

YAQEEN INSTITUTE FOR ISLAMIC RESEARCH

# 40 HADITHS ON SOCIAL JUSTICE

## LECTURE NOTES

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## Chapter 18: The Rights of the Neighbor

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

It is reported on the authority of Abu Huraira that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

...He who believes in Allah and the Last Day should treat his neighbor with kindness...

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ... وَمَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيُكْرِمْ جَارَهُ؟؟؟ حُرْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ...

[صحيح مسلم]

### Introduction

- The subject of neighbors usually gets covered in a shallow manner without any practical advice for today's world, especially when we discuss it in the context of justice.
- Hadith Anas (ra): "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day, let him honor his neighbor." Source: Sahih Muslim 47
- In another narration, "He does not truly believe until he loves for his brother, or neighbor, what he loves for himself." Source: Sahih Muslim 45.
- In a third narration, "By Allah, he does not believe – thrice – the one whose neighbor is not secure from his harm." Source: Sahih al-Bukhâri
- وعن أبي هريرة - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ - أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - قَالَ: ((وَاللَّهِ لَا يُؤْمِنُ، وَاللَّهُ لَا يُؤْمِنُ، وَاللَّهُ لَا يُؤْمِنُ!)) متفق عليه. وفي رواية لمسلم: لا يدخل الجنة من لا يأمن جاره بوائقه.
- The Sahaba were drawn to this because the Prophet (s) repeated three times that one does not believe. They asked him who he was speaking of and he said the one whose neighbor does not feel secure from his harm. In another Hadith he said he will not enter jannah whose neighbor does not feel secure from his harm. It's so severe that it can prevent you from entering jannah.

### What does it mean to harm your neighbor?

- This doesn't mean that you pose an imminent danger to your neighbor. It means that because of your bad attitude and character your neighbor doesn't feel any sort of peace from you. This doesn't apply to neighbors who may be islamophobes. This is about people who are so rude to their neighbors that your neighbor doesn't feel safe from you.
- Dr Hatem used to say about this hadith: part of your neighbor's right is that you reduce noise pollution for their comfort, and that you mow your own lawn so their property value does not depreciate due to an untidy neighborhood.

### The seriousness of this interaction in front of Allah

- When you think about the day of judgement, you think about an enemy or someone who oppressed you but you don't generally think about standing by your neighbor and disputing. But in fact the first two who will be judged for disputing on the day of judgement will be two neighbors. Allah will ask if you fulfil the rights of your neighbors.
- The Prophet (s) always treated his neighbors with excellence. He overcame evil with love and compassion, visited them, gave in charity to them. This is not something that is only to be said to someone who is treating his neighbor poorly. Yet there was a Hadith in which he said, "Gabriel kept entrusting me with neighbor until I thought that he would tell me to make him one of my heirs." (Bukhari: 6014)
- The Prophet (s) said Jibreel kept coming to me and telling me to take care of your neighbor so many times that I thought Jibreel would say a portion of your inheritance will go to your neighbor. They are like your family.
- There's a weak Hadith that says that the Prophet (s) found out about the sickness of his neighbor on a routine visit. He didn't say let me go visit him for the first time when he was sick. He sat by the bedrest of a dying Jewish boy and told him to say shahada, and the boy looked up at his father, and the father said listen to abu al qasim. He meant trust him, he's a good man. The Prophet was routine in making sure his neighbors were okay. He didn't have to wait for something dramatic to happen.

## Some of the rights of neighbors

- Samura b. Jundab (rA) reported: The Prophet said, "The neighbor of a home has greater right to the home of his neighbor, or the property, when it is being sold."  
Source: Sunan Abu Dawud 3517
  - عن مجاهد قال: كنت عند عبد الله بن عمر - رضي الله عنهما - وغلّام يسليخ له شاة، فقال: يا غلام، إذا سلخت)) فابدأ بجارنا اليهودي، حتى قال ذلك مراراً، فقال له: كم تقول هذا؟ فقال: إن رسول الله -صلى الله عليه وسلم - لم يزل يوصينا بالجار حتى خَشِينا أَنَّهُ سَيُورَثُهُ)) رواه أبو داود والترمذي
- We learn from this that before you sell your home you should ask your neighbor if he wants to buy it. Maybe he wants to extend his home, so you're doing him a kindness.
- Dr Muhammad Ismail al-Muqaddam mentions that one brother kept collecting his neighbor's newspaper from his door while he was away on vacation. Upon returning, he brought him the huge box of newspapers. When the man inquired why, he told him Islam says that is your right, the man eventually became Muslim.
- There's a sister in New Orleans around the age of 65 who was a convert and is from the lower 9th ward where the damage was the worst. She said when she would mow the lawn shed always also mow her neighbor's lawn. There are things that the Prophet (s) tells us to do that we don't even think about.
- He also said, don't belittle the smallest things.. There's a Hadith:
  - Abu Hurairah (rA) reported: Messenger of Allah (saws) said, "O Muslim women! No one of you should consider insignificant (a gift) to give to her neighbor even if it is (a gift of) the trotters of a sheep." (al-Bukhari and Muslim)
  - وعنه - رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ - قال: قال رَسُولُ اللهِ - صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ -: ((يا نساء المسلمين لا تحقرن جارة لجاتها ولو فرسن شاة)) متفق عليه.
- In another Hadith he said the one who is closer to you has more rights over you.
  - A'ishah (rA) reported: I said, "O Messenger of Allah, I have two neighbors, to which of them should I send a gift?" He (saws) replied, "To the one whose door is nearer to you." (al-Bukhari)

