

Raf ul Yad'ain

Raf'ay-yadayn simply means to raise the hands during prayer. When people begin their salat, they raise their hands to signify that they have left all things and submitted themselves towards Allah alone. This also signifies the individual's testimony of Allah's Unity. The Hanafis (as members of the Ahl as-Sunna wa'l-Jama'a) believe that this act of raising the hands to the level of the ears should only be undertaken at the start of the prayer and not during it.

There are those who hold the opinion that raf' al-yadayn should also be done before and after the ruku'; they hold their position because of the following reasons:

- 1) The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) used to do this.
- 2) This was the practice of the Khulafa' ar-Rashidun and the 'Ashara al-Mubashshara (the ten Companions of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) who were given glad tidings of Janna on this earth during their lives). Altogether, there are proofs from twenty Companions.
- 3) The narrations of raf' al-yadayn are mutawatir (ahadith which have been narrated by many authentic narrators during the period of the Companions, The Tabi'un, and their students).
- 4) Raf' ay-yadayn is a pillar of salat and leaving it makes the salat invalid.

However, the position of the Hanafi madhab is that towards the end of our beloved Prophet's (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) life the practice of raf' al-yadayn had been abrogated, and that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) during his last prayers on this earthly life only performed raf' al-yadayn at the beginning of his salat. However, there were still some Sahaba who unknowingly continued the practice of raf' al-yadayn, without realizing that it had indeed been abrogated and obsolete. It was for this reason that at times, those who knew of its abrogation, began to ask those who continued its practice for their reason for doing so.

Regarding the claim that twenty Companions, including the 'Ashara al-Mubashshara and the Khulafa ar-Rashidun, performed raf' al-yadayn, this incidentally proves that the majority of the Companions did not practise raf' al-yadayn. Secondly, if this claim is true then why is this not recorded in Bukhari

and Muslim, or in any other famous book of Hadith? If the support for twenty Companions practising raf' al-yadayn is not found in any Hadith book then how can this claim be true?

The claim that the hadith regarding raf' al-yadayn is mutawatir is also not true. This is because Imam Muslim and Imam al-Bukhari have only narrated the action of raf' al-yadayn from two Companions: 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) and Malik ibn Huwayris. Imam Zuhri narrated the hadith from Salim and Salim in turn narrated from 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar. Abu Qalaba and Nasr narrated from Malik ibn Huwayris, and from them, Khalid and Qatada narrated. In any one of these chains there is only one narrator at a time, whilst in the other there were two at a time. How can this be called mutawatir? The above narrator's position and the narrations which go against the above narrations will be discussed later, insha'llah.

Regarding the claim that omitting raf' al-yadayn invalidates salat, nobody from among the Companions or even the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) himself said that omitting raf' al-yadayn invalidates salat. The evidence for raf' al-yadayn being a pillar of salat is not even found in the books which contain collections of fabricated hadith. It is another matter if someone decides to introduce fabricated hadith!

Analysis of Those Narrations Which Prove Raf' ay- yadayn

Ibn Jurayj narrated from Zuhri who narrated from Salim who narrated from 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) that Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

"I saw the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) offering salat; he raised his hands up to his shoulders at the beginning of salat and also before and after the ruku', but not between the two prostrations"

[Bukhari and Muslim , chapter on 'Raf' ay-yadayn']

Those who follow the Hanafi madhab believe that this hadith only proves that the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) performed raf' al-yadayn during his lifetime, but it does not prove that he (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) performed it in his last prayers. Also it does not prove that raf' al-yadayn is an emphasized Sunna. One example is given below:

Imams al-Bukhari & Muslim record that when Hazrat 'A'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) was in her menstruation, the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) used to place his head in

her lap and recite the Qur'an [Bukhari & Muslim, Bab al-Hayd]. From this hadith we cannot conclude that reciting the Qur'an in the lap of one's menstruating wife is an emphasized Sunna. In the same way, the narration from Ibn 'Umar does not prove that raf' al-yadayn is an emphasized Sunna. Also Ibn 'Umar's narration seems to go against some of his other narrations.

