

Reciprocal Rights

(Rislatu 'l-Huquq)

Author: Imam Zain AL Abidin (A.S)

Translator: Saeed Akhtar Rizvi

Contents

Foreword.....3
NOTES:4
TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.....5
Introduction6
A. Rights Of God Over Oneself8
B. Rights Of Acts 10
C. Rights Of Leaders 12
D. Rights Of Subjects 13
E. Rights Of Womb Relatives 15
Supplement 20

Foreword

Reciprocal Rights (Risalat al-Huquq) is one of the most well known works narrated from the fourth Shi'i Imam Abu Muhammad Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn Ali ibn Abi Talib, peace be upon them (38/659 - Imamate 61/680-94 or 95/712 or 713). The famous and trustworthy Imami Traditionist Abu Hamzah at-Thumali narrated it from him, and Abu Ja'far ash-Shaykh as-Saduq al-Qummi included his narration in several works.' Ibn Su'bah and at-Tabrisi also give the Tradition, but, following their usual practice, without a chain of transmission.' The Allamah al-Majlisi included it in his Bihar al-Anwar, first with the chains of transmission from al-Khisal and al-Amali,³ and then with the chain of transmission from Tuhaf al-'Uqul,⁴ then he says: 'We give this twice because of the enormous difference between the [two versions] ,

the strength of the first [transmission] , and the great usefulness of the second.' As al-Majlisi says, there are many differences between the version of as-Saduq and that of Ibn Su'bah: the text which as-Saduq narrates contains all the rights which the Imam (p.b.u.h.) mentions - fifty in all -, while that narrated by Ibn Su'bah does not contain as many rights, although it is considerably longer since it contains comments given by the Imam, right by right.

The late as-Sayyid Abdu'r-Razzaq al-Musawi al-Muqarram gives the Risalat al-Huquq and its different texts in his book on the Fourth Imam,' where he mentions the differences which distinguish the texts from each other.

It is through the success given by Allah, praise be to Him, that the learned as-Sayyid Said Akhtar ar-Radawi has translated this work into English, choosing the longer text narrated by Ibn Su'bah in Tuhaf al-'Uqul. And it is through the success that Allah, praise be to Him, has granted us that we have published this English translation, printing it with the parallel Arabic text. We beseech and implore Allah to ensure that our endeavours serve solely His noble ends, and to guide us to that in which the good of the Muslims resides, for He is the best Master and the most excellent Protector.

World Organization for Islamic Services, (Board of Writing, Translation and Publication)

25/1/1412 6/8/1991 Tehran, Iran.

NOTES:

1. Using two chains of transmission, both of which originate from Abu Hamzah ath-Thumali in: (i) al-Khisal, vol.2, ch.50 onward, pp-564-70, pub. by Maktabah as-Saduq, Tehran; and (ii) al Amali, 59th majlis, pp.368-75, pub. by Maktabah Islamiyyah, Tehran; Faqih man la yahduruhu 'l-faqih, vol.2, sect. hajj, ch. al-huquq, pp.376-81, an-Najaf al-Ashraf (Iraq) ed.
2. Ibn Shu'bah, Tuhafu 'l-uqul, pp.255-72, pub. by Jami`ah al-Mudarrisin, Qum (Iran); al-Hasan ibn al-Fadl at-Tabrisi, Makarimu 'l-akhlaq, pp.219-24, pub. by al-A`lami, Beirut.
3. Biharu 'l-anwar, vol.74, Kitabu 'l-'ishrah, ch. Jawami'u 'l-huquq, pp.2-9, pub. by Maktabah Islamiyyah, Tehran.
4. ibid. pp.10-21.
5. al-Imam Zaynu 'l-Abidin, 'alayhi 's-salam, pp.1 18-32, an-Najaf al-Ashraf ed.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

THIS is the translation of the booklet of our al-Imam Ali ibn al-Husayn Zaynu 'l-Abidin, peace be upon him, known as Risalatu 'l-Huquq (The Book of Rights). In this Risalah, the Imam has explained in clear terms all the obligations [fifty in all] which a man is expected to fulfill in his life. The original is reported in Tuhafu 'l-'uqul `an ali 'r-rasul of ash-Shaykh Abu Muhammad al-Hasan ibn Ali ibn al-Husayn, Ibn Shu'bah al-Harrani who was a contemporary of ash-Shaykh as-Saduq [4th c. AH] , and one of the accepted authorities of the Shiite sect. His book has been treated with reverence in every age.

