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Rights and duties in islam

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

All praise is due to Allah, we praise Him, we implore His help and His forgiveness. It is from Allah that we are seeking protection from the evil of our soul and from our evil deeds. Whomever God guides, noone can lead him astray, and whomever God sends astray, has no one to guide him. Allah, the One with no partner, and that Muhammad is His Messenger and His Prophet; peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, his family, his Companions, and all his followers.

This being said: We can cite that among the qualities of Allah's Legislation, it preserves justice and gives everyone his right, without any excess or failure. Allah ordained justice, mercy and generosity towards relatives and He also sent the prophets, revealed the Books and carried out everything in this world and in the hereafter with justice.

Justice consists in giving to each individual the right and in placing him on the rank he deserves, which can only be obtained by knowing everyone's rights. That is why we chose to speak about the essential of these rights so that the servant can then put into practice what he will have learnt within the limits of his capabilities.

These rights can be resumed as:

1. The rights of Allah
2. The rights of the Prophet(ﷺ)
3. The rights of the parents
4. The rights of the children
5. The rights of relatives
6. The rights of spouses
7. The rights of the governors and the governed
8. The rights of the neighbours
9. The rights of Muslims in general
10. The rights of non-muslims.

These are the rights we briefly want to talk about in this work.

1

The rights of Allah

This right is the greatest, the most important and the one that is to be respected, because it is the right of Allah, the Creator, the Immense, the Ruler, the One Who manages everything. It is the right of the Sovereign, the True, the Apparent, the Ever-Living, the Ever-Subsisting, the Holder of the heavens and the earth, the One Who created everything and gave it its own proportions with His sacred Wisdom. It is the right of the One Who created you from nothing when your existence was not even mentioned; it is the right of Allah, Who gave you sustenance while you were in your mother's womb under three [superposed layers of] darkness and no one could give you food nor the essential elements to your development and to keep you alive. For you, He made flow (the milk) from the breast (that breastfeed you), He has guided you to the two paths

(of good and evil), He granted you parents to look after you, He gave you and prepared you: He gave you blessings, reason, understanding, and He prepared you to accept it and to take advantage of it.

وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُمْ مِّنْ بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئاً وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئَدَةَ لِعَلْكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

{And Allah brought you forth from the wombs of your mothers knowing nothing, and gave you hearing and sight and hearts that haply you might give thanks.} (Soorah an-Nahl, 17:78.)

If He prevented you from His blessings, even for a blink of eye, you would perish; if He deprived you of His Mercy, you would not be able to live.

If that is the blessing and the mercy of Allah unto you, then His right on you is the greatest of all rights, because it is the right in compensation for having created you, prepared and given you everything He has granted you. [Nevertheless,] He wants from you neither subsistence nor food.

لَا نَسْأَلُكَ رِزْقًا نَّحْنُ نُنْزِلُكَ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْتَّقِوِيِّ

{We ask not of you a provision: We provide for you. And the sequel is for righteousness.} (Soorah *Tâ-Hâ*, 20 :132)

He wants from you only one thing, from which you will benefit: He wants you to worship Him alone, with no partner.

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّةَ وَالْإِنْسَانَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ رِزْقٍ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ يُطْعِمُونِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمُتَّيْمِ

{I created the jinn and humankind only that they might worship Me. I seek no livelihood from them, nor do I ask that they should feed Me. Lo! Allah! He it is that gives livelihood, the Lord of unbreakable might.} (Soorah *adh-Dhâriyât*, 51 :56-58)

He wants you to be His servant in every sense that the lordship includes, in the same way that He is a Lord in the full sense of the Lordship. He wants you to be a submitted servant, humble, obedient to

His orders, deviating from His prohibitions, believing in all that He informed you, because you see on yourself His multiple and successive blessings... Are you then not ashamed to exchange those blessings against ungratefulness ? If someone granted you his blessings, you would feel ashamed to disobey him and to openly contradict him ; then what about your Lord Who grants you all the bessings in your possession, and Who preserves you from all evil by His Mercy?

وَمَا يُكُمْ مِنْ نِعْمَةٍ فِيْنَ اللَّهُ ثُمَّ إِذَا مَسْكُمُ الْضُّرُّ فَإِلَيْهِ تَجَارُونَ

{And whatever of comfort you enjoy, it is from Allah. Then, when misfortune reaches you, unto Him you cry for help.} (Soorah an-Nahl, 17 :53)

And this right Allah has imposed for Himself is simple and easy to whom Allah facilitates, because Allah has put in it no difficulty, discomfort, nor pain. Allah says:

وَجَاهَدُوا فِيِ اللَّهِ حَقَّ جَهَادِهِ هُوَ اجْبَاتُكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي
الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ مَّلَةَ أَبِيكُمْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ هُوَ سَمَّاَكُمُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مِنْ
قَبْلُ وَفِيِ هَذَا لِيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَىِ
النَّاسِ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَتُوا الزَّكَةَ وَأَعْصِمُوا بِاللَّهِ هُوَ مَوْلَاكُمْ فَنِعْمَ الْمَوْلَىٰ وَنَعْمَ
الْتَّصِيرُ

{And strive for Allah with the endeavor which is His right. He has chosen you and has not laid upon you in religion any hardship; the faith of your father Abraham (is yours). He has named you Muslims of old time and in this (Scripture), that the messenger may be a witness against you, and that you may be witnesses against mankind. So establish worship, pay the poor due, and hold fast to Allah. He is your Protecting Friend. A blessed Patron and a blessed Helper!} (Soorah al-Hajj, 22 :78)

This is exemplary belief, faith in the truth and a pious deed that bears fruit. It is belief based on love

and veneration, and whose fruits are sincerity (the cult exclusivity) and perseverance.

- Five daily and night prayers by which Allah forgives all sins, raises in ranks, purifies the hearts and works out situations, and that the servant performs to the best of his capabilities.

فَاقْتُلُوا اللَّهَ مَا مَسْتَطِعُمْ

{So keep your duty to Allah as best you can.} (Soorah at-Taghâbûn, 64:16)

And the Prophet (ﷺ) told ‘Imrân ibn Husayn (رضي الله عنه) when the latter was sick, ‘*Pray standing; if you cannot, then sitting; and if you cannot, then lying on your side*’¹.

- Alms (Zakat) which represents a small portion of your belongings and that you give for the needs of Muslims, poor people, beggars, travelers, to

¹ Reported by Al-Bukhârî, *Book of the shortening of prayer*, chapter ‘The one who cannot pray sitting prays lying on his side.’

indebted persons and others among those who are entitled to this charity.

