



Narrations Concerning Respiratory Hygiene and the Prohibition of Blowing on Food under Scrutiny

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(Received: January 2025, Accepted: February 2025)

DOI: 10.22034/hsr.2025.51774.1057

Abstract

In the teachings of Islamic law, maintaining hygiene and health holds a special place. For this reason, guidelines have been included in the system of religious knowledge in this area. Among these, some of the recommendations in the narrations are thought-provoking and require investigation into their religious basis. One of these issues, which the present study focuses on, is the topic of respiratory hygiene and blowing on food and drinks, which several narrations in the Shia tradition have prohibited. The present study, in a descriptive-analytical and problem-oriented approach, while identifying the categories of

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narrations related to the issue, critically examines this type of news. The outcome of the research indicates that, in terms of documentation, such news is not without controversy, and in terms of denotation, there is inconsistency between their meanings. However, according to the accepted and customary principle of "Reconciliation is preferable to rejection whenever possible," a certain minimum can be derived from these narrations and used as a basis for action. The research also addresses some of the possible forms and disputes regarding narrations related to blowing and strive to provide appropriate answers to them.

Keywords: Respiratory Hygiene, Blowing, Food, Drink, Narrations.

Introduction

Undoubtedly, Islamic teachings include instructions that, by acting upon their content, can lead to worldly and otherworldly happiness. In this regard, within the system of religious knowledge, while explaining rulings related to self-improvement and spiritual education, instructions are also given in the realm of the body and material life of human beings. It can be said that this collection of teachings serves as a tool for achieving the material and spiritual perfection of man, since man has both a spiritual and physical dimension that influence each other, and the growth and development of each has a direct effect on the other. Therefore, maintaining the health of the physical aspect is of great importance as a valuable means for human perfection and

Meanwhile, nutrition, as one of the most important factors in human health, both physically and mentally, has been highly regarded in Islam, and valuable precepts and instructions have been dedicated to this subject (cf. Kulaynī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 6, 336). For instance, the author of *al-Mīzān*, commenting on the verse "Then let man look at his food" (*‘Abasa/24*), believes that God Almighty deems it necessary for man to study the food he eats and through which he ensures his survival. He commands humans to contemplate this single blessing, so they may observe the extent of divine providence and see how much the Almighty Lord cares about the well-being and stability of humankind (Ṭabāṭabā’ī, 2010 AD/1390 SH: 20, 208).

In any case, it is clear that in Islamic teachings regarding hygiene and nutrition, principles that ensure human health are considered and emphasized. Among these, one of the recommendations to which believers are called in some narrations is to observe respiratory hygiene and avoid blowing into food. The explanation, as will be detailed in the following sections of this article, is that in a narration mainly attributed to the Holy Prophet of Islam (PBUH) in hadith collections, blowing into food and drink is generally prohibited. Accordingly, the present writing, considering the importance of the topic, aims to evaluate and analyze the aforementioned narration and similar narrations that have been transmitted in the Imami tradition. It will strive to determine the reliability of the chains of transmission and the meanings of these reports, as well as the approach and attitude of Imami scholars towards this type of narration, while identifying the primary sources of these reports and providing a correct explanation and analysis of them.

1. Research Background

What makes the research even more necessary is that, apparently, according to searches in reputable scientific databases, apart from some studies that generally discuss the importance of observing hygiene and cleanliness in Islamic law, no independent research has yet addressed the topic of the present study. Therefore, to the best of its ability, the present writing is considered a novel research endeavor.

2. Research Methodology

The present study, like most studies conducted in the field of humanities, is of a descriptive-analytical type and has been organized by referring to library resources and narrative heritage. Also, since the processing of collected information is considered one of the most important and fundamental parts of research in Islamic studies, the research at hand has strived to carefully study the sources, accurately identify the points of discussion, and present each of the objectives of the discussion in an organized and purposeful manner.

