

NEIGHBOUR'S RIGHTS

ACCORDING TO THE SUNNAH AND
THE EXAMPLE OF THE SALAF

By
Ali Hasan
Abd al - Hamid

Translated
By:
Huda Khattab



DAR IBN HAZM

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دار ابن خزم

***IN THE NAME OF ALLAH
THE MERCIFUL THE COMPASSIONATE***

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'Ali Hasan'Abd al-Hamid

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TRANSLATOR'S FOREWORD

The issue of neighbours is of interest and concern to all. Disputes and feuds between neighbours regularly hit the headlines. A bad neighbour is something to be dreaded, whilst a good neighbour is, as the saying goes, worth his (or her) weight in gold!

But neighbour problems are nothing new. However much we may hark back to the «good old days», when people could leave their doors unlocked, it is still a fact that people have always been concerned both about what kind of neighbours they have, and how they should relate to those who live closest to them.

Islam has plenty to say about neighbours. The *Ahadith* quoted by the author, although they are fourteen hundred years old, are as topical and relevant today as they were then. Much may have changed (technology, architecture...), but human nature is the same as ever, and we still need guidance as to how

we should treat one another. Islam shows us how to deal with our fellow- man, and our own neighbourhood is a good place to start...

Huda Khattab

NOTE ON ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used in this book:

SWT- *Subhanahu wa Ta'ala* (May He be glorified and exalted).

SAAS- *Sall-Allahu'alayhi wa sallam* (May Allah bless him and grant him peace).

RA- *Radi Allahu'anhu* (May Allah be pleased with him) *Radi Allahu'anha* (May Allah be pleased with her) *Radi Allahu'anhum* (May Allah be pleased with them).

AS- *'Alayhis-Salam* (Peace be upon him) *'Alayhim al-Salam* (Peace be upon them).

NOTE ON TRANSLATION OF QUR'ANIC QUOTATIONS

The translation of quotations from the Holy Qur'an are adapted from the translation and Commentary by A. Yusuf Ali (1983 edition, published by Amana Corp., U. S. A). The adaptations are:

1- The archaic style of English used by Yusuf Ali has been updated, i. e. the pronouns «thou», «ye» have been altered to «you». Verbs have been amended accordingly, so that «goeth» becomes «goes», etc.

2- The word «God» has been replaced with the word «Allah».

PREFACE

Praise be to Allah; we praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge with Him from the evils of our own souls and deeds. Whomever Allah guides, no-one can lead astray, and whomever He leaves astray, no-one can guide. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah Alone Who has no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His Slave and Messenger.

«Neighbours enjoy rights over and above those enjoyed by brothers in Islam. The neighbour is entitled to the same rights as every Muslim, but he is also entitled to more besides, by virtue of his being a neighbour»¹.

«The rights of neighbours do not entail only refraining from disturbing them. We should also put up with their disturbance; be kind to them; be the ones to initiate good deeds; be the first to greet a neighbour; not prolong disputes; visit them when they are ill; console

them at times of sorrow and congratulate them at times of joy; forgive their mistakes; not stare into their house; not upset them by leaning wood against their wall; not pour away water in their gutter, not throw dirt into their courtyard; not stare at whatever they carry into their house; conceal whatever of their private matters they may inadvertently reveal; not eavesdrop on their conversations; not look at their womenfolk; take care of their family's needs when they are absent»², «not disturb their servants; be kind to their children; and guide them in religious or worldly matters of which they have little knowledge»³.

«When the Muslims were imbued with the spirit of Iman (faith) and living in a truly islamic environment, the rights of others were well-known and taken care of. The Muslims used to compete in doing good and would hasten to carry out their duties with regard to all the rights which various persons enjoyed.

«But modern civilization, which is founded on materialism, dose not care for good principles and behaviour. It has made man into a machine, going along

in life's orbit deaf and without feelings, playing the role laid down for him devoid of noble feelings or higher human principles.

«No-one can escape from his monstrosity except for those whose souls are steeped in religious principles and whose hearts are illuminated with the knowledge of Allah, or those who live on the margins of society, far from the centers of materialistic civilizations, such as farmers, shepherds, and inhabitants of desert areas.

«Among the noble principles which have been destroyed virtually world-wide by materialistic civilization are the rights which people have over one another»⁴.

Among the most important of these rights are those which we have referred to above, namely the rights of neighbours.

As «respect for neighbours was so important both during the *Jahiliyyah* [Time of Ignorance before Is-

lam] and when Islam came, [it follows that this is the matter of] common sense and decency, as well as being required by religion»⁵.

The Sunnah of the Prophet (SAAS) provides a clear explanation of these rights, so that many scholars and *Muhaddithin* [scholars of Hadith] included a section of Neighbours' Rights in their chapters on Manners (*al-Adab*)⁶ or Kindness and Kinship (*al-Birr wa'l-Silah*)⁷. This matter became regarded as a «Branch of Faith»⁸, and some scholars devoted entire books to the topic, such as Imam Abu Na'im al-Isbahani (d. 430 AH)⁹, Imam al-Humaydi (d 219 AH)¹⁰, Imam al-Dhahabi (d. 748 AH)¹¹ and others.