My translation is very imperfect, because I cannot hope to find words to convey the shades of the con-notations implied in the original phrases.

that this translation will provide a window through which readers will be able to catch a glimpse of the sublime ethics of Islam.

The original hadith (tradition) has no paragraphing or subheadings, nor are there any punctuation marks or numbers. These have been added in the translation to make it more comprehensible to readers who are used to such aids in reading.

This translation had appeared in instalments in the bi-monthly, "The Light" [Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania]. The Peermahomed Ebrahim Trust [Karachi, Pakistan] then published this most comprehensible and concise charter of human rights as a booklet named "Reciprocal Rights". Now the World Organization for Islamic Services [W O F I S] is reprinting it for wider circulation. I have revised the translation for this edition.

Saeed Akhtar Rizvi

5th Sha`ban 1409=13th March 1989

Introduction

KNOW - may God have mercy on you - that God has [certain] rights over you, which cover you in every movement through which you move, every rest through which you rest, every place where you come down, every limb which you move, and every tool which you use. Some of these rights are greater than others.

The greatest rights of God over you is the right which He - the Blessed, the Sublime has made incumbent upon you for Himself, which is the root of all rights, as all of them spring from it. Then He has made [those rights] incumbent upon you in yourself, from your head to your foot, in keeping with the diversity of your organs. So, He has given your sight a right over you, your hearing a right over you, your tongue a right over you, your hand a right over you, your leg a right over you, your stomach a right over you, and your private part a right over you. These are the seven organs which are the means of all your acts.

Then He, to Whom belong Might and Majesty, gave your acts [certain] rights over you; He gave your ritual prayer (salat) a right over you, your fasting (sawm) a right over you, your alms (sadaqat) a right over you, your offering (sacrifices = hadyy) a right over you, and your acts (af`al) a right over you.

Then emerge [other] rights from you to others, of those who have obligatory rights over you; and the most incumbent of them over you are the rights of your leaders (a'immah), then the rights of your subjects (ra`iyyah), then the rights of your womb relatives (rahim): and from these rights branch out other rights.

The rights of your leaders are of three kinds: The most incumbent upon you is the right of your ruler (sultan), then of your guide (sa'is) in knowledge (ilm), then the right of your master in property (milk), and every manager [of your affairs] is [your] leader (imam).

And the rights of your subjects are of three kinds: The most incumbent upon you is the right of your subjects in authority; then the rights of your subjects in knowledge - for the man of ignorance is the subject.

of the man of knowledge - then the right of your subjects in property, such as wives and what is owned of the possessions. And the rights of your womb relatives are very many, depending on the nearness [or remoteness] of the relationship. The most incumbent upon you is the right of your mother, then the right of your father, then the right of your children, then the right of your brother, then the next nearest, then the next nearest - the most worthy, then the next most worthy.

Then there is the right of your master who favours you [by freeing you from slavery] , then the right of the slave whose favours reach you [by freeing him] , then the right of him who is kind to you, then the right of the muezzin (muadhhdhin) who calls you to prayer, then the right of the imam who leads you in your prayer, then the right of your sitting companion (jalis), then the right of your neighbour (jar), then the right of your companion (sahib), then the right of your partner (sharik).

Then there is the right which your property has over you, then the right of him who has a debt he must pay back to you, then the right of him to

whom you owe a debt, then the right of your associate (khalit), then the right of your adversary who has a claim against you, then the right of your adversary against whom you have a claim.

Then there is the right of him who asks you for advice (mustashir), then the right of him whom you ask for advice (mushir), then the right of him who asks your counsel (mustansih), then the right of him who counsels you (nasih).

Then there is the right of him who is older than you, then the right of him who is younger than you, then the right of him who asks [something] from you, then the right of him from whom you ask [something].

Then there is the right of him who does wrong to you by word or deed, or him who makes you happy by word or deed intentionally or unintentionally. Then there is the right of the people of your creed [Muslims], then the right of the people [non-Muslims] under the protection [of Islam] (ahlu 'dh-dhimmah), then [all] other rights in the measure of the causes of the states and the occurrence of events. Therefore blessed is he whom God aids to fulfil the rights which He has made incumbent upon him and whom He grants success therein and guides to the proper direction!

A. Rights Of God Over Oneself

1. As for the greatest right of God over you, is that you worship Him without associating anything

with Him. When you fulfil this [duty] with [utter] sincerity, He has undertaken to Himself to suffice you in the matters of this world and the next, and to preserve for you whatever you like of it.

