabi (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) putting his right hand on his left hand below the navel in *Salaah*." (all narrators of this chain are reliable) (Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaibah 1/390) <sup>10</sup>

## 2. The narration of Ali bin Abi Taalib (RA):

عن علي (رضي الله عنه) قال "من سنة الصلاة ان توضع الايدي على الايدي تحت السرة" (مسند احمد ، سنن دار قطنى ، مصنف ابن ابى شيبه)

Ali (RA) says, "From the *Sunnah* of *Salaah* is that the hands are placed one above the other, below the navel. (Musnad Imaam Ahmad 1/110 Hadith #875, *Sunan Darqutni* 1/289 Hadith #1089, *Musannaf ibn abi Shaibah* 1/390, 3/324 Hadith #3966.)

## 3. The narration of Nu'man bin Sa'd (RA)

عن نعمان بن سعد عن علي (رضي الله عنه) انه كان يقول "ان من سنة الصلاة وضع اليمين على الشمال تحت السرة" (سنن دار قطنى)

Nu'man bin Sa'd narrates that Ali (RA) used to say, "Verily, placing the the right hand upon the left below the navel is from the *Sunnah* of *Salaah*. (*Sunan Darqutni* 1/289, Hadith #190)

## 4. The narration of Abu Hurairah (RA)

عن ابى وائل قال قال ابو هريرة (رضي الله عنه) "اخذ الاكف على الاكف فى الصلاة تحت السرة" (اعلاء السنن ، سنن الكبرى للبيهقى ، تحفة الاحوذى)

Abu Hurairah (RA) says, "Placing the hands above the hands in *Salaah* should be below the navel." (*I'laa us Sunan* 2182, *sunanul- Kubra* of Baihaqi 2/819, Hadith #239. *Tuhfatul Ah'wazy* 2/78 *Al- Muballa bil Athaar* 3/30)

## 5. The narration of Abu Hurairah (RA)

عن ابى هريرة (رضي الله عنه) قال "وضع الكف على الكف فى الصلاة تحت السرة" (المحلى بالاثار)

Abu Hurairah (RA) says, "The placing of one hand on another hand in *Salaah* should be below the navel". (*Al-Muballa- Bilaathar* 3/30 under *the Mas'alah* of 448)

## 6. The narration of Anas bin Maalik (RA)

<sup>10</sup> In the commentary of Tirmizi by *Abi Tib*, he transmitted this *Hadith* and mentioned that this *Hadith* is *Sahih* in regards to its *sanad* (chain of the narration) and its *matan* (text of the *Hadith*), and it can be used as evidence.

عن انس (رضى الله عنه) قال "ثلاث من اخلاق النبوة تعجيل الافطار ، تأخير السحور ، و وضع اليد اليمنى على اليسرى فى الصلاة تحت السرة" (المحلى بالاثار ، معارف السنن ، تحفة الاحوذى)

Anas (RA) narrated that, "There are three characteristics of Prophethood, (a) hastening to break the fast, (b) delaying to eat *subhoor*<sup>11</sup>, and (c) putting the right hand on the left hand below the navel in *Salaah*." (*Al Muballa bil Athaar* 3/30, *Ma'arif-u- Sunan* 3/444, *Tuhfatul-Abwazi* 2/89)

#### 7. The *Athar* of Ibraheem Nakh'ee (R)

عن ابراهيم النخعى (رحمه الله) قال "يضع يمينه على شماله فى الصلاة تحت السرة" (مصنف ابن ابى شيبه)

Ibrahim Nakh'ee (R) said, "The right hand should be placed on the left hand below the navel in *Salaah*". (Musannaf bin Abi Shaibah 1/290. 3/322 *Hadith* # 3460)

The method of folding the hands below the navel is established from these narrations. The confusion that arises is that, there are narrations supporting both sides: placing the hands on the chest and placing the hands below the navel. The weakness of the narrations regarding the placement of the hands on the chest has been established previously.

There are seven *Abaadith* mentioned regarding the placement of the hands below the navel. From among them, the first *Hadith* which is from Musannaf ibn Abi Shaibah is narrated with a very authentic chain. All of these narrations are reliable.

*The Abnaaf*<sup>12</sup> took proofs from these and rendered the placement of the hands below the navel as *Mustahab*. There is no objection in regards to those who place the hands on the chest, nor has it been a target of criticism. Therefore, in tying the hands below the navel, there is more respect, and less similarity to women, whereas tying the hands on the chest resembles the form of a woman's *Salaah* (Tying the hands on the chest for women has been agreed upon by most Imams, if not all). Along with the soundness and authenticity of the narrations regarding folding the hands below the navel, it is also emphasized by the *Aathaar* of countless *Sahabah* and *Taabi'een*, which come in many books. This is why it is *Mustahab* to fold the hands below the navel in the *Hanafi Madhab*. And as shown above, it is totally wrong to say that Abu Hanifah (R) only took proof from Ali (RA).

May Allah give us ability to understand the truth and act upon it. *Aameen*.

<sup>11</sup> The meal before sunrise for fasting.

<sup>12</sup> Those following the Hanafi school of Law in matters of Jurisprudence.