

A Sufi's Interpretation of Ḥadīth: The Case of Ibn 'Arabī and the Ḥadīths about Holding up the hands during the prayer (*Raf' al-yadain*) *

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Abstract

This paper studies the understanding and interpretation of a specific *ḥadīth* by Muhy al-dīn Ibn 'Arabī. His view on the *ḥadīth* about 'holding up the hands during *ṣalāh* (*raf' al-yadain*)' is explained in the light of his well-known book, *Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*. Besides the general knowledge and terminology of *fiqh* and *ḥadīth*, Ibn 'Arabī also utilized his unique methods and methodologies of *taṣawwuf* to interpret the *ḥadīth*. It is concluded that in interpretation of a *ḥadīth*, Ibn 'Arabī differed from other scholars as he skillfully used these three areas of knowledge (*fiqh*, *ḥadīth*, and *taṣawwuf*) as a trivet and by synthesizing these three sciences, he approached to the issue in a comprehensive way. The dreams, one of Ibn 'Arabī's special methods and one of Sufism's wisdom sources, are presented within the context of the interpretation of *ḥadīth*. While Ibn 'Arabī was inspired the *ḥadīth* by a dream, he also stated its place and status in *ḥadīth* sources. Moreover, he derived several conclusions by critically reviewing the related *ḥadīths*.

Keywords

Hadith, Fiqh, Şufism, Ibn 'Arabī, Futūḥāt, Prayer, Holding up the hands, Interpretation

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Bir Sūfî’nin Hadis Yorumu: Raf’u’l-Yedeyn Hadisi - İbn Arabî Örneği

Öz

Bu makalede İbn Arabî’nin bir hadisi anlama ve yorumlaması ele alınmıştır. İbn Arabî’nin raf’ul-yedeyn/namazda ellerin kaldırılması hadisine bakış açısı meşhur eseri *el-Fütühâtü’l-Mekkiyye* adlı eseri ekseninde izah edilmiştir. İbn Arabî, hadisi yorumlarken fıkıh ve hadisin yanında tasavvuf ilmini ve özel yöntemlerini de işin içine katmaktadır. Onun diğer bilginlerden farklı olarak bir hadisi izah ederken bu üç sacayağını birlikte kullandığı ve bu üç ilmi mezcederek külli bir bakış açısıyla meseleye yaklaştığı görülmektedir. İbn Arabî’nin özel rivâyet metotlarından ve tasavvufî bilgi kaynaklarından olan rüyanın işlevi bir hadis yorumu özelinde nazara verilmektedir. İbn Arabî, hadisi rüya yoluyla alırken aynı zamanda hadis kaynaklardaki yerini ve durumunu belirtmektedir. Bunların yanında ilgili hadisleri kritiğe tabi tutarak çeşitli sonuçlara ulaşmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Hadis, Fıkıh, Tasavvuf, İbn ‘Arabî, Futūhāt, Namaz, Ellerin Kaldırılması, Yorum

INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, Abrahamic religions have given particular importance to worship. Islam has a special status among other religions with regard to valuing worship. One of the most fundamental worships that Islam puts great emphasis on is *şalāh* (daily prayers). Certainly, *şalāh* is one of the most essential worships for a believer. Thus, in *fiqh* and *ḥadīth* literatures, all decrees related to *şalāh* are carefully documented and meticulously handled.

As a source of the judgments in religion, scholars refer to the Qur’ān in the first place and secondly they refer to *Sunnah* (the practices of the Prophet [peace be upon him] that he taught and practically instituted, including his specific words, habits, and silent approvals).¹ After these two fundamental referential sources, they refer to other sources.² There are both controversial and commonly agreed issues related to decrees of *şalāh*. One of the controversial issues debated among scholars is the *raf’ al-yadain* whether one could hold up hands or not during the prayer other than opening *takbīr*.

There are different practices about holding up hands during the prayer (other than opening *takbīr*) among the *madhhabs* (religious schools of law). *Ḥadīths* constitute the supporting structures of these

¹ There is a consensus among islamic scholars that the first source of Islamic Law is Qurān and the second one is the Sunnah. For more detailed information, see Zekiyyüddin Şaban, *İslam Hukuk İlminin Esasları: (Usulü’l-Fıkıh)*, translated by İbrahim Kafi Dönmez (Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 1990), 46.