2. As for the right of your self (nafs) over you, is that you should engage it fully in obedience to God; then you render to your tongue its right, to your hearing its right, to your sight its right, to your hand its right, to your leg its right, to your stomach its right and to your private part its right, seeking the help of God in all that.

3. As for the right of the tongue is that you should consider it too noble for obscenity; accustom it to good, discipline it with good manners and keep it silent except in time of necessity or for spiritual or worldly benefit, and refrain it from unpleasant meddling of little benefit, which [meddling] is not safe from harm [compared] to that insignificant gain. The tongue is a witness of mental power and a guide to it; and its good discipline edifies a wise man in his wisdom. And there is no power save in God, the Sublime, the Almighty.

4. As for the right of hearing (sam') is to refrain from turning it into a way to your heart except for noble talk which may create some good in your heart,

or which may earn you noble character; because it is the door which allows speech to reach the heart, carrying there different types of ideas, good and evil. And there is no power save in God.

5. As for the right of your sight (basar) is to lower it against whatever is unlawful for you [to see] and do not degrade it, except in a place which provides you with a lesson by which you may increase your [spiritual] sight or gain some knowledge, because sight is the door of thinking. 6. As for the right of your two legs is that you should walk not with them to places forbidden to you; and you should not make them your mount to take a dishonourable path, because they [two] are your conveyance and are to take you on the path of religion and advancement. And there is no power save in God.

7. As for the right of your hand is that you should not extend it to what is forbidden to you, otherwise, you will earn punishment from God in the life here-after and condemnation from people in this life. And you should not withhold it from [actions] which God has made obligatory for you. Rather you should enhance the honour of your hand by withholding it from unlawful things and by extending it for most of such [good] deeds which are not even obligatory for you, because if the actions of your hands are based on wisdom and nobility, they will surely reap a good reward in the life hereafter.

8. As for the right of your stomach is that you should not turn it into a container for what is unlawful [to you] - whether little or much - and that you should not overeat, otherwise, it will turn eating into gluttony and loss of dignity [instead of giving you strength] , and you should keep it under control when hungry or thirsty because over-eating causes laziness, hinders

one from work and cuts a man off from every good and nobility; and overdrinking makes one look stupid and ignorant, and destroys one's dignity.

9. As for the right of your private part is to protect it from every forbidden act to you, seeking help [from your eyes] against it by casting down the eyes, since they [your eyes] are the best of helpers - and by often remembering death and by warning yourself of [the wrath of] God and of His punishment. And from God is protection and help. And there is no power and no strength save in Him.

B. Rights Of Acts

10. As for the right of ritual prayer (salat) is that you must know that it is an arrival before God and that through it you are standing before God. When you realize it, then your stand will be that of a humble [servant of God], longing [for His grace], afraid [of His punishment], fearing [His displeasure], hoping [for His mercy], poor, imploring [His kindness], respecting the One in Whose presence you stand with calm and quite, showing reverence in your limbs, submitting your soul to Him, telling Him the secrets of your heart in a fine manner, asking Him to emancipate you from the sins which have enslaved you and the mistakes which have ruined you. And there is no power save in God.

11. As for the right of fasting (sawm) is that you should recognize it as a curtain which God has set up over your tongue, your hearing, your sight, your pri-vate part and your stomach to protect you from the Fire; and it has come in hadith [from the Prophet] that "Fasting is a shield against the Fire".

Therefore if you keep your organs calm and quite inside this curtain, you may expect them to remain shielded; and if you allow them to remain disturbed behind the curtain trying to raise the corners of this cover, so that they come to know what is not lawful to them through glance which causes a desire and a .power which is beyond the boundary of taqwa (fear of God) you cannot be sure that it will not tear down the curtain and escape. And there is no power save in God.

12. As for the right of alms (sadaqat) is that you should treat it as your deposit with your Lord, and a trust which needs no witness. When you know this you will have more confidence in that saving which is deposited secretly rather than that which is given openly; and it behoves you to keep secret with God whatever you may desire to disclose; and this should always remain as a secret between you and Him, and you should not try to get witnesses to see or hear about this [alms] . Otherwise it will be an indication that you have more confidence in witnesses than in your Lord concerning the [ultimate] return of this trust to you.

Moreover, you should not make anyone feel obliged to you [because you have given him alms] as this alms is [actually] for your own benefit. If you made him feel obliged to you, how could you be sure that you yourself would not be in his position [in the future], because your behaviour would show that you had not deposited that alms for your own benefit. Had you felt that it was for your own benefit, you would not have demanded obligations from others. And there is no power save in God.

