

CHAPTER FORTY-FIVE

SUNNAH OF GREETING AND SHAKING HANDS

O Allah (The Exalted) bless our master Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and his family, the Sea of Your Lights, the Mine of Your Secrets, the Tongue of Your Proof, the Bridegroom of Your Kingdom, the Leader of Your Presence and the Seal of Your Prophets with blessings which last as long as You last and remain as long as You remain, blessings which please You which please him, and which make You pleased with us, O Lord of the Worlds.

Allah (The Exalted) has instructed us to make Salaam with each other. This is a beautiful Sunnah. Unfortunately, many say other greetings which in reality doesn't mean much. For instance people say Hello, Good morning, how are you etc. etc. These are against the Sunnah and also when departing we should not use terms such as Ta-ta, good bye, Allah-Hafiz or Ghuda-Hafiz but say Salaam and then if you want to say the rest of them then you can do so.

Closest to Allah, The Exalted

Abu Umamah (may Allah be pleased with him) has reported the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) saying that, *"Those who are nearest to Allah (The Exalted) are they who are first to give a salutation (Salaam)."*ⁱ

Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) states that, *"The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) passed by some youngsters and he greeted (made salaam) them."*ⁱⁱ

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) made even children feel special by greeting them. If we bring these teachings in our lives, the children will respect the elders when they grow up. Salaam is for respect and as you respected the youth they will respect you when they grow up.

Paradise for one who makes Salaam

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates from the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said that, *"You will not go into paradise until you bring faith and you are not a believer until you love each other, shall I not tell you what you have to do to love each other, make salaam."*ⁱⁱⁱ

Subhanallah! Salaam is a supplication that you are making for the person and when you make supplication then it is evident love will grow between each other.

Make Salaam upon entering and exiting

Qatadah (may Allah be pleased with him) has reported the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) saying, *"When you enter a house salute its inhabitants and when you leave say farewell invoking a blessing for peace on them."*^{iv}

To say Allah-Hafiz or Ghuda-Hafiz is not the Sunnah, but to make Salaam.

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates from the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) that, *"When one of you meets his brother he should salute him. Then if he meets again after a tree, wall or stone has come between them, he should salute him."*^v

Good action in Islam

'Abd-Allah bin 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) states that a person came to the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and asked, *"What is a good action in Islam?"* The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, *"Feed others and make salaam to all even if you do not know them."*^{vi}

Subhanallah! As long as you know that a person looks a Muslims we should make Salaam whether we know them or not. Shaykh Ahmad Raza Khan writes; if one cannot recognise if a person is a Muslim or a non-believer, it is not permissible to greet them first, as it is Sunnah to greet a Muslim and to a non-believer unlawful.^{vii}

Six rights of a Muslim

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) states that "A Muslim has six rights over another Muslim;

1. To be visited when he is ill.
2. To be assisted to his funeral.
3. When he calls you, go to him.
4. Make salaam when you meet him.
5. Answer him when he sneezes.
6. Talk good of him in his presence or in his absence. ^{viii}

We should bring these in our lives and follow the beautiful Sunnah. When you fall into these category others will do as you have done.

Free from pride

'Abd-Allah Ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) states that, "*He who makes salaam first is free from pride.*" ^{ix}

A person may feel that others should make Salaam with me; this is arrogance and is unlawful. Islam teaches to be pride free and be the first to make Salaam. There is more reward in being the first to greet.

First make Salaam

'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) states that, "*Make salaam before you talk, and do not talk to him who does not make salaam.*" ^x

Reward of Salaam

'Imran bin Hussain (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates that once a person entered the court of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and said, '*Assalamu 'Alaikum*', the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) replied to the salaam and he sat down. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, 'Ten rewards have been written'. Then another greeted, '*Assalamu 'Alaikum Warahmatullah*,' the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) replied to the salaam and he sat down. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, 'Twenty rewards have been written'. Then another greeted, '*Assalamu 'Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatu*,' the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) replied to the salaam and he sat down. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, 'Thirty rewards have been written' and stated a rule that 'Reward increases in this manner.' ^{xi}

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said that, "*Salaam is a name of Allah (The Exalted), when you are greeted give them a better reply or the same.*" ^{xii}

There is no reward saying 'Morning' or 'How are you' etc. However, in saying the Islamic greeting one is making supplication for the other person and the same time gaining rewards in his book of good deeds, *Subhanallah!*

The Islamic greeting

"Assalamu 'Alaikum Warah Matullahi Wabarakatu"

'Peace, mercy and blessings of Allah (The Exalted) be upon you'.