Imam adh-Dhahabi writes:

"Ibn'Umar said that he swore by Allah that raf' al-yadayn is bid'a and that he had never seen the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) practicing it

(adh-Dhahabi, Mizan al-I'tidal, Biography of Bishr ibn Harab]

Ibn 'Umar, in another place, said that the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: "Raf' ay-yadayn is only done in seven places: once to start salat and six times during hajj" [Kanz al-'ammal, vol. 7, p35]

The teacher of Imam al-Bukhari and Muslim, Imam Humaydi, writes: "The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) used to only practise raf' al-yadayn at the start of the prayer" {Musnad Humaydi, vol. 1, p277]

Imam an-Nasa'i writes: "Malik ibn Huwayris reported that the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) used to perform raf' al-yadayn before and after the ruku', and also between the two sajdahs"

[an-Nasa'i, Bab Raf' al-Yadayn]

From the above narrations it can be seen that Ibn 'Umar's narration of raf' al-yadayn goes against his own narrations based on a direct commandment from the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace). It also goes against the narrations of Imam Humaydi, Imam an-Nasa'i and Malik ibn Huwayris.

Examination of Above Narrations

(1) Imam al-Bukhari's above narration is against Imam Nasa'i's narration.

(2) Imam Abu Dawud said this narration is not directly from the action of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), but is in fact the action of 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him).[Sunan of Abu Dawud, chapter on 'Salat']

(3) Ibn 'Umar's above narrations prove that the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) did raf' al-yadayn nine or ten times during salat [Bukhari, chapter on 'Salat']

(4) Imam Malik writes, regarding the above narrations by Ibn 'Umar: "The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) use to do raf' al-yadayn five times in salat." He also said: "This is the action of Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) and not the action of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) [Imam Malik, al-Muwatta', chapter on 'Salat']

We can see that when this narration was narrated in Madina it was narrated to be five raf' al-yadayn in salat. When it reached Bukhara it changed from five to nine or ten raf' al-yadayn in salat.

Let us first examine the narrators of Ibn 'Umar's hadith - 'Abd al-Malik ibn Jurayj and Imam Zuhri:

'Abd al-Malik ibn Jurayj

Imam adh-Dhahabi and Imam al-'Asqalani write:

"Ibn Jurayj did not take narrations directly from people but he would attribute the narrations to them in such a way as to convince people that he actually heard the narrations from those people directly. The scholars of Hadith have called this process tadlis. Imam Ahmad said that Ibn Jurayj has narrated some ahadith which were fabricated. Also Ibn Jurayj is said to have performed mut'a [a marriage contract for a limited period] with 90 women in Makka al-Mukarrama [this was after it was made haram for Muslims]. Khurasani said that his narrations were weak. Also he never heard a narration from Imam Zuhri but only asked his permission if he could use his name in narrations"

[adh-Dhahabi, Mizan al-I'tidal and Tadhkirat al-Huffaz; al-'Asqalani, Tahzib at-Tahzib, Biography of 'Abd al-Malik ibn Jurayj]

Imam Zuhri

The main narrator of the above narration is Imam Zuhri. Indeed the narration is almost completely based on his narration. Before Imam Zuhri, the chain of narration of this Hadith was Umar ibn 'Abd al- Aziz, then Salim, then Imam Zuhri. After Imam Zuhri, his students made it more famous.

Imam adh-Dhahabi writes:

"Imam Zuhri's full name was Muhammad ibn Muslim ibn 'Abdullah ibn Shihab az-Zuhri. However, he is famous as Ibn Shihab az-Zuhri. He was born in the 50th year AH in Madina. He saw only a few Companions of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace). He was such a great scholar that many scholars of his time used to praise him, including even 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him).

[adh-Dhahabi, Tadhkirat al-Huffaz and Tahzib at-Tahzib, Biography of Imam Zuhri]

It is a fact that Imam Zuhri has narrated hadith (which have been collected by Muslim and Bukhari) which show that the family of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and the Companions did not get on well with each other [Sahih Muslim and Sahih Bukhari, Bab al-Fay]. The truth is that the Prophet's (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) family and the Companions did get on well with each other.

Hafiz al-'Asqalani wrote:

"It was a habit of Imam Zuhri to perform tadtis and attribute the narrations to people like 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Azhar, Ibn Ka'b, Abban, Ibn Uthman, Ibn Hakim, Ibn as-Salimi, 'Abdullah ibn Ja'far, 'Ubadah ibn as-Samit, Rafi', Umm 'Abdullah, Abu Hurayra, and 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar. Concerning 'Abdullah ibn Umar, the scholars of Hadith are split as to whether Imam Zuhri actually saw him or not. In the same way, there is no proof that Imam Zuhri did take narrations from 'Urwa ibn Zubayr. Nethertheless, the scholars of Hadith accept these narrations which Imam Zuhri allegedly took from 'Urwa. For us, this is evidence and we should therefore believe that Imam Zuhri heard something from 'Urwa. Imam Zuhri was from a group of scholars of Hadith who used to 'grab' hadith when they heard them

[Tahzib at-Tahzib, Biography of Imam Zuhri]

Tadtis - What is it?