13. As for the right of the sacrificial offering (hadyy) is that it should be offered with pure inten- tion for your Lord, seeking His mercy and acceptance, and not for the eyes of the onlookers. When you sac-rifice according to this [standard], you will not be a showy and exhibiting person, but will only be seeking [the pleasure] of God.

And know that God is sought through what is con-venient [to you] , not through what is difficult; as He Himself has made the rules easier for His creatures, and has not intended to make them suffer hardship. Also humbleness is better than grandiosity for you, because pomposity and extravagance are the lot of self-important persons. And as for humbleness

and modesty, there is no pretension or waste in them, because they are natural and are present in the human character. And there is no power, save in God.

C. Rights Of Leaders

14. As for the right of your ruler (sultan) is that you should know that you have been made a trial (fitnah) for him and that he is on test through you by the power he has been granted by God over you. And you should sincerely wish him well without quarelling with him, because his hands are strongly upon you and [by opposing him] you would be a cause of your own destruction and also of his destruction. And beseech his pleasure with humbleness and courtesy as much as is useful in averting his harm from you and does not interfere with your religion; and ask the help of God in this task.

And do not indulge in opposition to, or hatred of him because if you did so, you would be ungrateful to him [because if, as a result of this hatred, he was unjust to you he would be disgraced before God] and ungrateful to yourself [because you made yourself a target for his tyranny], and thus you would be counted as his helper against yourself and his partner in whatever he did against you. And there is no power, save in God.

15. As for the right of your guide (sa'is) in know-ledge is to magnify him, to respect his session, to listen to him intently facing towards him, and to help him to teach you [the] knowledge [which you can-not do without] by reserving for him your intellect with presence of mind, and purity of heart and clarity of vision, by abstaining from pleasures and by having few desires.

And you should know that you are his messenger [in whatever he teaches you] to those ignorant people who may come to you. So, it is necessary for you to deliver his message to them beautifully, and not to commit any breach of trust while conveying his mess-age, and to fulfil your duty on his behalf when you have undertaken it.

And there is no power and no strength save in God.

16. As for the right of your master in property, it is like that of your ruler, except that the former has more power over you than the latter.

You should obey him in all big and small matters except when this obedience goes against obedience to God and hinders you from fulfilling your duties towards God and His creatures. [In that case you should not obey him but should perform the aforesaid duties.] But after fulfilling those duties [towards God and His creatures], you should perform your duties towards him [i.e., your master]; and be busy with it. And there is no power, save in God.

D. Rights Of Subjects

17. As for the right of your subjects in authority (ra'iyyah) is that you should know that you have subjugated them as a result of your superior power, and that they are your subjects because of their weakness and timidity. How deserving of mercy, protection and forbearance is the person whose weakness and servility did your work for you in making him your subject and enforcing your command upon him, so much so that he is now helpless and powerless against you and can find no helper [if you put him in trouble] except God. And how important is it for you to thank God when you appreciate His grace in bestowing this power and strength upon you. And God increases His bounties for one who is thankful to Him. And there is no power, save in God.

18. As for the right of your subjects in knowledge is that you should know that God made you a custodian over them only through the knowledge He has granted you and entrusted you with the treasure of wisdom. Therefore, if you are generous in this commission given to you by Him, and if you act as a benevolent trustee who wishes his Master [God] well in looking properly after His servants and is patient and observant enough to bring out the wealth of his hand [treasure of knowledge] whenever he sees a needy person, you will be a well-guided person and you thus will have hope and true faith. Otherwise, you will be guilty of embezzlement [for the knowledge given to you] by God, and of tyranny towards His creatures; and will be liable to be deprived by God [of this knowledge] and honour.

19. As for the right of your subject through marriage [i.e., your wife] is that you should know that God has made her for you a tranquility and comfort [in worry] and a friend and shield [against sins]. And, likewise, it is incumbent upon either of you to thank God for his/her spouse, and to know that the other is a favour of God upon you.

And it is obligatory to have good fellowship with this favour of God [i.e., your wife] , and to respect her and be kind to her although your [i.e., the husband's] rights upon her are greater and her obedience to you is more binding in all your likes and dislikes so long as it is not a sin. So she has the right of love and fellowship, and a place of repose [i.e., a house] so that natural desires may be fulfilled, and this in itself is a great [duty]. And there is no power, save in God.

