

Concerning The Placing Of The Hands In Prayer During the Qiyâm

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Translated by Abu Rumaysah

Chapter: what occurs with regards to placing the right hand upon the left in prayer

234. Qutaybah narrated to us; Abû al-Ahwas narrated to us; from Sammâk bin Harb; from Qabîsah bin Hulb; from his father [Hulb at-Tâ’î] who said,

The Messenger of Allaah (SAW) used to lead us in prayer and grasp his left hand with his right.

Ahâdith pertaining to this topic have been narrated from Wâ’il bin Hujr, Ghutayf bin al-Hârith, ibn ‘Abbâs, ibn Mas‘ûd, and Sahl bin Sa‘d.^[2]

Abû ‘Ēsâ [at-Tirmidhî] said: The hadîth of Hulb at-Tâ’î is a hasan hadîth.

The People of Knowledge amongst the Companions of the Prophet (SAW) and the Tâbi‘în acted upon this hadîth, they were of the opinion that one should place his right hand upon his left hand while in prayer. Some of them were of the opinion that one places his hands above the navel and others below the navel. There was flexibility in this according to them.

The name of Hulb is Yazîd bin Qunâfah at-Tâ’î.

[End of quote from at-Tirmidhî]

- His saying, “the hadîth of Hulb at-Tâ’î is a hasan hadîth.”

It has also been reported by ibn Mâjah.

- His saying, “the People of Knowledge amongst the Companions of the Prophet (SAW) and the Tâbi‘în acted upon this hadîth, they were of the opinion that one should place his right hand upon his left hand while in prayer.”^[3]

The Mâlikiyyah were of the opinion that one leaves his hands free [by his sides] in prayer (irsâl). Al-Hâfidh ibn al-Qayyim said in I‘lâm after mentioning the ahâdith concerning placing the hands in prayer,

“these narrations are contradicted by the narration of al-Qâsim from Mâlik

that he said, ‘leaving it is more beloved to me’ and I do not know anything else that contradicts them.’^[4]

It is strange that the Mâlikiyyah should prefer the narration of al-Qâsim from Mâlik, despite the fact that there is no authentic hadîth concerning irsâl, and leave the ahâdîth concerning the placing of hands in prayer. Mâlik reports the above mentioned hadîth of Sahl bin Sa‘d under a chapter heading that reads, ‘placing the hands, one on the other, in prayer.’ He first mentioned the narration of ‘Abdul-Karîm bin Abî al-Mukhâriq that he said,

‘From the words of prophecy are: ‘if you feel no shame then do as you wish’, and the placing of hands, one upon the other, in prayer – placing the right upon the left, hastening iftâr and delaying the suhûr.’

Then he mentioned the hadîth of Sahl bin Sa‘d.

- His saying, “some of them were of the opinion that one places his hands above the navel and others below the navel.”

At-Tirmidhî has generalised his words here and we shall detail them. Know that the madh`hab of Imâm Abû Hânifah is that the man should place his hands below the navel in prayer and the woman upon her chest. There is nothing reported from him, or his companions, which contradicts this.

As for Imâm Mâlik, there are three reports from him:

1. Which is the famous and well-known one, that one does irsâl and this is quoted by the author of al-Hidâyah, Sarakhsî in his Muhît and others from Mâlik. Al-‘Allâmah Abû Muhammad ‘Abdullâh ash-Shâsî al-Mâlikî in ‘Aqd al-Jawâhir ath-Thamînah fî Madh`hab ‘Alimi-l-Madînah, and az-Zurqânî in Sharh al-Muwattâ, both said that irsâl was the narration of ibn al-Qâsim from Mâlik. Az-Zurqânî added that this became the practice of the majority of his companions.^[5]
2. That one places his hands below the chest but above the navel. This was mentioned from Mâlik by al-‘Ainî in Sharh al-Hidâyah. In ‘Aqd al-Jawâhir it is mentioned that this is the report of Mutarrâf and al-Mâjishûn from Mâlik.
3. One has a choice between placing and irsâl. It is mentioned in ‘Aqd al-Jawâhir that this is the opinion of the Medinan companions of Mâlik.

As for Imâm ash-Shâfi‘î, there are three reports from him:

1. One places them below the chest but above the navel, this is what he himself mentions in al-Umm.^[6] This is the chosen and famous report amongst his companions and the one that is recorded in the majority of their texts and commentaries.^[7]
2. Placing them upon the chest as was quoted by the author of al-Hidâyah from ash-Shâfi‘î. Al-‘Ainî said that it was mentioned in al-Hâwî from amongst their books.
3. Placing them below the navel as mentioned in Sharh al-Minhâj whose author went on to say, ‘the author of al-Mawâhib al-Laduniyyah said that it is the report of some of the companions of ash-Shâfi‘î.’

