

## Etiquettes of shaking hands

source: *silsilat ul-ahaadeeth is-saheeha* – the series of authentic narrations – hadeeth no. 16

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

On the authority of Aboo Hurairah (رضي الله عنه)<sup>1</sup>: “when the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم)<sup>2</sup> used to say farewell to someone, he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) would say:

أَسْتَوْدِعُ اللَّهَ دِينَكَ وَأَمَانَتَكَ وَخَوَاتِيمَ عَمَلِكَ

(I entrust your religion, your family and belongings (that you are leaving behind), and the last of your deeds to Allaah).”

Shaykh al-Albaanee (رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ)<sup>3</sup> comments: “A number of benefits are gained from this authentic hadeeth.

**First:** the permissibility of saying farewell with the mentioned saying in it:

أَسْتَوْدِعُ اللَّهَ دِينَكَ وَأَمَانَتَكَ وَخَوَاتِيمَ عَمَلِكَ

and the traveller responds to him and says:

أَسْتَوْدِعُكَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا تُضَيِّعُ وَدَانِعُهُ

(I entrust you to Allaah, whose trusts are not lost).<sup>4 5</sup>

**Second:** (the permissibility of) taking hold of one hand during handshaking, which has been mentioned in many narrations, and this hadeeth indicates the derivation of this word (‘handshaking’) in the (Arabic) language. According to *Lisaan ul-‘Arab*:<sup>6</sup> ‘*al-musaafaha* (handshaking) is taking hold of the hand, the same as *at-tasaafuh*. A man shakes another man when he places the side of his palm in the side of the other’s palm, and the sides of their palms are the front of them – like the hadeeth of handshaking upon meeting, which is done with one another by joining the side of a palm with another palm and turning face-to-face.’ I (Shaykh al-Albaanee) say: there is that which reports this meaning as well in some of the previously mentioned narrations, such as the *marfoo’* hadeeth<sup>7</sup> of Hudayfah (رضي الله عنه): ‘Indeed, if the believer meets another believer, then gives him the salaam and takes hold of his hand and shakes him, their sins fall off as the leaves of trees fall off.’<sup>8</sup> Al-Mundhree said: ‘at-Tabaraanee narrated it in ‘*al-Awsat*’ and I don’t know of anyone who was criticised among its narrators.’ I (Shaykh al-Albaanee) say: it has evidences by which it rises to the rank of being authentic, such as (that which was reported) on the authority of Anas by Ad-Dhiyaa Al-Maqdisee in ‘*Al-Mukhtaara*,’ which al-Mundhree attributed to Ahmad (رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ) and others. So all these narrations indicate that **the Sunnah in handshaking is taking hold of one hand**; therefore, the

<sup>1</sup> (رضي الله عنه) (rad iyallaahu `anhu) May Allaah be pleased with him

<sup>2</sup> (صلى الله عليه وسلم) May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him

<sup>3</sup> (رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah have mercy on him

<sup>4</sup> Saheeh Al-Kalim at-Tayyib no.133

<sup>5</sup> Refer to ‘*Al-Kalim At-Tayyib*

<sup>6</sup> The Arab Tongue; one of the well-known Arabic dictionaries

<sup>7</sup> a narration attributed to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم)

<sup>8</sup> Silsilat ul-Ahaadeeth is-Saheeha no.526

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handshaking with **both** hands that some of the scholars do is **against the Sunnah**, so let this be known.

**The third benefit:** that handshaking is legislated at the time of parting as well... The reason for inferring, rather quoting (this) becomes clear by remembering the permissibility of (giving) the salaam when parting as well due to his (the Prophet's) saying (صلى الله عليه وسلم): **'If one of you enters the gathering then let him give the salaam, and if he leaves then let him give the salaam, as the first one is not more deserving (to be said) than the other one,'**<sup>9</sup> Abu Daawood, at-Tirmidhee and others narrated it with a hasan (good) chain of narration. So the saying of some (people) is that handshaking at the time of parting is an innovation which has no truth. Yes, indeed the one who reads the mentioned narrations about handshaking when meeting will find them to be more in number and stronger than the mentioned narrations about handshaking when parting; and the one who is intelligent will conclude from that, that the permissibility of the second handshaking is not like that of the first (handshaking) in rank. **Therefore, the first one is Sunnah and the second one is recommended.** As for (the latter) being an innovation, then no (this is not true) due to the evidence that we mentioned.

And as for handshaking immediately after the prayers, then it is undoubtedly an innovation, except if (the handshaking) takes place between two persons who have not met before that, then it is Sunnah as you learned."

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<sup>9</sup> Saheeh Abi Daawood no.5208, Saheeh at-Tirmidhee no.2706