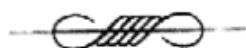
Seeing that such was the case, Mr. Nizam Sakkijha-the proprietor of al-Maktabah al-Islamiyyah, may Allah grant him success -asked me to prepare a book compiling the sound Ahadith and reports [from the *Salaf*, i. e. the first three generation of Islam] dealing with the topic in a straightforward and down-to-earth manner. I liked the idea and set about fulfilling this request, which is how this short book came about.

If you find good and correct work in it, then praise be to Allah, may He be blessed and exalted. If you find other than that, then I hope that you will pray for me, so that Allah may guide me and forgive my shortcomings.

I ask Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, to forgive me and grant me reward.

May Allah bless Sayyiduna Muhammad and his family and companions and grant them peace.

Ali Hasan'Ali'Abd al-Hamid
(Al-Halabi al-Athari).



Footnotes:

1. **Yahya ibn Hamza al-Yamani**, *Tasfiyat al-Qulub*, p 427.
2. **Mukhtasar Minhaj al-Qasidin (annotated by the author)**, P 138.
3. *Tasfiyat al-Qulub* p 428.
4. **Hasan Ayyub**, *Al-Suluk al-Ijtima' fi'l-Islam*, p 279.
5. **Ibn al-'Arabi al-Maliki**, *Ahkam al-Qur'an* (1/429).
6. *Sahih al-Bukhari* (10/440- Fat'h).
7. *Sahih Muslim* (4/2025).
8. **Al-Halimi**, *Shu'ab al-Iman* (3/365); **Al-Bayhaqi**, *al-Shu'ab* (7/73- 88).
9. **He includes a section on Neighbours (al-Jar)** in *Siar al-Nubala'* (19/306).
10. **Op. cit**, 19/123.
11. **Haq al-Jar, Published in Riyadh with annotation by Hisham al-Saqqa.**

PART ONE

INTRODUCTION

(1)

Neighbours in the Holy Qur'an:

Allah (SWT) says:

«Serve Allah, and join not any partners with Him; and do good- to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbours who are near, neighbours who are strangers, the Companion by your side, the way farer (you meet), and what your right hands possess; for Allah loves not the arrogant, the vainglorious». (al-Nisa' 4: 36).

Al-Imam al-Qurtubi said¹:

«As for the neighbour, Allah -may He be exalted - has ordered us, in His Book and through His Prophet, to protect him, to respect his rights and to care about his welfare. Do you not see that He, may He

be glorified, has mentioned the neighbour after the parents and the close relatives, for He, may He be exalted, says, «neighbours who are near» (*al-Jar Dhi'l-Qurba*), meaning those who are related to you (*Qarib*), and «neighbours who are strangers» (*al-Jar al-Junub*), meaning those who are not related to you (*Gharib*). This is the saying of Ibn Abbas»².

In Arabic, the word *Junub* is defined as *Fulan Ajnabi* (a stranger), and the related word *Janabah* means *Bu'd* (distance- i. e. in relationship).

The scholars of Arabic said:

«Do not prevent me from seeing Na'il because of *Janabah* (i. e. not being related to him), for I am a man who in the midst of a crowd is *Gharib* (a stranger)».

The poet al-Ash'ari said:

«I came to visit Hurayth in spite of *Janabah* (not being related to him), but he refused to give me any-

thing [i. e. because of not being related].

Al-Qurtubi, may Allah have mercy on him, said:

«On this basis, concern for neighbours is a religious duty, regardless of whether they are Muslim or Kafir, and this is the sound (*Sahih*) opinion³.

Ihsan (doing good) could mean consoling him, treating him kindly, refraining from disturbing him, and defending him».

Al-Hafiz ibn Hajar said:

«*Al-Jar al-Qarib* means those who are related by blood, and *al-Jar al-Junub* means those who are not so related. This is the opinion of the majority.. Others have said that *al-Jar al-Qarib* refers to Muslims and *al-Jar al-Junub* refers to non-Muslims, or that *al-Jar al-Qarib* refers to one's wife and *al-Jar al-Junub* refers to one's travelling companions»⁴.

(2)

Definition of «Neighbour»:

«The word Jar (Neighbour) covers both Muslims and Kafirs, religious and irreligious, friends and enemies, foreigners and fellow-countrymen, those who treat you well and those who would do you harm, relatives and strangers, those whose house is nearer to yours and those who are further away.

Neighbours fall into various categories. The best are those who combine all of the [desirable] qualities mentioned above, and the next best are those who bear most of these qualities, and so on until we reach the neighbours who bear only one of these qualities. The worst neighbours are those who combine all the undesirable qualities. Each neighbour is accorded rights according to the category he falls into. If a neighbour exhibits both good and bad qualities, we must judge which outweighs the other, and treat him accordingly»⁵.

The Extent of the Neighbourhood:

The scholars differed as to the definition and extent of a «Neighbourhood».

Al-Uza'i and Ibn Shihab said: «Forty houses in each direction».

Ali ibn Abi Talib said: «Whoever hears the call [for prayer] is a neighbour».

Some scholars say: «Whoever hears the *Iqamah* [call immediately preceding prayer, given within the mosque rather than from the minaret] is a neighbour of that mosque».

Other scholars said: «Whoever lives with a man in a locality or city is a neighbour».

Allah, may He be exalted, said:

«Truly, if the Hypocrites, and those in whose hearts is a disease, and those who stir up sedition in the City, desist not, We shall certainly stir you up against them: then will they not be able to stay in it as your neighbours for any length of time». [al-Ah-zab 33: 60].