- Fasting for one month in the year, that the sick person or the traveler can do later, and for which the one who is permanently unable nourishes a poor person per day [of fasting missed].
- The pilgrimage to the Sacred House [Mecca] once in his existence for the one who has the possibility to perform it.

These are the bases of the rights of Allah, and all other rights become mandatory only in special circumstances, such as Jihad in the path of Allah, or for a reason justifying it, such as helping the oppressed.

Look, O brother, this right whose practice is easy but whose reward is immense.

If you respect it, you will succeed in this world and in the hereafter, you will be saved from Hell and enter Paradise.

فَمَنْ زُحِّجَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعٌ
الغرور

{Whosoever is removed from the Fire and is made to enter Paradise, he indeed is triumphant. The life of this world is but comfort of illusion.}
(*Soorah al-^cImrân, 3 :185*)

2

The rights of Allah's Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)

This right is the most important among the rights of creatures, and no one among the creatures has a greater right than that of the Messenger of Allah (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). Allah says,

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ شَاهِدًا وَمُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا لِتُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَتَعْزِزُوهُ وَتُوقِرُوهُ وَتَسْبِحُوهُ بُكْرًا وَأَصِيلًا

{Lo! We have sent you (O Muhammad) as a witness and a bearer of good tidings and a warner, that you (mankind) may believe in Allah and His Messenger, and may honor Him, and may revere Him, and may glorify Him at early dawn and at the close of day.} (Soorah al-Fath, 48 :8-9)

That is why one must love the Prophet (ﷺ) more than anyone else, more than oneself, one's own child and one's father. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, '*None of you will have faith till he loves me more than his father, his own child and the whole mankind.*'²

Among the rights of the Prophet (ﷺ), we must honor, respect and love him in a way that belongs to him, without any exaggeration nor neglect.

Honoring him during his lifetime is to honour his Sunnah and his noble person, and after his death, to honor his Sunnah and his right legislation. The one who observes the way in which the Companions (رضي الله عنه) respected the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) will know how these noble beings have performed their duty towards the Messenger of Allah.

² Reported by Al-Bukhârî, *Book of faith*, chapter 'The love for the Prophet (s) is part of the faith.' (15); Muslim, *Book of faith*, chapter 'The duty to love Allah's Messenger (s) more than his own family, his child and the whole of mankind.'

Urwah bin Masûdsaid to the people of Quraysh when they sent him to the Prophet (ﷺ) to negotiate the Pact of Al-Hudaybiyyah: ‘I have met kings such as Caesar, Chosroes and the Negus, but I did not see a king who is respected by his Companions as the Companions of Muhammad respect him (ﷺ). By Allah, if he never spat phlegm but one of his Companions would take it by hand and rubs his face and skin with it. When he commands them, they quickly respond to his command. When he performs ablution, they are about to kill one another to use the water of his ablution. When they speak before him, they lower their voices and never stare at him out of reverence.’

This is how they loved him, and Allah created him with good behavior, a smooth and easy character, and if he had been rude with a hard heart, they would have run away from him.

Among the rights of the Prophet (ﷺ) is to believe in what he told us about the past and the future, obey his orders, move away from what he forbade and blamed, believe that his guidance and legislation are

the most perfect, and that no law or system, wherever it comes from, should be preferred to it:

فَلَا وَرِبَّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مَمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

{But nay, by your lord, they will not believe (in truth) until they make you judge of what is in dispute between them and find within themselves no dislike of that which you decidest, and submit with full submission.} (Soorah an-Nisâ, 4 :65)

قُلْ إِنَّكُمْ تَحْبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحِبِّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ ذَنْبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

{Say, (O Muhammad, to mankind) : If you love Allah, follow me; Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.} (Soorah *âl-`Imrân*, 3 :31)

Among the rights of the Prophet (ﷺ), there is defending his Legislation and his guidance

according to one's capabilities and with adequate weapons.

If the enemy attacks him with (false) evidence with ambiguities, one must defend him with science, refuting these (false) evidence and ambiguities and showing their falsehood. And if he attacks him with weapons, he responds in the same way.

No believer can remain silent while hearing someone against the Law of the Prophet (ﷺ) or his noble person, while he has the means to defend them.

3

The rights of the parents

Nobody would deny the merits of parents towards their children. Parents are the cause of the existence of the child and they have a great right on him. They raised him when he was small; they got tired for his well-being, and they kept awake so he could sleep. Your mother carried you in her womb and you have lived on her food and her health, usually for nine months, as Allah has shown in His word,

حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهُنَّا عَلَىٰ وَهُنْ

{His mother bore him in weakness upon weakness} (Soorah Luqmân, 31 :14)

Then she looked after you and breastfed you for two years despite her tiredness, the trouble and difficulty.

The father also deploys all his efforts to maintain you and feed you, from childhood till the time when you can look after yourself. He increases his efforts to educate and guide you while you can do neither good nor evil for yourself, and that is why Allah ordered the child to be beneficial and to thank his parents. Allah says:

وَوَصَّيْنَا إِلَّا إِنْسَانٌ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهُنَّا عَلَىٰ وَهُنْ وَفَصَالُهُ
فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنِ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ

{And We have enjoined upon man concerning his parents. His mother bore him in weakness upon weakness, and his weaning is in two years. Give thanks unto Me and unto your parents. Unto Me is the journeying.} (Soorah Luqmân, 31 :14)

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِنَّا هُوَ وَبِالِّا وَالِّدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا إِمَّا يُلْفَنُ عِنْدَكَ
الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَّاهُمَا فَلَا تُقْلِنْهُمَا أَفْ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا

وَأَخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الْذَّلِيلَ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ إِرْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَنِي
صَغِيرًا

{Your Lord has decreed, that you worship none save Him, and (that you show) kindness to parents. If one of them or both of them to attain old age with you, say not 'Fie' unto them nor repulse them, but speak unto them a gracious word. And lower unto them the wing of submission through mercy, and say: My Lord! Have mercy on them both as they did care for me when I was little.} (Soorah al-Isrâ, 17 :23-24)

The right of your parents upon you is that you should obey them by being beneficent unto them in your words and your actions, by giving them from your belongings and by having kind gestures with them.

You have to obey their orders in what is not a disobedience to Allah and in what does not harm you; you must speak to them kindly. You must be close to them, serve them as appropriate. You should

not get tired of them when they get older, sick or are weakened, and this should not weigh you as you will soon be like them: you will be parent as they have been, you will get old with your children, if this is your fate, as they have aged with you, and you will need their goodness as they had needed yours.

If you were obedient to them, rejoice in the anticipation of a huge reward and in connection with your actions: he who is kind to his parents, his children will be good to him, and the one who breaks the relationship with his parents, his children will do the same to him. Everyone reaps what he has sewn, and as you have done, you will get it.

