

186625 - Ruling on raising the hands between prostrations

the question

Is it proven from the Sunnah to raise hands between two prostrations? As Shaykh Al Albani (may Allah have mercy on his soul) has classified 5 hadiths which say that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) used to raise his hands between two prostrations, while the Hadith narrated by Abdullah ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) in Bukhari and Bayhaqi claims that he (peace and blessings be upon him) never raised his hands between sujoods.

Detailed answer

Firstly:

Al-Bukhaari (735) and Muslim (390) narrated from Ibn 'Umar that the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) raised his hands until they were level with his shoulders when he began to pray, when he said takbeer before bowing (rukoo'), and when he lifted his head from bowing, he raised his hands in the same manner and said "Sami'a Allahu liman hamidah Rabbana wa laka'l-hamd (Allah hears those who praise Him; Our Lord to You be praise)." But he did not do that when he prostrated (sujood).

Al-Bukhaari (739) narrated from Naafi' that when Ibn 'Umar began to pray, he would say takbeer and raise his hands, then when he bowed, he would raise his hands, and when he said "Sami'a Allahu liman hamidah (Allah hears those who praise Him)" he would raise his hands, and when he stood up after praying two rak'ahs he would raise his hands. Ibn 'Umar attributed that to the Prophet of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him).

The Shaafa'is and Hanbalis were agreed that it is prescribed to raise the hands when bowing and when rising from bowing, and that these actions are among the Sunnahs of prayer. As-Suyooti said: Raising the hands is proven from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) in reports from fifty Sahaabis.

The Shaafa'is are of the view that it is recommended to raise the hands when standing up after the tashahhud for the third rak'ah. This was also mentioned in one report from Imam Ahmad.

End quote from al-Mawsoo'ah al-Fiqhiyyah (27/95)

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The places where the hands are to be raised (during the prayer) are four:

When saying the opening takbeer (takbeerat al-ihram), when bowing, when rising from bowing, and when standing up following the first tashahhud.

End quote from ash-Sharh al-Mumti' (3/214).

See also the answer to question no. [3267](#).

Note:

With regard to what is attributed to ash-Shaafa'i in al-Mawsoo'ah al-Fiqhiyyah about it being mustahabb to raise the hands when standing up after the tashahhud for the third rak'ah is not correct. What is well-known in the madhhab and is the view of most of his companions is that the hands are only to be raised when saying the opening takbeer, when bowing, and when rising from bowing.

See: al-Majmoo' Sharh al-Muhadhdhab by an-Nawawi (3/425)

Secondly:

Al-Bukhaari (737) and Muslim (391) narrated from Maalik ibn al-Huwayrith that when the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said takbeer, he raised his hands until they were level with his ears. When he bowed he raised his hands until they were level with his ears, and when he raised his head from bowing, he said: "Sami'a Allahu liman hamidah (Allah hears those who praise Him)," and did likewise.

This was also narrated by an-Nasaa'i (1085) and he added: And when he prostrated, and when he lifted his head from prostration, he raised his hands until they were level with his earlobes.

This was classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh an-Nasaa'i.

Al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The most sound of the hadiths about raising the hands in prostration is that which was narrated by an-Nasaa'i... then he quoted this hadith.

It was also narrated by Ahmad (20014) as follows:

It was narrated from Maalik ibn al-Huwayrith that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) used to raise his hands until they were level with his earlobes when bowing and prostrating.

Ibn Abi Shaybah (2449) narrated from Anas that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) used to raise his hands when bowing and prostrating.

Classed as saheeh by al-Albani in al-Irwa' (2/68).

The scholars differed as to how we may reconcile between the hadith of Ibn 'Umar which says that he did not raise his hands when prostrating, and the hadiths of Maalik ibn al-Huwayrith and Anas, and similar reports, which say that he did raise his hands when prostrating.

Some of them are of the view that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) used to raise his hands when prostrating sometimes, but most of the time he did not do that.

Ibn Rajab (may Allah have mercy on him) quoted some of the reports which say that he raised his hands when prostrating, then he said:

The response to all of these reports – assuming that the mention in them of his raising his hands when prostrating is proven, and there was no confusion about the mention of takbeer with raising the hands – is to note that Maalik ibn al-Huwayrith and Waa'il ibn Hajar were not among the people of Madinah; rather they came to Madinah once or twice, so perhaps they saw the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) do that once. The reports contradict what is reported from Ibn 'Umar, who said that he did not do that, and he spent a great deal of time with the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and was very keen to memorise his actions and follow his example. This indicates that what the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) did most of the time was not to raise the hands except in the three places mentioned and when standing up following two rak'ahs.

With regard to raising the hands when prostrating and at other points in the prayer, there are some ma'lool (flawed) hadiths. End quote.

Fath al-Baari by Ibn Rajab (6/354)

As-Sindi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

What appears to be the case is that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) did that sometimes and did not do it sometimes, but most of the scholars are of the view that the hands should not be raised when prostrating. It is as if they adopted that view based on the fact that the basic principle is that it is not to be done, and when there was an apparent contradiction between the reports which said that he did that and the reports which said that he did not do it, they followed the basic principle. And Allah, may He be exalted, knows best.

The majority are of the view that not raising the hands when prostrating is more likely to be correct, because this is what is proven by sound reports, and they deemed the reports which speak of raising the hands when prostrating to be shaadhdh (odd), and that the narrator made mistake and mentioned raising the hands instead of saying takbeer, because the correct view is that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)

used to say takbeer every time he moved up or down in the prayer, as was narrated by al-Bukhaari (785) and Muslim (392).