So, He, may He be exalted, considered that the Munafiqin's presence in Madinah made them neighbours [of the Prophet (SAAS)].

Neighbours fall into different categories; the closest is one's wife, as the saying goes; *Aya Jarata Bini fa-in-naka Taliqah* («O Neighbour- i. e. Wife -get away from me for you are divorced»)⁶.

Ibn Hajar said: «Ibn Wahb reported from Yunus from Ibn Shihab: Forty houses to the right, to the left, to the rear and to the front»⁷.

Al-Halimi said⁸:

«As for the travelling companion, he is a neighbour,

because he shares one's physical space, and travelling companions have much to offer each other, as is the case with neighbours in the same market or village. This is why Allah (SWT) has commanded us to take care of him (i. e. the travelling companion), and Allah knows best».

Anecdotes and Poetry on the Rights of Neighbours:

In Islam, the neighbour is held in very high esteem, unlike in other systems of ethics and man-made laws. Indeed, these other systems encourage people to disrespect their neighbours, so that it becomes easy to infringe upon their honour and abuse them⁹.

The modern popular songs which describe the neighbour seen through the window, and the like, only became widespread after we had lost our faith and chivalrous qualities, and begun to imitate our forefathers blindly, and succumbed to cultural imperialism. We have reached a state where any cheap and dirty-minded youth among us can sing love songs about a (female) neighbour—something which never happened during our Jahiliyyah, let alone during Islamic times. Indeed, our great poet 'Antar respected the honour of others, and when he met his female neighbour he said: «I lower my gaze when my (fe-

male) neighbour appears before me, until she has gone into her house»¹⁰.

Islam has encouraged us to adhere to this standard of decent behaviour. There are very many Ayat, Ahadith and reports dealing with concern for neighbours, protecting their honour, covering up their mistakes and shortcomings, helping them at times of need, refraining from looking at their womenfolk, and avoiding doing anything that may make them suspicious or hurt their feelings»¹¹.

Furthermore, Muslim poets and scholars have written verses on the rights and protection of neighbours, of which we may quote the following:

«You are my neighbour and enjoy the sanctity of neighbourhood.

I am obliged to maintain the rights of my neighbour.

When my neighbour is away, I keep an eye out on his behalf,

to protect his private affairs and secrets.

It makes no difference to me whether his doorway is covered or not».

«I say to my neighbour if he comes to complain to me, regardless of whether he is speaking the truth or not, if the good I do has not reached you, even though you are my neighbour, then certainly the bad things I do will not reach you».

«They blamed me for selling my house cheaply, But they did not know that I had a neighbour there who disturbed me.

I told them, Stop balming me, For it is the neighbours who make a house expensive or cheap»¹².

Al- Qahtani says in his *Nuniyyah* (p 42)¹³.

«Protect your neighbour's rights

for every Muslim neighbour has two rights».

i. e. the rights of a Muslim and the rights of a neighbour.

Concerning the foolish neighbour, it was said:

«All his neighbour wishes from him is to be left alone»¹⁴.

Ibn'Abd al-Barr¹⁵ said:

* There are three characteristics which, if they are found in a man, there is no doubt that he is a sane and good man: if he is praised by his neighbour, by his relatives and by his friends.

* Three things make life unbearable: A bad neighbour, a disobedient child and a badly-behaved and unreasonable wife.

From al-Hasan ibn'Isa al-Naisaburi¹⁶:

«I Asked Abdullah ibn al-Mubarak: A man came to

me and complained about something my servant did, and my servant denies it. I would hate to punish him if he is innocent, but I would hate to let him off as my neighbour will be upset with me. What should I do?

[ʿAbdullah ibn al-Mubarak] said: Maybe your servant needs to be disciplined for something he did, so bear that in mind. When your neighbour complains about him, discipline him for what you are sure he has done, so that you will satisfy your neighbour and discipline your servant for what he did».

And it was said¹⁷:

«My fire and my neighbour's fire is one;

The cooking pot is given to him first.

It does not matter to me that his doorway has no cover».



Footnotes:

1. Al-Jami'li Ahkam al-Qur'an (5/183).
2. **Al-Hafiz ibn Hajar said: «Al-Tabari reported it with a Hasan Isnad».** (Al-Fat'h 10/441).
3. **For more details, see page [43-44 of original].**
4. Fat'h al-Bari (10/441).
5. **Ibid,** (10/42).
6. Tafsir al-Qurtubi (5/185).
7. Al-Fat'h (10/447). **This Hadith comes under the heading Haq al-Jiwar fi Qurb al-Abwab (The Rights of the Neighbours whose Doors are close).**
8. Shu'ab al-Iman (3/358).
9. **The Arabic word translated as «honour» is'Ird. The context refers specifically to concern about any interference with the female members of a neighbour's family.**
10. 'Antarah, Diwan, p 308.
11. **Muhammad'Ali al-Hashimi, Shakhsiyah al-Muslim,** p 178-179.
12. **Ibn Muflih, al-Adab al-Shariyyah wa'l-Minah al-Mar'iyyah (2/15-16).**
13. **Nuniyah: a poem in which every line ends with the letter Nun.**
14. **Siyar A'lam al-Nubala' (4/552), reported from Wabb ibn Munabbih.**
15. **Ibn Muflih, op. cit. (2/15-16).**

16. **Al-Khara'iti**, *al-Muntaqa min Makarim al-Akhlaq* (No. 101), **quoted by al-Salafi**.
17. **Ibn Qutaybah**, *'Ayun al-Akhbar* (2/193).