Hafiz al-'Asqalani writes:

"The literal meaning of the arabic word 'tadlis' is 'hiding'. Technically, it means to hide a hadith narrator. If a muhaddith did tadlis, he would use a narrator's name but it would be a name by which he was not commonly known. Thus, the identity of the weak narrator was hidden. The stronger narrators in the chain would be emphasized so that the attention of the hearer of the hadith would be diverted

[al-'Asqalani, Sharh an-Nukhba, chapter on 'Tadlis']

Imam adh-Dhahabi and Hafiz al-'Asqalani write:

"Imam Zuhri narrated 2, 200 ahadith, of which about a half have a chain leading to the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace). He used to perform tadlis, albeit of a minor manner. Imam Zuhri's murasil ahadith [where a Tabi'i quoted a hadith directly from the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) without mentioning the Companion from whom he received it] used to be weaker than other peoples'

[adh-Dhahabi, Tadhkirat al-Huffaz; al-'Asqalani, Tahzib at-Tahzib, Biography of Imam Zuhri]

Imam adh-Dhahabi narrated that Imam Shubah Wasiti writes: "I would rather fall from the skies and be broken to pieces, than to perform tadlis" [Tadhkirat al-Huffaz, Biography of Imam Shubah Wasiti]

Hafiz al-'Asqalani writes:

"Yazid ibn Zuray was asked, 'What is the legal ruling regarding tadlis?' To this, he replied 'It is an absolute lie'

[Tahzib at-Tahzib, Biography of Yazid ibn Zuray]

Imam adh-Dhahabi writes:

"Sulayman ibn Harb said that Imam Jarir 'Azdi was asked about tadlis. The Imam said, 'I reject it. A mudallis [one who performs tadlis] shows that which he has not heard' "

[Tadhkirat al-Huffaz, Biography of Imam Jarir ibn Hazin 'Azdi]

Hafiz Ibn Kathir writes:

"Imam ash-Shafi'i rejects all the narrations of any muhaddith who did tadlis, but other scholars say that if a mudallis identified who he took narrations from and if that was a reliable source, that particular narration would be accepted"

[Ibn Kathir, Ikhtisar 'Ulum al-Hadith, chapter on 'Tadlis']

Hafiz al-'Asqalani writes:

"If a mudallis uses the words 'Qala' [so and so said], or 'An, [from so-and-so] in a narration, the hadith will be rejected. However, if the mudallis uses a word implying that he directly heard the narration i.e. 'sami'tu' [I heard] then he would be lying. The rule concerning such people is that even if the mudallis was truthful, the hadith would not be accepted"

[al-'Asqalani, Sharh an-Nukhbah, chapter on 'Hadith Mu'dal']

Idraj and Imam Zuhri

Imam Zuhri used to do idraj, so it was difficult for people to understand his narrated ahadith.

Hafiz al-'Asqalani writes:

"Idraj literally means 'inserting something.' Its technical meaning is to insert one's own words into the text of a narration. Sometimes the text could be added at the start, or at the end. To find the actual hadith text from a mudrij [person who performs idraj] is very difficult. Either the hadith was analyzed by someone who had very deep knowledge, or the mudrij showed which words he inserted into the hadith text"

[al-'Asqalani, Sharh an-Nukhbah, chapter on 'Hadith Mudrij']

Imam al-Bukhari writes:

"It was reported by Imam Malik that the famous scholar of Hadith, Rabi'a Turayy, used to advise Imam Zuhri to show clearly in his narrations which were his own words and which were those of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace)"

[al-Bukhari, Ta'rikh al-Kabir, Biography of Rabi'a Turayy]

Muslim and Bukhari contain ahadith in which Imam Zuhri has inserted his own words. Scholars of Hadith have refuted these words. An example is given below:

Imam Muslim and Imam al-Bukhari write:

When Hazrat Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) became the khalifa, Hazrat 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) did not give bay'a (pledge of allegiance) to him nor did the tribe of Banu Hashim. However, six months later, after Hazrat Fatima (may Allah be pleased with her) passed away they all [including 'Ali] gave bay'a to him"

[Bukhari, chapter on 'Khaybar'; Muslim, Bab al-Fayy]

Hafiz al-'Asqalani writes:

"Imam Ibn Hibban, Imam al-Bayhaqi, and other scholars of Hadith say that this narration contains some of Imam Zuhri's own words. Somebody told Imam Zuhri that when Abu Bakr (may Allah be

pleased with him) became the khalifa, Hazrat 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) did not give bay'a for six months. Imam Zuhri did not contain himself with only 'Ali, but asserted that the whole tribe of Banu Hashim did not give bay'a to Abu Bakr until Hazrat Fatima (may Allah be pleased with her) passed away. The fact is that Imam Zuhri's words are wrong, and also that Hazrat 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) gave bay'a to Hazrat Abu Bakr on the first day he was appointed khalifa

[Fath al-Bari, end of Chapter of Khaybar]

Hafiz Qastalani also writes the same as above. Hafiz Ibn Kathir writes that the narrations which say that 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) gave bay'a to Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) on the first day he was appointed khalifa are more authentic than those which do not support this. The reason for this is that 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) used to pray behind Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) and stayed with him all the time [Ta'rikh Ibn Kathir,. Yawm as-Saqifa]

The references prove that Imam Zuhri used to perform tadlis and idraj. The scholars have pointed out that some of his narrations are not reliable.

Ijaza and Imam Zuhri

Ijaza literally means 'giving permission.' Its technical meaning is for a muhaddith to give permission to his students to narrate his ahadith, or any book of Hadith which he has knowledge of [al-'Asqalani, Sharh al-Nukhbah, chapter on Ijaza]. This is the correct way to give ijaza, but Imam Zuhri's way to give ijaza was very strange.

Imam adh-Dhahabi writes that Ubaydullah reported:

"I saw that the students of Imam Zuhri used to bring books to the Imam and ask him for permission to narrate from it using the Imam's name. The Imam used to allow them without knowing what was in those books. This was because neither the Imam used to read the ahadith, nor did the students read the ahadith to him"

[adh-Dhahabi, Tadhkirat al-Huffaz, Biography of Imam Zuhri]

Shaykh Salih Subhi writes:

"Imam Ibn Hazm said that if a scholar of Hadith gives permission to his students to narrate a book of Hadith using his name, and the scholar has not read the narrations, nor has anyone read them to him, then this is a bid'a and not permissible. Other scholars of Hadith have been more strict in this respect and have said that the scholars of Hadith who used to do this, in effect, gave permission to their students to attribute lies to them"

[Ulum al-Hadith, chapter on Ijaza]

From the above, it is evident that the authenticity of Imam Zuhri's narrations are in question. It could be the case that one of the students of the Imam used to narrate non-authentic ahadith and use the Imam's name, as he had given him permission to do so without checking the hadith.

Our Shaykh Shah Abul Husayn Zayd Faruqi writes:

"Hafiz Ibn al-Qayyim writes in his book I'lam al Muwaqqi'in(vol. 3 p 85), that Imam Malik wrote a letter to his colleague Imam Layth ibn Sa'd, whose knowledge was greater than his own. When Imam Layth replied to the letter, he mentioned a few things about Imam Zuhri. He wrote: 'There is no doubt that our teacher, Imam Zuhri, was a great scholar but we have to accept that some of Imam Zuhri's verbal and written statements used to contradict one another. When we used to ask him something, sometimes the written answer would be different from the answer he used to give us verbally. Even some of his written statements used to contradict one another. The Imam did not realize what he had said before and what he was writing at the time. These are the reasons why I have left him' "

[Faruqi, A, Z., Sawani Hayat Imam Abu Hanifa, Biography of Imam Layth]

This statement highlights the fact that Imam Zuhri's narrations are not necessarily authentic. For this reason, we cannot use a single narration from Imam Zuhri as being more authentic than the practice of the Companions, Tabi'un, Tabi'u't-Tabi'in or a great group of scholars.

Apology

We regret highlighting weaknesses in Imam Zuhri but we have above, only just quoted what other scholars of Hadith have said about him. We also respect Imam Zuhri greatly as a muhaddith, but he was a man like us and had weaknesses.

Returning to the point of our discussion - the raf' al-yadayn narration is only taken from Imam Zuhri. His students made the narration famous after this.

How the Narration Became Famous

Imam Ibn 'Abdi'l-Barr writes:

"Ibn Umar's narration became famous from Imam Zuhri's students. Eleven students took this narration from Imam Zuhri; they were: Imam Malik, az-Zubaydi, Ma'mar, Awza'i, Muhammad ibn Ishaq, Sufyan ibn Husayn, Aqil ibn Khalid, Abu Hamza, Ibn Uyayna Yunus and Yahya. 26 of Imam Malik's students narrated this hadith from him. They were: Yahya ibn Yahya, Ibn Bukayr, Abu Mas'ab, Sa'id, Ibn Wahab, Ibn al-Qasim, Ibn Sa'id, Ibn Abi 'Uways, 'Abd ar-Rahman, Juwayria bint Asma', Ibrahim, Ibn al-Mubarik, Bishr, 'Uthman, 'Abdullah, Khalid, Maki ibn Ibrahim, Ibn Hasan, Ibn Mas'ab, 'Abd al-Malik, Ibn Nafi', Abu Qura, Musa, Matraf, Qutayba, and Imam ash-Shafi'i. After all these people narrated this hadith and told their students this narration, it soon became very famous"