20. As for the right of your subject through possession [i.e., your slave] is that you should know that he is the creature of your Lord, and that he is your own flesh and blood, though you possess him. Not that you have created him, or have made his ears or eyes, or have given him his sustenance. Rather it is God Who has done all this for him, and then made him your subject and given him as a trust to you, so that you may keep a watch on the trust of God on His behalf and deal with him as God deals with His creatures.

So you should feed him what you eat, and clothe him with what you wear, and not demand from him what he cannot do. And if you do not like him, be relieved of the responsibility [put upon you by God] by changing him, but do not inflict punishment upon the creation of God. And there is no power save in God.

E. Rights Of Womb Relatives

21. It is the right of your mother that you should appreciate that she carried you as nobody carries any-body, and fed you the fruits of her heart which no-body feeds anybody, and protected you with her sense of hearing, vision, hands, legs, hairs, cuticles and [in short] with all her organs, gladly, cheerfully and carefully, suffering patiently all the worries, pains, difficulties and sorrows [of pregnancy] ,

till the hands of God removed you from her [body] and brought you into this world. Then she did not care if she went hungry as long as you ate, if she was naked as long as you were clothed, if she was thirsty as long as you drank, if she was in the sun as long as you were in the shade, favouring you with every comfort through her own sufferings and giving up her own sleep in order to put you to sleep.

And [remember that] her womb was your abode, and her lap your refuge, and her breast your feeder, and her whole existence your protection; it was she, not you, who braved the heat and cold of this world for your safety.

Therefore you must remain thankful to her accord-ingly, and you cannot thank her except with the help and assistance of God.

22. As for the right of your father is that you should realize that he is your root and you are his branch. Without him, you would not be. Therefore, whenever you notice anything in yourself which pleases you, know that your father is the main root of that blessing [of God] upon you. So praise God and thank Him in that measure. And there is no power save in God.

23 As for the right of your child is that you should know that he is from you and is connected to you, with all his virtue and vice of the worldly affairs; and that you are responsible for instructing him in good manners, guiding him towards his Lord, helping him to follow His commands which concerns you and him; and you will be rewarded or punished [according to your success or failure in this guidance].

Therefore, you should endeavour to bring him up as a person who will be beautified by his good influence [upon his child] of the worldly affairs [and who wishes to be] vindicated in the presence of his Lord concerning his responsibility towards his child by good guardianship and by taking God's dues from that child. And there is no power save in God.

24. As for the right of your brother is that you should know that he is your hand which you extend, your back [support] which you recline upon, your strength which you rely on, and your power by which you attack [your enemies] . Therefore, take him not as a weapon for disobedience to God, nor as an equipment to wrong the right of God; and do not shirk from assisting him against his own self [i.e., warn him to desist from evils], and helping him against his enemy, and shielding him from his satans, giving him sincere advice; and go forward to him for the sake of God. Then, if he obeys his Lord and properly answers His call [it is good for all]; otherwise God, rather than your brother, should be your choice and object of your reverence. [i.e., If your brother goes against the shari`ah and does not listen to your exhortations and warnings, you should have no connection with him].

25. As for the right of the master who has favoured you [by freeing you from slavery] is that you must realize that he has spent his wealth for you and brought you out from the lowliness of slavery and its estrangement to the pride of freedom and its sociabil-ity. He has freed you from the captivity of possession and loosened the bonds of slavehood from you. He made the fragrance of honour available to you and removed you from the prison of tyranny and kept hardships away from you, and opened his tongue of justice for your benefit,

and opened the whole world for you. He has made you your own master, and un-locked your fetters, and given you the chance to wor-ship and obey your Lord exclusively [without having to spend a part of your time in the service of your master]; and by freeing you he suffered loss in his property.

Therefore you should know that after your relatives, he, more than anybody else, has rights over you, in your life as well as in death; and he is the person most deserving of your help, assistance and aid for the sake of God. Therefore, if he needs something from you, do not keep it from him.

26. As for the right of the slave whom you have favoured [by freeing him from slavery] is that you must know that God has made you his protection, shield, help and refuge, and made him a means and cause between you and Himself. Therefore, it is proper that He should protect you from the Fire [i.e., by freeing that slave you are securing a guarantee against Hell].

This freeing will bring reward from God in the life hereafter; and in this world, God has given you his inheritance if he has no relative at all. This relationship is in recognition of the wealth which you have spent upon him and in appreciation of your giving him his rights [by freeing him] even although you suffered material loss.