3. Semantics of Blowing (*Nafkh*)

The word "Blowing" in Persian is equivalent to "*Nafkh*" in Arabic. Lexicographers have defined *Nafkh* as blowing into something (with the mouth or something else) (Farāhīdī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 4, 277; Ibn Manẓūr, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 3, 62). *Rāghib*, in *Mufradāt*, accepting this meaning that the word refers to blowing and exhaling into something "*Nafkhu al-Rīhi fī al-Shay'*," cites evidence from

120 verses such as the noble verses "*Yawma Yunfakhu fī al-Ṣūr*"

(Ṭāhā/102) and "*Nufikha fī al-Ṣūr*" (al-Kahf/99) to support this meaning. Of course, lexicographers have emphasized that blowing in cases such as the aforementioned verses is used figuratively and actually conveys the meaning of giving life (Ṭurayhī, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 2, 445). *Ibn Athīr*, without explaining the linguistic meaning of this word, narrates a tradition from the Holy Prophet (PBUH) in which he forbade blowing into drinks. According to *Ibn Athīr*, such advice was given because something from the person's mouth might come out while blowing, and as a result, the next person who uses that drink may be bothered and annoyed: "*Innamā Nahā 'anhu min Ajli mā Yakhāfu in Yabdar min Rīqati fa Yaqa' fīhi fa Rubbamā Shariba Ba'dahū Ghayrih fa Yata'adhdhā bih.*" (Ibn Athīr, 1947 AD/1367 AH: 5, 90) Some other lexicographers define *Nafkh*, when this action is performed with the mouth, as expelling air from the mouth, which is usually done in situations such as resting: "*Nafakha bi Famihī Nafkhan idhā Akhrajā minhu al-Rīḥa Yakūnu Dhālika fī al-Istirāḥati...*" (Zabīdī, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 4, 320)

4. Analysis and Evaluation of Narrations

Several narrations related to the hypothetical issue have been recorded in the Imamiyya collections of narrations. The author, after identifying and extracting these, will proceed to analyze them.

4-1. The Narration Known as "Prohibitions"

The most famous narration in this regard is the one known as "*Hadith al-Manāhī*" (Narration of Prohibitions). Within this narration, it is conveyed from the Holy Prophet of Islam (PBUH): "...And he forbade

blowing into food or drink, or blowing on the place of prostration." (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 4, 9) The Messenger of God (PBUH) forbade blowing into food and drink, as well as blowing on the spot of prostration.

This narration was initially recorded in "*Faqīh*," the prominent work of Shaykh Ṣadūq, who is considered the most famous hadith scholar and jurist of the Qom school of thought that focuses on theology and hadith. Subsequently, it was reflected and echoed in later centuries' narrational works (cf. Fayḍ Kāshānī, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 5, 1071; Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 6, 351; Majlisī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 63, 460).

It is noteworthy that the aforementioned narration has also been mentioned in some earlier works pertaining to Islamic etiquette and ethics. For instance, the late Ṭabrisī, a renowned Imamiyya scholar of the 6th century AH, mentioned this narration in his famous work, "*Makārim al-Akhlāq*." (Ṭabrisī, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 427)

Regarding the meaning of the narration, some hadith scholars have stated that the intention of the Holy Prophet of Islam (PBUH) is that if food or drink is hot, one should not try to cool it down by blowing on it. Instead, one should wait for the food and drink to cool down on own and become usable (Majlisī I, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 9, 349).

4-1-1. Critique

The chain of transmission of the aforementioned narration, as it appears in *Faqīh*, is as follows: "*Shu'ayb ibn Wāqid* from *al-Ḥusayn*
122 *ibn Zayd* from *al-Ṣādiq Ja'far ibn Muḥammad* (AS) from his father

(AS) from his forefathers (AS) from Amir al-Mu'minin..." (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 4, 3).

According to what is stated in *Mashīkha al-Faqīh*, in the chain of Shaykh Ṣadūq to "Shu'ayb ibn Wāqid," figures like "Ḥamza ibn Muḥammad 'Alawī," "Abū 'Abdullāh 'Abdul 'Azīz ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā Abharī," and "Abū 'Abdullāh Muḥammad ibn Zakarīyā Jawharī Ghalābī Baṣrī" are present.