Allah granted a high rank to the right of parents and placed it after His right, which includes His own right and the right of the Prophet (ﷺ). Allah says,

وَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئاً وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا

{And serve Allah. Ascribe no thing as partner unto Him. (Show) kindness unto parents ...} (Soorah an-Nisâ, 4 :36)

أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِيَ وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ

{Give thanks unto Me and unto thy parents. Unto Me is the journeying.} (Soorah Luqmân, 31 :14)

The Prophet (ﷺ) gave priority to obeying your parents before doing Jihad on the path of Allah, as it is reported in the hadith from Ibn Mas'ûd (رضي الله عنه), who said, '*O Messenger of Allah, which deed is the best for Allah ?* He replied, '*The Prayer at its appointed hour.*' I asked, '*Then what?*' He replied, '*Kindness to the parents.*' I asked, '*Then what?*' He replied, '*Jihad on the path of Allah*'.³

This shows the importance of the right of parents, although many people have shifted to disobedience and breaking it.

Thus, some do not recognize any right to their father nor their mother, they might even despise

³ Reported by Al-Bukhârî, *Book on the times for prayers*, chapter 'The merit of the prayer at its appointed hour' (527); Muslim, *Book of faith*, chapter 'Faith in Allah is the best of all deeds' (85).

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them, disdain them and look down onto them; those ones will be treated in the same way as a return for what they did in this world and in the next.

4

The rights of the children

When we talk about 'children', we mean both boys and girls. Their rights are numerous and we may cite amongst them the upbringing, which is to develop in them the religion and good behaviour until they attach great importance to it.

Allah says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوْا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيْكُمْ نَارًا وَقُوْدُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ

{O you who believe! Ward off from yourselves and your families a Fire whereof the fuel is men and stones.} (Soorah at-Tahrîm, 66 :6)

And the Prophet (ﷺ) said, 'Everyone of you is a shepherd and he will be questioned for his flock; the

*man is a shepherd in his family and he will be questioned for his flock*⁴.

Children are therefore a deposit entrusted to the parents and they will have to answer for them on the Day of Resurrection. To educate them in religion and good behaviour therefore relieves the responsibility of parents towards this flock. Children become straight people and are then rejoicing the eyes of their parents in this world and in the next one. Allah says :

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَاتَّبَعُوهُمْ ذُرِّيَّهُمْ يَأْيَانٌ إِنَّهُمْ بِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّهُمْ وَمَا أَنْتَ بِهِمْ
مِّنْ عَمَلٍ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ كُلُّ امْرٍ يُبَيَّنُ بِمَا كَسَبَ رَهِينٌ

{And they who believe and whose seed follow them in faith, We cause their seed to join them (there), and We deprive them of naught of their (life's) work. Every man is a pledge for that which he hath earned.} (Soorah at-Tûr, 52 :21)

⁴ Reported by Al-Bukhârî, Book on the Friday prayer, chapter 'The Friday prayer in towns and villages' (893); Muslim, Book on the Commandment, chapter 'The merit of the just Imam and the punishment of the unjust' (1827).

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, ‘*When a servant dies, his deeds come to an end except for three things : an ongoing charity, a knowledge which is beneficial or a virtuous descendant who prays[and invoke Allah] for him.*’⁵

This is the result of the good education of the child: if he received a pious education, he will be beneficial to his parents, even after their death.

Many parents have failed with this right, they have neglected their children and have forgotten them, as if they had no responsibility unto them. They do not ask where they are going out or when they will return; they do not question them on their friends and their companions; they do not guide them towards good and do not forbid them no harm.

And what is amazing is to see all precautions to preserve their assets, to prosper; they work late in order to make them fruitful, while most of the time, they make them prosper on behalf of others.

⁵ Reported by Muslim, Book of the Testament, chapter ‘What the servant gets as a reward after his death.’ (1631).

They do not take their children into account while preserving the mis more important and is more useful in this world and in the hereafter. In the same way that it is mandatory to the father to feed the body of his child with food and drink and to clothe him, it is mandatory to feed his heart with science and faith and to clothe his soul with the habit of piety, which is better (than this world's goods).

Among the rights of the child is the fact that te father spends for them according to what is suitable, without waste nor greed, because it is a right that his children have on him and a gratitude to Allah for what He granted him as goods.

How could he then forbid these goods and be stingy with them during his lifetime, only to keep these goods so that they will take them by force after his death? And if he is stingy with them as regards to compulsory expenditure, they can take from his goods what will be sufficient for them to live with, as considered the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in the case of Hind bint Utbah (May Allah be pleased with her).

Among the rights of the children, there is the fact to favour one on the other with presents and gifts; he must not give one thing to some of his children without giving it to others, because this is an injustice, and Allah does not like wrong-doers.

This leads to scare away those who have been deprived and to bring the enmity between them and their father. Some people prefer one of their children for his obedience and his loving relationship with his parents, and his father gives him gifts because of his obedience, but it is not a sufficient reason to specifically give it to him (and not others).

It is not permissible to give to the one who stands by his obedience, as his reward is with Allah. And to reward the obedient child will lead him to be imbued with himself and suggest he has a particular merit, and it will make the other children to flee and persist in their breakup. In addition, we do not know how the situation may evolve, the obedient child may become disobedient and vice versa, because the hearts are in the hand of Allah, and He turns them as He wills.

Al-Bukhârî and Muslim report from An-Numân ibn Bashir (رضي الله عنه) that his father Bashir ibn Sa‘d, offered him a servant. He informed the Prophet of this and he said, ‘*Did you do this for all your children?*’ He replied, ‘No.’ He said, ‘*Take him back.*’⁶ And in another version, ‘*Fear Allah and be fair with your children.*’⁷ And in another version, ‘*Call someone else to witness, because I do not testify transgression.*’⁸

The Messenger of Allah(ﷺ) thus named the fact to focus on some of their children more than others a transgression, and transgression is an injustice and this is prohibited.

⁶ Reported by Al-Bukhârî, *Book of gifts*, chapter ‘The present of the father’ (2586); Muslim, *Book of gifts*, chapter ‘The condemnation of giving privilege to some children compared with others’ (9/1623).

⁷ Reported by Al-Bukhârî, *Book of gifts*, chapter ‘To give testimony when giving a present’ (2586); Muslim, *same chapter as before* (13/1623).

⁸ Reported by Al-Bukhârî, *Book of testimony*, chapter ‘One must not testify transgression’ (2650); Muslim, *same chapter as before* (14/1623).

But there is no harm to give to one child what the other does not need, as supplying him with office materials, a cure or what he needs to get married, because this is motivated by the need, this is considered a (compulsory) expenditure.