² For more information, see Abdullah Kahraman, *Fıkıh Usûlü*, (İstanbul: Rağbet Yayınları, 2016), 65.

different practices.³ Every school holding a different view on an issue argues that its perspective is more accurate and thus ends up in a different practice by referring to *ḥadīths*.⁴

According to schools⁵ except for *Hanafism*, raising hands while bending down and rising from the bowing is considered to be in line with the Prophet’s act.⁶ However, according to the *Hanafī* scholars, raising hands during the prayer other than opening *takbīr* is neither in line with the *sunnah*, nor an approved act.⁷

1. ḤADĪTHS RELATED TO RAF‘ AL-YADAIN

In *ḥadīth* sources, there exist many narrations about raising hands during the prayer other than opening *takbīr*. Regarding the issue, there are many *ḥadīths* narrated from companions such as ‘Umar, ‘Abd

³ Khattābī’s assessment on the *ḥadīths* related to *raf‘ al-yadain* is as the following: “Most of the scholars agree on raising hands during bending down (*ruku*). Leading companions (*sahabas*) such as *Abū Bakr*, ‘*Alī*, *Ibn ‘Umar*, *Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī*, *Ibn Abbās*, ‘*Abd Allāh b. Zubair* and *Anas*, *tābiins* such as *Hasan al-Basrī*, *Ibn Sīrīn*, ‘*Atā*, *Tāvūs*, *Mujāhid*, *Qasim b. Muhammad*, *Salim*, *Qatāda*, *Maḡhūl* and in addition to these, *al-Awza‘i*, *Mālik*, *Shāfi‘ī*, *Aḡmad*, *Ishaq*, *Sufyan al-Thawrī* agree on this view.” See, 3: 23; Azīmabādī, *Ebu’t-Tayyib Şems al-hak*, *Avn al-ma’būd Sharhu Sunan-i Abū Dāwūd*, nşr. İşraf Sıdkī Muhammed Cemil al-Attār (Beirut: Dāral-Fikr, 1415/1995), ‘*Avn al-ma’būd Sherhu sunen-i Abū Dāwūd*, 2: 338; In his book titled *al-Sunan*, *Tirmidhī* cites the narration of *Ibni ‘Umar* as *hasan* and *sahih* and it is narrated from *H. ‘Umar*, ‘*Alī*, *Vāil bin Hujr*, *Mālik bin al-Huveyrī*, *Anas*, *Abū Hurayra*, *Abū Khumeyd*, *Abū Useyd*, *Sehl bin Sa’d*, *Muhammed bin Maslamah*, *Abū Qatade*, *Abū Musa al-Aḡhari*, *Jābir*, *Umayr al-Leysī*. Also, he reports that *Ibni ‘Umar*, *Jābir b. ‘Abdallāh*, *Abū Hurayra*, *Anas*, *Ibni Abbas*, ‘*Abdallāh b. Zubeyr* and some *sahabas*, *Hasan al-Basrī*, ‘*Atā*, *Tavus*, *Mujahid*, *Nafi*, *Salem b. ‘Abdallāh*, *Sa‘īd b. Jubayr* from *tabiin* and *İmam Mālik*, *Shāfi‘ī*, *Aḡmad b. Ḥanbal*, *al-Awza‘i*, *Ma‘mer*, *Ibni Uyaynah*, ‘*Abdallāh b. Mubārek*, *Ishak* from subsequent *mujtahids* judge for the raising hands during *Ṣalah*. See *Tirmidhī*, “*Adhān*”, 190; *Mubārekfūrī*, *Tuhfet al-Ahwazī*, 2: 96.

⁴ Examination of the views about *raf‘ al-yadain* indicates that there are many different judgments about it, ranging from *sunnah* to *wajib* and even to judgments classifying this action as *makruh*. See *Shaybānī*, *Kitab al-āthār*, 1: 142; *Ibn Hazm*, *Muḡhallā*, 3: 88, 236; *Ibn Rushd*, *Bidāyah al-Mujtahid wa nihayat al-Muqtasid*, 191-193; *Kutb al-Dardīr*, *al-Sharh al-Kabir ala Mukhtasar Khalil*, 1: 177; *al-Qashani*, *Badai‘u al-sanai*, 1: 208; *al-Marghinānī*, *al-Hidāyā*, 1: 131; *al-Sharbini*, *Mughni al-muhtaj* 1: 236; *Nawawī*, *Majmū‘*, 3: 255

⁵ According to some well-known books of *Mālikī* school, it is not necessary to hold up hands during the prayer. For example, see *Kutb al-Dardīr*, *al-Sharh al-Kabir ala Mukhtasar Khalil*, 1: 177. However, according to *Ibn Abd al-Barr*, the narration of *Ibn al-Qasim* about *İmam Mālik*’s judgement that “One should not raise his/her hands except opening *takbīr*” is weak. *Ibn Abd al-Barr* asserts raising hands during the prayer to be correct. See *Ibn Abd al-Barr*, *Ikhtilaf aqwal Mālik wa ashabihi*, 108.