As for Imâm Ahmad then there are also three reports from him:

1. Placing them below the navel.
2. Placing them below the chest.
3. A choice between the above two.

The most famous report from him is the first and this is the one adhered to by the majority of the Hanbalis.^[8] All of the above has been taken from Fawz al-Kirâm of Shaykh Muhammad Qâ‘im as-Sindî and Darâhim as-Surrah of Muhammad Hâshim as-Sindî.

- His saying, “and there was flexibility in this according to them”

The clear meaning of this statement is that the difference of opinion that occurred between the scholars concerning placing the hands above or below the navel was one of choice and excellence. Know that the ahâdîth and narrations that occur on this subject differ and due to this there occurred a difference amongst the Imâms, may Allâh have mercy upon them. Here I shall mention the evidences [for each opinion] in three sections along with an explanation of the evidences for and against them.

Section One: In explanation of the one who holds to placing the hands below the navel

These stick to the following ahâdîth:

1) The hadîth of Wâ‘il bin Hujr (RA) reported by ibn Abî Shaybah, Musannaf, from Wakî‘; from Mûsâ bin ‘Umayr; from ‘Alqama bin Wa‘il bin Hujr; from his father who said,

‘I saw the Prophet (SAW) placing his right hand over his left below the navel.’

Al-Hâfidh al-Qâsim bin Qatlûbagâ, Takhrîj Ahâdîth al-Ikhtiyâr Sharh al-Mukhtâr, said, “this sanad is good.” Shaykh Abû at-Tayyib al-Madanî, Sharh at-Tirmidhî, said, ‘this hadîth is strong from the point of view of the sanad.’ Shaykh ‘Abid as-Sindî, Tawâli al-Anwâr, said, ‘its narrators are trustworthy.’

I say: even if the isnâd of this hadîth is good, affirming the words, ‘below the navel’ poses a serious problem.

Shaykh Muhammad Hayat as-Sindî said in his book, Fat`hu-l-Ghafûr, “the addition, ‘below the navel’, is problematic, in fact it is a mistake arising from neglect. I checked the authentic text of the Musannaf and I saw this hadîth in it with this sanad, with this wording but without the additional wording, ‘below the navel’. After this hadîth is mentioned the narration of an-Nakha’î and its wording is close to the wording of this hadîth, and at its conclusion are the words, ‘below the navel.’ So maybe the sight of the scribe [of the texts of the Musannaf] slipped from one place to the other and interpolated the wording of the mawqûf narration into the marfu ‘ narration [as occurs in some of the texts of the Musannaf]’

The author of ad-Durra fî Idh`hâr Gash Naqd as-Surra said,

“and as for the hadîth of Wa’il that is depended upon, reported by ibn Abî Shaybah, then there is a lot of discussion surrounding this hadîth. This is because ibn Abî Shaybah reported this hadîth, and after it reported the narration of an-Nakha’î and the wording of the two is close, and at the conclusion of the wording of the narration are the words, ‘below the navel.’ So the texts [of the Musannaf] differ, in some of them occurs the mention of the hadîth without specifying the place of the hands followed with the narration of an-Nakha’î. In other texts the hadîth is mentioned with the additional wording but without the narration of an-Nakha’î following it. So it is possible that the addition arises from negligence on the part of the scribe [of the Musannaf] by his interpolating the wording of the narration into the hadîth. Similarly it is possible that the absence of the wording ‘below the navel’ in the earlier texts [of the Musannaf arises from neglect of the writer]. However the differing in this way shows that the wording of the narration got interpolated into the hadîth.’

I say: and the saying of these scholars is supported by the fact that Ahmad reports the hadîth with the same sanad as ibn Abî Shaybah and the addition does not occur in it. So in the Musnad of Ahmad occurs: Wakî‘ narrated to us; from Mûsâ bin ‘Umayr al-‘Anbarî; from ‘Alqama bin Wâ’il al-Hadramî; from his father who said,

I saw the Messenger of Allaah (SAW) placing his right hand upon his left in prayer.’

Ad-Dâruqutnî also reports this hadîth with the same sanad as ibn Abî Shaybah and there is no mention of the addition in it: al-Husayn bin Ismâ‘îl and ‘Uthmân bin Ja‘far bin Muhammad al-Ahwad both related to us; from Yûsuf bin Mûsâ; from Wakî‘; from Mûsâ bin ‘Umayr al-‘Anbarî; from ‘Alqama bin Wa’il al-Hadramî; from his father who said, ‘

I saw the Messenger of Allâh (SAW) placing his right hand upon his left in the prayer.’

