

## *The do's and don'ts of handshaking*

*source: silsilat ul-ahādīth us-sahīha ~ the series of authentic narrations ~ hadīth no. 16*

On the authority of *Abu Huraira* رضي الله عنه: “when the Prophet ﷺ used to say farewell to someone, he ﷺ would say:

أَسْتَوْدِعُ اللَّهَ دِينَكَ وَ أَمَانَتَكَ وَ خَوَاتِيمَ عَمَلِكَ

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

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*Shaykh al-Albānī* comments:

“A number of benefits are gained from this authentic *hadīth*. First: the permissibility of saying farewell with the mentioned saying in it: ‘أَسْتَوْدِعُ اللَّهَ دِينَكَ وَ أَمَانَتَكَ وَ خَوَاتِيمَ عَمَلِكَ’ and the traveler responds to him and says: ‘أَسْتَوْدِعُكُمْ اللَّهَ الَّذِي لَا تَضِيْعُ وَدَائِعُهُ’ (I entrust you to Allāh, whose trusts are not lost).<sup>1</sup> Refer to ‘*Al-Kalim At-Tayyib*.’<sup>2</sup>

Second: (the permissibility of) taking hold of one hand during handshaking, which has been mentioned in many narrations, and this *hadīth* indicates the derivation of this word (‘handshaking’) in the (Arabic) language. According to *Lisān ul-'Arab*:<sup>3</sup> ‘*al-musāfaha* (handshaking) is taking hold of the hand, the same as *at-tasāfuh*. A

<sup>1</sup> *Saheeh Al-Kalim at-Tayyib* #133

<sup>2</sup> The Goodly Words by *Shaykh Ibn Taimiya*

<sup>3</sup> The Arab Tongue; one of the well-known Arabic dictionaries

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 *hadīth* 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-Albānī*) say: there is that which reports this meaning as well in some of the previously mentioned narrations, such as the *marfū'* *hadīth*<sup>4</sup> of *Hudhaifa*: '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>5</sup> *Al-Mundhurī* said: '*At-Tabarānī* narrated it in '*Al-Awsat*' and I don't know of anyone who was criticized among its narrators.' I (*Shaykh al-Albānī*) 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-Dhiyā Al-Maqdisī* in '*Al-Mukhtāra*,' which *al-Mundhurī* attributed to *Ahmad* and others. So all these narrations indicate that the *sunnah* in handshaking is taking hold of one hand; therefore, the 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 *salām* when parting as well due to his (the Prophet's) saying ﷺ: 'If one of you enters the gathering then let him give the *salām*, and if he leaves then let him give the *salām*, as the first one is not more deserving (to be said) than the other one,'<sup>6</sup> *Abu Dāwūd*, *at-Tirmidhī*

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<sup>4</sup> a narration attributed to the Prophet ﷺ

<sup>5</sup> *Silsilat ul-Ahādīth us-Sahīha* #526

<sup>6</sup> *Sahīh Abī Dāwūd* #5208, *Sahīh at-Tirmidhī* #2706

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.”

~ *asafeeha translations* ~