

Rights Of The Muslims

From The Book: Mukhtaar Lilhadeeth Fi Shahru Ramadaan
Which Is A Collection Of The Sayings Of Various Scholars
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Know, my dear respected brothers and sisters, that your Muslim brother or sister has rights over you these rights are paramount for you to establish. These rights all praise to Allah are easy for those whom Allah makes it easy for.

Abu Hurairah narrated from the Prophet (s): "the rights Muslims have over each other are six" it was then said to the messenger (s) what are they, he said: "if you meet him give him *salam*, if he invites you accept it, if he seeks advice from you then give it, if he sneezes and praises Allah then asks Allah to have mercy upon him, if he is sick visit him and if he dies then follow his funeral procession." (Muslim)

These are the rights each Muslim has. The one who fulfils them is better than the one who does not fulfill them. Likewise those who fulfill some are better than those who do none. Indeed there is much good that stems from giving all the Muslims their rights, and verily Allah will give a great reward for those who establish the rights of the Muslims. Furthermore, leaving them off is no trivial matter as many may think. The effects of abandoning the rights of the Muslims will lead to disunity, hatred, and discourse to spread in the community.

Let us look into the *Hadith* of Abu Hurairah in detail and see its explanation:

1st right - "If you meet him give him *salam*"

Salam is the greeting of the Muslims, and the complete *salam* is "*assalamu alaykum wa rahmatu al;ahi wa barakatahu*" it is a dua of peace, mercy and blessings for the Muslim peace and mercy are form the names and attributes of Allah most high. It is a right your Muslim brother has over you that you make this *dua* for him when you meet him.

This greeting should be said to those whom you know and those whom you know not, the young and the old, the rich and the poor, the noble and despised. It displays the humbleness a Muslim must have, preventing him from becoming arrogant or proud over his Muslim brothers. So whoever starts with the *salam* first has freed himself from arrogance and he is most rewarded out of the two.

Spreading *salam* is from love, and brotherhood amongst the Muslims something which is a prerequisite of *Iman* which will enter a Muslim into paradise, and save him from the fire. Just as the messenger (s) said: **"you will not enter paradise until you believe, and you will not believe until you love one another, shall I not guide you to something which if you were to do it you would love one another – spread *salam* amongst yourselves."** (Muslim)

So let us all start with *salam* and not wait for the other person to start, then we can go into any speech we want, even if it be speaking by phone, or email, or text etc. It's not appropriate for a Muslim to use the greetings of the disbelievers like 'hello, hi, how you doing, etc.

The Muslim who is given *salam* to, must return a better greeting or similar but not less. Allah said in the Quran :

< if you are greeted then return an even better greeting or return the same>¹

2nd –right “If he invites you then answer his invitation”

Meaning; if he invites you for a meal or drink, then answer the call of your brother who has chosen you specifically to come to him. It is not permissible to not respond unless you have a *shariah* reason to do so. As the messenger (s) said: **“whoever invites you then answer them”** (Abu Dawood, Nisai)

3rd Right - “if he seeks your advice then advise him”

So if your brother wishes to consult you in a matter whether you know about it or not then advise him how you would like to be advised. If the matter is good and beneficial in all cases then encourage him in it. And if it is harmful then warn him of the dangers, if it has both then explain to him the benefits and the harms help him weight them up. Even if he were to seek advice from you about marriage, or a broken down relationship then advise him in the best way, advise him how you would deal with the matter yourself if you were in such a situation.

I warn you of cheating the Muslims, in any matter, for indeed whoever cheats the Muslims is not from them. And he has failed in fulfilling the rights of giving sincere advice. Giving sincere advice is a permanent obligation in every situation. Remember the hadeeth **“the religion is sincere advise”** the Prophet said that three times (Muslim).

4th Right - “if he sneezes and praises Allah then say may Allah have mercy upon you”

This is because sneezing is from the great blessing of Allah; it removes all the harmful particles from the body of the human. Allah has ordered us to thank him for this by saying *alhamdulillah*. It has also been legislated for his Muslim brother to say *'yarhamakullah'* which means may Allah have mercy on you. Then he must reply *'yahdekum allahu was slah baalakum'* which means may Allah guide you and fix your affairs' as is narrated in the *hadeeth* found in Bukhari.

So whoever does not praise Allah when he sneezes then he does not have the right of the *dua* 'may Allah have mercy on you'. He should not blame anyone but himself; he lost two blessings, the blessing of reward if he had praised Allah after sneezing, and the *dua* of his brother for him.

5th – right -“If he becomes sick then visit him”

So this is also a right your brother has over you, if you know he is sick then you should visit him, more so if he is a relative of yours or a neighbor, or close colleague, the rights are stronger in such cases.

This visit is from the best and highly rewarded good deed one can do. Whoever visits his sick brother will remain in the mercy of Allah as long as he sits with him and makes him happy. Whoever visits his brother in the day angels will make *dua* for him all day until the night, and whoever visits his brother in the evening angels make *dua* for him all night, until the morning as is found in the *hadeeth* in Abu Dawood and Tirmidhi.