This fact is also supported by the fact that ibn at-Turkamânî, the Shaykh of al-Hâfidh az-Zayla‘î, mentioned in his al-Jawhar two weak hadîth to support his madh`hab where he said,

“ibn Hazm said, ‘it is reported to us from Abû Hurayrah who said, “place the hand upon the hand below the navel.” And from Anas who said, “three are from the manners of the Prophethood: hastening the iftâr, delaying the suhûr, and placing the right hand upon the left below the navel in the prayer.” ’ ”

Before these two hadîth he quotes the narration of Abû Mijliz in the Musannaf of ibn Abî Shaybah, “ibn Abî Shaybah said in his Musannaf: from Yazîd bin Hârûn; from al-Hajjâj bin Hisân who said; I heard Abû Mijliz or I asked him,

‘how do I place [my hands]?’ He replied, ‘place the palm of the right hand on the back of the left palm below the navel’ ”

He does not quote any other narration from the Musannaf of ibn Abî Shaybah, and it is clear that the narration of Wa’il in which the addition, ‘below the navel’ occurs was not in there. If it was there with this addition then ibn Turkamânî would have quoted it, for it is inconceivable that he would mention two da‘îf hadîth to support his madh`hab, and quote the narration of Abû Mijliz, a tâbi‘î, from the Musannaf, and not quote the marfu‘ hadîth of Wa’il with this addition present and its sahîh sanad.

This is also supported by the fact that Shaykh Muhammad Hayat as-Sindî said in his letter, Fat`hu-l-Ghafûr,

“that more than one of the Companions of Hadîth reported this hadîth and there was no mention of the words, ‘below the navel’, in fact I have not seen or heard any of the People of Knowledge mention this hadîth with this addition except al-Qâsim.

This is ibn ‘Abdi-l-Barr, the Hâfidh of his time, saying in at-Tamhîd, “and ath-Thawrî and Abû Hanîfah said, ‘below the navel’ and this is narrated from ‘Alî and Ibrâhîm an-Nakha’i but it is not authentic from them.” So if this authentic hadîth with this additional wording were in the Musannaf he would have mentioned it because he often quotes from the Musannaf in this chapter and others.

This is ibn Hajr, the Hâfidh of his time, saying in his Fat`h,

“ibn Khuzaymah reported from Wa’il that he placed them upon his chest, and in al-Bazzâr [the wording is] near his chest and Ahmad reports a similar hadîth from the hadîth of Hulb.”

He says in Takhrîj al-Hidâyah that the narration of ‘Alî is da‘îf and is contradicted by the hadîth of Wa’il bin Hujr, “I prayed with the Messenger of Allâh (SAW) and he placed his right hand upon his left on his chest.” He also indicates this in Takhrîj Ahâdîth ar-Râfi‘î. So if this addition were present in the Musannaf he would have mentioned it for his books are replete with ahâdîth and narrations.

This is as-Suyûtî, the Hâfidh of his time, saying in Wadhâ’if al-Yawn wa-l-Layl, “he used to place his right hand upon his left and place them firmly on his chest.” He mentioned in his Jâmi‘ al-Kabîr about eight ahâdîth of Wa’il from the Musannaf and the wording of some of them is, ‘I saw the Prophet (SAW) place his right hand upon his left in prayer.’ This is the wording that the author of Naqd as-Surra mentioned with the addition, ‘below the navel’ and if this addition were present then as-Suyûtî would have mentioned it.

This is al-‘Ainî saying in the commentary of Bukhârî,

“ash-Shâfi‘î relied upon the hadîth of Wa’il bin Hujr reported by ibn Khuzaymah in his sahhîh who said, ‘I prayed behind the Messenger of Allâh (SAW) and he placed his right hand upon his left on his chest.’ And our Hanafî scholars seek support with evidences that are not strong (ghayru wathîqa).”

So if this addition were present in the Musannaf he would have mentioned it for his works are replete with quotes from it.

This is ibn Amîr al-Hâj, who outdid his Shaykh ibn al-Hummâm in research and depth of investigation, saying in Sharh al-Miniyyah, “what is established in the Sunnah is to place the right hand upon the left in prayer and there is no authentic hadîth that establishes the place of placing them on the body except the aforementioned hadîth of Wa’il.^[9]” So if this hadîth were present with this addition, ibn Amîr al-Hâj would have mentioned it especially since his

commentaries are overflowing with quotes from the Musannaf.” [End of quote from as-Sindî]

I say [in conclusion]: the aforementioned hadîth of Wa’il bin Hujr even though its sanad is good, there is a severe problem in affirming the wording, “below the navel” as you have come to know.