Regarding the chain of transmission of this narration, it must be said that, in addition to the fact that the person "*Shu'ayb ibn Wāqid*" is unknown and there is no mention of him in the biographical books: "Indeed, *Shu'ayb ibn Wāqid* is not mentioned in the books of biographical evaluation of narrators, so he is unknown" (Khu'ī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 10, 38) Therefore, Imami scholars, in their works, have explicitly stated his weakness (Shirazi, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 1, 63; Shahidi, 1996 AD/1375 SH: 1, 40; Muḥaqqiq Dāmād, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 3, 75; Qummī, 2005 AD/1426 AH: 1, 277); some others among the narrators in the chain of transmission are also considered unknown and weak. For example, one of the individuals in the chain of the aforementioned report is "*Ḥamza ibn Muḥammad 'Alawī*," regarding whose trustworthiness some believe that although there is no attestation of his reliability in biographical evaluation books, since Ṣadūq has mentioned him in many narrations with the phrase "*Raḍīyallāh 'anhu*" (Ṣadūq, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 4, 434), it might be said that he intended to praise him (Muntaẓirī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 5, 95). The explanation is that some Imami hadith scholars, when

mentioning individuals in the chain of transmission of a hadith, sometimes use expressions such as "*Raḥmatullāh ‘alayh*" (Kulaynī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 1, 487; Ṭūsī, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 38) and "*Raḍīyallāh ‘anhu*" (Ṣadūq, 1966 AD/1386 AH: 1: 44; *ibid*: 1982 AD/1403 AH: 53). This expression and terminology, according to some biographical evaluators, indicates that since the great figures of hadith show mercy and approval towards these narrators, this very fact is an indication that these individuals held a high position and status among prominent Imami hadith scholars (A‘rajī Kāzīmī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 134; Ḥā’irī Māzandarānī, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 1, 94).

However, it must be stated that such an approach has been contested by some other biographical evaluators. For example, *Muḥaqqiq Khu’ī* believes that the aforementioned expressions merely indicate a request for mercy for individuals, and such a prayer is desirable and recommended for all believers. Furthermore, some of these expressions and requests for mercy and forgiveness by the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) regarding individuals known for their immorality were also issued for specific reasons, and even some biographical evaluators, such as *Najāshī*, despite explicitly stating the weakness of some narrators and not narrating from them, have requested mercy for them (Khu’ī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 1, 78).

In any case, many Imami scholars, due to the fact that nothing indicating the trustworthiness of the mentioned narrator has been mentioned in biographical evaluation books, have considered him to
124 be an unmentioned (*Muḥmal*) individual (Ardabīlī, 1982 AD/1403

AH: 2, 535; Khu'ī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 10, 38).

Another narrator is "‘Abdul ‘Azīz ibn Muḥammad," who is also not mentioned in the books of *Rijāl* (biographical evaluation), and for this reason, he is considered *Majhūl* (unknown) in jurisprudential writings (Khu'ī, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 10, 38; Ṣadr, 1987 AD/1408 AH: 4, 45; Muntazirī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 2, 569).

Considering the above, it seems that such a *khavar* (report) cannot be considered in accordance with the valid criteria of *Rijāl*, and for this reason, many jurists have explicitly stated the weakness of the *Sanad* (chain of narration) of the *Khavar* known as "*Manāhī*" (Prohibitions) (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 11, 58; Ḥā'irī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 132; Rūḥānī, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 14, 219; Shahroudi, 2002 AD/1423 AH: 2, 204).

4-2. Narration of Ḥusayn ibn Muṣ'ab

In another narration, regarding not blowing on food and drinks, it is narrated from *Ḥusayn ibn Muṣ'ab*: "Abū 'Abdullāh (AS) said: "It is disliked to blow on *Ruqay* (amulets), food, and the place of *Sujūd* (prostration)." (Ṣadūq, 1942 AD/1362 AH: 1, 158)¹ Blowing on amulets, food, and the place of prostration is disliked. A similar hadith, albeit with a *Mursal* (interrupted) *Sanad*, has also been narrated by *Muḥaddith Nūrī* in *Mustadrak* (Nūrī, 1987 AD/1408 AH: 13, 113).

1. The *Sanad* of narration is: "Ḥaddathanā Aḥmadu ibn Muḥammadi ibn al-Haytham al-'Ijlīyu Raḍīyallāhu 'anhū Qāla: Ḥaddathanā Aḥmadu ibn Yaḥyā ibn Zakarīyā al-Qaṭṭānu Qāla: Ḥaddathanā Bakru ibn 'Abdi llāhi ibn Ḥabībīn 'an Tamīmī ibn Buhlūlīn 'an Abīhi 'ani al-Ḥusayni ibn Muṣ'abin Qāla:...