And if the father carries out his obligations towards his children in terms of education and expenses, it is more likely that the child will be obedient to his father and will give him his rights. But if the father neglects his obligations, he deserves to be punished, to see his child deny him his right and to be tested by the disobedience as a reward for his actions, because as you have done to others, you will get back.

5

The rights of the relatives

Relatives who are close to you, such as your brother, your paternal uncle, your maternal uncle and their children, and all those who have a (family) bond with you, have a right over you according to their kinship. Allah says,

وَآتِ ذَا الْقُرْبَى حَقَّهُ

{Give the kinsman his due...} (*Soorah Al-Isrâ'*, 127 :26)

وَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئاً وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَى

{And serve Allah. Ascribe no thing as partner unto Him. (Show) kindness unto parents...} (*Soorah An-Nisâ*, 4 :36)

Each close relative must maintain the ties binding him to others, by honoring him, helping him physically and materially, depending on the degree of kinship and on the need: that is asked by the Legislation, the reason and the sound nature.

The (revealed) Texts encouraging to maintain the ties of kinship are very numerous. In two collections of authentic Hadith (*Sâheeh Al-Bukhâri* and *Muslim*), it is reported by Abû Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that the Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) said, ‘Allah created the creations, and when He finished, the bonds of kinship raised up and said, ‘It is the place (the Paradise) of those who seek refuge with You against the breaking of the bonds (of kinship).’ He said, ‘Yes, would you like that I maintain the bonds with the one who maintains it with You and that I break with the one who broke with You?’ The bonds of kinship said, ‘Indeed!’ Allah said, ‘Then I grant it to you.’ Then the Messenger of Allah (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) said, ‘Read Allah’s word’,

فَهَلْ عَسِيْمَ إِنْ تَوْكِيْمَ أَنْ تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَتَقْطَعُوا أَرْحَامَكُمْ
أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَعَنْهُمُ اللَّهُ فَاصْنَعُوهُمْ وَأَعْمَلْ أَبْصَارَهُمْ

{Would ye then, if you were given the command, work corruption in the land and sever your ties of kinship? Such are they whom Allah curses so that he deafens them and makes blind their eyes.} (Soorah Muhammad, 47 :22-23)⁹.

And the Prophet (ﷺ) also said, ‘Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him maintain the bonds of kinship’¹⁰.

Many people overlook this right and ignore it; some maintain no relationship with their parents by helping them with their belongings, giving them respect, nor by having a good behavior. The days and months pass without them seeing their loved ones, they do not visit them, do not show affection towards them by offering them a gift or giving them

⁹ Reported by Al-Bukhârî, *Book of good behaviors*, chapter ‘The one who maintains his bonds of kinship, Allah will maintain His bond with him’ (2586); Muslim, *Book of goodness and the bonds of kinship*, chapter ‘Maintaining the bonds of kinship and forbidding to break them’ (9/1623).

¹⁰ Reported by Al-Bukhârî, *Book of the good behavior*, chapter ‘To receive his guest with good manners and to be at his service’ (6138).

something they need. On the contrary, they can cause them harm with their words or acts or both together. They maintain bonds with people outside the family and neglect their families.

Others only maintain bonds with their relatives if the latter maintain this bond themselves, and those do not really maintain the ties of kinship: they only repay good with good and this is not specific to the relatives: this kind of relationship can affect anyone outside the family and the relatives.

The one who really keeps the ties of kinship is the one who does it for Allah, without looking if relatives also maintain these bonds or not, as it is narrated in Saheeh Al-Bukhârî, from ^cAbdullah ibn ^cAmr ibn al-‘Âs (رضي الله عنهما), who reported that the Prophet said (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), ‘*The one who maintains the ties of kinship is not the one who reciprocates. The one who maintains the ties of kinship is the one who, when his relatives cut him off, maintains the ties of kinship*’¹¹.

¹¹ Reported by Al-Bukhârî, *Book of the good behavior*, chapter ‘The one who maintains the bonds of kinship does not reciprocate’ (5991).

A man said to the Prophet (ﷺ), 'I have relatives with whom I try to keep the ties of relationship but they sever relations with me; and whom I treat kindly but they treat me badly, I am gentle with them but they are rough to me.' He (ﷺ) replied, '*If you are as you say, it is as if you are feeding them hot ashes, and you will be with a supporter against them from Allah as long as you continue to do so*',¹².

It would have sufficed to uphold the ties of kinship, to know that Allah maintains His bond with the one who preserve them, that He grants him mercy, makes things easier for him and soothes his difficulties.

But beyond this, to uphold the ties of kinship gets families closer, provides affection, sympathy, mutual assistance in difficulties, the joy and rejoicing as it is well known.

¹² Reported by Al-Bukhârî, *Book of the goodness, the bond of kinship and the good behavior*, chapter 'Maintaining bonds of kinship and forbidding to break them' (2558).

And all these blessings are reversed when appears the breakdown and when people are moving away from each other.

6

The rights of the spouses

The marriage has important implications and effects, it is a link between the husband and wife which obliges each of them to respect the rights of others: physical, social and material rights.

Spouses must coexist in the good and fulfill their duty with indulgence and simplicity, and without forcing each other nor delaying the execution. Allah says,

وَاعْشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

{But consort with them in kindness} (Soorah an-Nisâ', 4 :19)

وَلْئَنَّ مِثْلَ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَلَلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ

{And they (women) have rights similar to those (of men) over them in kindness, and men are a degree above them} (Soorah al-Baqarah, 2 :288)

Thus, the wife must give his right to her husband, and if the spouses respect their rights one towards the other, their life will be happy and understanding will continue between them. And if it is the opposite, then opposition and divergence will appear, and their life will be miserable.

The revealed Texts recommending good behavior towards women and taking into account their nature are very numerous; they also show that perfection in this area is impossible. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, ‘*Act kindly towards woman, for they were created from a rib and the most crooked part of a rib is its top. If you attempt to straighten it you will break it, and if you leave it alone it will remain crooked; so act kindly toward women.*’¹³ And in another version,

¹³ Reported by Al-Bukhârî, *Book of the Stories of the Prophets*, chapter ‘The behavior of Adam and his progeny’ (3331); Muslim, *Book of breastfeeding*, chapter ‘The good behavior towards women’ (60/1468).

‘The woman is like a rib; if you try to straighten her, she will break. So if you want to get benefit from her, do so while she still has some crookedness and breaking it is divorce.’¹⁴

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, ‘A believer must not bear enmity against a believing woman. If he does not like an aspect of her behavior, he will like another.’¹⁵

In these hadiths, the Prophet (ﷺ) showed his community the way the husband must behave towards his wife and be happy with what he can get from her, because the nature from which it was created is not perfect; it must necessarily have some crookedness. The husband can only enjoy her if he takes her as she was created.