2) The hadîth of ‘Alî (RA) reported by Abû Dâwûd, Ahmad, ibn Abî Shaybah, ad-Dâruqutnî, al-Bayhaqî and Abû Juhayfah that ‘Alî said,

“the Sunnah is to place the hand upon the hand below the navel.”

I say: its isnâd contains Abdur-Rahmân bin Is’hâq al-Wâsitî, and this hadîth revolves around him and he is da‘îf and it is not correct to depend upon him. Al-Hâfidh az-Zayla’i said in Nasb ar-Râyah after mentioning this hadîth, “ibn al-Qattân said, ‘ Abdur-Rahmân bin Is’hâq, he is ibn al-Harb Abû Shaybah al-Wâsitî. Ibn Hanbal and Abû Hâtim said about him, “rejected in hadîth.” Ibn Ma‘în said, “he is nothing.” Bukhârî said, “there is a problem in him.” Al-Bayhaqî said in al- Ma‘rifah, “its isnâd is not authentic, Abdur-Rahmân bin Is’hâq al-Wâsitî is alone in reporting it and he is abandoned.” An-Nawawî said in al-Khulâsa and Sharh sahîh Muslim, “and it is a hadîth which is weak by agreement for Abdur-Rahmân bin Is’hâq is weak by agreement.” ’ »^[10]

Shaykh ibn al-Hummâm said in at-Tahrîr,

“when al-Bukhârî says about someone, ‘there is a problem in him’ then his hadîth is not depended upon or used for support, or given any consideration.”^[11]

So when you come to know all of this, it becomes clear that this hadîth of ‘Alî is not to be depended upon, or used as support, or given any consideration. Furthermore it also contradicts the commentary of ‘Alî to the saying of Allâh, « wanhar » that he placed his hand upon the center of his left forearm and placed them upon his chest - reported by al-Bayhaqî, ibn Abî Shaybah, ibn al-Mundhir, ibn Abî Hâtim, ad-Dâruqutnî, Abû ash-Shaykh, al-Hâkim and ibn Mardawiyah as in ad-Durr al-Manthûr.^[12]

Al-Fâdil Mulla al-Haddâd said in Hâshiyah al-Hidâyah, “so when the hadîth of placing the hands below the navel is weak and contradicts the narration of ‘Alî that he explained His saying, « wanhar » by placing the right hand upon his left on his chest then it is obligatory to act upon the hadîth of Wa’il which an-Nawawî mentioned. Furthermore this [da‘îf] hadîth of ‘Alî is also to be considered abrogated according to the way of the Hanafiyah. The author of ad-Durra fî

Idh`hâr Gash Naqd as-Surra, and he is Hanafî in madh`hab, said, ‘Abû Dâwûd reports on the authority of Jarîr ad-Dabbî that he said,

‘I saw ‘Alî placing his right hand upon his left wrist above the navel.’

So the principle of our scholars is that when a Companion acts contrary to what he narrates then this indicates the abrogation of what is narrated.’ ”

I say: the isnâd of the narration of ‘Alî, I mean the one that Abû Dâwûd reports from Jarîr ad-Dabbî is sahîh as you will come to know.

3) The hadîth of Abû Hurayrah reported by Abû Dâwûd from Abû Wâ’il who said,

‘Abû Hurayrah said: hold the hand with the hand below the navel.’

I say: the isnâd of this hadîth also contains Abdur-Rahmân bin Is`hâq al-Wâsitî. So this hadîth is also not fit to depend upon or use as a support or give any consideration to as you have just come to know.

4) The hadîth that ibn Hazm mentions in al-Muhalla in ta`lîq form from Anas with the wording,

‘three are from the manners of the Prophethood: hastening the iftâr, delaying the suhûr, and placing the right hand upon the left below the navel in the prayer.’^[13]

I say: I have not come across the sanad of this hadîth and the Hanafî scholars mention it in their books and depend upon it but they also do not mention its isnâd. If the isnâd of something is not known then it is not correct to depend upon it or use it as support or give it any consideration.

The author of ad-Durra said, “and as for the hadîth of Anas, ‘from the manners of the Prophethood is placing the right hand upon the left below the navel’ about which al-‘Ainî said that it is reported by ibn Hazm, then its sanad is not known so as to look into its narrators and see if they are acceptable or not. This hadîth has been reported by more than one of the Hadîth Scholars without the addition, ‘below the navel’, and an addition [to the wording of a hadîth] is only acceptable from known and reliable narrators.”