The aforementioned narration has been cited by some Imami jurists in the chapter of *'Ibādāt* (worship) (Baḥrānī, 1984 AD/1405 AH: 8, 324; Kāshif al-Ghiṭā, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 3, 210; Ḥakīm, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 6, 407).

4-2-1. Critique

Regarding the aforementioned narration, it must be said that this *khavar* also seems unreliable due to some of the narrators in its chain of narration. The explanation is that although some of the individuals in the chain of narration, such as "*Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Haytham 'Ajli*," are considered trustworthy and reliable (Najāshī, 1986 AD/1407 AH: 65; Ibn Dāwūd, 1963 AD/1383 AH: 103; Allamah Ḥillī, 1961 AD/1381 AH: 44), the reliability of some other individuals who are in the *Sanad* of the hadith has been questioned by *Rijāl* scholars. For example, "*Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā ibn Zakarīyā Qaṭṭān*" has been considered weak in some books of *Rijāl* (Māmaqānī, 2003 AD/1424 AH: 6, 11; Khomeini, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 2, 83). Another example is "*Tamīm ibn Buhlūl*," who is also among the unknown and weak narrators (Khu'ī, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 15, 299; Madanī Kāshānī, 1990 AD/1411 AH: 4, 8; Sayfī Māzandarānī, 2007 AD/1428 AH: 122).

4-3. Khabar Arba'mi'ah

It is narrated from Imam Ali (AS) in a *khavar* known as "*Arba'mi'ah*" (Four Hundred) that: "A man should not blow on his place of *Sujūd*, nor blow on his food, nor on his drink, nor on his amulet." (Ṣadūq,

The aforementioned report includes a statement from Imam Ali (AS) in which he articulated four hundred points concerning the needs of the Islamic community (Shahrudi, 2005 AD/1426 AH: 3, 259).

4-3-1. Critique

The meaning of the aforementioned hadith is self-evident and requires no further explanation. However, concerning its chain of narration, this narration is considered among the weak reports.¹ For instance, "*Qāsim ibn Yaḥyā Rāshidī*" is among the narrators who have been discredited by a group of experts in biographical evaluation (Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī, n.d.: 86; Tafrishī, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 4, 50). His grandfather, "*Ḥasan ibn Rāshid*," although considered reliable in some biographical works (Ṭūsī, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 375), has been described as "very weak" by some other biographical evaluators (Ibn Dāwūd, 1963 AD/1383 AH: 439). Considering these aspects, a number of jurists have explicitly stated the weakness of the chain of narration of this report (Khomeini, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 1, 267; Khu'ī, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 3, 356; Qummī, 1996 AD/1417 AH: 262).

Of course, it might be argued that although no explicit attestation of reliability has been received regarding "*Ḥasan ibn Rāshid*," the fact that his name appears in the chains of narration of the book *Kāmil al-Ziyārāt*, and that *Ibn Qūlawayh* narrates from him frequently through intermediaries, should, in principle, lead us to consider him reliable

1. al-Khiṣālu, 'an Abīhi 'an Sa'di ibn 'Abdillāhi 'an Muḥammadi ibn 'Isā 'ani al-Qāsim ibn Yaḥyā 'an Jaddihī al-Ḥasan 'an Abī Baṣīrin wa Muḥammadi ibn Muslimin 'an Abī 'Abdillāhi 'an Ābā'ihī Qāla Qāla Amīrul Mu'minīna... (Majlisī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 63, 458).

(Shubiyri Zanjānī, 1997 AD/1419 AH: 2, 623).

The explanation of such an inference is that one of the characteristics of the book *Kāmil al-Ziyārāt* (by *Ibn Qūlawayh Qummī*) is that he has attested to the reliability of all the narrators in his work and has claimed that he has transmitted the hadiths in this book from the most reliable sources and authentic chains of narration (Ibn Qūlawayh, 1935 AD/1356 AH: 4). However, in response, it must be said that, in addition to the fact that some biographical books, as mentioned above, have explicitly stated the weakness of the aforementioned narrator, there is no reason to assume that whoever is considered trustworthy by the author of the aforementioned book is also considered reliable by the rest of the jurists and biographical evaluators. For this reason, *Muḥaqqiq Khu'ī* did not accept such a claim due to the weakness and ignorance of some of the individuals present in the aforementioned work, as well as the discontinuities and elevated chains of narration present in some other narrations of this book (cf. Qummī, 2005 AD/1426 AH: 10, 192).