⁶ *Ibn Hazm*, *Muḡhallā*, 3: 88; *Ibn Rushd*, *Bidaya*, 1: 191-193; see *Ibn Qudamah*, *Mughni*, 2: 171; *al-Shirbini*, *Mughni al-muhtaj*, 1: 236; *al-Nawawī*, *Majmu‘*, 3: 255.

⁷ *al-Shaybānī*, *Kitab al-āthār*, 1: 142; *al-Qashani*, *Badai‘u al-sanai*, 1: 208; *al-Marghinani*, *al-Hidāyā*, 1: 131. For discussions on the arguments of *Hanafī* scholars about *raf‘ al-yadain*, see *Güler*, *Zekeriya*, *Zāhirī Muhaddislerle Hanefī Fakihleri Arasındaki Münakaşalar ve İhtilaf Sebepleri*, 89-94.

Allāh ibn 'Umar⁸, Mālik b. al-Huwayrith,⁹ Salim b. 'Abd Allāh,¹⁰ Ibn Mas'ūd,¹¹ Bara b. Azib,¹² Abū Humeyd al-Saidi, Vail b. Hujr, Mu'az and Anas.¹³

Al-Bukhārī (d. 256/870) being prominent among others, many *muhaddiths* recorded these narrations in their books. In addition to recording the narrations in his work called '*Sahih*', Imam al-Bukhārī also wrote a specific book on *raf' al-yadain*.¹⁴

Ibn 'Arabī's propounding these narrations in *Futūḥāt* is in line with Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, al-Tirmidhī, al-Nāsāī and Ibn Maja, who are the authors of *Al-Kutub al-Sittah* (*Six Books*), recording these narrations in their studies.¹⁵

Given his scholarly life chronologically having been instituted to contain this sum of knowledge and basing his view about the above issue on these records, Ibn 'Arabī considered the 'Muslim *ḥadīth*' regarding the issue. However, he neither refers to the narrations recorded by al-Bukhārī, nor the narrations in other

⁸ "Allah's Apostle (be peace upon him) opening the prayer with the takbīr and raising his hands to the level of his shoulders at the time of saying the takbīr, and on saying the takbīr for bowing he did the same; and when he said, "Sami'a-llah li-man hamida", he did the same and then said, "Rabbana wa laka-l-hamd." But he did not do the same on prostrating and on lifting the head from it." For the *ḥadīth*, see al-Bukhārī, "Adhān", 85; Müslim, "Ṣalah", 22; al-Nasāī, "Iftitah", 1 (874), 2 (875), 3 (876); Ibn Māja, "Iqamah", 15 (858); Ibn Hibban, 5: 172 (1861); for other narrations from Ibn 'Umar, see al-Bukhārī, *Raf' al-yadain fi al-salāh*, 69.

⁹ "The Prophet (be peace upon him) opened the prayer with the takbīr and raised his hands. When bowing down and straightening up from bowing, he (be peace upon him) raised his hands." For the *ḥadīth*, see al-Bukhārī, "Adhān", 84; Muslim, "Ṣalah", 24; Ibn Hibban, *Sahih*, 5: 176 (1863).

¹⁰ "I saw 'Allah's Apostle (be peace upon him) raising his hands to the level of his shoulders at the time of saying opening the prayer with the takbīr, before bowing down and after bowing up. He (be peace upon him) did not raise his hands between prostrations." For the *ḥadīth*, see al-Bukhārī, "Adhān", 83; Muslim, "Ṣalah", 21; Aḥmad, 2: 47; Ibn Hibbān, *Sahih*, 5: 177 (1864); Abū Ya'lā, *Musnad*, 9: 416 (5564).

¹¹ Abū Dāwūd, "Ṣalah", 119; al-Tirmidhī, "Ṣalah", 76; al-Nasāī, "Iftitah", 87.

¹² Abū Dāwūd, "Ṣalah", 119; al-Tirmidhī, "Ṣalah", 76.