These hadiths also show that the husband must do share things between good sides and bad sides that can be found in his wife: if he hates an aspect of her

¹⁴ Reported by Muslim in the previous chapter (59/1468).

¹⁵ Reported by Muslim, *Book of breastfeeding*, chapter ‘Good behavior towards women’ (1469).

behavior, that he counterbalances it with an aspect of her behavior that he loves, and he must not only watch her under the eye of anger or contempt.

Many men want everything to be perfect with their wife, although it is impossible ; therefore, they stay sad and cannot find happiness with their wives, and this can lead them to divorce, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said, '*So if you want to get benefit from her, do so while she still has some crookedness and breaking it is divorce.*' The husband must be forgiving and close his eyes to everything his wife does, as long as this does not affect the religion or honour.

Among the rights of the wife on her husband is that he pays for her to mandatory expenses such as food, drink, clothing, housing and all that flows from it, according to the word of Allah,

وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكُسُوفُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

{The duty of feeding and clothing nursing mothers in a seemly manner is upon the father of the child} (Soorah al-Baqarah, 2 :233)

And the Prophet (ﷺ) said, ‘*Their rights over you are that you should feed and clothe them well.*’¹⁶ He was also questioned about the rights of the wives on her husbands and he said, ‘*That you feed her when you eat and clothe her when you clothe yourself and do not strike her face. Do not malign her and do not keep apart from her, except in the house*’¹⁷.

Among the rights of the wife on her husband is that he must be fair between her and his other wife.

If he has a second wife, he must be fair in spending, housing and everything it is possible to be fair, as favouring one of them is part of the great sins.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, ‘*Whoever has two wives and favours one of them over the other, will come on*

¹⁶ Reported by At-Tirmidhî, who authenticated it.

¹⁷ Reported by Abû Dâwûd, *Book on the marriage*, chapter ‘The right of the wife on her husband’ (2142); Ibn Mâjah, *Book on the marriage*, chapter ‘The right of the wife over her husband’ (1850). Sheikh al-Albâni said in his verification of *Mishkât ul-Masâbih* (2/972), ‘The transmission channel of this hadith is hasan.’

the Day of Resurrection with one of his sides leaning,¹⁸

And in everything else where it is not possible to be (completely) fair such as love, well-being, the man commits no sin (to lean more towards one than the other) because this happens without that him doing anything. Allah says,

وَكُنْ تَسْتَطِيْعُوا أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا بَيْنَ النِّسَاءِ وَلَا هُنْ حَرَصُوا

{You will not be able to deal equally between (your) wives, however much you wish (to do so).}

(Soorah an-Nisâ, 4 :129)

The Prophet (ﷺ) dealt equally between his wives, he said, ‘*O Allah this is my share for what I have in my power, therefore do not blame me for what is in Your power and that I do not know*’¹⁹.

¹⁸ Reported by Ahmad, and the transmitters of the Sunan in an authentic chain of transmission.

¹⁹ Reported by Abû Dâwûd, *Book on marriage*, chapter ‘Equity between wives’ (2134); At-Tirmidhî, *Book on marriage*, chapter ‘Equity between co-wives’ (1140); Ibn Mâjah, *Book on marriage*, chapter ‘Equity between spouses’ (1971).

But if he grants an additional day to one with the agreement of the one who gives her day, there is no problem, as was the case when the Prophet (ﷺ) granted to 'Â'ishah (May Allah be pleased with her) her day in addition to the day of Sawdah (May Allah be pleased with her) after she has given it to her²⁰.

Similarly, at the time of the disease which resulted in his death, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) asked, '*Where will I be tomorrow? Where will I be tomorrow?*' And his wives allowed him to go where he wanted ; he then remained with 'Â'ishah (May Allah be pleased with her) until his death²¹.

With respect to the rights of the husband on his wife, they are more important than the rights she has on him, according to the word of Allah,

وَلَئِنْ كَانَ مِثْلُ النِّسَاءِ عَلَيْهِنْ بِمَا مَعُورُوفٍ وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنْ دَرَجَةٌ

²⁰ Reported by Al-Bukhârî and Muslim.

²¹ Reported by Al-Bukhârî, *Book on marriage*, chapter 'If the husband asks the permission to his wives'; Muslim, *Book on the merits of the Companions*, chapter 'The merits of 'Â'ishah' (2443).

{And they (women) have rights similar to those (of men) over them in kindness, and men are a degree above them.} (Soorah al-Baqarah, 2 :228)

The husband has authority over his wife; he gives what is good for her, he educates and guides her, as Allah says,

الرَّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَّبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أُمُورِهِمْ

{Men are in charge of women, because Allah has men the one of them to excel the other, and because they spend of their property (for the support of women.)} (Soorah an-Nisâ, 4 :34)

Among the rights of the husband over his wife is that she obeys him in what is not a disobedience to Allah, as she must keep his secrets and his property, and the Prophet (ﷺ) said, ‘If prostration was allowed then I would ask wives to prostrate themselves in front of their husbands.’²²

²² Reported by Abû Dâwûd, *Book on marriage*, chapter ‘The right of the husband over his wife’ (2140) ; At-Tirmidhi, *Book*

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, ‘*Whenever a man calls his wife to bed and she refuses to come, the angels curse her until morning*’²³.

Among his rights on her is that she does nothing, which deprives him of full enjoyment, even if it is because of a supererogatory worship, according to the word of the Prophet (ﷺ), ‘*It is not lawful for a woman to fast while her husband is resident except with his permission and she should not admit anyone to his house except with his permission*’²⁴.

on breastfeeding, chapter ‘The right of the husband over his wife’ (1159); At-Tirmidhî said, ‘This hadith is hasan-ghârib’ and Sheikh Al-Albânî authentified this hadith in Saheeh al-Jâmi^c (5294).

²³Reported by Al-Bukhârî, *Book on marriage*, chapter ‘If the wife sleeps outside her husband’s bed’; Muslim, *Book on marriage*, chapter ‘The prohibition to refuse sexual intercourse with her husband’ (2443).

²⁴ Reported by Al-Bukhârî, *Book on marriage*, chapter ‘The wife should not admit anyone to his house except with his permission’ (5195); Muslim, *Book on marriage*, chapter ‘What the servant spends from his master’s goods’ (1026).

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) has made the satisfaction of the husband towards his wife one of the causes that will provide her entrance to paradise.

According to Umm Salamah (May Allah be pleased with her), the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, *'If a woman dies while her husband was pleased with her, she will enter Paradise'*²⁵.