4-4. Akhbār 'Ilal al-Sharā'i'

In *'Ilal al- Sharā'i'*, *Shaykh Ṣadūq* narrates two traditions with the same chain of transmission, the content of which contradicts the aforementioned reports. According to his narration, Imam *Ṣādiq* (AS) is first asked about a person who blows into a food container. The Imam responds that there is nothing wrong with this; it is only disliked if another person is present and shares the food with him. He is also

128 asked about a person who blows on his food. The Imam responds:

"Does he not intend to cool his food down by doing so?" It is said: "Yes, that is so." The Imam says: "In that case, there is nothing wrong with it": "About *Abī 'Abdillāh* (AS) regarding a man who blows into a cup, he said: "There is no problem with it, and it is only disliked if someone else is with him, lest he be harmed by it; and about a man who blows on food, he said: Is he not only wanting to cool it down? He said: "Yes." He said: "There is nothing wrong with it." (Ṣadūq, 1966 AD/1386 AH: 518)

It is worth noting that *Shaykh Ṣadūq*, after narrating these traditions, states that what he gives fatwa (religious edict) according to and relies on is that blowing on food and drink is absolutely forbidden, whether the person is alone or whether another person is present with him, and he has not seen the reason mentioned in the aforementioned report anywhere else: "The author of this book says that the fatwa I issue and rely on is that it is not permissible to blow on food and drink, whether the man is alone or with others, and I do not know this reason except in this report." (Ṣadūq, 1966 AD/1386 AH: 518)

4-4-1. Critique

After quoting *Ṣadūq*'s statement, Allamah *Majlisī* argues that the negation of harm (Lā ba'sa) mentioned in the tradition does not contradict the dislike (*Karāhah*) of the act of blowing, and he suggests that the dislike of this action may be greater in the presence of another person alongside the blower (not that the dislike of the action is removed by the absence of another). He then infers from *Ṣadūq*'s statement that he considers this act to be forbidden, while it is

commonly considered disliked (*Makrūh*). However, *Majlisī* also raises a possibility: that the *Fatwā* of non-permissibility in the expressions of the early scholars does not explicitly indicate the prohibition of the act: "The absence of harm does not negate the dislike, and it is possible that it is more disliked if someone else is with him, and the well-known view is dislike in general, and the apparent meaning of *Ṣadūq* is prohibition, even if the absence of permissibility in the expression of the early scholars is not explicit in it." (*Majlisī*, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 63, 402)

In any case, the chain of narration of the mentioned report¹ is also incomplete due to the presence of some unknown individuals. For example, as some *Rijāl* scholars have stated, the *Ṭarīq* (chain) of *Ṣadūq* to "*Bakkār ibn Abī Bakr al-Ḥaḍramī*" is unknown (*Khu'ī*, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 4, 242). *Majlisī* II has also considered the mentioned narrator to be among the weak (*Majlisī*, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 4, 319).

5. Final Conclusion of the Narrations

It seems that by observing the situation of the existing narrations and the contradiction that exists between their implications, as well as the weakness of the chain of these narrations, several solutions can be proposed in this regard, which will be discussed below.

5-1. Deducing Compatibility

Regarding the conflict between two Sharia proofs, it is a well-known

1. Akhbaranī 'Alīyu ibn Ḥātim Qāla: Ḥaddathanā Muḥammadu ibn Ja'fari ibn al-Ḥusayni al-Makhzūmī Qāla: Ḥaddathanā Muḥammadu ibn 'Īsā ibn Ziyādin 'an al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alīyyi ibn Faḍḍālīn 'an Tha'labata 'an Bakāri ibn Abī Bakrin al-Ḥaḍramī.

principle that "Reconciling is preferable to rejecting, whenever possible," (Narāqī, 2001 AD/1422 AH: 2, 376; Ashtiani, 2005 AD/1426 AH: 1, 177); that is, as far as possible, one should reconcile between two or more conflicting proofs and avoid discarding one of the two proofs or both of them.