- وأقرب الجيران باباً أحقهم بالإحسان، عن عائشة - رضي الله عنها - قالت: (قلت: يا رسول الله، إن لي جارين، فإلى أيهما أهدي؟ قال: (( إلى أقربهما منك باباً))؛ رواه البخاري

- Abu Dharr (rA) reported: The Messenger of Allah (saws) commanded me thus, "O Abu Dharr! Whenever you prepare a broth, put plenty of water in it, and frequent your neighbors [with it]." (Sahih Muslim)
- And sometimes courtesy to your neighbors is just tolerating them. You shouldn't refuse someone from fixing something in their wall. It was an uncomfortable Hadith for people because these noises annoy them. In a Hadith:
- Abu Hurayrah (rA) reported that the messenger of Allah (saws) said: "No-one should prevent his neighbor from fixing a wooden peg in his wall." Abu Huraira said [to his companions], "Why do I see you refusing this nowadays? By Allah, I will certainly continue proclaiming it." (Sahih al-Bukhari)
- In another Hadith by Abu Dharr: Of those who Allah loves: a man who has a bad neighbor but he bares it with patience until they die or Allah settles the matter for them. This is in the Hadith:
- "Mutarrif reported: I heard that you (Abu Dharr) narrated about the Prophet (saws) saying, "Allah loves three and hates three." Abu Dharr said, "I do not think that I would tell lies about the Messenger of Allah." Mutarrif said, "Then who are the three whom Allah loves?" Abu Dharr (quoting the Prophet (saws)) said: "A man who fights for the sake of Allah, with perseverance and hoping for reward from Him, and fights until he is killed, and you can find this in the Book of Allah." Then he recited: "Truly Allah loves those who fight in His cause in battle array, as if they were a solid cemented structure." [al-Saff 61:4] Mutarrif asked, "Then who?" He said, "A man who has a bad neighbor who annoys and disturbs him, but he bears it with patience and forbearance until Allah ends the matter either during his lifetime or upon the death of either of them."
- He is not a believer who eats his fill while his neighbor beside him goes hungry." (Sahih al-Bukhari)
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- None of the Hadith about neighbors specify Muslims or non-Muslims. Even the companions internalized this concepts. It has nothing to do with their religion.
- We know how serious this matter is because there was a woman who was a great worshipper and did all the extra prayers and fasts but had an abusive tongue, and the Prophet (s) said there is no good in her, she is devoid of khayr and will be in the hellfire. This is in the Hadith:
- "Abu Hurayra (rA) reported: A man asked, "O Messenger of Allah! There is a woman who prays, gives charity and fasts a great deal, but she harms her neighbors with her speech (by insulting them)." He said: "She is [bound to be] in the Hellfire." The man said: "O Messenger of Allah! There is (another) woman who is well-known for how little she fasts and prays, but she gives charity from the dried yoghurt she makes and she does not harm her neighbors." He said: "She is [bound to be] in Paradise." (Ahmad, vol. 4, p. 166, Ibn Hibban, hadith no. 2054)
- Ibn 'AbdilBarr (rahimahullah) commented on this Hadith with a similar hadith. Someone shows up on the day of judgement with all these good deeds but was abusive to all these people and that person, their good deeds to go to the people they hurt. That person will say I have nothing less. And then Allah will tell the people to give him their sins.
- This means these deeds were done in a manner that was sincere and accurate, or else they would not be valid as currency (good deeds) to pay off their debts. In other words, your most diligent good deeds will be squandered to pay off your moral debts!
- Ibn 'AbdilBarr's statement is true about wronging anyone, but with a neighbor it's compounded because he/she has a double right (original inviolability + right of neighboring). For this reason, when Ibn Mas'ud asked about the worst major sins, not just the major sins, he (saws) did not say zina, but zina with your neighbor's wife. It's a compounded enormity.
- The Prophet (saws) said, "There are three worst types of people ... a bad neighbor who, if he sees something good, he conceals it, and if he sees something bad he broadcasts it." (at-Tabarani)

- The Prophet's (saws)'s warning against harming or arguing with neighbors should always echo in our ears, and we should never forget it any time we feel the stirrings of anger or hostility towards neighbors: "The first two disputing parties to appear before Allah on the Day of Judgement will be two neighbors." (al-Bukhari - al-Adab al-Mufrad)
- Abu Hanifa had a neighbor who would get drunk, play loud music, yell things, was in so much debt. He let it go. One night he didn't hear the guy so he went to check on him. He found out he was arrested and he paid off his debt. The man came out and sees him and was surprised and asked why did you pay off my debt. He responded, have we forgotten about you? I missed your loud voice. He cleaned him up and took him home and that man became one of his best students. So don't think, they didn't have the kind of neighbors we have.

### Conclusion

- You want to be so good to your neighbors that they cry if you leave.
- Modern Applications
  - Don't hurt neighbors with your parking when going to the masjid. Be courteous with parking.
  - Be the first to greet others. Don't let it be a chance encounter when you meet your neighbors. Go introduce yourself.
  - Visit them when you're sick. Show concern for their health.
  - Overlook their annoyances
  - Ask about them regularly
  - Lend them things. Lend your help.
  - Help them with their groceries
  - Make extra food and dessert and offer it to them. Make it a habit.
  - Take care of your own house.