The reply

Reply by saying:

Wa 'alaikum Salaam Warah Matullahi Wabarakatu".

'And Peace, mercy and blessings of Allah (The Exalted) be upon you too'.

It is seen today that when someone says to pass on my salaams to such a person, the person says 'Wa'alaykum Salaam'. This is incorrect as the person asked you to pass the Salaams giving you a responsibility and didn't give you Salaams. If you can give the Salaams then say *Insha-Allah* or else you will be sinful.' ^{xiii}

Sins are forgiven

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) would greet people by shaking hands. Muslim brothers should shake hands upon performing salaam. Bara bin Aazib narrates that the Messenger

of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) states that, *“When two Muslims meet and shake hands, their minor sins are forgiven before they part.”*^{xiv} *Subhanallah!*

‘Umar bin Shu’ayb through his father narrates from his grandfather that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said that, *“Those who copy those against us are not from amongst us. Do not copy the Jews or the Christians. The greetings of the Jews are with the fingers and the Christians greeting is with the palm of the hand.”*^{xv}

Do not just do this, if someone is far from them if you are going to raise your hands then say Salaam to the person should reply not just raise the hands.

Embracing each other

Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) has reported that, *“Whenever the Messenger of Allah’s (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) companions met one another they would shake hands and on returning from a journey they would embrace one another.”*^{xvi}

Zari (may Allah be pleased with him) who was a member of the deputation of ‘Abd-al-Qais said that, *“When they came to Madinah they raced to be the first to dismount and kiss Allah’s Messenger’s (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) hands and feet.”*^{xvii}

Thabit (may Allah be pleased with him) asked Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) whether he had ever touched the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) with his hands. Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) replied in the affirmative and Thabit (may Allah be pleased with him) kissed his blessed hands.^{xviii}

Once a very evil youngster passed away in Multan¹. Someone saw him in a dream and enquired, ‘What is your state?’ the youngster replied, ‘Allah (The Exalted) has forgiven me.’ When he was asked regarding his forgiveness he said, ‘Once Khaja Bahawi Zakariya Multani (may Allah have mercy upon him) was passing and I kissed his blessed hands, because of this I was forgiven.’^{xix}

We find there are blessings in kissing the hand’s of the pious and it is a Sunnah of the companions to.

To embrace is a Sunnah

‘Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) states that, *“Zaid bin Harith (May Allah be pleased with him) came to Madinah and the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) was in my house. Zaid (may Allah be pleased with him) came and knocked. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) stood up and dragging the cloth went towards him. He embraced him and kissed him.”*^{xx}

Shaykh-ul-Islam Baba Fareed-ud-Deen Ganje Shakar (may Allah’s Mercy be upon him) states that Imam Abu Hanifa (may Allah’s mercy be upon him) was of the habit that whenever someone (pious) came into his gatherings he would stand and greet him and when the person left he would do the same.^{xxi}

Manners of greeting & shaking hands

1. One who makes greeting first receives ninety rewards and the one who answers gets ten.^{xxii}
2. That person, who greets first, without waiting for the other to greet, is closer to Allah (The Exalted).^{xxiii}
3. One should greet people, even if you do not know them.^{xxiv}
4. Say the full salaam – *Assalamua ‘alikum Waraḥ Matullahi Wabarakatu.* ‘May peace, Allah’s (The Exalted) Mercy and blessing be upon you.’
5. It is Sunnah to give salaam and to reply is necessary (Wajib).^{xxv}
6. To answer to a salaam straight away is necessary (Wajib), if delayed; one will have to make repentance.^{xxvi}