Shaykh Hâshim as-Sindî said in his letter, Darâhim as-Surra,

“from them is what az-Zâhidî mentioned in his Sharh al-Qudûrî, and ibn Amîr

al-Hâj and ibn Najîm mentioned in al-Bahr ar-Râ'iq, that it is reported from the Prophet (SAW), 'three are from the habit of the Messengers: hastening the iftâr, delaying the suhûr, and placing the right hand upon the left below the navel in prayer.' He said: I have not come across the sanad to this hadîth except that az-Zâhidî added that it is reported by 'Alî bin Abû Tâlib (RA) from the Prophet (SAW). But ibn Amîr al-Hâj and ibn Najîm said, 'that the reporters of hadîth do not know the wording, "below the navel" from a marfu' or mawqûf narration.' "

So these are the ahâdîth that are depended upon to place the hands below the navel and not one of them is correct to depend upon as you have come to know.

Section 2: In mention of the one who sticks to holding the hands above the navel

I have not come across a marfu' hadîth that lends evidence to this position. Yes there is the narration of 'Alî (RA) which indicates this, as reported by Abû Dâwûd in his Sunan from Jarîr ad-Dabbî who said,

"I saw 'Alî grasping his left wrist with his right hand above the navel."

I say: this isnâd is sahîh or hasan, but it is the action of 'Alî and is not marfu'. Also the clear meaning of his saying, "above the navel" is a place raised from the navel, i.e. upon the chest or near the chest, as occurs in the hadîth of Wa'il bin Hujr and the hadîth of Hulb at-Tâ'î and the mursal of Tâwûs, all of which follow. This interpretation is supported by his (RA) commentary to His saying, « wanhar » by placing the hands upon the chest in the prayer as has preceded.

Section 3: In mention of the one who holds to placing the hands upon the chest

These depend on some ahâdîth.

1) From them the hadîth of Wa'il bin Hujr who said,

"I prayed with the Messenger of Allaah (SAW) and he placed his right hand upon his left on his chest in the prayer."

Reported by ibn Khuzaymah, and this hadîth is authentic, authenticated by ibn Khuzaymah as was made clear by ibn Sayyid an-Nâs in his Sharh at-Tirmidhî

. Shaykh Muhammad Qâ'im as-Sindî al-Hanafî acknowledges in his letter, Fawz al-Kirâm, that this hadîth fulfills the conditions of ibn Khuzaymah where he says,

“I believe that this hadîth fulfils the conditions of ibn Khuzaymah, and this is strongly suggested in the manner of al-Hâfidh in al-Ittihâf, and is obvious from the words of ibn Sayyid an-Nâs after he mentioned the hadîth of Wa’il bin Hujr in Sharh at-Tirmidhî – ‘and ibn Khuzaymah authenticated it.’ ”

Ibn Amîr al-Hâj, who outdid his Shaykh ibn al-Hummâm in research and depth of investigation, said in Sharh al-Minniyyah,

“what is established in the Sunnah is to place the right hand upon the left in prayer. There is no authentic hadîth that establishes the place of placing them on the body except the aforementioned hadîth of Wa’il.”

Likewise this was said by the author of al-Bahr ar-Râ’iq as is found in Fat’hu-l-Ghafûr of Shaykh Hayat as-Sindî.

Ash-Shawkanî said in Nayl, “ibn Khuzaymah reported it in his sahîh and authenticated it.”

Al-Hâfidh said in Fat’hu-l-Bârî,

“and he did not mention [i.e. Sahl bin Sa’d] the place to put them on the body. Ibn Khuzaymah reported from Wa’il that ‘he placed them upon his chest’. Al-Bazzâr has the wording ‘near his chest’ and Ahmad reports a similar hadîth from the hadîth of Hulb. In the Zawâ’id al-Musnad is the hadîth of ‘Alî that he placed his hands below the navel and its isnâd is da‘îf.’^[14]

It is clear from the words of al-Hâfidh that he considered the hadîth of Wa’il to be sahîh or hasan, because he mentioned here three ahâdîth for the purpose of appointing the place where the hands are to be placed: the hadîth of Wa’il, the hadîth of Hulb and the hadîth of ‘Alî. He declared the hadîth of ‘Alî to be da‘îf, and was silent about the hadîth of Wa’il and Hulb. If these were also weak according to him then he would have made that clear due to what he states in his introduction to his commentary... Also al-Hâfidh made clear in ad-Dirâyah, after mentioning the hadîth of Wa’il reported by ibn Khuzaymah,

“it is in Muslim without the words, ‘upon his chest.’ ”

So it is clear from the words of al-Hâfidh that this hadîth is reported in Muslim, with the same text and sanad, but without mentioning where the hands were to be placed.