[At-Tamhid, chapter on 'Raf' ay-yadayn']

From this, it can be concluded that this narration was not famous at the time of the Sahaba and the Tabi'un. When people try to find evidence to support raf' al-yadayn they say that there are over a hundred ahadith supporting it. In reality, there is only one hadith which has been transmitted by Imam Zuhri, and his students have transmitted it further. So many chains were produced after Imam Zuhri.

When Imam Awza'i debated with Imam Abu Hanifa concerning raf' al-yadayn , the only hadith Awza'i could give as evidence for it was the one from Imam Zuhri. This demonstrates that if there were any other hadith to support raf' al-yadayn then Awza'i would certainly have revealed it.

Furthermore, Bukhari and Muslim only wrote ahadith with chains leading to Imam Zuhri. If there were any other hadith, then they would have included them.

Imam Malik's Opinion on Raf' al-Yadayn

Imam Malik had the most knowledge of Imam Zuhri's narrations. Let us see what his opinion about this was.

Imam Ibn al-Qasim, who was Imam Malik's student, writes that Imam Malik said:

"Apart from the beginning of the prayer, I am unaware of performing raf' al-yadayn at any other time. I believe that the practice of raf' al-yadayn during the prayer is weak"

[al-Madunah, Bab Raf' al-Yadayn]

Imam Malik's saying that he was unaware of performing raf' al-yadayn does not mean that he was unaware of the hadith. This was because he himself heard it along with ten of his colleagues and transmitted it to 26 of his students. The real meaning of his saying is that he was unaware of the practice of it. This was because neither Imam Zuhri, nor any of his students performed raf' al-yadayn. Likewise, the people of Madina did not practise it, nor the people coming for Hajj from all over the world. Another point to raise is that Imam Malik, who is a main narrator of this hadith, did not practice raf' al-yadayn himself. The practice of raf' al-yadayn was very uncommon in Imam Malik's time.

How can we use this narration as evidence for raf' al-yadayn when the scholars who narrated it did not act upon it, and when there are doubts concerning the reliability of the two main narrators (Ibn Jurayj and Imam Zuhri)?

Second evidence for Raf' al-Yadayn

The second evidence of people who performing raf' al-yadayn is that Imam al-Bukhari and Imam Muslim write:

"Abu Qalaba and Nasr ibn Asim, say that they saw Malik ibn Huwayris performing raf' al-yadayn before ruku and after ruku in salat and he reported that the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) used to do this as well"

[Bukari and Muslim, Bab Raf' al-Yadayn]

The people who perform raf' ay-yadayn give this as their evidence and say that it is a Sunna mu'akkada (emphasised sunna which the Prophet [may Allah bless him and give him peace] performed regularly) and that non performance of it means that the prayer is not accepted properly.

We answer this by saying that this narration cannot prove that raf' al-yadayn is Sunna mu'akkada and also you cannot prove from this narration that the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) used to perform raf' al-yadayn all the time. Also, Malik ibn Huwayris's narration goes against his other narration:

"Imam Nasa'i writes that Malik ibn Huwayris reported that the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) used to perform raf' al-yadayn before and after the ruku' and in the middle of the two sajdahs"

[an-Nasa'i, Bab Raf' ay-Yadayn]

From Malik ibn Huwayris's second narration there is also proof of performing raf' al-yadayn between the sajdahs, but the people who perform raf' al-yadayn only do it before and after the ruku' and not in the middle of the sajdahs. Their argument is that this action has been abrogated - this in spite of the fact that Malik ibn Huwayris's narration does not confirm this.

Secondly, Malik ibn Huwayris was only in Madina for a few weeks and did not stay with the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) at times, so he did not know the last actions of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace). This suggests that he did not know whether the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) performed raf' al-yadayn or not. On the other hand, 'Abdullah ibn Ma'sud saw the Prophet's (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) last actions concerning raf' al-yadayn. He saw the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) perform the prayer without raf' al-yadayn. 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud's narration is more reliable than Malik ibn Huwayris's as Ibn Mas'ud stayed with the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) all the time.