From this point of view, it should first be seen whether it is possible to somehow reconcile the aforementioned narrations and establish harmony or not. With this explanation, it seems that the possibility of a customary reconciliation exists in the hypothetical issue; however, not in the way that the late *Majlisī* reconciled the narrations, arguing that the phrase "*Lā Ba'sa*" (no harm) in the latter part of the narration of '*Ilal al-Sharā'i*' has a general meaning and can be reconciled with disapproval (Majlisī, 1989 AD/1410 AH: 63, 402), considering the mentioned narration as referring to the absolute disapproval of the act of blowing; because even if his reasoning is accepted, what can be said about the first part of the narration, according to which the Imam (AS) explicitly, after negating any harm and considering blowing into food as unproblematic, limits the disapproval of this matter to the assumption and situation where another person is with the individual and, in other words, they are sharing the meal: "It is only disliked when someone else is with him..." (Ṣadūq, 1966 AD/1386 AH: 518).

Therefore, in this context, by applying absolute to qualified (Tabrizi, 2000 AD/1421 AH: 405), it can be stated that the mentioned aversion refers to a situation where two people are sharing food or drink.

It is worth noting that a matter that can be considered as support for

this deduction is the narrations that speak of blowing on the site of prostration. In some of these narrations, such an action is considered unproblematic, and the reason for this is explained as follows: the aversion to this act is only in cases where it causes annoyance to others: "I said to *Abū 'Abdullāh* (AS): "A man prays and blows on the place of his forehead. He said: There is nothing wrong with it. It is only disliked if it annoys the one next to him." (Ḥurr 'Āmilī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 6, 351)

This narration, which is considered among the authentic hadiths by Imami jurists (Sabzewari, 1992 AD/1413 AH: 7, 18; Rouhani, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 5, 62; Ḥakīm, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 6, 407), has been given precedence by some jurists over narrations that indicate an absolute aversion to the act, and it has been concluded that the aversion to blowing is specific to the case where there is a possibility of annoying the person who is present next to the praying person; therefore, in the absence of this possibility, the aversion will also be removed (Ḥā'irī Yazdī, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 266).

A similar content to the above narration has also been narrated by Shaykh Ṭūsī in *al-Istibṣār*, and blowing during prayer is only considered reprehensible if it causes harm to others (Ṭūsī, 1970 AD/1390 AH: 1, 330).

5-2. Preferring Narrations Indicating Aversion Due to Narrative Fame

Although in the previous section, the possibility of applying common
132 methods of reconciliation in the issue was strengthened; however, it may

be said that narrations concerning aversion take precedence over other narrations due to their narrative fame. But it seems that such a deduction is incomplete in the case under discussion; firstly, there is disagreement among Usuli scholars regarding the arrangement between factors of preference and their precedence and postponement (Ansari, n.d.: 2, 801); secondly, even if we accept the theory of arrangement between factors of preference and giving precedence to narrative fame over other factors of preference, since only the late *Ṣadūq* from among the three Sheikhs has narrated the narrations related to the discussion, and there is no trace of them in other primary and authentic narrative collections, committing to the fact that the narrations of the first category enjoy narrative fame seems very unlikely.

Because, according to what the jurists and hadith scholars have mentioned in their books regarding the definition of narrative popularity, the mentioned title does not apply to any of the contradictory reports. This is because the Usulis (scholars of jurisprudence) define narrative popularity as the renown of a narration among hadith scholars and its being written in hadith books (Nā'inī, 1995 AD/1416 AH: 4, 785). For example, Sabzevari believes that narrative popularity refers to a hadith being well-known among hadith scholars and their attention to its preservation and maintenance (Sabzevari, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 2, 80). *Ḍīyā' al-Dīn 'Irāqī* also provides a similar definition of popularity ('Irāqī, 1993 AD/1414 AH: 3, 99).

Considering the aforementioned points, it must be said that none of the mentioned narrations possess narrative popularity. It is evident that if

a narration is observed to be transmitted in several sources, and primarily in later sources, it is because all the later sources have referred to an earlier source that transmitted that narration, and therefore, they have transmitted the narration following that initial source.

