

# **Neglected Greetings of Islam**

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## **Revised Version**

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### **1. Protect legacy of Islam:**

In this age of technology and science, moral values and teachings taught by the religion, to promote a refined society are neglected at large by all nations, and very unfortunately Muslims are one of them. These moral down falls are leading the Ummah towards the ditch of destruction. It is a time that we examine our attitudes and improves it. Each community has some words of greetings which are used when members of the community meet. Such words of greetings are to express courtesy and promote positive feelings. Greetings granted by Qur'an to Muslims hold highest spiritual as well as moral values amongst other greetings of numerous nations. Assalaamu Alaikum means peace upon you.

### **2. Imami Talim of Salaam:**

Prior to Islam it was common among the dwellers of the Arabian Peninsula while greeting to say: "Hayakallah" (May Allah grant you life) and "Sabha'bil Khair" (Good morning). Once a person came in the presence of Imam Husain and said: [1]

"Kaiyfa Anta Aafak Allah"? (How are you? Allah keeps you safe. )

Imam Husain immediately corrected him in a best manner, gave him the basic Talim of Islam so nicely and responded him in the following manner:

**"As Salaamu Qabalil Kalaamu Aafak Allah"** (Say Salaam prior to begin talk, Allah protect you)

Then he taught:

**"Laa Taazanul Ahad Hatta Be Salaamin"** (Do not grant permission to anyone until he says Salaam)

At another place Imam Husain discovered the reward of Salaam very precisely in these words: [2]

**"There are seventy good- deeds in the Salaam, sixty nine for the person who say Salaam and only one for that person who responds. A person is a miser, who does not reply to the Salaam"**

Qur'an directs us to response Salaam in a more courteous manner. [3]

Wa Alaikum Afzalus Salaam is one of the best responses of As Salaamu Alaikum. Proud and arrogant people never initiate of saying Salaam, even they fell below dignity to reply. They slightly move their head or smile instead to say "Wa Alaikum Assalaam". They are misers of the worst class as per Nabawi Traditions. Imam Husain says: [4]

*“Abkhal al Bakhil, Yabkhalu Fis Salaam” (The greater miser is the one who shows misery in replying Salaam).*

Rasulullah (S) declared in crystal clear terms: [5]

*“Whoever does not reply (Salaam) is not from us”*

A Hadith says: [6]

*“Principal of humbleness is to begun with Salaam”*

### **3. Salaam upon you O people of the graves:**

The Greeting in Islam not only increases friendship and harmony and respect alone but also signifies at the same time to fulfill the rights of Dua for Muslim. Salaam is one of the Asma al Husuna-names of Allah. This Salaam is highly recommended when visiting the Ruzat al Nabi. At the graves of the chosen people of Allah to whom Qur’an addressed as *“Ibadeh’il Lazi’nastafa”* reciting Salaam is highly recommended. It is also one of the Sunnah to recite this Dua when one enters the graveyard: [7]

*“As Salamu Alaikum Ya Ahl al Qubur Min al Muminin Antum us Sabiqun wa Ana Bekum Lahiqun”* (“Salaam upon you O people of the graves from the believers you preceded us and we shall meet you).

### **4. Manners of Salaam:**

A Hadith recommended reciting Salaam in a manner that each one can hear clearly. The person who initiates the Salaam first is closest to Allah. Hadith literature provides us glorious teachings in this regards. When someone questioned who should initiate in Salaam, Rasulullah (S) answered: [8]

*“The one who (wish to) is closer to Allah”. Rider should greet a pedestrian, a pedestrian should greet the one who is sitting and a small group should greet a large number”*

Salaam should be offered to all Muslims, irrespective of whether they are acquaintances or strangers. To say Salaam aloud to everyone in the gathering is sufficient. It is not necessary to greet each person individually. It is incorrect to greet only a particular person, in gathering.

Convey Salaam always in cheerful mode. In this regard this conversation is worth mentioning, and available in the Sacred Scriptures. When Yahya (A.S) met Essa (A.S) he began by saying the Salaam, and was answered also by Salaam. Whenever Yahya (A.S) met Essa (A.S), Yahya (A.S) was always found to be happy and smiling, and Essa (A.S) sorrowful, as if he resembled a crying person. Essa (A.S) asked Yahya (A.S): [9]

*“You smile like a happy person as if you are secure and protected”*

Yahya replied:

*“You show such sorrow, as if you have given up all hope”*

Than the commandments appeared:

*“The one who smiles the most is the dearest to Me”*

If a person is at a distance where your Salaam may not be heard than Salaam can be offered by a hand signal. Sirah Literature provides a tradition, according to which