Proof that Malik ibn Huwayris Stayed in Madina for Only a Few Weeks

Imam al-Bukhari and Imam Muslim write:

"Malik ibn Huwayris came to Madina with some other people and stayed in Madina for twenty nights and then they really wanted to go home. So when the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) found this out, he gave them permission to leave for Basra, where Malik was from"

[Bukhari, Muslim, Bab al-Adhan]

From this narration there is proof that Malik ibn Huwayris was only in Madina for a short time and so he could not have known the last actions of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) concerning raf' al-yadayn . Malik ibn Huwayris's narration about raf' al-yadayn does not prove that the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) performed raf' al-yadayn all the time; it only proves that Malik ibn Huwayris saw him (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) perform raf' al-yadayn in that period. This also does not prove that it is a Sunna mu'akkada. If someone tries to prove from this narration that it is Sunna mu'akkada to perform raf' al-yadayn then people could also say that it is Sunna mu'akkada to pick a child up during salat!

Imam al-Bukhari writes: "The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) while praying salat picked up his grand-daughter, Amama, and put her down when he went into sujud" [Bukari, Bab as-Salat]. No one can say from this narration that it is a Sunna mu'akkada to pick up a child while praying, so how can some say that because Malik ibn Huwayris saw the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) perform raf' al-yadayn in salat on a particular occasion it is Sunna mu'akkada.

Narrators of the Second Hadith Supporting Raf' al-Yadayn

There are four main narrators of the narration supporting raf' al-yadayn . They are, Abu Qalaba, Khalid al-Hazza, Nasr ibn Asim, and Qatada. Of course, we believe that they had full knowledge of Hadith but they were human and had some weaknesses.

Abu Qalaba

Imam adh-Dhahabi and Hafiz al-'Asqalani write:

"Abu Qalaba's full name was 'Abdullah ibn Zayd; he used to live in the city of Basra. He was a great and knowledgeable man. He was against and had no regards towards 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him). He used to narrate ahadith from people whom he had never met before, for example:

'Abdullah ibn 'Umar, 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas, 'A'isha, and Abu Hurayra. When he related ahadith, it seemed as if he had heard the hadith directly from the Companions of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), but in reality he heard them from other people"

[adh-Dhahabi, Mizan at-l'tidal and al-'Asqalani, Tahzib at-Tahzib, Biography of Abu Qalaba]

Khalid ibn Hazza

Hafiz adh-Dhahabi and Hafiz al-'Asqalani write:

"Imam Ibn Sa'd Khalid was not an authentic Imam. Abu Khatam said that hadith narrated by Khalid cannot be used as evidence. When Khalid came to Syria he told ahadith to the people but the scholars rejected his narrations. He had also lost his memory. Despite this, Ibn Mu'in and Nasa'i praised him"

[adh-Dhahabi, Mizan at-l'tidal;al-'Asqalani, Tahzib at-Tahzib and Muqaddama Fath al-Bari, Biography of Abu Qalaba]

Abu Qalaba's other student Ayyub also narrated this hadith, but he never mentions raf' al-yadayn . This hadith is also found in Sahih al-Bukhari. The scholars of Hadith agree that Ayyub was more knowledgeable than Khalid.

Nasr ibn Asim

Hafiz al-'Asqalani writes:

"Imam Dawud said that he was from amongst a misled sect, but others said that he repented from his wrong beliefs"

[Tahzib at-Tahzib, Biography of Nasr ibn Asim]]

Qatada

Imam adh-Dhahabi and Hafiz al-'Asqalani write:

"Qatada was a great scholar and a mufassir [scholar of Tafsir (Quranic exegesis)]. He was very intelligent, and many scholars praised him. He narrated ahadith of such people whom he had never heard, met, nor seen. He saw only one Companion of the Prophet, Malik ibn Anas, but he attributed narrations from many other people despite this.

He had evil beliefs about Islam; he openly declared his sinful beliefs. Despite the fact that Qatada held wrong beliefs, the scholars still took narrations of hadith from him (may Allah forgive him)

[adh-Dhahabi, Mizan al-I'tidal and Tadhkirat al-Huffaz, Biography of Qatada Basri; al-'Asqalani, Tahzib at-Tahzib]

From all the above references, it cannot be proved that the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) did raf' al-yadayn all the time. Also, Malik ibn Huwayris did not stay with the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) during the last period of the Prophet's (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) life. The four main narrators of this hadith have been criticized by the scholars of Hadith. Therefore this hadith does not stand at the same level as 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud's hadith.

The Third Evidence Used to Support Raf' al-Yadayn.