5-3. Giving Preference to Narrations Indicating Disfavor Due to the Well-Known Practice

It may be argued that the weakness of a hadith is not a reason for its invalidity, and according to one principle, a well-known can compensate for the weakness of the hadith's chain of transmission (Makarim Shirazi, 2006 AD/1427 AH: 177). It should be noted that although such a principle has been accepted by some jurists (Sabzevari, 2002 AD/1423 AH: 1, 611; Rouhani, 1991 AD/1412 AH: 11, 203), the theory of compensating for the weakness of the chain of transmission based on well-known practice is a matter that is fundamentally debated and disputed among Imami jurists (cf. Ansari, n.d.: 1, 588). For example, *Muḥaqqiq Ardabīlī*, rejecting such a principle, deems it incorrect: "Compensation through popularity is unacceptable." (Ardabīlī, 1982 AD/1403 AH: 1, 89)

Aside from this major (*Kubrawī*) problem, the minor (*Ṣughrawī*) issue in the matter is the realization of practical popularity in the discussed scenario. This is because those who say that well-known practice compensates for the weakness of the chain of transmission, mean by "Well-known" the popularity among the early scholars; that is, the early jurists whose time of living was connected or close to the time of the presence of the impeccable Imam (AS). Therefore, if this type of jurist acts according to the meaning of a narration, their action

compensates for the weakness of the chain of transmission. However, if, for example, the well-known practice of later scholars is based on a narration, such popularity will lack effectiveness.

Therefore, the fame (or prevalence of opinion) being discussed here pertains to the issue's prominence among the early scholars, similar to what is said regarding *Rijāli* authentication, where the authentication by later scholars is not considered reliable, while the authentication by early scholars is considered valid (cf. Hashemi Shahroudi, 2005 AD/1426 AH: 1, 682).

Considering the aforementioned points, it must be stated that since no such prominence among early scholars has been established regarding this issue, and, in principle, the opinions of many of the early scholars are not clear in the hypothetical discussion; the claim of practical prevalence on this matter would be unfounded. For instance, searching the extant opinions of two famous Shi'a jurists, *Ibn Junayd* and *Ibn Abī 'Aqīl*, does not reveal their chosen position. Sayyid *Murtaḍā*, the renowned Shi'a jurist and theologian, has also not taken a position on the hypothetical issue. It is noteworthy that even a jurist like *Ṣadūq*, who is considered among the early scholars, as mentioned previously, holds an unusual view on the hypothetical issue, issuing a *Fatwā* of absolute prohibition of blowing on food and drink. Given the aforementioned points, it must be stated that, fundamentally, no such prominence of opinion on the matter exists among the early scholars that one could rely on it, choosing its side and adhering to it.

Therefore, in summary, it can be stated that, having rejected the two latter possibilities, the only assumption that can be deemed

reasonable is that the certain minimum is taken in the matter and made the basis of action; that is, we commit to the view that blowing on food or drink in the presence of another person is considered *Makrūh* (disliked) and undesirable in Islamic law, and in other cases, the principle of permissibility and allowance remains in effect.

Conclusion

There are three narrations that prohibit blowing. These are the narration known as *al-Manāhī*, the narration of *Ḥusayn ibn Muṣ'ab*, and the report of *Arba 'mi'ah* (Four Hundred). A chain of transmission analysis of these narrations reveals that all of these reports, due to the presence of some unknown and weak individuals in their chain of transmission, suffer from issues related to the chain of transmission, albeit with varying degrees of severity, and are considered weak according to the standards of *Rijāl* (the science of narrators). In contrast to these narrations, Shaykh *Ṣadūq*, in *'Ilal al-Sharā'i'* (The Reasons for Laws), narrates two reports with one chain of transmission, according to which blowing into food or drink is only disliked in the presence of others, and in a situation where a person is alone, such dislike is irrelevant; although the chain of transmission of these reports is also incomplete due to the presence of some unknown individuals. The research showed that by observing the state of the existing narrations and the contradiction that exists between their meanings, as well as the weakness of the chain of transmission of these narrations, a method must be employed that can somehow

136 reconcile the narrations received in this matter and avoid rejecting and

discarding them as much as possible. In this regard, according to the findings of the research, the existing possibilities in the matter are presented, and with the analytical proposal and rejection of two possibilities (preferring the narrations indicating dislike due to the fame of the narration and the narrations indicating dislike due to the well-known practice), it seems that the best way is to believe in the dislike of blowing when another person is present with the individual and it causes harm or discomfort to them through blowing, and otherwise, according to the original principle, the possibility of dislike will be eliminated.

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