¹³ al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī reports that he does not know any *sunnah* other than *raf' al-yadain* which is narrated by the Prophet (be peace upon him) and about which the four khalīfs, ashara mubashshara and leading companions in a widespread region agree on. In addition, al-Bayhaqī documents the names of approximately thirty companions who narrated raising hands during the prayer. See al-Bukhārī, *Raf' al-yadain fi al-Ṣalah*, 30 (footnote). In his book, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya documents the names of approximately thirty companions who narrated raising hands during the prayer and reports that there is no act of the Prophet (be peace upon him) contrary to the statements given in these narrations. It is noted that the Prophet continued this practice till his death. See Ibn Qayyim, *Zad al-Ma'ad*, 1: 209. Similarly, the *ḥadīths* regarding the issue are narrated from a group of approximately 50 companions in which there are also companions from the group known as ashara mubashshara. See, *Raf' al-yadain fi al-Ṣalah*, 30 (footnote).

¹⁴ See al-Bukhārī, *Kitābū Raf' al-yadain fi al-Ṣalah*; Also see *Jila al-ayneyn bi-takhriji riwayat al-Bukhārī fi juz raf' al-yadain*.

¹⁵ See Muslim, "Ṣalah", 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26; Abū Dāwūd, "Ṣalah", 115, 116, 117. (Among the authors of *Al-Kutub al-Sittah*, only Abū Dāwūd reports the narration regarding "raising hands to the level of his shoulders during Ṣalah."); al-Tirmidhī, "Ṣalah", 76; al-Nasāī, "Iftitah", 1, 2, 3, 4; Ibn Maja, "Iqamah", 15.

sources. There are two possible explanations for this fact. Either Ibn ‘Arabī was not aware of these narrations, or he ignored them. The first explanation is considered to be extremely unlikely because it can be inferred from Ibn ‘Arabī’s studies on the ḥadīth on the subject of *raf’ al-yadain* that he must have been aware of the narrations mentioned above.¹⁶

His expertise on ḥadīth can easily be seen from his ordering of ḥadīths on the mystical insight, it is important to note that although he is known as a person who emphasizes spiritual side, at the same time he does not undervalue the reasoning at all.

2. IBN ‘ARABĪ’S PERSPECTIVE ON RAF’ AL-YADAIN

Muhy al-dīn Ibn ‘Arabī follows a different methodology when interpreting raising hands during the prayer. While he is studying *raf’ al-yadain* through *fiqh* methodology, he also utilizes a sufi perspective.

Ibn ‘Arabī mentions this issue in two separate sections of his book. The first one is Raising Hands during the prayer;¹⁷ and the second one is the section titled as *Knowing the Place of Naskh in Muhammadi Sharia*.¹⁸

The author of *Futūḥāt* initially summarizes the overall views on *raf’ al-yadain* three categories in his work: The decrees regarding raising hands during the prayer, the cases in which raising hands is required and finally, when raising hands has to be completed.¹⁹

Ibn ‘Arabī, who alternates between ḥadīth and *fiqh*, but gives more weight to *fiqh* while analyzing this issue, reports that according to some Islamic scholars, raising hands during *ṣalāh* is considered as *sunnah*. He also states that it is accepted as *fard* (obligatory) by some other scholars which are classified in three groups. One group of these scholars, the first group, mentioned in *Futūḥāt* as the *Zāhiri School*²⁰, argues that raising hands for opening *takbīr* is *fard*.²¹ The second group argues that raising hands while bending down and while

¹⁶ We think that Ibn ‘Arabī does not ignore narration of Buhārī, but he features narration of Muslim, as it is in line with the order presented in *Futūḥāt*. Moreover, ḥadīths of Wāil b. Hujr ve Mālik ibn al-Huwayris can be presented as examples showing that that Ibn ‘Arabī must have been aware of the narrations mentioned. While summarizing the discussions on the issue, Ibn ‘Arabī explicitly emphasizes these two ḥadīths. It is stated that the ḥadīth about ‘Raising hands on prostrating and on lifting the head from it’ (Aḥmad, 4: 317) is narrated from Wāil bin Hujr; the ḥadīth about ‘raising hands after two rakah’ (Bukhārī, “Adhān”, 84; Muslim, “Adhān”, 24) is narrated from Mālik ibn al-Huwayris. See *Futūḥāt*, 1: 437 (Chapter 69).

¹⁷ *Futūḥāt*, 1: 437 (Chapter 69).

¹⁸ *Futūḥāt*, 3: 70 (Chapter 318).

¹⁹ *Futūḥāt*, 1: 437 (Chapter 69). Ibn ‘Arabī’s citation of different views on *raf’ al-yadain* is in line with the method of Ibn Rushd. However, Ibn Rushd discusses the related views and controversies in more detail. See. Ibn Rushd, *Bidāyah*, 1: 191-193.