On the other hand, if you do not care for him, fear that his inheritance will not prove agreeable to you. And there is no power save in God. 27. As for the right of one who does a kindly act (dhil ma`ruf) towards you is that you should thank him and remember his kindness; and spread good words for him, and sincerely pray for him in that which is between you and God, the Sublime. Because, if you did so, you would have thanked him secretly and openly. After that, if it is possible to repay him by your deeds, do so; otherwise keep a watch for such an opportunity, setting your heart on it.

28. As for the right of the muezzin is that you should know that he reminds you of your Lord and calls you to your share [in the grace of God], and that he is your best helper in performing your duty laid down for you by God. So you should thank him for it as you thank one who has done kindness to you; and even if, in your house, you are suspicious of him, do not degrade him in his work for God; and know that he, without any doubt, is a grace of God for you. Therefore you should deal with [this] grace of God in a good way, thanking God for it in all conditions. And there is no power save in God.

29. As for the right of your imam in your ritual

prayer is that you should know that he has taken on the role of mediator between you and God and your delegate to your Lord. He spoke for you, but you did not speak for him; he supplicated for you, but you did not supplicate for him; he asked [God] for you, but you did not ask for him. He has

relieved you from the anxiety of standing before God and asking from Him for yourself, but you have not relieved him from this. Then, if there was any defect in any of the above actions, he, and not you, will be held answerable for it; if he committed a mistake you are not going to share it with him [though you are not better than him] . Thus, he protected your soul with his self and saved your prayer by his prayer; so you must be thankful to him for it. And there is no power and no strength save in God.

30. As for the right of [your] sitting companion is to treat him mildly, to give him a good company and to do him justice in conversation; and while looking at him do not take your eyes away from him at once; and, while talking, your aim should be to make him understand. And if you have gone to sit with him, you are at liberty to take your leave; but if he has come to sit with you, he has the option, and [in this case] you should not stand from that meeting with-out his permission. And there is no power save in God.

31. As for the right of [your] neighbour is to safe-guard [his interest] in his absence, and respect him in his presence, and to help and assist him in both condi-tions. Do not look for his [hidden] shames and do not dig into his affairs in order to know any disgrace; but if you come to know it inadvertently without looking for it, become an impregnable castle to [hide] what you have learned and a thick cover for it, so much so that if spears penetrate into your heart to detect it they cannot touch it. Do not eavesdrop on him when he is unaware.

Do not leave him in hard-ship, and do not envy him in his comfort. Forgive his faults and forgo his slips. And if he behaves with you disgracefully you should not forget your forbearance, but deal with him peacefully. Be his shield against the tongue of abuse, and protect him from the treachery of those who pose as sincere to him [but are not]. And live with him a graceful life. And there is no power and no strength save in God.

32. As for the right of [your] companion is that you should deal with him with grace as far as is poss-ible, and if it is not possible, then at least with justice; and that you should honour him as he honours you, and protect him as he protects you; and strive hard that he does not go ahead of you in any good deed between you and him; and if he surpasses you, you should repay it [with grace]; and do not fall short in the love which he deserves. Make it a point to remain sincere to him, to protect him, to assist him in obedi-ence to his Lord and to help him in any personal affairs of his which are not a sin against his Lord. And, lastly, you should be mercy for him, not a terror. And there is no power save in God.

33. As for the right of the partner (sharik) is that if he is absent, you should suffice him in his affairs, and when he is present, you should work with him on equal footing. Do not make any decision without his decision, and do not act on your own opinion without exchanging views with him. You should guard his property for him, and betray him not in that of his affairs which is hard or of little importance sine it has been transmitted to us [from our ancestors] thus: "Verily, the hand of God is above the hands of two partners as long as they do not betray each other". And there is no power save in God.

34. As for the right of [your] property is that you should not obtain it except by lawful means and you should not spend it except in lawful ways. Do not misplace it [i.e., do not use it in unlawful expenditure]; and do not remove it from truth [do not cheat in accounts, and do not spend unlawfully]. And, when the wealth is from God [as all wealth is] then use it only [to reach] God and to make it a way to God.

Through it you should not prefer above yourself he who will not praise you, rather he will not be a good successor to your inheritance and will not spend it in obedience to your Lord. Thus, you will be his helper in those [sins and transgressions]. And if, in spending the wealth which previously was yours, he looked after his own interest by obeying his Lord,

then he will take all the [spiritual] profit and you will carry the weight of sin, grief and shame, in addition to its consequence [in the Hereafter] , because you hoarded it in contravention of the rules of the shari`ah. And there is no power save in God.