²⁵ Reported by At-Tirmidhî, *Book on breastfeeding*, chapter 'The right of the husband over his wife' (1161); Ibn Mâjah, *Book on marriage*, chapter 'The right of the husband over his wife' (1854); At-Tirmidhî said, 'This hadith is hasan-Saheeh'.

The rights of the governed and the governors

The governors are those who direct the affairs of the Muslims, this governance is general as the presidency of a country, or specific, such as the presidency of an administration or a specific function. All have rights that must meet those who are under their command, just as they have rights over them.

The rights of the governed on the governors are that they must respect the responsibility entrusted to them by Allah and that He ordered them to take: to advise the governed, to move forward on the right path by which they will carry out the interests of this world and the hereafter, by following the path of believers, which is the path on which was the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), because it contains success

for them and for their governed. Therefore, they will manage to settle the governed and maintain a strong link between them, to subject them to their orders and preserve the responsibilities that they entrust them.

He who fears Allah, will be feared by others, and the one who pleases Allah, He will except him from people's property and make them satisfied with him, because hearts are in the Hand of Allah and He turns them over as He wants to.

With respect to the rights of the governor on the governed, they advise them on matters entrusted to him, they remind him when he forgets, they invoke [Allah] in his favor if he moves away from the truth, they obey him in what is not a disobedience to Allah, because it maintains the order, and instead, contradict and disobey them would spread chaos and disorder. It is for this reason that Allah ordered to obey Himself, to obey His Messenger and the governors when He says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاكُمْ آتِيْعُوا اللَّهَ وَآتِيْعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولَئِكَ الْأَمْرُ مِنْكُمْ

{O you who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority.} (Soorah an-Nisâ, 4 :59)

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, ‘*It is obligatory upon a Muslim to listen (to the ruler) and obey whether he likes it or not, except when he is ordered to do a sinful thing; in such case, there is no obligation to listen or to obey*’²⁶.

‘Abdullah ibn ‘Umar (رضي الله عنهما) said, ‘We were traveling with the Prophet and we had to stop somewhere; it was then that the announcer of the Prophet called for common prayer. We came around the Prophet and he said, ‘*No Prophet came before me without that it was a duty for him to guide the community towards the good he knew for them; and for your community, the good has been placed at the start [the first generations], and its end [generations] will be*

²⁶ Reported by Al-Bukhârî, *Book on Jihad and travel*, chapter ‘To listen and obey the Imam’ (2955); Muslim, *Book of the commandment*, chapter ‘It is obligatory upon a Muslim to listen (to the ruler) and obey whether he likes it or not, except when he is ordered to do a sinful thing’ (1839).

affected by woes and things that you will disapprove of. Temptations will come and will follow each other. The temptation will come and the believer will say, 'It is this one.' So anyone who wants to be saved from hell and enter paradise, may his death come while he believes in Allah and in the Last Day and may he behave with people as he likes to be treated. And the one who takes an oath of allegiance to an imam, and gives him the handshake and the commitment of the heart, that he obeys him if he can, and if another comes to challenge his command, hit the neck of the latter (kill him)',²⁷.

A man asked the Prophet (ﷺ), 'O Prophet of Allah, what do you ordain us to do if we are ruled by governors who ask us to fulfill our duties towards them but who refuse our rights?' The Prophet turned his back from him, and the man asked him again. The Messenger of Allah then said, '*Listen and obey.*

²⁷Reported by Muslim, *Book of the commandment*, chapter 'The obligation to respect the oath of allegiance to the Caliph, one after the other' (1844).

*They will answer for their sins and you will answer for yours*²⁸.

Among the rights of governors on the governed, there is the fact that the latter support them and help them to carry out the task entrusted to them, and that each one knows his place and his responsibility in society so that things are going as it should.

Indeed, if the governed do not help the governors in their responsibilities, things will not be performed as they should.

²⁸ Reported by Muslim, *Book of the commandment*, chapter ‘To obey the governors if they refuse to grant people their rights’ (1846).

8

The rights of the neighbours

The neighbour is he who dwells near your home and he has a great right on you. If he is a close relative (a member of your family) and that he is a Muslim, he has three rights on you: the right of the neighbourhood, the right of family ties and the right of Islam.

If he is a Muslim but he is not a close relative, he has two rights on you: the right of the neighbourhood and the right of Islam.

Similarly if he is a close relative but he is not Muslim, he has two rights on you: the right of the neighborhood and the right of family ties.

Finally, if he is not a close relative and he is not Muslim, there is the single right of the neighbourhood. Allah says,

وَبِالْأَلَّاَدِينِ إِحْسَانًا وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَى وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينِ
وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَى وَالْجَارُ الْجُنُبُ

{...(Show) kindness unto parents, and unto near kindred, and orphans, and the needy, and into the neighbor who is of kin (unto you) and the neighbor who is not of kin...} (Soorah an-Nisâ, 4 :36)

And the Prophet (ﷺ) said, ‘Jibril kept on enjoining the good treatment of neighbours to such an extent that I thought he would include neighbours as heirs’²⁹.

²⁹ Reported by Al-Bukhârî, *Book on good behavior*, chapter ‘The recommendation towards the neighbour’ (2014, 2015); Muslim, *Book of the goodness, the bond of kinship and the good behavior*, chapter ‘The recommendation towards the neighbour and the beneficence towards him’ (2624, 2625).

Among the rights of the neighbour on the neighbour is that he is beneficial to him, as much as he can, by his goods, his status and in being profitable to him.

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, ‘*The best neighbour in the sight of Allah is the one who behaves best towards his neighbours.*’³⁰ And he said, ‘*That the one who believes in Allah and in the Last Day behaves best towards his neighbours*’³¹. He also said, ‘*Whenever you prepare a broth, put plenty of*

³⁰Reported by At-Tirmidhî, *Book on goodness and the bond of kinship*, chapter ‘The right of neighbourhood’ (1944); Ahmad, 2/167 ; ^cAbdullah ibn Humayd (342) ; Al-Bukhârî in Al-Adab Al-Mufrad (115); Ibn Khuzaymah (2539). At-Tirmidhî said, ‘Hadith hasan-gharîb.’ And Shaikh Al-Albânî authentified it in Saheeh al-Jâmi^c. (3270)

³¹ Reported by Al-Bukhârî, *Book on good behavior*, chapter ‘That the one who believes in Allah and in the Last Day does not harm his neighbour’ (2014, 2015); Muslim, *Book of faith*, chapter ‘The recommendation to being good towards the neighbour and the guest and to keep silent’ (48).

*water in it, and give some of it to your neighbours*³².

To offer the neighbour gifts on occasions is part of the beneficence towards him, because this brings affection and make enmity disappear.