Qadi Shawkani writes:

"The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), when performing his last salat, performed raf' al-yadayn "

[Nayl al-Awtar, chapter on Raf' al-Yadayn]

The people who perform raf' al-yadayn say that the above narration proves that raf' al-yadayn was not abrogated. In response to this we say that this hadith is not authentic. This is the reason why it was not written in Sahih al-Bukhari, or Muslim - even Imam al-Bayhaqi did not include it in his book of sunan. All the narrators of this hadith are weak.

Examining the Narrators of the Hadith

'Abd ar-Rahman Harwi

Imam adh-Dhahabi writes that Harwi used to fabricate hadith and tell them to people [Mizan al-I'tidal, Biography of 'Abd ar-Rahman Harwi]

If Harwi used to fabricate his narrations of hadith it follows that his narrations cannot be relied upon.

Usamah ibn Muhammad Ansari (the student of Musa ibn 'Uqba)

Imam adh-Dhahabi writes:

"Imam Abu Khatim said that Usamah was not strong in the knowledge of Hadith. Imam Yahya ibn Mu'in said that he fabricated hadith and attributed them to the great scholars of Hadith. He was a liar. Imam Daraqutni said that he was not reliable and that is why the scholars did not take any narrations of hadith from him. Imam Ibn Addi said that all his narrated ahadith are not safe. He narrates one hadith that says that you should make du'a' to Allah Most High when you see a beautiful face, and He will accept it"

[Mizan al-I'tidal, Biography of Usamah ibn Muhammad Ansari]

Qadi Shawkani writes that Usamah ibn Muhammad Ansari was a liar and he fabricated hadith [al-Majmu'at al-Ahadith, chapter on Sadaqa, p.67]

It is strange that Qadi Shawkani wrote in his book that Usamah ibn Muhammad was a liar, and yet despite this took his narration as evidence in his other book. The other surprising thing is that Qadi Shawkani always discusses the narrators of the hadith, but with this hadith he does not mention or discuss anything about them. It seems as if he is totally unaware of them.

We are also surprised concerning those people who present this hadith as evidence of their practice of raf' al-yadayn . They are proud and say that they are following the Sunna of Rasulu'llah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace).

Performing Salat Without Raf' al-Yadayn - Proof from Ahadith

Imam Muslim writes:

"Once we were performing salat and the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) came to us and asked us: 'Why are you doing raf' al-yadayn as a stubborn horse waving its tail?' He also told us: 'Perform your salat with peace'

[Muslim, chapter on Sukun fi as-Salat]

The above hadith proves that one must not perform raf' al-yadayn in the middle of one's salat.

Imam Muslim writes in another narration, after the above:

"Jabir ibn Samrah reported: 'At the end of the salat, we used to wave our hands left and right when saying salam. The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) told us not to wave our hands but only to say the salam.'"

The above narrations prove that the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) stopped raf' al-yadayn as well as waving the hands during the Prayer.

Imam Humaydi, who was the teacher of Imam al-Bukhari and Muslim, writes:

" 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar said: 'The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) only performed raf' al-yadayn at the beginning of salat, not before or after doing ruku' ' "

[Musnad Humaydi, Vol. 2, p. 277, Maktabah Salafiyya, Madina al-Munawwara]

Imam Ibn Abi Shayba and Imam 'Abd ar-Razzaq write:

" 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: 'The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) performed raf' al-yadayn at the beginning of salat.'"

" 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud and Brabin Azib reported: 'We saw the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) only performing raf' al-yadayn at the beginning of the salat.'

" Aswad, Imam Shabi, Ibrahim an-Nakha'i, 'Ali and Ibn Mas'ud's student (may Allah be pleased with them) only performed raf' al-yadayn at the beginning of salat"

[Musnad Ibn Abi Shayba and Musnad 'Abd ar-Razzaq, Chapter on Raf' al-Yadayn]

Imam Ibn al-Qasim writes:

"Imam Malik said that Imam Zuhri told him that he heard from Salim, who said that his father ['Abdullah ibn 'Umar] reported, that the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) only performed raf' al-yadayn at the beginning of the salat and not in any other part of it."

This narration also proves that Imam Zuhri narrated a hadith stating that the practice of raf' al-yadayn was only performed at the beginning of the salat.

Imam Malik said that he has no knowledge of doing raf' al-yadayn in any other part of the salat apart from the beginning [al-Mudawwana, chapter on 'Raf' al-Yadayn']

Imam Malik also said:

"To do raf' al-yadayn is weak, except at the beginning"

[al-Mudawwana, chapter on 'Raf' al-Yadayn']

How could Imam Malik say that he had no knowledge of someone who practices raf' al-yadayn even when he himself heard a hadith supporting it from Imam Zuhri? The answer to this is, as mentioned earlier, that Imam Malik knew the hadith of raf' al-yadayn but he never saw anyone in Makka or Madina who practiced it. The reason for this is that the practice of raf' al-yadayn was abrogated.

