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## **Duty Towards Neighbors**

"And (be good) to the neighbor who is your relative and to the neighbor who is not a relative ......" (Qur'an, 4:36).

Islam has great respect for the mutual rights and duties of the neighbors. The Holy Prophet (S.A.) has said: "Gabriel always used to advise me to be generous with the neighbors, till I thought that Allah was going to include the neighbors among the heirs of Muslim".

The rights of neighborhood are not meant for Muslim neighbors only. Of course, a Muslim neighbor has one more claim upon us – that of Islamic brotherhood; but so far as the rights of neighborship and concerned, all are equal. Explaining it, the Holy Prophet (S.A.) said: "Neighbors are of three kinds:

- (1) that one who has one right upon you;
- (2) that who has got two rights upon you; and
- (3) that one who has got three rights upon you.

"The neighbor having three rights upon you is the one who is also a Muslim and a relative. The neighbor having two rights is the one who is either a non-Muslim relative or a non-relative Muslim.

"The neighbor having one right is the one who is neither a Muslim nor a relative. Still he has got all the claims of neighborhood-rights upon you".

Here are some more traditions which show the Islamic love towards the neighbors:-

The Holy Prophet (S.A.) has said: "That man is not from me who sleeps contentedly while his neighbor sleeps hungry"

Imam Zainul-Abedeen (A.S.) (son of Imam Husain) (A.S.) has said: "These are your duties towards your neighbor: Protect his interests when he is absent; show him respect when he is present; help him when he is inflicted with any injustice. Do not remain on look-out to detect his faults; and if, by any chance, you happen to know any undesirable thing about him, hide it from others; and, at the same time, try to

desist him from improper habits, if there is any chance that he will listen to you. Never leave him alone in any calamity. Forgive him, if he has done any wrong. In short live with him a noble life, based on the highest Islamic ethical code".

Now, let us ask our self a very significant question; "Are we a good neighbor".

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