Rasulullah(S) passed by a group of people sitting in the Masjid, he signaled the greetings with his hand coupled with saying the Salaam, and Abd al Hamid signaled in reply with his hands. When entering in to an empty place, house, shop, office etc, then too, Salaam should be said as follows: [10]

#### **As Salaamu Alaina Wa'ala Ibadillahis Saleyhin**

It is undesirable to recite Salaam when a person is engaged in the following activities:

- During performing Salaat
- When one is engaged in Tasbih or Zikar
- During Khutbah, Majlis, Daras
- When one is busy in Tilawat
- During Azaan and Iqamah
- When one is busy in Dua
- When occupied in discussion and research of religious sciences
- While Judge delivering verdict
- While eating or drinking
- During recitation of Talbiyah in Kabah

If someone says: “convey my Salaam to your parents”, do not reply on behalf of your parents, as you are not authorized and have no right for it. An amazing practice is also prevalent amongst people. On wedding invitation cards often people mentioned prior to the names of the hosts Salaam. Afterwards in that list name of the departed is also mentioned. Can any person have power to hear the Salaam of deceased person? All credit goes to the silly script writer who designed such a text, which people blindly follow.

When visiting others or calling through phone always say Salaam. Care should be taken not to visit or contact any person through phone during the resting time and time of Salaat. Never enter in to the house of any person, whoever he may be, without permission. For asking permission to enter, ring the bell and when the person of the house enquires who is there, say Salaam aloud, and inform your name, instead of saying: “Me”, as Rasulullah (S) instructed. If you realize that the person inside has heard your ring or voice, and is purposely ignoring it, then repeat the ring three times. If there is no permission or answer than as per Hadith, you must return

#### **5. Musaafaha & Muaniqah link with Salaam:**

Musaafaha is one of the neglected Sunnah, linked with Salaam. It should be made after offering Salaam. Its meaning is to place the palm of the right hand fully against the palm of the right hand of the person you are meeting and than to clasp it with both hands and shake them. Then the one who initiated the Musaafaha should not withdraw his hand until the other person has done so. It is a signal of affection and the most perfect form of greetings. As per Ahadith, Musaafaha increases affection, decreases the sins, eliminates hatred, and develops relationship.

*It is incorrect to touch his fingers with the fingers of other as Musaafaha. It is the practice of Hindu Brahmins, the so called royal superior race, who feel below dignity even to touch the lower castes. Amongst a few communities of Indian-Muslims, in Gujrat and other places, such feelings continue, as masses conversion never allowed them an opportunity to completely remove the Hindu spirit.*

*Sirah Literature provides us traditions of the Kissing on Hand and Feet, as a mark of Salaam. Wazza bin Aamir transmitted a tradition: [11]*

*“We reached Madinah and we were taken into the presence of Rasulullah (S). We embraced, and kissed his hands and feet in reverence”.*

*Sirah Literature provides another example: [12]*

*“A group of Jews appeared in the Nabawi presence and kissed both his hands and feet. These examples show that for reverence, one can offer respect to the dearest people of Allah in this manner”.*

*Muaniqah is Sunnah linked with Salaam. It is permissible to make Muaniqah- to embrace a person by holding him and drawing the person close to oneself when they meet after returning from a journey or after a long absence. Hold the person with both arms around the neck and shoulders and draw the person towards your chest. Males with males and females with females can practice this Sunnah.*

#### **6. Salaam on non- Mehram woman or vice versa**

*A questioned is raise frequently, weather a man recites Salaam upon a non- Mehram woman or vice versa? It is not recommended to convey Salaam to a single young non-Mehram girl. Nor to convey any words of exchange wishes, just safe from the Fitnah. If an elder person says Salaam, he/she could be replied. Asma narrated that Rasulullah (S) passed a group of women, sitting in the Masjid. He greeted them by raising his hands. It provides that in gathering, man can convey Salaam through signaling to woman in assembly. [13] Another narration reported by Umme Hani, who visited Rasulullah(S), while he was washing, she greeted him. He asked who is this. Umme Hani informed about her. Rasulullah(S) said Marhaba! (Welcome).*

*However, a woman should not shake hands with any man who is not a Mahram for her, just as a man should not shake hands with a woman for whom he is not a Mahram. This is based on the Hadith: [14]*

*“Verily I do not shake hands with women”*

*It has been authentically reported that Rasulullah(S) used to accept the pledge of allegiance from women in words only. “And no women ever touched his hand.”[15] Qur’an says: [16]*

*“Indeed in Rasulullah(S) you have a good example to follow”*

*Moreover, women shaking hands with men and men shaking with women, for whom they are not a Mahram, is a cause of Fitnah. Shariah, which is perfect, prevents all things which lead to what Allah has forbidden.*