In conclusion the hadîth of Wa’il bin Hujr is sahîh and acceptable to depend upon

and to derive evidence that placing the hands on the chest in prayer is totally correct.

2) From the ahâdîth that these scholars depend upon is the hadîth of Hulb at-Tâ'î reported by Imâm Ahmad in his Musnad that Yahya bin Sa'îd narrated to us; from Sufyân; Sammâk narrated to us; from Qabîsa bin Hulb; from his father that,

“I saw the Messenger of Allaah (SAW) turn from his left to right, and place these on his chest and Yahya depicted this by placing the right hand upon the left [on the chest] above the level of the elbows.”

The narrators of this hadîth are all trustworthy, and the isnâd is linked.

Yahyâ bin Sa'îd is Abû Sa'îd al-Qattân al-Basrî, al-Hâfidh, al-Hujjah, one of the Imâms of Jarh wa-t-Ta'dîl. Al-Hâfidh said in at-Taqrîb, ‘thiqah, mutqin, Hâfidh, Imâm, qudwah.’

As for Sufyân then he is ath-Thawrî about whom it is stated in at-Taqrîb, ‘thiqah, Hâfidh, faqîh, ‘âbid, Imâm, Hujjah, possibly committed tadrîs.’ I say he has clearly stated that Sammâk narrated to him and hence the possibility of tadrîs is removed.

As for Sammâk then he is ibn Harb bin Aws bin Khâlid adh-Dhihlî al-Bakrî al-Kûfî, Abû al-Mughîra, sadûq, his reports from ‘Ikrimah specifically are mudtarib and his memory failed him at the end of his life. This is mentioned in at-Taqrîb. Adh-Dhahabî said, ‘Ahmad said, “Sammâk is mudtarib.” Shaybah declared him da‘îf, ibn ‘Ammâr said that he used to make mistakes, al-‘Ijlî said that sometimes he would [erroneously] link something and ath-Thawrî used to consider him da‘îf by saying that “his reports are mudtarib and he is not from those who are muthbit.” sâlih said that he has been declared da‘îf. Ibn Khudâsh said that he has weakness and ibn Ma‘în and Abû Hâtim declared him thiqah.’ The fact that Sammâk is mudtarib in hadîth does not impair this particular hadîth as it is only from ‘Ikrimah specifically that he is mudtarib, here he reports from Qabîsah. Similarly his memory failing him at the end of his life does not impair this hadîth as it is from the report of Sufyân from him and Sufyân heard from Sammâk before this happened. The author of Tahdhîb al-Kamâl said, ‘Ya‘qûb said that his reports from ‘Ikrimah specifically are mudtarib and he is good (sâlih) when he reports from others, he is not of those who are muthbit. Those who heard from him early on such as Shu‘bah and Sufyân then their hadîth from him is strong.’

As for Qabîsah then he too is thiqah as you have already come to know and his father is a Companion.

Therefore this hadîth of Hulb at-Ta'î is hasan. The author of Athâr as-Sunan acknowledged that it was hasan so to derive evidence from this that the place for the hands in prayer is on the chest is correct.

3) From the ahâdîth these scholars depend upon is the hadîth of Tâwûs reported by Abû Dâwûd in al-Marâsîl who said, “Abû Tawba narrated to us; al-Haytham i.e. ibn Humayd narrated to us; from Thawr; from Sulayman bin Mûsâ; from Tâwûs who said,

‘The Messenger of Allaah (SAW) used to place his right hand upon his left hand and plant them firmly upon his chest while in prayer.’ ” [15]

This hadîth is found in some of the texts of Abû Dâwûd. Al-Hâfidh al-Mizzî said in al-Atrâf under the letter ‘ tâ’ from the book al-Marâsîl, ‘the hadîth is reported by Abû Dâwûd in Kitâb al-Marâsîl’ and this was also stated by al-Bayhaqî in al-Ma‘rifah. The hadîth of Tâwûs is mursal because Tâwûs is a tâbi‘î [so he could not have seen the Messenger (SAW)] and its isnâd is hasan. And the mursal hadîth is considered a proof with Abû Hanîfah, Mâlik and Ahmad in general. According to ash-Shâfi‘î it is a proof when supported by something that occurs via another route that builds upon the first route be it musnad or mursal. This mursal hadîth is supported by the aforementioned hadîth of Wa’il and Hulb at-Tâ’î so deriving evidence from these to place the hands upon the chest in prayer is correct.^[16]

Addendum: Some of the Hanafiyyah try to claim that the hadîth of Wa’il is mudtarib (confused and subject to inconsistency) because ibn Khuzaymah reports this hadîth with the wording “upon the chest” and al-Bazzâr has the wording “near the chest” and ibn Abî Shaybah has the wording “below the navel.”