PART TWO
THE RIGHTS AND VIRTUES OF
NEIGHBOURS ACCORDING TO
THE
SUNNAH OF THE PROPHET
(SAAS)

1- Prohibition of Harming Neighbours

From Abu Hurayrah (RA): the Prophet (SAAS) said:

«He will not enter Paradise whose neighbour is not safe from his bad behaviour»¹.

2- Recommendation to treat neighbours well

From 'A'ishah (RA) who said: the Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said:

«Jibril kept recommending me to treat my neighbour well until I thought that he would tell me to make him one of my heirs»².

3- The one who harms his neighbour should be cursed

From Abu Hurayrah (RA) who said:

A man came to the Prophet (SAAS) and complained to him about his neighbour. The Prophet (SAAS) told him three times, «Have patience». Then on the fourth - or third- time, he said: «put your furniture out on the street, so the man did so. Passers-by began to ask what was going on, and were told: «His neighbour has harmed him». So they began to say: «May Allah curse him!» The neighbour came out and said, «Put your things back, for by Allah I will never harm you again»³.

4- Taking care of neighbours

From Abu Dharr (RA), who said: my dear friend [i. e. the Prophet (SAAS)] advised me: «Whenever you cook some stew, add extra water to it, then look to some household in your neighbourhood and give it to them in kindness»⁴.

In another report: «... O Abu Dharr, whenever you

cook some stew, add extra water to it, and remember your neighbours»⁵.

And in another version: «.. so you will have plenty for your family and your neighbours»⁶.

5- Being co-operative towards neighbours

From Abu Hurayrah (RA) who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said:

«None of you should prevent his neighbour from leaning wood against his walls»⁷.

6- Refraining from harming one's neighbours is a part of Faith (*Iman*)

From Abu Hurayrah, from the Messenger of Allah (SAAS), who said: «Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should not harm his neighbour»⁸.

7- The Best Neighbour

From 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «The best of friends, in Allah's sight, is the one who is best to his friend; and the

best of neighbours, in Allah's sight, is the one who is best to his neighbour»⁹.

8- No deed which harms a neighbour can be regarded as insignificant

From 'Abdah ibn Ali Lubabah¹⁰, may Allah have mercy on him, who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said:

«No deed which harms a neighbour can be regarded as insignificant»¹¹.

9- A righteous neighbour contributes to happiness

From Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas (RA) who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «Four things contribute to happiness: a righteous wife, a spacious home, a righteous neighbour and a comfortable means of transport. And four things contribute to misery: A bad neighbour, a bad wife, a cramped home and a bad means of transport»¹².

10- Treating neighbours well

From Abu Hurayrah (RA) who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «Be God-fearing: you will be

the best in worship among the people. Be content with your lot: you will be the most grateful of people. Like for people what you would like for yourself: you will be a Believer (Mu'min). Treat your neighbour well: you will be a Muslim»¹³.

11- The sin of disturbing a neighbour is compounded¹⁴

From Abu Zabyah al-Kala'i, who said: I heard al-Miqdad ibn al-Aswad saying that the Prophet (SAAS) asked the people about adultery, and they said: «[It is] Haram; Allah and His Messenger have forbidden it».

He (SAAS) said: «Verily, for a man to commit adultery with ten women would be a lesser sin for him than if he commits adultery with the wife of his neighbour».

He [Miqdad] said: [the Prophet (SAAS)] asked them about stealing. They said: «[It is] Haram; Allah and His Messenger have forbidden it».

He (SAAS) said: «If a man were to steal from ten houses it would be a lesser sin for him than if he were to steal from his neighbour's house»¹⁵.

12- Do not eat your fill whilst your neighbour is hungry¹⁶

From Abdullah ibn Musawir who said: I Heard Ibn'Abbas mention Ibn al-Zubayr, saying that he was a miser, then he said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (SAAS) say:

«He is not a believer who eats his fill whilst his neighbour beside him goes hungry»¹⁷.

IMPORTANT: «This Hadith gives a clear indication that it is Haram for a wealthy man to leave his neighbours hungry. He must offer them whatever will keep their hunger at bay, and whatever will clothe them if they are naked, and other such necessities»¹⁸.

13- No-one is a believer if he does not love his neighbour

From Anas (RA) from the Prophet (SAAS):

«By Him in Whose hand is my soul, no man truly believes until he loves for his neighbour- or his brother- what he loves for himself»¹⁹.

14- Advice to women not to scorn the gift of a neighbour

From Abu Hurayrah (RA) who said: The Prophet (SAAS) used to say: [«O Muslim women! No-one should scorn the gift of a neighbour, even if it is [only] a sheep's foot»²⁰.

15- The rights of the neighbours whose doors are near²¹

Form'Aishah (RA) who said: «I said: O Messenger of Allah! I have two neighbours, to which one of them should I give a gift?» He (SAAS) said: «To the one whose door is nearest to yours»²².

16- Seeking refuge with Allah (SWT) form a bad neighbour

From Abu Hurayrah (RA): The Prophet (SAAS) used to say:

«O Allah, I seek refuge with You from a bad neighbour in my permanent home, for the neighbour in the desert always changes»²³.