## **7. Concluding Remarks:**

One unpleasant practice is very common today. Instead of Salaam, people use 'Hi' in Email and SMS, prior to start of conversation. It is a matter of regret that Muslims, unconsciously committed sin, to mutilated word of Qur'an "Salaam" and make it for their convenience short as "ASA", "WSLM", "AAWRWB" etc. Does it make any sense? What are we saving? Is it time or words? I request you to convey greetings of Islam in proper way "*Assalamu Alaikum*". Following points from Hadith Literature are enough to guide:

1. "That person is nearest to Allah who recites Salaam first. (one who does not wait for the opposite party to make Salaam first" [17]
2. "Greet every Muslim, whether acquainted or not" [18]
3. "Salaam should always be made before talking"[19]
4. "When replying to a Salaam that has been conveyed through a third person, answer by saying: "*Wa Alaika Wa Alayhis Salaam*", upon you and upon him Salaam [20]
5. "After making Salaam, if a barrier such as a tree or wall appears between them (where the view is obscured) one should make Salaam again when meeting them" [21]
6. "A mounted person should greet the one who is walking, and a person on foot should greet the one who is sitting; a smaller group should greet a larger group and the young should greet their elders" [22]
7. "When entering a house, make Salaam to the occupants of that house" [23]
8. "When leaving that place (i.e. house), depart with making Salaam"[24]
9. "When entering ones own house, should recite Salaam to his family; this will be a source of blessings for one and one's family"[25]
10. "The completion of visiting the sick is by placing ones hand on the sick person's forehead, and the completion of Salaam is the shaking of the hands"[26]
11. "When two Muslims meet and shake hands, their (minor) sins are forgiven before they depart" [27]
12. "Do not greet the Jews and Christians (i.e all non-Muslims) with the words of Salaam"[28]

## **Select Bibliography & Notes**

[1] "Balaghatil Husain", Mustafa Muhsin al Musavi al Hairi, Beirut, Lebanon

[2] "Bihaar al Anwaar", vol. 17, Qum. Bihaar al Anwaar(Oceans of Lights)is a comprehensive collection of Traditions of Ahl al Bait compiled by the Shi'i scholar Mulla Muhammad Baqir, known as 'Allama Majlisi (d. 1110/1698). It is one of the major Hadith collections, the second source of inspiration in Islam. Probably completed between 1106/1694 and 1110/1698, it is historical subjects and commentaries on many Ayaat of Qur'an,

[3] Surah an Nisa, Ayah 86

[3]Qura'n

[4] "Balaghatil Husain", Mustafa Muhsin al Musavi al Hairi, Beirut, Lebanon

[5]Hadith

[6] Hadith

[7] Etiquettes to recite Salaam on the people of Muslim graveyard.

[8] Hadith

[9] "Qasas ul Anbiya", Shaikh Jafar Shibani, Yemen

[10] "Tirmizi", (He was born in the year 209 A.H. during the reign of the Abbasid ruler Mamoon al Rasheed)

[11] "Abu Dawood"( Abu Dawood Sulayman ibn Ash`ath al-Azadi al-Sijistani was a noted Khurassian collector of prophetic Hadith, and wrote the third of the six canonical Hadith collections recognized by Sunni Muslims, Sunan Abu Dawood. He was born in Sijistan, now known as Sistan in south-western Afghanistan, in 817, and died in 888. Widely travelled among scholars of Hadith, he went to Iraq, Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Khurasan, Nishapur, and Marv among other places in order to collect Hadith.

[12] "Ibn Majah", Abu Abdillah Muhammad ibn Yazid Ibn Majah al-Rabi al-Qazwini, (824 CE/209 AM—887/273) commonly known as Ibn Majah, was a medieval scholar of hadith. He compiled the last of Sunni Islam's six canonical hadith collections, Sunan Ibn Majah.

[13] "Tirmizi"

[14] "An-Nasa'I", No. 4186 & Al-Muwattta, No. 2. (Sunan as-Sughra, written by Nasai and also known as Sunan Nasai, is one of the six most authentic collections of Hadith (Sihah Sitta). It contains 5467 Ahadith

[15] "Sahih al Bukhari", No.2713, 4891, 5288, 7214 & Muslim, No. 1866. Sahih al-Bukhari is one of the six canonical Hadith collections of Sunni Islam. These Nabavi traditions, or Hadith, were collected by the Muslim scholar Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhari (810–870) (about 200 years after Muhammad died) and compiled during his lifetime

[16] Qur'an 33:21

[17] Hadith

[18] Hadith

[19] Hadith

[20] Hadith

[21] Hadith

[22] Hadith

[23] Hadith

[24] Hadith

[25] Hadith

[26] Hadith

[27] Hadith

[28] Hadith

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