I say: it is firmly established in the Science of Hadîth that if the hadîth simply differs in its wordings then this does not necessitate idtirâb. Rather from its conditions is that the different aspects of the narrations be equivalent in authenticity. So if one of the narrations is found to be stronger then it takes precedence, and if they are equivalent then one can still find a reconciliation according to the principles of the Scholars of Hadîth.

In this case the aspects of difference are not equivalent for affirming the wording of ibn Abî Shaybah “below the navel” poses a serious problem as has preceded. As for the wording of ibn Khuzaymah, “upon the chest,” and the wording of al-Bazzâr, “near the chest,” then the first is stronger and takes precedence over the second. The reason being that the first has supports with the hadîth of Hulb and the mursal of Tâwûs contrary to the second for it has no witnesses. Even if we were to accept that they were equivalent then a reconciliation is possible. Shaykh Abû al-Mahâsin Muhammad, nicknamed al-Qâ’im as-Sindî, said in Fawz al-Kirâm, ‘al-

‘Allâmah ash-Shaykh Abû al-Hasan said in his treatise *Jawâz at-Taqlîd wa-l-‘Amal bi-l-Hadîth* after mentioning the hadîth of Wa’il, Hulb, the mursal of Tâwûs, the commentary of ‘Alî, Anas and ibn ‘Abbâs [to « wanhar »], “these ahâdîth were taken to by ash-Shâfi‘î, however he stated that one should place the hands upon the chest such that the bottom of the hand is actually placed below the chest in order the reconcile these ahâdîth with those reports that mention, “near the chest.””

Other scholars suggested another reconciliation, this being that the two narrations were reported with regards to two different prayers. Similar to this difference is the difference of the wording of the ahâdîth to do with raising the hands to the level of the shoulders or to the level of the ears. [i.e. the narrations depict different prayers and it is permissible to do either/or]. So the saying of the Hanafiyyah that the hadîth of Wa’il is mudtarib is not to be given any attention.

Footnotes

1 Ash-Shawkânî, *Nayl al-Awtâr* [2/208] mentions the sources for the ahâdîth concerning placing the hands in prayer by saying, “[the hadîth of Wâ’il] has been reported by an-Nasâ’î, ibn Hibbân and ibn Khuzaymah.

From Hulb by Ahmad, at-Tirmidhî, ibn Mâjah and ad-Dâruqutnî, its isnâd contains Qabîsah bin Hulb and only Sammâk narrates from him. He has been declared thiqah by al-‘Ijlî and majhûl by ibn al-Madîni and an-Nasâ’î. The hadîth of Hulb has been declared hasan by at-Tirmidhî.

From Ghutayf bin al-Hârith by Ahmad.

From ibn ‘Abbâs by ad-Dâruqutnî, al-Bayhaqî, ibn Hibbân and at-Tabarânî, al-Hurmalah was alone in narrating it.

From ibn ‘Umar by al-‘Uqailî who declared it da‘îf.

From Hudhayfah by ad-Dâruqutnî.

From Abu ad-Dardâ’ by ad-Daruqutnî as a marfu‘ report and ibn Abî Shaybah as a mawqûf report.

From Jâbir by Ahmad and ad-Dâruqutnî.

From ibn Zubair by Abû Dâwûd.

From ‘A’ishah by al-Bayhaqî who said that it was sahîh.

From Shaddâd bin Shurhabîl by al-Bazzâr and [its isnâd] contains ‘Abbâs bin Yûnus.

From Ya‘lâ bin Murrah by at-Tabarânî and [its isnâd] contains ‘Umar bin ‘Abdullâh bin Ya‘lâ who is da‘îf.

From ‘Uqbah bin Abî ‘A’ishah by al-Haythamî as a mawqûf report with a hasan isnâd.

From Mu‘âdh by at-Tabarânî and [its isnâd] contains al-Khasîb bin Jahdar.

From Abû Hurayrah by ad-Dâruqutnî and al-Bayhaqî.

From al-Hasan and Tâwûs, both as mursal reports by Abû Dâwûd, and also from Sahl bin Sa'd, ibn Mas'ûd and 'Alî.'

The above comes to a total of twenty authorities.