²⁰ Ibn Hazm, *Muḥallā*, 3: 236.

²¹ *Futūḥāt* 1: 436-7 (Chapter 69).

rising from the bowing is *fard*. The last group claims that in addition to the cases mentioned above, raising hands on prostrating and on lifting the head from it is also *fard*.²²

In *ḥadīth* resources, there are many *ḥadīth* narrations regarding raising hands after two *rakahs* (two units of *ṣalāh*).²³ Moreover, some scholars argue with reference to some *ḥadīth* narrations, which are also reported by Ibn 'Arabī, that raising hands on prostrating²⁴ and after two *rakah* are *sunnah*.²⁵

On the other hand, Ibn 'Arabī lists the four cases in which raising hands are obligatory. He presents the evidence for the last two, but does not report their sources. The scholars arguing the obligation of raising hands on prostrating and on lifting the head from it base their views on the *ḥadīth* of Wāil b. Hujr. The *ḥadīth* that Ibn 'Arabī mentioned is recorded in Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal's book, titled as *Musnad*.²⁶ Moreover, it is noted in *Futūḥāt* that scholars arguing that raising hands after two *rakah* is obligatory to do *istidlal* (a process of inductive inference and seeking guidance from the source) according to the *ḥadīth* narrated from Mālik ibn al-Huwayrith.²⁷ This *ḥadīth* is also recorded in *sahih* (valid) resources such as al-Bukhārī and Muslim.²⁸

The author of *Futūḥāt* first reviews the narrations on *raf' al-yadain* regarding their predication. Under this criterion, 'the *ḥadīth* about raising hands to the level of shoulders' is the strongest one among all the *ḥadīth* narrations regarding raising hands.²⁹ Also, 'the narration about raising hands to the level of ears' is stronger (with respect to its *sened* (the chains of their narration)) than 'the narration about raising hands to the level of chest'.³⁰

After the review of narrators' chain, Ibn 'Arabī evaluates the contents. According to him, since there is not any prohibition on this issue, one doesn't have to neglect the *ḥadīths* regarding this issue and should act proper to the *ḥadīths*. Moreover, there are both *fards* and *sunnahs* in the acts of the Prophet. Describing a judgment as *fard* requires evidence for this.³¹

²² *Futūḥāt*, 1: 436-7 (Chapter 69). The group of scholars, whose name is not cited by Ibn 'Arabī, claiming that raising hands while bending down and rising from the bowing and on prostrating and on lifting the head from it is *fard* are Dāwūd Zāhirī and a group of his companions. See Ibn Rushd, *Bidāyah*, 1: 191.

²³ For example, see al-Bukhārī, "Adhān", 86; Abū Dāwūd, "Adhān", 117; al-Nasāī, "Sehv", 2, 3; Ibn Maja, "Iqamah", 15.

²⁴ See Ibn Rushd, *Bidāyah*, 1: 191.

²⁵ Ibn Rushd, *Bidāyah*, 1: 191; al-Nawawī, *Majmū'*, 3: 446-48.

²⁶ Aḥmad, 4: 317.

²⁷ *Futūḥāt*, 1: 437 (Chapter 69).

²⁸ Al-Bukhārī, "Adhān", 84; Muslim, "Adhān", 24.

²⁹ al-Nawawī reports that according to widely shared view in *Shāfi'ī* school, raising hands to the level of shoulders is obligatory. See al-Nawawī, *Majmū'*, 3: 307.

³⁰ *Futūḥāt*, 1: 437 (Chapter 69).

³¹ These views expressed in *Futūḥāt* are as the following: *On this issue, my view is as the following: The narrations regarding holding up hands during Ṣalah only reflect the acts of Hz. Prophet (peace be upon him). There is not actually any such order of Hz. Prophet (peace be upon him). He (peace be upon him) said: "Perform Ṣalah as you see me perform Ṣalah."* (For the *ḥadīth*, see al-Bukhārī, "Adhān", 18, "Edeb", 27, "Āhād" 1; Dārimī, "Ṣalah", 42; Aḥmad, 5: 53; al-Dāraquṭnī, 'Alī b. 'Umar, *Sunan*, ta'līq, Shams al-Hak al-Azīmābādī, 4 Cilt, (Beirut: Dār Ihyā al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 1413/1993) 1: 346 (10)). "As is

As can be understood from the discussion above that Ibn ‘Arabī primarily depends on the *ḥadīths* while forming his chain of thoughts. In the same vein, by making a comparison with the issue of Ali’s *niyyah* (intention) of *hajj*³², he claims that not knowing the true judgment about holding up hands during the prayer does not prevent one from practicing it.