35. As for the right of him to whom you owe a debt is that, if you are well-to-do you should repay him this loan] , satisfy him, and make him needless of you; and do not make him waver [between his house and yours to demand what is his due] ; and do not tarry [in the repayment], because the Messenger of God, peace be upon him and his progeny, said: "The tarrying of the rich [in repaying his debt] is in injustice ". And if you are in straitened circumstances, then you should satisfy him with good words and amiable request [to allow an extension] , and send him away with gentleness; and though you have taken his wealth, so you should not mistreat him, because this is wickedness. And there is no power save in God.

36. As for the right of the associate (khalit) is that you should neither mislead him, nor act dishonestly towards him, nor you lie to him, nor ignore him, nor deceive him. And do not behave [with the intention of breaking him down] like the enemy who gives no quarter. And, if he trusts you, try your utmost to justify his trust, and know that breach of trust is usury. And there is no power save in God.

37. As for the right of the adversary (khasm) who has a claim against you is that, if what he claims against you is true, then you should not try to refute his evidence nor endeavour to invalidate his claim. Instead, you should be your own adversary in his favour, and be the judge against yourself, and be his witness for his claim without any need of [other] witnesses, because it is the right of God upon you.

And if what he claims is void, deal with him gently and put the fear [of God] in his heart, and adjure him by his religion and dull his edge against you by reminding him of God; and avoid superfluous and irrelevant talk, because such talk cannot remove the enmity of your adversary, and you will have committed a sin; because of such talk, your adversary will sharpen the sword of his enmity against you, as evil words create evil and courteous words rout out evil. And there is no power save in God.

38. As for the right of the adversary against whom you have a claim is that, if what you claim against him is true, you should maintain polite moderation in speaking to him to describe that claim, because the sound of the claim itself is harsh enough. And explain your arguments gently ; give

him time, make your talk clear, and deal with him kindly. And do not side-step from your proofs by quarrelling unnecessarily, as you may lose the track of your argument without gaining any advantage. And there is no power save in God.

Supplement

39. As for the right of him who seeks your advice (mustashir) is that, if you have advice for him, you should be sincere to him and give him such advice which, had you been in his place, you would have followed yourself; and the advice should be rendered gracefully and gently, because gentleness turns strangeness into friendship, and rudeness estranges friends.

And if you can think of no advice for him but know someone whose judgment you trust and whom you will gladly consult if it comes to your affairs, you should lead and guide your conferee to him. Thus you will not be keeping your kindness away from him or hiding your sympathy from him. And there is no power save in God.

40. As for the right of him who advises you (mushir)

is that, if his advice is not in line with your own views, you should not doubt his sincerity, because it is a matter of opinion and people differ in it, one from another. Therefore, if you disagree with him, you are at liberty to follow your own opinion; but it is not proper for you to put him under suspicion when previously you had thought him worthy of consultation. And do not forget to thank him for his kindness in giving you his opinion and his advice.

And if his advice conforms with your own opinion, be thankful to God and accept it from your brother, that is, the said adviser, with gratitude. And if he should sometime need your advice, advise him sincerely as he did you. And there is no power save in God.

41. As for the right of him who asks your counsel (mustansih) is that you should counsel him according to his need and ability in a way that is agreeable to his hearing, and talk with him according to his intellectual capacity, because every intellect recognizes discourse which is on its own level, and avoids [that which is not on that level] ; and your way should be [based on] mercy. And there is no power save in God.

42. As for the right of your counselor (nasih) is that you should remain humble before him, and give your heart to what he says, and open your ears to his call, so that you may understand his counsel. Then examine it carefully. If he is right, be thankful to God for it, and accept his counsel, and appreciate it. But if he could not discern the truth, then have mercy upon him and do not blame him. You should understand that he did not withhold his counsel from you though his ideas were mistaken. Of course, if you know that he is not sincere with you, then the matter is different; but in that case, you should not listen to him at all. And there is no power save in God.

43. As for the right of him who is older than you is that you should respect him because of his age, and honour him because of his Islam - if he has any merit (fadilah) in Islam - by always giving him precedence and not arguing with him when he is talking, and not overtaking him when he is walking, and not walking in front of his path. Do not be rude to him, and bear with him if he is rude to you; and maintain his respect because his age is advanced in Islam - because the worth of age is according to the worth of Islam. And there is no power save in God.

44. As for the right of him who is younger is that you should have mercy on him through training him, educating him, pardoning him and covering

his faults. Be kind to him and help him, and cover up his offence [committed] on account of his young age, because this will lead him to repentance; and treat him with gentleness and do not dispute with him since this is more appropriate for his well guidance.

