
Shaking hands between men and women

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Taken from 'Silsilah Ahadeeth As-Saheehah'

529 – From Umaymah bint Ruqayqah (رضى الله عنها)¹ who said: 'I came to the Messenger of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم)² along with the women, so that we could pledge an allegiance upon Islaam.

So we said: O Messenger of Allaah we pledge allegiance to you that we will not associate anything with Allaah, nor will we steal, nor commit Zina³, nor kill our offspring, nor will we utter slander intentionally forging falsehood, nor will we disobey you in a good action.

So the Messenger of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) added: '**In that which you have capability and energy to do.**'

Umaymah (رضى الله عنها) said: 'Allaah and His Messenger are more merciful to us than us being merciful to our own selves. Now then, we want to give you, O Messenger of Allaah the oath of allegiance.'

So the Messenger of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said: '**Indeed I do not shake hands with women, as for what I say for a hundred women is like what I say for one woman.**'⁴

In another narration collected by an-Nisaa'ee in 'al-Mujtaba' (2/184), Tirmidhee (1/302), Ibn Maajah (2874), Ahmad and al-Humaydee in his Musnad (341) by way of Sufyaan bin Uayinah from Muhammad bin al-Munkadir with the same narration, except that al-Humaydee and Tirmidhee summarised the narration but they brought extra wording after the saying: 'Now then we want to give you allegiance' that Sufyan said: 'It means: shake our hands.'

And in the narration of Ahmad the wording is: 'We said Messenger of Allaah will you not shake our hands?'

Tirmidhee said: 'The hadeeth is Hasan Saheeh.'

I (Albaanee) say: 'And its Isnaad⁵ is authentic.

Muhammad ibn Ishaq followed them in the narration and said: Muhammad bin al-Munkadir narrated to me, the rest of the narration with extra wording at the end: 'Umaymah (رضى الله عنها) said: 'and the Messenger of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) did not shake the hand of even one woman amongst us.'

¹ (رضى الله عنها) (rad iyallaahu `anhaa) May Allaah be pleased with her

² (صلى الله عليه وسلم) (sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam) May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him

³ Adultery/fornication

⁴ Collected by Maalik (2/982/8), by an-Nisaa'ee in 'Ashaarat an-Nisaa' from his book 'Sunnan al-Kubra' (2/93/2), Ibn Hibbaan (14) and Ahmad (6/357). Narrated from Muhammad bin al-Munkadir from Umaymah bint Ruqayqah (rad iyallaahu `anhaa).

⁵ (إسناد) Isnaad: Ascribing a hadeeth back to the one who said it - connecting the chain of narration.

Shaking hands between men and women

Collected by Ahmad and al-Hakim, (4/71) with a Hasan Isnaad. This narration has a brief and similar supporting evidence from the hadeeth of 'Asmaa bint Yazeed . It was collected by al-Humaydee (368), Ahmad (6/454,459), ad-Dulaabee in 'al-Kuna' (2/128), Ibn AbdulBarr in 'at-Tamheed' (3/24/1) and Aboo Na'eem in 'Akhbar Asbahaan' (1/293) by way of Shahr bin Hoshab from 'Asmaa. And in the narration by Ahmad:

'Asmaa (رضى الله عنها) asked the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم): will you not put your hand out for us O Messenger of Allaah?'

And the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said to her: **'Indeed I do not shake hands with women.'**

The narrator 'Shahr' is weak in regards his memory, and by this extra wording, it is perceived that the women used to take the hand of the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) when giving allegiance, with a garment covering his (صلى الله عليه وسلم) hand.

And there are some other narrations which mention this, however they are all *Maraseel* (A type of hadeeth which is weak, where a Taabi'ee narrates from the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) thereby being a break in the chain), which al-Haafidh⁶ mentioned in 'al-Fath'⁷ (8/488) so none of them can be used as an evidence especially since they oppose that which is more authentic than these narrations, like the main hadeeth under discussion and that which comes after it, likewise the hadeeth of 'Aaishah, the Mother of The Believers (رضى الله عنها), concerning when the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) would take the allegiance from women and she mentions that: 'And no, I swear by Allaah the hand of the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) never ever touched a woman when they would give him allegiance, except that he would say: **'I have taken your allegiance upon that.'**⁸

As for the statement of Umm 'Atteeya (رضى الله عنها): 'We gave allegiance to the Messenger of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم), and he recited to us **[that they should not associate anything along with Allaah]** and he forbade us from wailing at a death, so a woman withdrew her hand, she said: such and such woman helped me lament. . . .'