Imam at-Tirmidhi writes:

" 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud said that he would perform the salat the way that the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) did. When he performed the salat he only did raf' al-yadayn at the beginning of the salat.

"Many Companions of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), their students (Tabi'un), Sufyan, the Scholars of Kufa and many other scholars followed this hadith"

[at-Tirmidhi, Bab Raf' al-Yadayn; Ibn Hazm in his Muhalla (chapter of salat) writes that this hadith is authentic; Ahmed Shakir, a famous Najdi scholar, also writes that this hadith is authentic in his Takhrij Ibn Hazm]

Even other scholars wrote this hadith in their books, for example: Imam Abu Dawud Ibn Abi Shayba, Imam 'Abd ar-Razzaq, Imam Abu Ya'la and many others.

Imam at-Tirmidhi wrote in his narration:

"The Companions of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), Tabi'un and scholars of Kufa were performing salat without raf' al-yadayn ."

[at-Tirmidhi, Bab Raf' al-Yadayn]

Who Were the Scholars of Kufa?

Imam Ibn Sa'd, Hafiz Ibn al-Qayyim and Hafiz Ibn Taymiyya write:

" 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) gave an order to build the city of Kufa. When the city was built, people from various Islamic areas came to live in the city. Many Companions of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) moved to Kufa and started to live there. Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) sent 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud and Ammar ibn Yasir to teach the people in Kufa. After sixteen or seventeen years, when 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) became the Khalifa, he

transferred the capital from Madina to Kufa. A large number of Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) moved to Kufa. They taught people about Islam. Kufa thus became the centre point for Islamic scholars"

[Tabaqat Ibn Sa'd; Minhaj as-Sunna Alam al-Muwakki'in, chapter on 'Kufa']

Kufa was the central point of Islamic knowledge, which is why so many scholars of Hadith travelled to it repeatedly to gain knowledge. Hafiz al-'Asqalani writes:

"Imam al-Bukhari travelled to various cities to gain knowledge of Hadith. He went to the city of Jazeera twice, Basra four times, and stayed in the Hijaz [Makka and Madina] for six years. Imam al-Bukhari said himself that he could not account for how many times he went to Kufa and Baghdad to learn knowledge of Hadith"

[Muqaddima Fath al-Bari, Biography of Imam al-Bukhari]

Imam at-Tirmidhi's narrations prove that no one practiced raf' al-yadayn in the city of Kufa which became the centre point of Islamic knowledge and thought. Imam Malik's narration proves that no one was practicing raf' al-yadayn in Makka or Madina, as this practice had been abrogated.

The Debate Between Imam Awza'i and Imam Abu Hanifa

These two Imams once debated the matter of raf' al-yadayn , and it is described by Sufyan ibn Uyayna:

"Once Imam Abu Hanifa and Imam Awza'i met in a market in Makka. Imam Awza'i asked Imam Abu Hanifa why he did not practice raf' al-yadayn during the salat.

Abu Hanifa: There is no authentic hadith about practicing raf' al-yadayn .

Awza'i: Why isn't there an authentic hadith? Here is one: Imam Zuhri told me, who was told by Salim, who was told by Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) practiced raf' al-yadayn before and after theruku'.

Abu Hanifa: Hamad told me, who was told by Ibrahim, who was told by Ikrama, who was told by Aswad who was told by 'Abdullah ibnMas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) only practiced raf' al-yadayn at the beginning of performing his salat and not afterwards.

Awza'i: The narration that I have presented to you has a shorter chain and your hadith has a longer chain; for this reason, my hadith is more reliable than yours.

Abu Hanifa: It does not matter if the chain of the hadith is long or short. The priority of the hadith depends on the narrators of the hadith and how much knowledge of Hadith they had. The narrators of the hadith which I have presented possess more expertise in the knowledge of Hadith. For example, Hamad is more knowledgeable than Imam Zuhri. Ibrahim is more knowledgeable than Salim; Ikrama is a great scholar and Ibn Mas'ud is unique.

Imam Awza'i then became silent"

[Musnad Imam Abu Hanifa, chapter on 'Raf' al-Yadayn]

This debate shows that Imam Awza'i had no other evidence. If he had then he would have presented it to defend his case in support of raf' al-yadayn . Imam Abu Hanifa replied so beautifully that Imam Awza'i was forced to become silent.