17- Disputes with neighbours

From 'Uqbah ibn 'Amir from the prophet (SAAS), who said:

«The first two opposing parties on the Day of Resurrection will be two neighbours»²⁴.

18- Harming a neighbour may lead to Hellfire

From Abu Hurayrah (RA) who said: A man asked, «O Messenger of Allah! there is a woman who prays, gives charity and fasts a great deal, but she harms her neighbours with her speech [by insulting them]».

He (SAAS) said: «She will go to Hell».

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 yoghurt²⁵ she makes, and she does not harm her neighbours».

He (SAAS) said: «She will go to Paradise»²⁶.

19- Bearing neighbours' disturbance with patience

From Abu Dharr (RA) who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said:

«There are three whom Allah loves.. [one of them is] he who has a neighbour who disturbs him, but he puts up with the disturbance patiently, until they are separated by death or by one of them moving away»²⁷.

20- The testimony of neighbours

From Ibn Mas'ud (RA) who said: A man said to the Prophet (SAAS): «How will I know whether I am doing right or wrong?» He said: «If you hear your neighbours saying that you have done good, then you have done good, and if you hear them saying that you have done wrong, then you have done bad»²⁸.

21- The *Fitnah* of neighbours

From Hudhayfah (RA) who said: The Messenger of

Allah (SAAS) said: «... a man's committing sins (Fitnah) with regard to his wife, his wealth, his children and his neighbour may be atoned for by prayer, fasting, giving charity and enjoining the good and forbidding the evil...»²⁹.

22- Giving charity (*Sadaqah*) to neighbours

From Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (RA) who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said: «Charity may not be given to a rich person, but it should be given to those fighting in the way of Allah, to the wayfarer, or to a poor neighbour, who may (later) give a gift or invite you to his home»³⁰.

23- Co-operating with neighbours

From 'A'ishah (RA) who said: By Allah, we used to watch the new moon, three new moons in the space of two months, and no fire [for cooking] was lit in the house of the Messenger of Allah. [The narrator] said: O Aunt! What did you live on? She said: The two black ones: dates and water. But the Messenger of Allah had Ansari neighbours who kept livestock,

and they used to send some of its milk to the Messenger of Allah (SAAS), and he used to give it to us to drink³¹.



Footnotes:

1. AL-Bukhari (6016), Muslim (46). A similar report is given by Ahmad (3/154), al-Hakim (1/11) and ibn Hibban (510), with a *Sahih Isnad* from Anas (RA). A third version is given by al-Bukhari (6016) from Abu Sharih al-Ka'bi. There are many similar reports with various Isnads in the same chapter.
2. Al-Bukhari (6014), Muslim (2624). See also; al-Bukhari (6015), Muslim (2625), from Ibn Umar and others to numerous to quote here.
3. Abu Da'ud (5153), *al-Bukhari al-Adab al-Mufrad* (124), al-Hakim (4/160), with a *Hasan Isnad*. There is a similar account from Abu Juhayfah, reported by al-Bazzar (1903), al-Hakim (4/166), and al-Bukhari in *al-Adab* (125), but there is some weakness and one or more unknown narrators in its Isnad.
4. Muslim (2625, 143). See also: al-Bazzar (1901); al-Tabarani: *al-Awsat* and *al-Majma'* (8/165), from Jabir with a slightly weak Isnad.
5. Muslim (2625, 142).
6. Ibn Hibban (513) and Ahmad (15/156), with a *Sahih Isnad*.
7. al-Bukhari (2463) and Muslim (1609). A similar report is given by Ahmad (3/479, 480) and Ibn Majah (2336), from *Mujamma' ibn Jaryah*; and another from Ibn'Abbas; see Ahmad (1/303) and al-Bayhaqi (6475).

8. Al-Bukhari (6475) and Muslim (47, 74).
9. Al-Tirmidhi (1944), Ahmad (2/167), al-Darimi (2/215) and al-Hakim (1/164), with a Sahih Isnad.
10. The reference given in *al-Durr al-Manthur* (2/159) as «from Abu Lubabah» is erroneous.
11. Ibn Abi Shaybah (8/547), with a Sahih Mursal Isnad. See also al-Tabarani: *al-Kabir* (23/258/No. 535), whence Abu Nu'aym: *al-Hilyah* (10/27), from Umm Salamah. Al-Haythami (Majma'al-Zawa'id, 8/170) says that the men in the Isnad are trustworthy, but there is some doubt concerning Shaykh al-Tabarani; however, the report supports the Hadith quoted, so the Hadith is Hasan.
12. Ibn Hibban (1232) and al-Khatib (12/99), with a Sahih Isnad.
13. Ibn Majah (4217), Abu Ya'la (5865) and Abu Nu'aym: *al-Hilyah* (10/365). There is some weakness in its Isnad. A similar report is found in *Arba'i al-Da'wah wa'l-Du'ah*, No. 13.
14. This is the heading used by our Shaykh al-Albani in *al-Silsilah al-Sahihah* (No 65).
15. Ahmad (6/8), al-Bukhari; *al-Adab al-Mufrad* (103), and al-Tabarani: *al-Kabir* (20/210/605), with a good (Jayyid) Isnad. Al-Hafiz says that Abu Zabyah is *Maqbul* (acceptable), but he was in fact designated as trustworthy by Ibn Mu'in and others.
16. This is the heading used by al-Bukhari in *al-Adab*

al-Mufrad (p 1/194).

