

## **The Approach Of The Hanafi School**

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Occasionally, the Hanafi school of thought awards preference to those hadiths which have a weaker chain of narrators or even to those hadiths whose chains of narration may not be as superior to the others. This is so because the narrations may possess some other more superior preferential factors. For example, the fact that a hadith is in greater conformance with the text of the Qur'an is one of the most noteworthy preferential factors that render a particular hadith superior to those that contradict it, according to the Hanafi school. This makes a great deal of sense, because the words of many of the hadiths are not the actual words of Allah's Messenger (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam). In most cases, they are the words of the narrators who narrated the meaning of the hadith. On the other hand, the words of the Qur'an are the actual words (of Allah) transmitted by the narrators. Therefore, from two conflicting narrations, the narration which is in greater conformance to the text of the Qur'an will obviously gain more preference over the other narration.

In one example of the above principle, the Hanafis award preference to the narration that does not mention raising of the hands in salat over the narration which does mention it. This is so simply because the Holy Qur'an declares, **"And stand before Allah with ease and tranquillity."** (Surat al-Baqara 2:238). Hence, from among the conflicting narrations, the Hanafis award preference to those hadiths which conform more closely to this form of tranquillity.

This ruling is also established from other previous occurrences. In the early days of Islam, it was permissible to speak (and to make salām) in salat, but this was gradually abrogated and the salat metamorphosed into a more tranquil action. Hence, the narrations which conform more to tranquillity are more juridically preferable in the Hanafi school. In addition, the narrations which do not mention any recitation while performing salat behind the Imam are awarded preference over those narrations which mention this practice. This is so because of the Qur'anic verse, **"And when the Qur'an is being recited, listen to it attentively and remain silent."** (Surat a1-Araf 7:204).

Similarly, it is better to delay the Fajr and 'Asr prayers because it is in greater conformance with the Qur'anic verse, **"And glorify the praises of your Lord before sunrise and before sunset."** (Sura Qaf 50:39). "Before sunrise" and "before sunset" means a time which is close to them. A period of three to four hours before sunrise or sunset is not normally referred to as being "before" sunrise or "before" sunset. Hence, the Hanafis are of the opinion that it is better to delay the Fajr and 'Asr prayers. Furthermore, the Hanafis have chosen the qunut (a supplication made in the witr salat) of 'Allahumma inna nastainuka...' in the witr salat because they were considered as two sūrats of the Holy Qur'an. There are thousand of examples of this nature, but out of fear of long-windedness, we will leave them out.