As it can be inferred from his assessments above that the judgment on the issue depends on only *nass* (scriptures), not on mystical insights or any other special methodology. The criteria used in the *ḥadīth* review are the rules outlined in the *ḥadīth* methodology, not any other special methodology.

Acting in line with the manners of a consummate sufi, he notes that not ‘the judgment itself’ but performing that act is the first and important concern regarding any *sunnah* of the Prophet. Thus, it does not matter whether the judgment about that act is *sunnah* or *fard*. Furthermore, if the narrations are combined as much as possible, all acts of the Prophet’s could be performed.³³ We must note the enthusiasm of Ibn ‘Arabī to perform with all *ḥadīths* narrated from the Prophet. Ibn ‘Arabī’s insistence on performing in compliance with the statements of *ḥadīths* as much as possible can be considered as a common result of his sufi side and his *ḥadīth* scholar side.

In addition to this, according to his perspective, it is not right to conclude an act of the Prophet as *fard* if there is not a direct order regarding this act. Under the rules of *ḥadīth* methodology, the abundance of *thiqa* (trustable narrator) is desirable.³⁴ Because of this, one can perform with the guidance of any acceptable *ḥadīth*. As can be inferred, Ibn ‘Arabī acts on this issue as a *ḥadīth* scholar rather than a *fiqh* scholar. More precisely, his sufi side does not prevent him from relying on *ḥadīths*.

Moreover, after reciting the reviews regarding the *ḥadīth*, the author of *Futūḥāt* also notes his choice and perception. While analyzing the issue, it is explicitly understood from his notes that he utilizes both *ḥadīth* and *fiqh* methodologies.³⁵

It is noteworthy that Ibn ‘Arabī’s view on raising hands during the prayer other than the opening *takbīr* is in line with the views of Ibn Hazm who also lived in the same region. Ibn Hazm argues that holding

known, the prayer is a worship that includes both *fards* and *sunnahs*. Thus, one could not conclude from this *ḥadīth*, by opposing *ijma*, that all decrees regarding the prayer are *fard*.” See *Futūḥāt*, 1: 437 (Chapter 69).

³² Ibn ‘Arabī explains his reasoning on this issue as the following: “We perform the prayer and raise our hands up with accepting and being aware of that it is a religious decree, but without specifying whether it is *fard* or *sunnah*. Similar to this, although ‘Alī b. Abī Tālib did not know Hz. Prophet’s intention of *hajj* (which kinds of *hajj*), he entered the state of *iḥram* (a sacred state that a Muslim must enter in order to perform the major pilgrimage) with Hz. Prophet’s intention of *iḥram*. The Prophet (be peace upon him) approved this act and did not react to him. Hence, we accept and hold up hands during the prayer as stated in religious decree.” *Futūḥāt*, 1: 437 (Chapter 69). For the *ḥadīth* about ‘Alī’s entering the state of *iḥram* with intending the Prophet’s intention of *hajj*, see Aḥmad, 3: 320 (1437).

³³ *Futūḥāt*, 1: 437 (Chapter 69).

³⁴ See *Futūḥāt*, 1: 437 (Chapter 69). Ibn ‘Arabī supports his view by reminding the rule of *ḥadīth* methodology ‘excess of *thiqa* (trustable narrator) is desirable’. For more information about the excess of *thiqa* and desirability of this excess, see *al-Bāis al-hasīs Sharh ikhtisār ulūm al-ḥadīth*, 1: 190.

³⁵ See *Futūḥāt*, 1: 437 (Chapter 69).

up hands during the prayer other than opening *takbīr* is not *fard*. He also argues that since there exist supporting narrations from Hz. Prophet’s (peace be upon him) life for both acts, whether or not holding up hands during the prayer, *sunnah* will be performed by doing in either way.³⁶

3. A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO RAF’ AL-YADAIN BY IBN ‘ARABĪ

When expressing his views on the issue of holding up hands during the prayer, Ibn ‘Arabī refers to a dream of his. At this point, we have an opportunity to evaluate his actual identity, meaning his sufi characteristic, and he basically develops his conclusion by referring to this dream. He writes that in the dream, The Messenger (peace be upon him) orders him to raise his hands for opening *takbīr*, while bending down and rising from the bowing.³⁷ It is important to note that while Ibn ‘Arabī is discussing the issue related with the prayer in the form of a *fiqh* book, suddenly he alters his attitude and chooses to express his views by referring to his dreams.