¹ Soora nisa v86

Whoever visits a sick person should give him good tidings of pardon, forgiveness and make *dua* for him to be cured. He should say to him '*labass tahoorn in sha allah*' which means 'this is a purification if Allah wills' (Bukhari). He should remind him to repent, turn to Allah, increase in making *dua* and seeking forgiveness and give him good advise. He should not stay with him for long period, just enough to visit him unless of course the sick person requests him to remain longer.

6th right- 'Following his funeral procession if he dies'

If a person follows the *janaza* until the deceased is prayed over he receives reward the size of mount *uhud* if he follows the procession until the deceased is buried he receives reward the size of two mount *uhud*. Partaking in the funeral of the diseased is a right of Allah and the deceased and the living relatives

Brothers, what is an obligation on any intelligent person is to first be sure of fulfilling ones own rights then his brothers rights.

About death, it is so strange, one who knows the reality of this *dunya* and is then deceived by it. Can we not measure and contemplate over the past years and then use that as an example of what will happen in the coming years. When we are invited to repent, are we going to say yes we will do it, we will do it! When we stand up to worship are we going to look for shortcuts! How many lies did we say to beautify our *dunya*! We enter the *masajid* whilst our hearts are still in the place we left!

<Verily the death which you flee from will indeed meet you, then you will be returned to the knower of the unseen and seen and he will inform you of all you use to do>

Oaths

Further rights your brother Muslims have over you are that you give him what he wants if you have the ability when he asks you by swearing the name of Allah for it, so that he does not have to recompense for it by fasting three days continuously.

Protection

And he has rights that you protect his back when he is not present and that you love for him what you love for yourself as the messenger (s) said: "**none of you truly believe until you love for your brother what you loved for yourself.**" (Bukhari, Muslim)

Dealing with him

And he has rights that you deal with him with the best manners and character, so do not harm him in anyway and be kind and gentle with him have mercy upon him and respect him, and deal with him how you would like to be dealt with. Aid him and help him if he needs help. Allah messenger (s) said: "**verily allah is in the aid of his slave as long as his slave is in the aid of his brother.**" (Muslim). Do not cheat him, do not deceive him, do not envy him. Keep your promises, be gentle, and overlook his faults. Leave off backbiting and slander. Be patient with the harms from different members of your community, forbear their accusations, and ill treatment.

Oh brothers these are just some of the things required form you and if you can uphold all these it shows you are a strong Muslim with the required Islamic character. It shows you are a concerned Muslim that you care for your brother Muslim and the community as a whole.

Brothers how many of our days will go by thinking of the *dunya*, business, pleasures and sports. We don't think about the grave our final abode; we go to sleep dreaming of the *dunya* and awake thinking of it. Where are we from those who could not let an hour go by except they cried out of fear of Allah and the punishment? We are always concerned about not getting our rights from this person and that person whilst we give little thought or concern to the rights of others.

Neighbors

Brothers and sisters Islam has given the neighbor special rights. Allah said in the Quran;

< Worship Allah and do not associate partners with him be kind to the parents, and relatives, and orphans, and the *miskeen* and the relative and your related neighbors, and you're near neighbors ...>²

The near neighbor – the only thing that has bonded you to him is his location, he lives near you. So whoever lives near you he has rights as a neighbor. That is even if there is no religious bond or family bond. This is why all the *ahadeeth* that mention the neighbor are general and do not specifically mention religion or family tie.

The prophet (s) said:

"Jiraeel continued to remind me about the rights of the neighbors so much that I thought he would be given rights of inheritance"

(Bukhari/Muslim).

He (s) also said: **"whoever truly believes in Allah and the last day then let him be good to his neighbor and whoever truly believes in Allah let him be kind to his guests and whoever truly believes in Allah and the last day then let him speak good or remain silent."** (Bukhari/Muslim)

Also his (s) saying **"whoever truly believes in Allah and the last day then let him not harm his neighbor"** (Bukhari)

Some of the rights the neighbors have are:

1. You should not harm him in speech or action. Whoever does so will fall under the fierce warning from Allah messenger **"by Allah he does not believe, by Allah he does not believe, by Allah he does not believe" they said who oh messenger of Allah he said "the one whose neighbor is not safe from his evil"** (Bukhari/Muslim)

2. You should help him if he seeks your help. Visit him if he is sick, congratulate him if he is happy over something, and give him support if he is inflicted with difficulty. Speak kindly to him and his children, guide him in his affairs, cover up his mistakes, do not look into his home and respect his privacy, do not block his right of way do not put dirt in his perimeter. All this is from being good to your neighbor as Allah said:

< and the related neighbor and the close by neighbor...>³

² Soora nisaa v36

³ Soora nisa v36

3. You should be generous and good to him by offering him your food as the messenger (s) said: "**oh Abu Dar if you cook food then increase the soup by adding water and offer it to your neighbor**" (Bukhari)

4. You should respect him honor him allow him to place a sign on the wall if you share it. As the prophet (s) said "**let none of you prohibit your neighbor from placing a piece of wood on his wall**" (Bukhari/Muslim).

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