17. Al-Bukhari, op. cit, (112), al-Hakim (4/167) and al-Khatib (10/392), with an Isnad in which one narrator is unknown (*Majhul*). a similar report is given by al-Bazzar (119), from Anas. Its Isnad includes 'Ali ibn Zayd ibn Jud'an, who is weak (*Da'if*). Another similar report is given by al-Dhahabi: *Haq al-Jar* (p 38), which is Hasan, in sha Allah.
18. *Al-Silsilah al-Sahihah* (1/230).
19. Muslim (45, 72).
20. Al-Bukhari (6017) and Muslim (1030). The meaning is that no-one should scorn the giving of a gift, even if it is something which is not particularly useful or valuable. (*al-Fat'h* 10/445).
21. This is the heading used by al-Bukhari in *al-Sahih* (10/447- *Fat'h*).
22. Al-Bukhari (6020).
23. A Sahih Hadith; see my notes on *al-Tuhfah al-Nadiyyah bi-Sharh al-Lamiyyah al-Wardiyyah* (part 57), currently under print.
24. Al-Tabarani; *Al-Kabir* (836, 852), and Ahmad (4/151), with two Isnads from Abu'Ushshanah from him with a Sahih Isnad. Al-Haythami classed it as *Hasan* in *al-Majma'* (10/349). Al-Mundhiri classed it as *Jayyid* in *al-Tarhib* (3/355).
25. *Al-Awthar min al-Aqit*: pieces of solidified, dried yoghurt.

26. Ahmad (2/440), Ibn Hibban (2054- *Zawa'idah*) and al-Hakim (4/166), from Abu Yahya the slave of Ja'dah, from Ja'dah; its Isnad is Sahih, Abu Yahya was classed as trustworthy by Ibn Mu'in; see *al-Jarh wa'l-Ta'dil* (9/457). Al-Hafiz could not find his classification in *al-Tahthib*, so in *al-Taqrib* he classed Abu Yahya as *Maqbul* (acceptable).
27. Ahmad (5/151), Ibn Nasr: *Qiyam al-Layl* (p 177), Ibn al-Mubarak: *al-Jihad* (47), and Ibn Abi'Isam: *al-Jihad* (127), with an Isnad from al-Jurayri from Abu'l-Ala' from Ibn Ahmas from Ahmas. There is some doubt (*Jahalah*) concerning Ibn Ahmas. But the Hadith is Hasan, because it has another Isnad, with two routes from Abu'l-Ala', directly from Abu Dharr; see: Ibn Abi Shaybah (5/302-303), Abd al-Razzaq (11/185). In one of these Isnads there is a claim of having heard the Hadith directly. This is a Sahih Isnad.
28. Ahmad (1/402), Ibn Majah (4223), Ibn Hibban (526) and al-Bayhaqi (3490), with a Sahih Isnad. This Hadith is also narrated from Abou Hurayrah: al-Hakim (1/375) and al-Isbahani, al-Tarhib (844).
29. Al-Bukhari (525) and Muslim (144).
30. Abu Da'ud (1635, 1636), Ibn Majah (1841), Ibn al-Jarud (365), Ibn Khuzaymah (2374), al-Hakim (1/407), al-Bayhaqi (7/13), Ahmad (3/56) and Abd al-Razzaq (7151), from Zayd ibn Aslam, from 'Ata,

from him, its Isnad is Sahih. There was some doubt concerning it, but not to the extent that its authenticity was rejected.

31. Al-Bukhari (2567) and Muslim (2972).

PART THREE
WARNING CONCERNING
SOME REPORTS ATTRIBUTED
TO THE PROPHET (SAAS)
ON THE SUBJECT OF NEIGH-
BOURS

1- «The neighbour before the house»

This was narrated by al-Tabarani in *al-Mu'jam al-Kabir* (4379), Abu'l-Shaykh in *al-Amthal* (232), al-Khatib in *al-Jami'li Akhlaq al-Rawi wa Adab al-Sami'* (3/291) and al-Quda'i in *Masnad al-Shihab* (709), via Aban ibn al-Muhabbar from Sa'id ibn Ma'ruf ibn Rafi'ibn Khadij, from his father, from his grandfather, in the words:

«..Look for the neighbour before you look at the house..».

Al-Sakhawi said, in *al-Maqasid al-Hasanah* (No. 163): «Ibn al-Muhammar is *Matruk* [i. e. his Hadith cannot be accepted]; he and Sa'id together cannot be

taken to prove anything».

Imam al-Dhahbi narrated the Hadith (*Mizan al-I'tidal* 15/1) from the *Munkar* («odd») reports of Ibn al-Muhabbar!