¹ A place in Pakistan

7. Say Salaam so the person can hear you and reply so the person who gave the Salaam can hear you. ^{xxvii}
8. If there are two groups and no one performed salaam, then they have missed a great Sunnah. ^{xxviii}
9. The one walking should make salaam to the one sitting, the young should make salaam to the old and the small group should make salaam to the larger group. ^{xxix}
10. Men should say salaam to women, but if a strange woman (Ghair Mehram) gives salaam to a man and she is old then reply so that she can hear. If the woman is young, answer so that she cannot hear. ²
11. When you enter the house make salaam. ^{xxx}
12. If a non-believer makes salaam then reply ‘ ‘Alykum’ only. ^{xxxi} Meaning same to you. To make supplication for a non-Muslim is unlawful except that they bring faith.
13. If one says ‘Assalamu ‘Alykum’, one can in reply say ‘Assalamu ‘Alykum’ this answer will suffice. ^{xxxii}
14. If salaam is on a letter sent to you, it is also necessary (Wajib) to reply either by saying it or replying to it in writing³. ^{xxxiii}
15. In a gathering or a group when someone initiates salaam, one reply is sufficient and if no one replies, all will be sinful. ^{xxxiv}
16. Sisters should also make greeting to each other. ^{xxxv}
17. When someone sends greeting through a third party reply in the following manner:
 - If both are men, meaning the sender and the giver then answer by saying ‘*Wa ‘Alayka Wa ‘Alayhis Salaam*’
 - If both are women, meaning the sender is a woman and the giver is also a woman then the answer will be ‘*Alaiki Wa ‘Alai Has Salaam*’.
 - If the sender is a man and giver is a woman then you will say ‘*Alaika Wa ‘Alai Has Salaam*’.
 - If the sender is a woman and giver is a man then you will say, ‘*Alaiki Wa ‘Alai His Salaam*’’. ^{xxxvi}
 - All mean the same i.e. Peace on you and on them.
18. If a sermon is being given anywhere, do not greet anyone nor talk i.e. Jumu’ah, wedding or a lecture. ^{xxxvii}
19. If someone had greeted you in a place where to greet is not necessary then to answer is not necessary either i.e. at the time of Adhaan, when in the toilet etc. ^{xxxviii}
20. If one is greeted whilst eating and there is no morsel of food in the mouth then it is better to answer otherwise not necessary. ^{xxxix}
21. Pray the Salawaat (durood) when you meet and your past and future sins (minor) will be forgiven.
22. It is Sunnah to shake with both hands and that the palms of both should meet.
23. When two people shake hands, seventy virtues are divided the person who shakes hands the Sunnah way and with love will gain sixty-nine and the other person will receive one.

² Shaykh Ahmad Raza Khan writes; the woman should reply silently and if a greeting is passed on through someone the same rule applies.

³ It was the practise of Shaykh Ahmad Raza Khan that he would give an answer straightaway, as the reply in the letter would take some time to reach. (Bahar-e-Shariat Vol: 17 & Akhlaaq Aur Aadaab, p. 116)