At-Tirmidhi (253) narrated that ‘Abdullah ibn Mas’ood said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) used to say takbeer every time he moved up or down, or stood up or sat down (in the prayer), and so did Abu Bakr and ‘Umar.

At-Tirmidhi said, immediately after quoting the hadith: The hadith of ‘Abdullah ibn Mas’ood is a saheeh hasan hadith, and was the practice of the Companions of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), including Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmaan, ‘Ali and others, as well as those who came after them of the Taabi’een, and it is the practice of most of the fuqaha’ and scholars. End quote.

In al-‘Ilal by Imam ad-Daraqutni (1763) it is narrated that he was asked about the hadith of Abu Salamah, from Abu Hurayrah, which says that he used to raise his hands with every takbeerah, and he said: If my hands were cut off, I would raise my forearms, and if my forearms were cut off, I would raise my upper arms.

He said: This is the report of Rafdah ibn Qudaa’ah, from al-Awzaa’i al-Ghassaani, from Yahya ibn Abi Salamah. Mubashshir ibn Ismaa’eel and others differed with him, and they narrated from al-Awzaa’i, from Yahya, from Abu Salamah, (that he said): I saw Abu Hurayrah say takbeer – and he did not mention him raising his hands – and at the end he said that this was the way that the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) prayed, and this is the correct view.

It was also narrated by Muhammad ibn ‘Amr, from Abu Salamah, from Abu Hurayrah.

It was narrated by ‘Amr ibn ‘Ali, from Ibn Abi ‘Adiyy, from Muhammad ibn ‘Amr, from Abu Salamah, from Abu Hurayrah, that he used to raise his hands every time he moved up or down (in the prayer), and he said: I am the one among you whose prayer most closely resembles that of the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him).

There was no other report like that of ‘Amr ibn ‘Ali.

Another narrator reported that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) used to say takbeer every time he moved up or down (in the prayer), and this is the correct view.

End quote from al-'Ilal (9/283).

In Tadhkirat al-Huffaaz by Ibn al-Qaysaraani (89, no. 192) it says:

192 – The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) used to raise his hands every time he moved up or down (in the prayer)... This hadith was narrated by Rafdah ibn Qudaa'ah al-Ghassaani, from al-Awzaa'i, from 'Ubaydullah ibn 'Ubayd ibn 'Umayr, from his father, from his grandfather, from the Prophet.

The isnaad of this report is maqloob (inverted) and the hadith is munkar (odd). The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) did not raise his hands every time he moved up or down (in the prayer).

The report of az-Zuhri from Saalim from his father clearly states the opposite, that he did not do that between the two prostrations.

This Rafdah is da'eef (weak), and was the only one who narrated this hadith. End quote.

See: Manhaj al-Imam Ahmad fi l'laal al-Hadith, by Basheer 'Ali 'Umar (1/129-131).

The scholars of the Standing Committee were asked:

There are some hadiths which speak of raising the hands between the two prostrations, and in some hadiths it is forbidden to raise the hands between the two prostrations. How can we reconcile between them?

They replied:

Some of the scholars followed the method of deciding which is more correct. They regarded as more correct that which was narrated by al-Bukhaari and Muslim from Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), which is that the hands are not to be raised when prostrating

and when rising from prostration. They regarded the report which speaks of raising the hands between the two prostrations as being shaadhah (odd), because it is contrary to the more sound report.

Other scholars followed the method of reconciling between the reports because it is possible to do so, so there is no need to accept one and reject the other, because one should follow all the proven reports, and accepting one whilst rejecting another will lead to rejecting some reports that have been proven, which is contrary to the basic principle (of accepting all proven reports). This may be explained by noting that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) raised his hands when prostrating and when rising from prostration sometimes, and he did not do that sometimes, so each person narrated what he saw.

Following the first view is more appropriate, because of the reason mentioned.

End quote from Fataawa al-Lajnah ad-Daa'imah (6/345).

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) was very keen to watch the actions of the Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and he did indeed watch them. He saw him raising his hands when he said takbeer, when he bowed, when he rose from bowing and when he stood up following the first tashahhud, and he said: He did not do that (raising his hands) when prostrating. This is more sound than the hadith which says that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) used to raise his hands every time he moved up or down (in the prayer). We cannot say that this comes under the guidelines on one who says that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) did a particular action and one who denies that he did it, and that the report of the one who says that he did should be given precedence over the report of the one who denied it, which is this case is the hadith of Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) which says that he did not do that (i.e., raising the hands when prostrating), because the hadith of Ibn 'Umar, in which he said that he did not do that, was not because he was not aware that the Prophet

(blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) did raise his hands; rather it was because he knew that he did not raise his hands. Ibn 'Umar was sure that he did not raise his hands, and was certain that he did not do that when prostrating, even though he was certain that he did it when bowing and when rising from bowing, and when saying the opening takbeer, and when standing up following the first tashahhud.

This issue does not come under the guidelines on one who says that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) did a particular action and one who denies that he did it, in which case precedence is given to the one who affirms it because of the possibility that the one who denies it was unaware of the matter, because the one who denied it in this case (namely Ibn 'Umar) did so on the basis of knowledge, close following of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and watching him, so his denial was a denial based on knowledge, and there is no possibility that he was unaware of it. We should reflect on this point, because it is very important in helping us to understand the issue. End quote.

Majmoo' Fataawa wa Rasaa'il Ibn 'Uthaymeen (13/45-46)

Therefore, the more correct of the two views – and Allah knows best – is the view that the hands are not to be raised when prostrating. This is the view of most scholars, but if someone thinks that the report which speaks of raising the hands when prostrating is proven, so he follows that view and raises his hand when prostrating sometimes, he is not to be denounced for that, because this is a matter that is subject to ijtihaad.

And Allah knows best.