2- «Neighbours are of three kinds»¹

Al-Bazzar (Musnad, 186- *Zawa'idah*) said:

Abdullah ibn Muhammad Abu'l-Rabi' al-Harithi narrated (*haddathana*) that Muhammad ibn Isma'il ibn Abi Fudayk narrated: Abd al-Rahman ibn al-Fudayl informed us (*akhbarana*) from ('an) Ata al-Khurasani from al-Hasan from Jabir ibn'Abdullah who said: The Messenger of Allah (SAAS) said:

«Neighbours are of three kinds: the neighbour who has one right, which is the least number of neighbourly rights; the neighbour who has two rights; and the neighbour who has three rights. As for the one who has one right, he is the *Mushrik* neighbour (who is not related to you), who has the right of neighbourhood. As for the one who has two rights, he is

the Mulsim who has the right of Islam and the right of neighbourhood. As for the one who has three rights, he is the Muslim neighbour who is related to you: he has the right of Islam, the right of neighbourhood, and the right of family-ties».

Al-Bazzar said: «We know this Hadith only through this Isnad».

Al-Haythami (*Majma' al-Zawa'id*, 8/164) said: «Shaykh al-Bazzar' Abdullah ibn Muhammad al-Harithi is a liar [lit. fabricator]».

This Hadith was also narrated by Abu'l-Shaykh, al-Daylami and al-Tabarani (*al-Thowab* and *Sharh al-Ihya'*, 6/304), and by al-Hasan ibn Sufyan (*Musnad*)², who said:

«Al-Husayn ibn 'Isa al-Bustani narrated that Muhammad ibn Abi Fudayk narrated from Abd al-Rahman ibn Fudayl».

It was also narrated by Abu Nu'aym, in *Hilyah al-*

Awliya' (5/207), from Abu'Amr ibn Hamdan from al-Hasan ibn Sufyan. This is a narration³ from the fabricator al-Harithi⁴.

The Hadith is weak because it contains two shortcomings (*'illatan*):

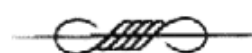
1- the weakness (*Da'f*) of 'Ata'al-Khurasani. There was some debate as to the weakness of 'Ata' in this Hadith. Ibn'Adiyy narrated it in *al-Kamil* (5/1818) via Suwayd ibn'Abd al-'Aziz- who is weak- from him [sic] from 'Amr ibn Shu'ayb from his father from his grandfather.

2- Al-Hasan did not hear it from Jabir; see *Jami'al-Tahsil* (p 163) by al-'Ala'i.

3- «The Prophet (SAAS) recommended people to take care of neighbours even as far as seven houses away»⁵.

This report is unfounded. Although it is the matter of the Sunnah in general, in that taking care of neighbours is a proven part of the Sunnah, the limit-

ing of such care to a radius of seven houses has no basis in any report attributed to the Prophet (SAAS). And Allah (SWT) knows best.



Footnotes:

1. I have included this Hadith because al-Hafiz ibn Kathir quoted it in his *Tafsir* (1/748) without comment, and al-Sabuni did likewise in his summary of Ibn Kathir's *Tafsir (al-Mukhtassar, 1/388)*. Indeed, many books on neighbours' rights have quoted it without comment or explanation, including al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar in *al-Fat'h* (10/442).
2. See also: al-Isbahani, *Takhrij al-Ihya'* (1837- Saudi edition); and *al-Tarhib wa'l-Tarhib* (843).
3. This is the opinion of Brother Mahmoud al-Haddad in his footnotes on al-Dhahabi's *Haq al-Jar*, p 46.
4. There is some extra material at the end: «The least of the neighbour's rights is that you should not disturb your neighbour with the smell of your cooking unless you offer him some of it».
5. This is a common saying in the Arab world.

PART FOUR

HOW SHOULD ONE TREAT HIS NEIGHBOUR IF HE IS NOT A PRACTISING SUNNI MUSLIM?

If your neighbour is a practising Sunni Muslim, then you must afford him all the rights already outlined in this book.

But if¹ your neighbour is guilty of a major sin, then he should not be left alone. If he is committing the sin in secret, behind closed doors, then ignore him and turn a blind eye to what he is doing, but if you can advise him in secret, then it is better to do so.

If he is doing it openly and boasting about it, like a tax-collector [sic] or one who deals with *riba* (usury), then just leave him alone.

If he usually misses most of the prayers, then keep on reminding him of the good (*al-Ma'ruf*) and discouraging him from evil (*al-Munkar*), or else avoid him for the sake of Allah- perhaps this will have some beneficial effect on him- but do not stop greet-

ing him, speaking to him, and sending gifts to him.

If he stubbornly persists in his evil ways, then avoid him altogether, and try to move to another neighbourhood, because- as was mentioned before the Prophet (SAAS) sought refuge with Allah from bad neighbours in one's permanent home.

If your neighbour is careless in his attitude towards women and has no feelings of jealousy with regard to his own womenfolk's honour, or his womenfolk are not on the Straight Path, then avoid him and do your utmost to prevent them disturbing your wife, for this may lead to much evil. Fear, too, the weakness of your own soul: do not enter his house, and cut off all possible ties with him...

.. If you fail to heed this advice, then your desires may overtake you, and you will not be able to control yourself, your son, your servant or your sister (i. e. all ties between your family and the family of the careless and immoral neighbour described above should be cut off).

If you can persuade such people to move away from your neighbourhood, then this should be done, kindly and politely, but firmly.

If your neighbour is Rafidi, or engages in major innovations in religion (*Bid'ah Kabirah*), and you have taken it upon yourself to teach and guide him, then try your hardest. If you cannot do that, then keep away from him and do not strike up any friendship or relationship with him; it is better to move away from the area altogether.