24. Whilst shaking hands recite the following supplication: 'Yaghfirullahu Lanaa Walakum'. 'May Allah forgive me and you'. ^{xi}
25. Use both hands when greeting, the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said that, "The perfect way for one to greet is to shake hands." ^{xii}
26. It is not correct to put the hand up alone or nodding the head but to say salaam whilst raising the hand is proper. ^{xiii}
27. It is forbidden to shake with just the fingers; in the hadith it states this is the practice of the Christians.
28. NOTE: Males must not shake hands with females. This rule applies to such females whom marriage is permissible with. Hence, it is permissible to shake hands with one's mother, sister, daughter, aunt (maternal & paternal), grandmother and wife.
29. The Messenger of Allah's (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) noble habit was to wait with the person meeting him until the person departed. In addition, he would not remove his blessed hands from that person who was shaking it, until the other removed his.
30. Do not bow when making salaam to respected persons as it is disliked (Makruh), ^{xiii} there is no problem in kissing the hands of a pious person, since this is a rewarding act.
31. People tend to shake hands with one hand today, this is against the Sunnah.
32. To kiss the hand and feet of parents is permissible.
33. It is permissible to shake hands after each Salaah. ^{xiv}
34. Another method of shaking hands which the Jurists (Fuqaha) have mentioned is with both hands whilst pressing the thumb as there is a vein which creates love. ^{xiv}
35. Some people after shaking hands kiss their own hands, this is disliked, and one should not do this. ^{xvi}
36. To kiss the floor in front of a Scholar or a pious person out of respect is forbidden (haraam). Whoever does this and those who are pleased with such an act both will be sinful. ^{xvii}
37. It is disliked for women to kiss another woman on the cheek or lips. ^{xviii}
38. It is forbidden to prostrate to someone to greet him, and if the intention is worship then this is Kufar. ^{xlix}

When not to make Salaam

1. Do not make salaam when people are engaged in praying the Qur'an, Dhikr or in a lecture etc.
2. Do not say salaam if someone is calling the Adhaan and Iqamah or when the khutbah is being performed for a wedding or Friday sermon etc.
3. Do not greet those who are in the toilet, bath and those who are singing or eating.
4. Do not make greeting in the mosque to those who are engaged in the recitation of the Qur'an, Dhikr or waiting for Salaah as this is not the time for greeting, nor is to answer to the greeting at this point necessary. ⁱ
5. Do not greet those who are teaching or talking about religion.

Respected brother/sister in Islam! When meeting our Muslim brother/sister we should first say Salaam since this is in fact a supplication for them. After you have made salaam you can greet them in other ways, like people do today but you will not find a better greeting than the one that the Messenger of Allah (may

Allah bless him and grant him peace) has taught us. Make a habit of saying salaam when entering and leaving the house so the people in the house know you have entered or you are leaving and the good thing about this is that you will be rewarded for it.

May Allah (The Exalted) give us all the ability to make Salaam and shake hands according to the Sunnah, Ameen.

-
- ⁱ Mishkat
ⁱⁱ Bukhari
ⁱⁱⁱ Muslim
^{iv} Baihaqi
^v Abu Dawood
^{vi} Bukhari & Muslim
^{vii} Ehkam-e-Shariat
^{viii} Nisai
^{ix} Baihaqi
^x Ibn Najjar
^{xi} Abu Dawood, Tirmidhi & Mishkat
^{xii} Bukhari
^{xiii} Faizane Sunnat
^{xiv} Tirmidhi
^{xv} ibid
^{xvi} Tabrani
^{xvii} Abu Dawood
^{xviii} Al Adabul Mufrid
^{xix} Faizane Sunnat
^{xx} Tirmidhi
^{xxi} Asrarul Awliya
^{xxii} Keemiyae Sa'adat
^{xxiii} Bukhari
^{xxiv} ibid
^{xxv} Durre Mukhtar
^{xxvi} ibid
^{xxvii} Bazzaziya
^{xxviii} Alamgiri
^{xxix} Bukhari
^{xxx} Alamgiri
^{xxxi} Bukhari & Muslim
^{xxxii} Alamgiri
^{xxxiii} Raddul Mohtar & Durre Mukhtar
^{xxxiv} Alamgiri
^{xxxv} Baihaqi
^{xxxvi} Abu Dawud
^{xxxvii} Alamgiri
^{xxxviii} ibid
^{xxxix} Raddul Mohtar
^{xl} Mishkat
^{xli} ibid
^{xlii} Ehkame Shairat
^{xliii} Bahare Shariat
^{xliv} Rodul Mohtar
^{xlv} Akhlaq Wa Adaab
^{xlvi} Zayla'i
^{xlvii} Deylmi, Alamgiri & Bahare Shairat
^{xlviii} Durre Mukhtar
^{xliv} ibid
^l Alamgiri