Among the rights of the neighbour upon his neighbour: that he does him no harm neither in words nor acts, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said, ‘*By Allah ! He is not a true believer ! By Allah ! He is not a true believer ! By Allah ! He is not a true believer !*’ The Companions said, ‘Who, O Messenger of Allah ?’ He said, ‘*The one who does not preserve his neighbour from his own harm*’³³. And in another version, ‘*The one who does not preserve his neighbour from his own harm will not enter*

³² Reported by Muslim, *Book of goodness, the bond of kinship and the good behavior*, chapter ‘The recommendation towards the neighbour and the beneficence towards him’ (2625) (142).

³³ Reported by Al-Bukhârî, *Book on the good behavior*, chapter ‘The sin of the one who does not protect his neighbour from his harm’ (6016).

*paradise*³⁴. The one who does not preserve his neighbour from his own harm is not a believer and will not enter paradise.

Nowadays, many people neglect the right of the neighbourhood and do not preserve their neighbours from their harm ; you constantly see them argue and oppose between them, infringe their rights, harm them in words and in deeds. All this is contrary to the Command of Allah and His Prophet, it leads to the division between Muslims, repel the hearts and makes disappear the sanctity (of property, person and honour) from the other one.

³⁴ Reported by Muslim, *Book of faith*, chapter ‘Forbidding to harm the neighbour’ (46).

9

The rights of Muslims in general

These rights are very numerous. Among them, we can cite what is reported from *Saheeh al-Bukhârî*. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, ‘*The rights of one Muslim over another are six. If you meet him, greet him with salaam; if he invites you, accept the invitation; if he asks for advice, give him sincere advice; if he sneezes and praises Allah, ask Allah’s mercy on you; if he falls sick, visit him; and if he dies, attend his funeral*’³⁵.

³⁵Reported by Muslim, *Book of the greeting*, chapter ‘Among the right of the Muslim over another is to greet him with salaam’ (2162) (5); Al-Bukhârî, in a close hadith where it is reported 5 instead of 6, *Book of the funerals*, chapter ‘The command to attend funerals’ (1240).

This hadith thus exposes several rights among Muslims:

First right

The greeting (*Salaam*), which is a confirmed Sunnah (*Mu'akkadah*), is a cause of union and affection among Muslims, as can be seen, and as shown in the word of the Prophet (ﷺ), ‘*By Allah! You will only enter Paradise when you believe and you will not truly believe until you love one another. Shall I advise you one thing that will make you love one another ? Spread salaam among you*’³⁶.

And the Prophet (ﷺ) always greeted first people he met, and he also greeted children when he met them.

The Sunnah is that young greet the one who is older, that the small group greets those who are more numerous, that the one who is on his mount greets the one who is walking.

³⁶ Reported by Muslim, *Book of faith*, chapter ‘Only true believers enter Paradise and to love believers is part of faith’ (46).

But if the one who is supposed to put this Sunnah into practice does not do it, that the other does so in order not to lose the greeting. If the young does not greet, the one who is older must do it; if the small group does not greet, those who are more numerous must do so in order to get the reward.

‘^cÂmmar ibn Yâsir (رضي الله عنه) said, ‘He who follows three things has completed his faith: to be fair even against oneself, to pass greeting to everyone, and to give even if one has little.’

And if starting to greet is a Sunnah, greeting is a collective obligation, which, if it is fulfilled by one, excuses others; if one greets a group and one responds, that is sufficient for others. Allah says:

وَإِذَا حُيِّسْتُم بَتْحِيَةً فَحِيُّوا بِأَحْسَنِهِ مِنْهَا أَوْ رُدُّوهَا

{When you are greeted with a greeting, greet you with a better than it or return it.} (Soorah an-Nisâ, 4 :86)

It is not sufficient to answer the greeting only by ‘Welcome’ (*Ahlan wa Sahlan*), because this is neither better nor equivalent to the ‘*Salaam*’.

If one says ‘*As-Salāmu ‘Alaykum*’ (Peace upon you), the other must answer, ‘*Wa ‘Alaykum us-Sālam*’; and if one says ‘Welcome’, the other answers ‘Welcome’, and if one adds a greeting salutation, it is even better.

Second right

If he invites you, accept the invitation, that is to say: If he invites you for dinner or else, accept his invitation.

To accept the invitation is a confirmed Sunnah (*Mu’akkadah*) because of all that it brings as reassurance for the heart of the guest, such as affection and union.

On the other hand, to accept the invitation of the wedding dinner is mandatory according to known conditions, according to the word of the Prophet (ﷺ),

‘The one who does not accept the invitation has disobeyed Allah and His Messenger’³⁷.

His word, ‘*If he invites you, accept the invitation*’, can even include the invitation to come and help him and lend him a hand. Thus you must accept his invitation. If he calls you to help him to carry one thing, put it down or something else, you have to help him according to the word of the Prophet (ﷺ), ‘*A believer to the believer is like a solid building, one part supporting the other*’³⁸.

Third right

If he asks for advice, give him sincere advice.

That is to say: if he comes to ask you advice on something, give him advice, as it is part of the

³⁷ Reported by Muslim, *Book on marriage*, chapter ‘The command to accept the invitation’ (1432) (110); The sense of this hadith is also reported by Al-Bukhârî, *Book on marriage*, chapter ‘The one who does not accept the invitation has disobeyed Allah and His Messenger’ (5177).

³⁸ Reported by Al-Bukhârî, *Book of injustices*, chapter ‘To help the oppressed’ (2446); Muslim, *Book on goodness, maintaining bonds of kinship and good behavior*, chapter ‘Mercy, feelings and help between Muslims’ (2585).

religion, as our Prophet (ﷺ) said, ‘*Religion is sincere advice and sincerity to Allah and His book, and His Messenger, and to the Muslim leaders and to all Muslims*’³⁹.

And if he does not come to ask advise and will encounter difficulties or commit a sin, you must advise him even if he does not come to see you, because this helps to remove the wrong or repel the evil from Muslims.

And if you see that he will get no harm in what he will do but you see there is more profitable for him, it is not required to tell him something. On the other hand, if he comes to seek you advice, then you must advise him.

Fourth right

³⁹ Reported by Al-Bukhârî with an incomplete chain, *Book of faith*, chapter ‘The word of the Prophet : religion is sincere advice’ (p.53, *Al-Afkâr Ad-Dawliyyah* edition); Muslim with a transmission chain up to the Prophet (s) according to Tamîm ad-Dârî, *Book on faith*, chapter ‘*Religion is sincere advice*’ (55).

If he sneezes and praises Allah [i.e., if he says, ‘*Al-Hamdulillâh*’], ask Allah’s mercy on you [then answer him, ‘*Yarhamukallâh*’] as a reward for having praised his Lord when he sneezed.