A main characteristic distinguishing him from other *fiqh* scholars is his usage of special methods even in analyzing the issues related to judgments (*ahkām*). While developing a view on any issue, he bases his thoughts on dreams, which is different from other scholars. When analyzing the issue, Ibn ‘Arabī clearly utilizes one of his peculiar methods beside *fiqh* and *ḥadīth* methodologies.³⁸ Another important point is that the author of *Futūḥāt* does not mention his original method in a separate section, but discusses it in the same section. This indicates that in his perspective, there is no distinction between *Fiqh/Ḥadīth*, the exoteric (*zāhiri*) sciences, and *Ṭaṣawwuf/Ethics (akhlāq)*, the esoteric sciences.

On the other hand, he acknowledges at section 318 of *Futūḥāt* that he bases many of his judgments, including holding up hands during the prayer, on *Sūrat al-Nabi*. However, while he mentions in *Futūḥāt* that he relies on revealings through dreams in one part of the book, in another part he notes that he receives this information from ‘*Sūrat al-Nabi*’.³⁹

From Ibn ‘Arabī’s expressions in *Futūḥāt*, it is explicit that ‘*Sūrat al-Nabi*’ is certainly a form of spiritual element.⁴⁰ However, these expressions also indicate that this concept is not related to the dreams. Thus, it

³⁶ See Ibn Hazm, *Muḥallā*, 3: 235.

³⁷ *Futūḥāt*, 1: 437 (Chapter 69).

³⁸ More discussions on the Ibn ‘Arabī’s unique narration methods, See, Ayhan, *İbn ‘Arabī ve Hadis*, 138-275.

³⁹ *Futūḥāt*, 3: 70 (Chapter 318).

⁴⁰ Ibn ‘Arabī explains the meaning of the expression ‘*Sūrat al-Nabi*’ as the following:

“The meaning of *Sūrat al-Nabi* is exactly the soul and the essence (*haqiqa*) of the Prophet (peace be upon him) or a resembling image of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the image of an angel which knows religious orders (*al-ahqam al-shar’iyya*) of the Prophet (peace be upon him). By this way, the given statements to that person also constitute the religious order of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Any other alternative meaning for this is not possible. Since, undoubtedly, the devil can’t imitate the image of any prophet.” *Futūḥāt*, 3: 70 (Chapter 318). For the *ḥadīths* regarding impossibility of devil’s interfering or imitating the image of the Prophet (peace be upon him), see al-Bukhārī, “*İlm*” 38, “*Tabir*” 10; Muslim, “*Ru’ya*”, 10, 11; Abū Dāwūd, “*Adab*”, 88; al-Tirmidhī, “*Ru’ya*”, 4, 7; Ibn Maja, “*Ru’ya*”, 2; al-Dārimī, “*Ru’ya*”, 4; Aḥmad, 1: 450, 279, 2: 232, 261, 342, 410.

is possible that Ibn 'Arabī has received the related information about *raf' al-yadain* both through dreams and from the *Sūrat al-Nabī*.⁴¹

4. SUFI INTERPRETATION OF THE ḤADĪTH OF RAF' AL-YADAIN

After reporting the *ḥadīth* and religious judgments on *raf' al-yadain*, Ibn 'Arabī points to the *implicational* side of the issue. According to him, the interpretation of the *ḥadīth* from a *taṣawwufi* perspective is as the following:

Raising hands implies that the declaration of that everything obtained, earned by these hands is nonexistent. Allah teaches it to a person who performs ṣalāh and (as if) tells: 'My slave! When you stand in my presence, be as a destitute, impoverished man. Leave behind -while raising hands- the things that I favored and gave you for it is just me who is in the direction of qibla.'

By this way, the person performing ṣalāh turns towards the direction of qibla, utters takbīr and raises his hands while his palms are open and empty in order to show he has nothing. When he brings his hands to the sides and leaves them earthwards, his palms are turned backwards facing the direction where he left his possessions behind. In return for every act performed during ṣalāh, Allah bestows a favor on him. When Allah gives him something, he does not hold onto it and leaves it behind. By raising hands, he expresses to Allah the following:

By raising hands when ordered and by not raising hands when ordered not to, he resigns himself to order of Allah..."⁴²

The author of *Futūḥāt* says a lot about the interpretation of the *ḥadīth*. These are rather related with his feelings and with sufi side of him. He interprets the exoteric meaning of the *ḥadīth* as well as its *ishari* (vectoral)/*Taṣawwufi* meaning. He tries to explain not only the exoteric side (*fiqh zāhir*) of the *ḥadīth/nass*, but also the esoteric side (*fiqh bātin*) of it. Here, an important point is to emphasize that *ṣalāh* is not only just a series of some physical/mechanical movements, but it involves a spiritual, moral aspect.

