

Shaking hands of non-Muslim women seeking Da'wah

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

Question: Is it permissible to shake the hand of the strange woman who comes for the purpose of accepting Islaam; and if one does not shake her hand, then this may have the opposite effect, and she may think that she is (being) belittled; so what does the Muslim do in this situation?

Shaykh Muqbil ibn Haadee al-Waadi'ee (رَجَمَهُ اللَّهُ)¹: It is not permissible to shake her hand due to what At-Tirmidhee narrates in his Jaami' on the authority of Umaymah bint Ruqayqah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا)²; she said: Allaah's Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)³ said:

"I do not shake hands with women."

Likewise, due to that which Al-Bukhaaree narrated in his Saheeh on the authority of Aa'ishah⁴ (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا), who said about Allaah's Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ): "By Allaah, his hand never touched the hand of a woman."

At-Tabaraanee narrated in his Mu'jam from Ma'qil ibn Yassaar, (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ)⁵, who said: Allaah's Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

"For one of you to be stabbed in the head with an iron needle is better for him than to touch a woman who is not permissible for him."

What is understood is that this is not from the perspective of belittlement. However, it is a religious matter. Moreover, along with handshaking comes looking and speaking. So it is a must that things be predicated upon a proper foundation. I have mentioned the Hadeeth of Umaymah bint Ruqayqah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا); in it a woman said: "Will you not shake our hands O Messenger of Allaah, as you shake the hands of the men?" So he said:

¹ (رَجَمَهُ اللَّهُ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah the Most High have mercy on him

² (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا) (rad iyallaahu `anhaa) May Allaah the Most High be pleased with her

³ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) (sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam) May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him

⁴ Umm-al-Mumineen 'Aaishah, the Mother of The Believers (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا)

⁵ (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) (rad iyallaahu `anhu) May Allaah the Most High be pleased with him

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“I do not shake the hands with women. My statement to one hundred women is like my statement to one woman.”

And the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) would recite to them the verse which comes at the end of Soorah al-Mumtahinah⁶ and then he would say to them:

“Are you upon this?”

And they would say: “Yes.”

⁶ سورة الممتحنة – Soorah al-Mumtahinah (the 60th Soorah)