

Is It Sunnah to Raise The Hands In the Qunoot of Witr & If So, How Are They Raised? Imaam Muhammad Ibn Saalih al-Uthaimeen (Rahimahullaah)

[In the chapter dealing with the *Witr* prayer, its rulings, time, number of Rak'ah, how it is performed, what is recited in it and whether or not the *Qunoot* (supplication) should *always* be recited in it or only *sometimes* – the Shaykh (Rahimahullaah) puts forth – and answers - the question]:

Does one raise his two hands (in the *Qunoot* of *Witr*) or not?

That which is correct is that one *should raise his hands*. This is because (the raising of the hands in the *Qunoot* of *Witr*) has been authentically reported to have been practiced by '**Umar ibn al-Khattaab** (RadiyahAllaahu 'an-hu, may Allaah be pleased with him). [See: al-Bayhaqee, 2/210, and an-Nawawee declared it to be authentic, as has been mentioned in 'al-Fath ar-Rabbaanee', 3/315]

And '**Umar ibn al-Khattaab** (RadiyahAllaahu 'an-hu, may Allaah be pleased with him) is one of the **Rightly Guided Khalifahs** whose *Sunnah* is **followed**, due to the *command* of the Prophet (SallAllaahu Alaihi wa Sallam) ["...follow my *Sunnah* and the *Sunnah* of the **Rightly Guided Khalifahs**...", as mentioned in the Hadeeth of al-'Irbaad ibn Saariyah (RadiyahAllaahu 'an-hu, may Allaah be pleased with him)]. Hence, one does raise his two hands (in the *Qunoot* of *Witr*).

[Here the Shaykh (Rahimahullaah) puts forth – and once again answers – another question]:

But, **how does one raise his hands?**

The scholars (Rahimahumullaah) have said: he should raise his two hands **up to his chest**, and he should **not raise them a lot**. The reason for this is because this supplication (in *Qunoot* of *Witr*) is **not Du'aa al-Ib-ti-haal** (prayer of extreme humility) wherein a person *exaggerates* in *raising* the hands; rather, it is **Du'aa Ragh-bah** (expressing one's desire, wish or longing) wherein one **stretches out his hands** and his **palms are facing upwards** to the sky. This is how our scholars (rahimahumullaah) have explained it.

And that which is *apparent* from the speech of the People of Knowledge is that one **joins his two hands together, touching one another**, like the beggar who is requesting another person to give him something [so he holds his hands *together* so that something can be placed in them].

As for *separating* (the two hands) (**at-Tafreej**) and making a *distance between the two hands* (**al-Mubaa'adah**) – I do not know that this (practice) has any **basis**, not in the *Sunnah*, nor in the *speech of the scholars*.

[The Shaykh (Rahimahullaah) closes this topic explaining the permissibility of *Qunoot* before or after *Rukoo'*]:

This (*Qunoot* supplication) should be in the third Rak'ah, **after** the bowing (*Rukoo'*); this is what is preferable. However, if one supplicates (with *Qunoot*) **before** (the *Rukoo'*), there is no harm in this. In this case, when one completes the recitation (of Qur'anic verses), he supplicates (with *Qunoot*), then says 'Allaahu Akbar' (Allaah is the Greatest), then bows (in *Rukoo'*). This is permissible also. [This is mentioned in the Hadeeth of Ubayy ibn Ka'b (RadiyahAllaahu 'an-hu, may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allaah (SallAllaahu Alaihi wa Sallam) supplicated (with *Qunoot*) in the *Witr* (prayer) **before** the bowing (*Rukoo'*). Saheeh Abu Daawood, no. 1266]