Ibn 'Arabī claims that every action performed during *ṣalāh* such as opening *takbīr*, bringing hands down and leaving them earthwards, standing up (*qiyām*) for *ṣalāh*, prostrating, giving greetings has a distinct

⁴¹ Ibn 'Arabī provided various information on *Sūrat al-Nabī*. He claimed that he didn't learn the religious orders (*al-ahkām al-shar'iyya*) that he took from a quasi-image of *Sūrat al-Nabī* from any kind of book or scholar. When this information that was derived from this special method was shared with other reliable scholars, it was observed that both information that was derived from both sources (the books and *Sūrat al-Nabī*) were exactly the same. Ibn 'Arabī reported that this exact convergence surprised the scholars, who combined both *Ḥadīth* and *Fiqh* sciences, in his region. He also stated that in every subject that he gave information from *Sūrat al-Nabī*, there was a *sahih ḥadīth* which was an exact match to the letter with the given information. According to Ibn 'Arabī, the information about holding up hands during the prayer is also in this category. Previously, he had never seen anybody who had performed this practice or had seen any scholar who had held this view in his native land. When he shared this information about *raf' al-yadain* with a *Ḥadīth* scholar Muhammad b. 'Alī b. al-Hajj, this scholar narrated a *ḥadīth* form Muslim regarding this issue. Ibn 'Arabī himself also noticed this narration while examining some *ḥadīths* in *Sahih* of Muslim. See *Futūḥāt*, 3: 70 (Chapter 318).

⁴² *Futūḥāt*, 1: 437 (Chapter 69).

meaning.⁴³ Therefore, he concludes that there are both exoteric/explicit side and esoteric/non-explicit side of the *ṣalāh* and these two jointly constitute *ṣalāh*. Moreover, he tries to impart from the depths of his heart that a person should confess his feebleness and should worship with considering his need for the benevolence of Allah.⁴⁴

5. CONCLUSION

Ibn 'Arabī first analyzes the *ḥadīth* and *fiqh* literatures to ascertain the place of raising hands during the prayer. He basically reports the different views on *raf' al-yadain* in the *fiqh* literature and provides supporting arguments for these views from *ḥadīth* sources.

The author of *Futūḥāt* not only cites the judgments of scholars on the issue, but also closely scrutinizes these views. In addition to this, he evaluates the *ḥadīths* regarding the issue as well as the reliance of them. Therefore, we can safely conclude that he acts both as a *ḥadīth* and a *fiqh* scholar.

Moreover, Ibn 'Arabī does not interpret the issue by centering the view of any Islamic group and but rather acts as an autonomous *mujtahid* (a person who knows the religion in all details). Also, an original point here is that he chooses to combine all *ḥadīth* narrations on this issue as much as possible, rather than opting to use only some part of them.

Furthermore, he states his arguments through presenting a specific dream of his. In this way, he considers the issue beyond the traditional *fiqh* and *ḥadīth* methodologies and actually develops a unique sufi methodology to analyze this kind of a *fiqh* issue.

In addition to using his unique method to develop an understanding for this subject, he points to the implied/*taṣawwufi* meaning of the *ḥadīth* in order to explicitly explain his method. Having his interpretations not restricted to the-*fiqh* related aspect of the subject but elevating them to a spiritual level can be considered as an important contribution to the contemplation (*tafaqqur*) side of the *ṣalāh*.

Ibn 'Arabī as a sufi *ḥadīth* scholar not only reports a debatable issue among religious schools but also re-evaluates it and states his opinions, which is an extremely important point to consider in this literature. Also, explaining a subject of *fiqh* through both exoteric and *taṣawwufi* (or sufi') perspectives is perhaps the result of Ibn 'Arabī's totally inclusive thoughts on the subject. Furthermore, Ibn 'Arabī's usage of his own unique methods in addition to the *fiqh* and *ḥadīth* methodologies must be the result of his sufi characteristic, which causes this practice to turn out to be a special case.

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⁴³ For the rest of the *taṣawwufi* interpretation of the *ḥadīth*, see *Futūḥāt*, 1: 437 (Chapter 69).

⁴⁴ *Futūḥāt*, 1: 437 (Chapter 69).

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