2 As-Sarakhsî, al-Mabsut [chpt. Kayfiyyah ad-Dukhûl fi-s-salah] said, 'holding the hands in prayer (i'timâd) is a Sunnah except in the view of al-Awza'î for he was of the opinion that the one praying has the choice between i'timâd and irsâl (leaving ones hands free by the sides). He used to say that they were only ordered with i'timâd as a kindness and leniency to them due to their lengthening the standing [in prayer]. [In such standings] the blood would concentrate at the tips of their fingers when they did irsâl, therefore it was said to them that 'were you to perform i'timâd then you would not feel such discomfort.' However the madh`hab of the generality of the scholars is that it is a Sunnah which the Messenger of Allâh (SAW) persisted in performing and he said, "we, the gathering of Prophets, have been ordered to take hold of our left hands with our right hands in prayer." '

3 Ibn al-Qayyim, I'lâm al-Muwaqqi'în 'an Rabbi-l-'Alamîn [2/337 under example sixty one].

4 In al-Mudawwanah [chpt. al-I'timâd fî-s-salâh] there occur the words, 'Mâlik was asked about placing the right hand on the left hand in prayer. He replied, "I do not know of this in the obligatory prayer," and he used to dislike it, "however in optional prayers, if the standing is long, there is no harm in it."

As-Sahnûn said; from ibn Wahb; from Sufyân; from more than one of the Companions of the Messenger of Allâh (SAW) that they saw the Messenger of Allâh (SAW) placing the right hand upon the left hand in prayer.'

5 Ash-Shâfi'î, al-Umm [].

6 An-Nawawî, al-Majmû', said, "we have mentioned that the recommended position to place them according to our madh`hab is below the chest but above the navel."

7 Ibn Qudâmah, al-Mughnî said, "as for placing the right hand upon the left hand in prayer, then this is from the Sunnahs of prayer in the view of many of the People of Knowledge. It is the view reported from 'Alî, Abû Hurayrah, an-Nakha'î, Abû Mijliz, Sa'îd bin Jubair, ath-Thawrî, ash-Shâfi'î, the As'hâbu-r-Ra'î and ibn al-Mundhir related it from Mâlik.

However the clear sense of his [Mâlik's] madh`hab, which his companions are upon, is irsâl. This is also the view reported from ibn Zubair and al-Hasan...

The reports differ as to where one should place ones hands. It is reported from Ahmad that they should be placed below the navel. This is also reported from ‘Alî, Abû Hurayrah, Abû Mijliz, an-Nakha‘î, ath-Thawrî and Is`hâq. This is because it is reported from ‘Alî that he said, ‘the Sunnah is to place the hand upon the hand below the navel’ and this is understood to mean the Sunnah of the Prophet (SAW) and because it is the opinion of those Companions that we have already mentioned.

It is also reported from Ahmad that they should be placed above the navel and this is also the opinion of ash-Shâfi‘î and Sa‘îd bin Jubair due to what is reported from Wâ’il bin Hujr, ‘I saw the Prophet (SAW) praying and placing his hands upon the chest, one on top of the other.’

It is also reported from Ahmad that one has a choice [as to where to place them] as both have been textually narrated. The matter is flexible.”

The hadîth of ‘Alî, Abû Hurayrah and an-Nakha‘î will be discussed below.

8 Referring to the hadîth that will be discussed under Section 3.

9 Az-Zayla‘i, Nasb ar-Râyah [1/392].

10 See also Irwâ‘ al-Ghalîl [no.353]

11 al-Albânî discusses this narration of ‘Alî (RA) in his introduction to the first edition of the new print of sifah as-salâh]pp. 14-17] and declares it correct to use as a witness.

12 Ibn Hazm, al-Muhallâ [3/30].

13 Fat`hu-l-Bârî [2/285 Chapter: Placing the right hand upon the left.] The hadîth of Sahl bin Sa‘d is, ‘the people were commanded that a person place the right hand on the back of the left hand in the Prayer.’

14 After mentioning this hadîth in ‘Sunan Abû Dâwûd’ [Eng. Trans. 1/194 no.758] there occurs a footnote taken from ‘Awn al-Ma‘bûd [1/275-77], “...according to the traditionists [Ahlu-l-Hadîth] the tradition is sound. Hence the folding hands on the chest in prayer, in their opinion, is the established Sunnah of the Prophet (SAW). The traditions regarding the folding of hands above or below the navel are not established as coming from the Prophet (SAW).”

15 The discussion on the hadîth of Hulb and Tâwûs can be found in the aforementioned introduction to sifah as-salâh [pp. 13-14].

16 See also the discussion of al-Albânî on this principle, and likewise his refutation to the above claim on p. 16 of the introduction to sifah as-salâh [Ar.]