The hadeeth has been collected by Bukhaaree and this is not as apparent as it may seem that the women would shake the Messenger's hand.

So the like of this narration cannot refute the clear text from the saying of the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم): **'I do not shake hands with women.'** Also his action which was narrated by Umaymah bint Raqeeaa (رضى الله عنها), 'Aaishah, the Mother of The Believers (رضى الله عنها) and Ibn Umar (رضى الله عنه)⁹ as we will mention.

Al-Haafidh said: 'It is as if 'Aaishah, the Mother of The Believers (رضى الله عنها) indicated to this, refuting that which came from Umm 'Atteeya (رضى الله عنها), from what Ibn Khuzaimah collected and Ibn Hibbaan, al-Bazaar, at-Tabaree and Ibn Mardaway from way of Ismaa'eel bin Abdurrahmaan from his grandmother Umm 'Atteeya (رضى الله عنها) regarding the story of giving allegiance. He said: the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) stretched out his hand from outside the house and then we [the women] stretched out our hands from inside the house. Then the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said: **'O Allaah bear witness.'**

⁶ al-Haafidh Ibn Hajar al-Asqalane (rahimahullaah)

⁷ Fath al-Baree ('Victory of the Creator') explanation of Saheeh al-Bukhaaree

⁸ Collected by al-Bukhaaree

⁹ (رضى الله عنه) (rad iyallaahu `anhu) May Allaah be pleased with him

Shaking hands between men and women

Likewise, in the hadeeth which comes after this where she said: 'A woman from amongst us held her hand.'

Indeed one feels that they would give allegiance with their hands. And it is possible to reply to the first hadeeth that stretching out the hand from behind the Hijaab indicates that allegiance was taken even though the shaking of hands did not take place.

As for the second narration then the meaning of holding/clutching the hand was the delay in submitting allegiance, or that allegiance took place with a garment placed upon the hands.

Abou Daawood narrated in 'al-Maraseel' from ash-Sha'abee that when the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) took an allegiance from the women who came, using a garment from Qatar and he placed it on his hand and said: **I do not shake hands with women....'**

Then al-Haafidh mentioned the rest of the ahadeeth in meaning and they are all 'Maraseel' and cannot be used as evidence.

What he (al-Haafidh) mentioned in reply to the two ahadeeth of Umm 'Atteeyah (رضى الله عنها), then that is the main proof that her hadeeth are from Ismaa'eel bin Abdurrahmaan and he is not a strong narrator, because this Ismaa'eel is not well-known rather he is used as a supporting narrator.

So in summary, it is not authentic from the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) that he ever shook hands with a woman, not even while taking allegiance, more over so shaking hands when meeting each other.

As for what some people use as an evidence for its permissibility by using the hadeeth of Umm 'Atteeyah (رضى الله عنها) which she mentioned, even though shaking hands is not mentioned. Likewise they turn away from the clear ahadeeth where the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) refrained from shaking hands, and this is something which does not stem from a sincere believer, especially since there is a severe warning for the one who touches a woman who it is not lawful to touch as is in hadeeth no. 226 [From the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم): **'That it is better for a person to be struck on his head with an iron rod than touch a woman whom he is not allowed to touch.'** (See the Shaykh's comment about this hadeeth at the end of this article.)]

There is a supporting hadeeth for the hadeeth of Umayma bint Ruqayqah (رضى الله عنها) which will follow shortly.

After I wrote what has preceded, I saw that Ishaq bin Mansoor al-Marwazee said in the book 'Mas'ail Ahmad wa Ishaq' (1/211): 'I said (to Ahmad): Do you dislike to shake hands with women?' He answered: 'I dislike it.'

Ishaq said: 'It is as he said it, whether it is an old lady or a young lady, indeed the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) took their allegiance while he had a garment covering his hand.'