45. As for the right of him who asks [for help] is that, (if you believe he is in the right and you have the means to meet his needs) you should give him [the help asked for], and pray that his hardship be over, and assist him as he has requested.

And if you doubt he is in the right and do not trust him because of previous dealings [but you are not sure that he is lying this time], then be careful; perhaps this doubt of yours is a trap by Satan who wants to keep you away from your share [of virtue] and desires to come between you and your honour before your Lord. Still, if you decide not to help him, leave him alone [without putting him to shame] , and turn him away gracefully. And if you over-rule the doubts of your heart concerning him and give him whatever you think fit for him, surely that is true constancy [Qur. 31:17]

46. As for the right of him from whom you ask [for help] is that if he grants you, you should accept it from him with gratitude, appreciating his kindness. But if he withholds [the offer] you should accept his excuse and think well of him. And know that, if he withheld it, it was his property which he withheld, and he cannot be blamed with regard to his wealth [if he did not give it away] , even if he withheld it from you unjustly, because: verily man is very unjust, very ungrateful [Qur. 14:34]

47. As for the right of him through whom God made you happy is that, if he did so knowingly, you should praise God first of all, then thank him for his favour and try [when you get the chance] to compensate him for that favour, nay, to do even more, since he had the grace of initiative [because his favour was not in lieu of any previous favour from you]. And look out for any chance to make him happy.

If that person did the favour [which made you happy] unintentionally and unknowingly, you should thank God and be grateful to Him and know that this favour is from God Who has reserved it for you. Still, you should love that person [by whose hand God sent that happiness to you] , because he was the means of bringing the grace of God to you; and pray for his happiness ever after, because the source of the blessing of God is a grace in itself wherever it may be, although he did it unintentionally. And there is no power save in God.

48. As for the right of him who was unjust to you in word or deed is that, if he did so knowingly and intentionally then forgiveness is more suitable for you, because it will weed out enmity between the two of you. And, further, there are many people in this world, and it is better to deal with them with good grace. And God says:

And whosoever helps himself after he has been wronged - against them there is no way. The way is only open against those who do wrong to the people, and are insolent in the earth wrongfully; there awaits them a painful chastisement. But surely he who bears patiently and is forgiving - surely that is true constancy. [Qur. 42:41- 43]

And He, to Whom belong Might and Majesty, has also said:

And if you chastise, chastise even as you have been chastised; and yet assuredly if you are pa- tient, better it is for those patient. [Qur. 16:126] All this concerns the person who was intentionally unjust to you. But if it was not intentional, then you should not afflict him by taking your revenge purposely, otherwise it will mean that you avenged an unintentional mistake with intentional punishment. Be patient with him and turn him away [from his mistake] in the most graceful manner. And there is no power save in God.

49. As for the right of the people of your creed [Muslims] in general is that, you should have peaceful feelings towards them and spread the wings of mercy upon them; that you should be gentle towards the wrong-doers among them and reform them by earning their love; that you should be grateful to him who is virtuous in his character or is generous towards you, because his virtuousness of character [even without any apparent benefit to you] is in itself a generosity towards you, as he thus saved you from his misbe-haviour and spared you the effort of protecting your-self from him, and kept his troubles away from you.

Therefore, pray, when you pray, for all of them, and keep your help ready for all of them, and treat all of them according to their proper position:

treat elders as you would your own father, those younger than you as you would your own child, and contemporaries as you would your own brother. Thus treat any of them who comes to you with grace and mercy; and convey to your [Muslim] brother whatever is incumbent on a brother for a brother.

50. As for the right of the people [non-Muslims] under the protection [of Islam] , the rule about them, is that you should accept what God has accepted from them and should give them the rights which God has granted them; and refer to the shari`ah of God about the responsibilities which they have. And if there is any matter between them and you, then decide according to the commands of God even if it is against your interest. And there must be a barrier keeping you from any injustice to them, from depriving them of the protection of God, and from flaunting the commitments of God and His Messenger, peace be upon him and his progeny, concerning them, because it has reached us that he [the Holy Prophet] said:

"Whosoever does injustice to a protected non-Muslim, I will be his enemy [on the Day of Judgement]."

Therefore, have fear of God [and treat them justly]. And there is no power and no strength save in God.

* * * * *

So, these are the fifty rights surrounding you, from which you can never escape in any condition; it is obligatory for you to abide by them and endeavour to discharge them, and to seek the help of God, magnificent is His Praise! in all this. And there is no power and no strength save in God. And all praise and thanks is to God, the Lord of the Universe.

THE END