

## Can a Hanafi Offer Salah Behind a Shafi'i Imam?

Darulifta Ahlesunnat (Dawateislami)

### Question

Can a person offer salah behind an Imam who is not the same Mazhab? For example, I am following Imam Abu Hanifah. Can I pray with the one who is following Imam Shafi'i?

Questioner: (Khalid, South Africa) (Mazhab: Hanafi)

### Answer

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
الْجَوَابُ بِعَوْنِ الْمَلِكِ الْوَهَّابِ اللَّهُمَّ هِدَايَةَ الْحَقِّ وَالصَّوَابِ

A Hanafi can offer salah behind a person who follows another Mazhab (school of jurisprudence) and holds the correct beliefs, in certain cases. But in some cases, doing so is Makruh Tahrimi, and in others, the salah is completely invalid. The details of each scenario are explained below.

- i. If it is known that the Imam who follows a different Mazhab did not observe the Hanafi requirements, i.e., all the fara'id (obligatory acts) and shara'it (conditions) of wudu and salah, in this specific salah, it is invalid for a Hanafi to offer salah in congregation with this Imam.
- ii. If it is known that the Imam who follows a different Mazhab generally does not observe the requirements of wudu and salah according to the Hanafi Mazhab, but it is not known specifically about this salah, it is Makruh Tahrimi for a Hanafi to offer salah in congregation with this Imam.
- iii. If it isn't known whether or not the Imam generally observes the Hanafi requirements, it is still Makruh to offer salah in congregation with this Imam. But according to the 'Arjah' (most preferred) opinion, it is not Makruh Tahrimi.
- iv. If it is known that the Imam generally observes the Hanafi requirements, but it isn't known whether he is observing them in this specific salah, the ruling for this case is lighter than the third case, but some Karahah (dislike) remains.
- v. If it is known that the Imam has observed the Hanafi requirements specifically in this salah, it is not Makruh to offer salah in congregation with him. But still, it is preferred to offer salah in congregation with an Imam who follows the same Mazhab.

It is stated in Radd al-Muhtar:

أن الحاصل أنه إن علم الاحتياط منه في مذهبه فلا كراهة في الاقتداء به وإن علم عدمه فلا صحة، وإن لم يعلم شيئاً كره.

Translation: The summary is that if it is known that the Imam exercises caution according to our school, it is not Makruh to offer salah in congregation with him. If it is known that he does not do so, the salah is invalid. If nothing is known, it is Makruh. (Radd al-Muhtar, vol. 2, pg. 7, Pub. Dar al-Fikr, Beirut)

Clarifying these cases in further detail, Shaykh al-Islam, Imam Ahmad Raza Khan عليه

رحمة المنان states in Fatawa Razawiyah:

مذہب اربعہ حقہ سے کسی دوسرے مذہب والے کے پیچھے حنفی کی اقتداء میں بھی چند صورتیں ہیں: (۱) اس خاص نماز میں معلوم ہو کہ امام نے کسی فرض یا شرط و ضویاً نماز یا امامت مطابق مذہب حنفی کی رعایت نہ کی۔۔۔ اس صورت میں اُس کے پیچھے حنفی کی نماز محض باطل۔ (۲) خاص نماز کا حال معلوم نہ ہو مگر اس کی عادت معلوم ہے کہ غالباً امور مذکورہ میں مذہب حنفی کی مراعات نہیں کرتا تو اس کے پیچھے نماز مکروہ تحریمی ہے۔ (۳) عادت بھی معلوم نہیں تو اس کی امامت مکروہ ہے اور راجح یہ کہ اب یہ کراہت تحریمی نہیں۔ (۴) عادت یہ معلوم ہے کہ ہمیشہ مراعات کا التزام کرتا ہے تو صورت سوم سے حکم اخف ہے مگر ایک گونہ کراہت سے ہنوز خالی نہیں۔ (۵) خاص اس نماز کا حال معلوم ہے کہ اس میں اس نے جمیع امور مذکورہ کی رعایت کی ہے تو اب عندا لجمہور کراہت اصلاً نہیں اگرچہ پہلے عادت عدم مراعات رکھتا ہو پھر بھی افضل یہی ہے کہ مل سکے تو موافق الذہب کی اقتداء کرے۔

Translation: There are a few situations for a Hanafi to pray in congregation with a follower of any other Mazhab (school of jurisprudence) from the four guided schools:

1. It is known about this specific Salah that the imam did not observe the fard (obligatory acts) or shart (condition) of wudu, salah, or Imamat (leading salah) of the Hanafi mazhab... In this case, the Hanafi's Salah behind them is invalid.
2. It isn't known about this specific Salah, but it is known that the imam generally doesn't observe the requirements mentioned above. Offering salah in congregation with them is Makruh Tahrimi.
3. If the imam's habit isn't known either, (offering salah in) his leadership is Makruh. But, the 'Arjah' (most preferred) opinion is that this is not Makruh Tahrimi.
4. It is known that he always observes the requirements in accordance (with the other schools). Though this carries a lighter ruling than the third case, it is still not free from minor karahah (dislike).
5. If it is known that the Imam has observed the requirements specifically in this salah, according to the majority (of the jurists), there is no karahah at all, even if he was habitual of not observing the requirements. Despite this, it is preferred that he offer behind someone of the same Mazhab, if available. (Fatawa Razawiyah, vol. 6, pg. 505, Publ. Raza Foundation, Lahore)

This detail is also mentioned in another place in Fatawa Razawiyah. Adding on to it, Shaykh al-Islam علیہ الرحمۃ المنان states:

اگر معلوم ہے کہ میرے مذہب کی بھی رعایت و احتیاط کرتا ہے یا معلوم ہو کہ اس نماز خاص میں رعایت کئے ہوئے ہے تو اس کے پیچھے نماز بلا کراہت جائز ہے جبکہ سنی صحیح العقیدہ ہونہ غیر مقلد کہ اپنے آپ کو شافعی ظاہر کرے۔

Translation: If it is known that he also observes the requirements and cautions of my Mazhab, or it is known that he is observing the requirements specifically in this salah, then offering salah in congregation with him is permissible without any dislike, **given that he is a Sunni who holds correct beliefs; not a Ghair-Muqallid who presents himself as a Shafi'i.** (Fatawa Razawiyah, vol. 6, pg. 577, Publ. Raza Foundation, Lahore)

وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَرَسُولُهُ أَعْلَمُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

(Allah Almighty knows best and His Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ knows best.)

Answered By: Mufti Muhammad Qasim Attari

Ref No: HAB-0692

Date: 14<sup>th</sup> Jumad al-Ukhra 1447 AH/ December 6<sup>th</sup> 2025



## *Dar-ul-IftaAhlesunnat (Dawat-e-Islami)*



[www.fatwaqa.com](http://www.fatwaqa.com)



[daruliftaahlesunnat](https://www.facebook.com/daruliftaahlesunnat)



[DaruliftaAhlesunnat](https://www.youtube.com/DaruliftaAhlesunnat)



[Dar-ul-ifta AhleSunnat](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.daruliftaahlesunnat)



[feedback@daruliftaahlesunnat.net](mailto:feedback@daruliftaahlesunnat.net)