Then I saw in 'al-Mustadrak' (2/486) from Ismaa'eel bin Abee Owais who said that his brother narrated to him from Sulayman bin Bilal from Ibn 'Ajlaan from his father from Faatimah bint 'Utbah bin Rabe'e'ah bin Abd-Shams. 'That Abou Hdayfah bin 'Utbah (رضي الله عنه) came with her (Fatima bint 'Utbah) and Hind bint 'Utbah to the Messenger of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) to give allegiance to him. She said:

'He (صلى الله عليه وسلم) took allegiance from us and he placed conditions upon us.'

Shaking hands between men and women

She narrates that she said to him: O my uncle's son did you ever know of any evil and sickness whatsoever about your people?'

Aboo Hudaifah (رضي الله عنه) said: 'Yes we will give him allegiance, and indeed this is what the allegiance was given about and this is its condition.'

Faatimah (رضي الله عنها) said that Hind (رضي الله عنها) said: 'I do not give allegiance to you upon not stealing rather I steal from my husband's wealth, so the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) put out his hand and she put out her hand. Then he sent a message to Aboo Sufyaaan (رضي الله عنه) and he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) made it permissible for her to take from him. Aboo Sufyaaan (رضي الله عنه) said: 'As for food stuff then she can take it, as for wealth then no and made dua' against her!'

She said: 'So we gave allegiance to him then Faatimah (رضي الله عنها) said: 'There was no person more hateful to me than yourself and I did not like that Allaah make it permissible for you to have authority and what it contains. And now I swear by Allaah that there is no person more beloved to me than your person and that Allaah lengthens it and blesses it and gives recompense.'

The Messenger of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said: '**Likewise, I swear by Allaah none of you truly believes until I become more beloved to you than your son and your father.**'

Al-Hakim said: Saheeh al-Isnaad and Dhahabee agreed.

I (Albaanee) said: 'Its Isnaad is Hasan¹⁰ because there is some talk about Muhammad bin Ajlaan and Ismaa'eel bin Abee Owais but it is not harmful Insha'allaah¹¹.

This hadeeth supports the point that allegiance took place between the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and the women by stretching out their hands without actually shaking hands, as was previously mentioned by al-Haafidh, since if it did take place the narrator would have mentioned it, as is apparent. So there is no difference between this hadeeth and the main hadeeth under discussion.¹²

Hadeeth No. 530

From Abdullaah bin Amr' (رضي الله عنه): 'that the Messenger of Allaah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) **never used to shake hands with women** in taking allegiance.'^{13 14}

Hadeeth no. 226

Ma'aqal bin Yassar (رضي الله عنه) from the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم): '**That it is better for a person to be struck on his head with an iron rod than touch a woman whom he is not allowed to touch.**'¹⁵

¹⁰ al-hasan – الحسن Ibn Hajar explains it to be that which fulfils the conditions of the Saheeh except that the precision of one or more of its narrators is of lesser standard.

¹¹ If Allaah wills

¹² Taken from 'Silsilah Ahadeeth As-Saheehah' vol.2 hadeeth no.529 p.63-67

¹³ Collected by Ahmad, Shaykh al-Albaanee said its Isnaad is Hasan.

¹⁴ Taken from 'Silsilah Ahadeeth As-Saheehah' vol. 2 hadeeth no.530 p.67

¹⁵ Collected by ar-Rooyaani in his 'Musnad'; Shaykh al-Albaanee said the Isnaad is good.

Shaking hands between men and women

Shaykh Albaanee (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ)¹⁶ commented:

'In this hadeeth is a severe warning to the one who touches a woman who it is not allowed for him to touch. In this hadeeth is an evidence that it is prohibited to shake hands with women because no doubt shaking hands includes touching.

Many of the Muslims nowadays have been trialled by this and amongst them some of the people of knowledge, even if some of them showed disapproval in their hearts then the situation would have become minimized a little. However, they try to regard it as permissible by using many different techniques and interpretations.

It reached us that a very big personality in al-Azhar (University in Egypt) was seen by some people shaking hands with women. Our complaint is to Allaah about the absence of Islaam.

Indeed some of the Islamic groups have taken the opinion that it is permissible to shake hands between men and women, and it was made binding upon every Hizbee (partisan) to implement it, and they use as an evidence for that, with that which is not correct, rejecting what is considered from the hadeeth, and there are other clear ahadeeth which show the impermissibility of shaking hands between men and women.¹⁷

¹⁶ (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah have mercy on him

¹⁷ Taken from 'Silsilah Ahadeeth As-Saheehah' vol.1 hadeeth no.226