If your neighbour- at home, in the market- place or on the farm- is a Jew or a Christian, then treat him well² and do not disturb him. But concerning those whose main concern is to accept the invitation of [Jewish and Christian] neighbours, who make friends with them and become too close to them³, Allah (SWT) says:

«You will not find any people who believe in Allah and the Last Day, loving those who resist Allah and His Apostle, even though they were their fathers or

their sons, or their brothers, or their kindred. For such He has written Faith in their hearts, and strengthened them with a spirit from Himself...» [al-Mujadilah 58: 22].

If this [Christian or Jewish] neighbour is also related to you, then there is no doubt his rights should be honoured.

If one of your parents is a Jew or a Christian, then the rights of parents and relatives come above those of a neighbour, so respect the various rights to which people are entitled.

Do not initiate the greeting («*al-Salam'alaykum*») with Jewish or Christian neighbours; if they greet you thus, then reply simply «*Wa-'alaykum*»⁴. It is permissible to exchange brief enquiries after their health («How are you?») but not to prolong such exchanges, as Allah (SWT) said:

«.. Soon will Allah produce a people whom He will love as they will love Him, -lowly with the Believers

(al-Mu'minin), mighty against the Rejecters (*al-Kafirin*)...» (al-Ma'idah 5:54).

The believer should be humble and down-to-earth with other believers, and he should be somewhat reserved with non-Muslims, as a gesture of the superiority of Islam. Whilst we should not disturb them, we should not befriend them as we befriend our fellow-Muslims.



Footnotes:

1. The following text is adapted from Imam al-Dhahabi: *Haqq al-Jar* (46-49).
2. It is permitted to visit him when he is ill, but not to offer condolences when he dies. This is on the basis of the Hadith of 'Ali (RA): when his father Abi Talib died, the Messenger of Allah (SAAS) told him: «Go and bury him,» but he did not offer condolences. See: Ahmad (807 and 759), Abu Da'ud (3214) and al-Nisa'i (1/110), with two Sahih Isnads. see also: *Talkhis al-Habir* (2/114).
3. Hence visiting them and congratulating them on the occasion of their festivals is not permitted; doing so implies acceptance of their religion, which we know is distorted; their festivals, as is clear to anyone, are part of their religion.
4. Cf. *Silsilah al-Ahadith al-Sahihah* (2/324-330).

EPILOGUE

These are the rights of neighbours, which apply regardless of whether your neighbour is Muslim or Kafir, a Sunni Muslim or an innovator, religiously observant or irreligious... The marvellous, universally-applicable rights may bring happiness in this world and the next.

Hence we know that the misery which is overwhelming mankind in all places has come about because of the absence of true Muslims from positions of authority and influence, and because the just and humane principles of Islam have been lost behind the many backward, man-made systems which have brought humanity nothing but misery, poverty, exploitation, hunger and shame.. in an age of space-travel, missiles, satellites and moon-landings!

The World Agriculture and Food Organization, which is affiliated to the United Nations, announced in 1975 that between 20-100 million people in Africa

and Asia will face death in the coming years. If this situation was to continue, three million people would die of hunger every week. Between 460 and 1,000 million were already suffering from malnutrition.

At a time when hunger is stalking Asia and Africa, we find that in other parts of the world, the West (the democratic world!) -the rich world which comprises 20% of the world's population but controls 80% of the world's wealth -is working crazily to keep hold of that wealth...

Thus, in 1975, Brazil burnt thousands of tonnes of coffee, in order to maintain its price on the world market. It costd the European Common Market \$ 50 million to destroy foodstuffs and argricultural produce which was surplus to its own needs, in order to keep prices high.

America pays a thousand million dollars annually in compensation to farmers for not producing certain crops, to protect its prices.. American farmers kill and bury tens of thousands of calves, to maintain the

price of meat... at a time when, in the same year, tens of thousands of people died of starvation in Africa, Asia and Latin America!

Such is the great difference between the humane Islamic civilization, which does not allow a man even to disturb his neighbour¹ with the appetizing smell of his cooking, and the materialistic Western civilization which threatens millions with starvation and death. How wretched are those who are running after the materialistic systems, whether eastern or western, in the utter darkness of *Jahiliyyah*! And how great is the responsibility of the Muslims to carry the torch of Light (*Nur*), «lit from a blessed tree.. neither of the East nor of the West»²! Only by Islam will the weaknesses of *Jahiliyyah* be exposed, and only by its light will hearts and minds be enlightened, and mankind restored to right guidance, security and prosperity³.

Is there any that will receive admonition⁴?



Footnotes:

1. This interpretation is correct, but the Hadith narrated is weak.
2. Cf. al-Nur 24:35 [Translator].
3. Adapted from Shakhsiyah al-Muslim, p 167-169.
4. Cf. al-Qamar 54:15 [Translator].

AFTERWORD

May Allah (SWT) grant us a good end.

This brings to an end this volume of sound Ahadith and good reports which I was able to compile by the Grace of Allah. I tried my utmost not to omit any of the Sound Ahadith¹ I hope, in sha Allah, that I have achieved this.

If what I have written is correct, then this is from Allah; if it is wrong, then it is a result of my own shortcomings.

And finally: All praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.



Footnote:

1. I mentioned more Sahih Ahadith -*alhamdulillah*- than Imam al-Mundhiri in *al-Tarhib wa'l-Tarhib* (3/352-363).