But if he sneezes and does not praise Allah, one must not ask mercy for him, as he did not praise Allah; his reward is that one does not require mercy for him.

Asking mercy for the one who sneezes, if he praises Allah, is mandatory, and he should respond by saying, ‘*Yahdikumullâhu wa yuslihu bâlakum*’ (May Allah guide you and improve your situation).

But if he sneezes several times and that is requested mercy for him three times, tell at the fourth, ‘*Âfâkallah*’ (May Allah heal you) instead of ‘*Yarhamukallâh*’.

Fifth right

If he falls sick, visit him. It is a right that the patient has on his Muslim brothers, and they have to respect it. And the more the patient is close to you:

family, friend or neighbour, the more his right of visit is strong.

This visit depends on the state of the patient and his illness: sometimes the situation calls for many to visit him, and sometimes it is the opposite. We must therefore take into account the situation.

The Sunnah for the one who visits a sick person is that he asks about his condition, that he invokes [Allah] for him, it opens the doors of relief and hope, as this is among the greatest causes of health and healing.

One must remind him about repentance without scaring him, for example, by telling him, ‘With your disease, you earn good. With diseases, Allah forgives sins and clears the misdeeds. Remain bedridden can get you a great reward because it is for you the opportunity to remind Allah, invoke Allah and implore His forgiveness.

Sixth right

If he dies, attend his funeral. It is one of the right of the Muslim over his brother, and there is a great reward in this.

It is authentically reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, ‘Whoever follows the funeral procession and offers the funeral prayer for it, will get a reward equal to one *Qirât*, and whoever attends it till burial, will get a reward equal to two *Qirât*.’ He was asked, ‘What are two *Qirât*?’ He replied, ‘Equal to two huge mountains’⁴⁰.

Seventh right

Among the rights of the Muslim over the Muslim, is the fact that **he must preserve him from any harm**, as harming Muslims is a great sin. Allah says,

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤذُنُونَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ بِغَيْرِ مَا أَكْسَبُوا فَقَدْ احْتَمَلُوا
بِهَنَاءً وَإِثْمًا مُّبِينًا

⁴⁰ Reported by Al-Bukhârî, *Book of funeral*, chapter ‘The one who waits till the burial’ (1325); Muslim, *Book of funeral*, chapter ‘The merit of praying over the deceased and to attend the funeral’ (945).

{And those who malign believing men and believing women undeservedly, they bear the guilt of slander and manifest sin.} (Soorah Al-Ahzâb, 33 :58)

And most often, the one who harms his brother, Allah takes revenge of him in this world, then in the hereafter.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, ‘*Do not hate each other, do not turn your back on each other, and be brothers, O servants of Allah! The Muslim is the brother of a Muslim: he is not unfair to him, he does not deceive him and does not cheat on him. In terms of evil, it is sufficient that a man hate his Muslim brother. The Muslim is sacred for the Muslim: his blood, his property and his honor*’⁴¹.

⁴¹ Reported by Al-Bukhârî in a summary, *Book of good behavior*, chapter ‘It is forbidden to envy one another and to turn one’s back on each other’ (6065); and in the chapter on emigration (6076); Muslim, *Book of goodness, maintaining family bonds and good behavior*, chapter ‘It is forbidden to be unjust towards a Muslim brother, to cheat him and to despise him’ (2564).

Rights and duties in islam

The rights of a Muslim on another Muslim are very numerous, but they can be all summarized in his word, '*The Muslim is the brother of a Muslim.*'

The one who puts into practice what is meant by this fraternity will do his utmost to bring him all the good and repel from him anything that could harm him.

10

The rights of non-muslims

The appellation ‘non-muslim’ includes all non-believers who are divided into four categories:

1. Those who fight Muslims
2. Those who seek asylum
3. Those who have a Pact with Muslims
4. and the People of the Book who reside in Muslim countries (*adh-Dhimîyûn*).

1. Those fighting have no right on us, nor protection nor assistance.
2. Those requesting asylum have upon us a right of protection during the time and place set for their asylum, according to the word of Allah,

وَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ اسْتَجَارَكَ فَاجْرُهُ حَتَّىٰ يَسْمَعَ
كَلَامَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ أَبْلَغْهُ مَا مَنَّهُ

{And if anyone of the idolaters seeks your protection (O Muhammad), then protect him so that he may hear the word of Allah; and afterward convey him to his place of safety.} (Soorah At-Tawbah, 9 :6)

3. Those who have a Pact with us have as right upon us that we may respect their Pact until the designated term between them and us, as long as they respect this Pact and do not refuse any of our rights, as they help noone against us and do not criticize our religion, according to the word of Allah,

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُمُ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَنْقُصُوكُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَمْ
يُظَاهِرُوا عَلَيْكُمْ أَحَدًا فَاتَّمُوا إِلَيْهِمْ عَهْدَهُمُ اللَّهُ مُدَّتَّهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
يُحِبُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

{Excepting those of the idolaters with whom you (Muslims) have a treaty, and who have since abated nothing of your right nor have supported anyone against you. (As for these), fulfill their treaty to them till their term. Lo! Allah loves those who keep their duty (unto Him).} (Soorah At-Tawbah, 9 :4)

وَإِنْ تَنكِحُوهُنَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ عَهْدِهِمْ وَطَعَنُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ فَقَاتِلُوهُنَّا
أَئُمَّةُ الْكُفَّارِ إِنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْمَلُونَ لَهُمْ لَعْنَةٌ يَنْهَا فُنْ

{And if they break their pledges after their treaty (has been made with you) and assail your religion, then fight the heads of disbelief. Lo! they have no binding oaths in order that they may desist.} (Soorah Tawbah, 9 :12)

4. *Adh-Dhimiyún* are those who have the more rights and duties in these four categories, as they live in Muslim countries. They are under their protection and guard, in exchange of the capitation tax (*Jizyah*) that they pay.

The Muslim governor must apply the rights of Islam for people, property and honour; and he must apply to them the sentences in what they regard as illicit [in religion]; He should also protect and exclude from them any wrongdoing.

The People of the Book (in the land of Islam) must be distinguished from the Muslims in their clothing but they should not express anything forbidden in Islam or specific to their religion as the bell or the cross. The rules concerning the People of the Book are cited in the books of scholars⁴² and we do not want to expand on the subject here.

And praise be to Allah, Lord of the universe, and may peace and prayer of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and his companions.

Muhammad ibn Sâleh Al-^cUthaymîn
Allah's mercy be upon him

⁴² See for example : Ibn ul-Qayyim, *Ahkâm Ahl ad-Dhimmah*.

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