60351 - Female students kissing one another every day

the question

What is the ruling on kissing people on the cheek, apart from husband and wife? This phenomenon has become widespread among girls in school, to such an extent that two friends will exchange kisses every morning. I would like to know the Islamic ruling, with evidence, and the ruling on this strange phenomenon in particular.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

What is prescribed when meeting is to say salaams and shake hands. If a person has come from a journey then it is prescribed to embrace him. As for kissing at every meeting, this is not part of the Sunnah of greeting, rather it is narrated that this is disallowed. Al-Tirmidhi narrated (2728) that Anas ibn Maalik (may Allah be pleased with him) said: A man said: O Messenger of Allah, when one of us meets his brother or his friend, should he bow to him? He said: No. He said: Should he embrace him and kiss him? He said: No. He said: Should he take his hand and shake hands with him? He said: Yes. This hadith was classed as hasan by al-Albaani in Saheeh Sunan al-Tirmidhi.

Yes, kissing is prescribed on some occasions, when returning from a journey and the like. See question no. 34497.

But as for exchanging kisses every morning, there is no doubt that this is not prescribed, and it is a strange phenomenon that is alien to Muslim societies. There is the fear that it may be taken as a means by those in whose hearts is a disease to engage in haraam physical pleasure within the framework of another phenomenon which is called admiration, which is undoubtedly a haraam kind of infatuation.

Al-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

As for embracing and kissing the face of someone other than a person who has returned from travelling, etc – apart from a child – this is makrooh, as was clearly stated by al-Baghawi and others… As for a handsome beardless youth, it is haraam to kiss him under any circumstances, whether he is returning from a journey or not. It seems that embracing him is akin to kissing him, whether the one who is kissing or the one who is kissed are righteous or otherwise. End quote from al-Majmoo', 4/477

The scholars of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas were asked: There is the phenomenon of young men kissing one another on the cheeks every time they meet, every day. This phenomenon has also spread among old men, in the mosques and in the classrooms. Is this contrary to the Sunnah or is there nothing wrong with it? Is it a bid'ah or a sin or is it permissible?

They replied:

What is prescribed when meeting is to say salaam and shake hands, If the meeting is after a journey then it is prescribed to embrace as well, because it is narrated that Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: When the companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) met, they would shake hands, and if they had come from a journey they would embrace. As for kissing the cheeks, we do not know of any Sunnah to indicate that. End quote.

Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa'imah, 24/128

Shaykh al-Albaani (may Allah have mercy on him) said in Silsilat al-Ahaadeeth al-Saheehah (1/74, hadith no. 160): This is the hadith of al-Tirmidhi that we mentioned at the beginning of our answer:

In fact the hadith clearly states that kissing when meeting is not prescribed in Islam. That does not include kissing one's children or wife, as is obvious.

With regard to the ahaadeeth which state that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) kissed some of his companions on various occasions – such as when he kissed and embraced Zayd ibn Haarithah when he came to Madeenah, and when he embraced Abu'l-Haytham ibn al-

Tayhaan, etc – the following points may be noted in response to that:

1 – These are unsound ahaadeeth which cannot be taken as evidence.

2 – Even if any of them were saheeh, it is not permissible to use them against this saheeh hadith, because it is an action on the part of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) which may be interpreted as applying to a specific case or there may be some specific reason for that which makes this hadith unfit to be used as evidence, unlike this hadith, which is a verbal hadith that is addressed in general terms to the ummah as a whole, so it is string evidence which cannot be rejected. It is established in the field of usool that words take precedence over deeds in the event of a conflict, and the hadith which indicates a prohibition takes precedence over another which indicates permissibility. This hadith is verbal and indicates a prohibition, so it takes precedence over the other ahaadeeth mentioned even if they are saheeh.

Similarly, with regard to hugging and embracing, we say that it is not prescribed because the hadith forbids it, but Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: When the companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) met, they would shake hands, and if they had come from a journey they would embrace Narrated by al-Tabaraani in al-Awsat, and its men are the men of saheeh, as stated by al-Mundhiri (3/270), and al-Bayhaqi, 8/36

Al-Bayhaqi (7/100) narrated with a saheeh isnaad from al-Sha'bi that when the companions of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) met, they would shake hands, and when they came from a journey they would embrace one another.

Al-Bukhari narrated in al-Adab al-Mufrad (970), and Ahmad narrated (3/495) that Jaabir ibn 'Abd-Allah said: I heard that a man knew a hadith and had heard it from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). I bought a camel, loaded my luggage onto it, and traveled for a month until I came to Syria, where I found 'Abd-Allah ibn Unays. I said to the doorkeeper: Tell him: Jaabir is at the door. He said: Ibn 'Abd-Allah? I said: Yes. He came out tripping on his garment and he embraced me and I embraced him… Its isnaad is hasan as stated by al-Haafiz, 1/195. al-Bukhari narrated it among the mu'aalaq reports.

So it may be said that embracing in the case of a journey is exempted from the prohibition, because the Sahaabah did that. End quote.

And Allah knows best.