

In the name of

Allah,

the Beneficent,

the Merciful

# Al-Furqān

the bi-weekly electronic newsletter from the office of  
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O Allah,

Bless

Muhammad

& his progeny

## Three Types of Rights

*\* ways of redressing violations \**

### Introduction

As the prime creation of God, we the humans are responsible for our actions. Whatever we do has connection with one or more of the three angles of life: self, others, and God. That's why Islam has classified rights into three categories—the rights of Almighty God; the rights of the fellow human beings; and the rights of the self.

The main challenge of our life is to fulfill all three types of rights. "Sin" is nothing but violation of one of these three rights. As fallible beings we have to learn how to redress the situation in which such violations take place through us. The most serious matter is the violation of rights of the fel-

low human beings. Describing the three types of sin, Imam 'Ali says, "The sin that will not be left unquestioned is the injustice of humans against one another. The retribution in such a case is severe. It is not (like) being wounded with knives nor (like) being lashed by whips, but is it so (painful) that these things are insignificant compared to it." (*Nahju 'l-Balagha*, sermon no. 176)

### Rights of Almighty Allah

What you see below is a chart of how to redress when rights of Almighty God are violated. Remorse and sincere repentance is an essential condition for forgiveness. The sin that is unpardonable is *shirk*, polytheism. (4:48; 4:116)

	TYPES	EXAMPLE	REMORSE	DO THE MISSED DUTY		KAFFARAH (penalty)
				without "qaza"	as qaza	
<b>Violation of Allah's Rights</b>	<i>can't be compensated</i>	drinking wine	✓			
	<i>can be</i>	not paying zakat, khums, doing hajj	✓	✓		
		not doing daily obligatory prayers	✓		✓	
	<i>compensated</i>	violating prohibitions of ihram	✓			✓
		intentionally missing fasting in Ramadhan	✓		✓	✓

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		TYPES	SITUATIONS	SOLUTIONS
<b>Violation of Other's Rights</b>	<i>moral rights</i> <i>e.g. backbiting, false accusation</i>		if the person is alive + asking for pardon is possible	= you must seek his/her forgiveness
			if the person is alive but asking pardon isn't possible <sup>1</sup> or if he/she is dead	= do <i>istaghfar</i> <sup>2</sup> for him/her + spread good word about that person
	<i>financial &amp; material rights</i> <i>e.g. money, property</i>	1	if the amount is known & the owner is known	= hand over the amount to the owner or get it forgiven
		2	if the amount is known but the owner is unknown	= pay it in charity ( <i>sadaqa</i> ) <sup>3</sup>
		3	if the amount is unknown and the owner is known	= compromise with the owner on a probable amount/value or seek his/her forgiveness = if there is neither compromise nor forgiveness, then refer to the religious judge.
		4	if the amount is known but the owner is dead	a. if you know the deceased has an heir, then pay to him/her; b. if the heir is unknown to you, then pay it in charity as above. c. if you don't know whether or not he had heirs, then treat it as <i>sihmul Imam</i> <sup>4</sup> and pay to the mujtahid.
		5	if the amount is unknown and even the owner is unknown	a. if the unfulfilled right is not part of your existing wealth, then pay an approximate value as charity on owner's behalf. b. if it is mixed in your wealth, then pay 1/5 of it as <i>radd-e mazalim</i> . <sup>5</sup>

### Rights of Others

The chart above explains the ways of redressing various situations when rights of fellow human beings are violated.

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a.s.) once said, "We will intercede on your behalf on the Day of Judgement; but by Allah, I am worried about you for the period when you would be in *barzakh* (purgatory)." Remember that our God, our Prophet and our

Imams are all just; they cannot ignore the issue when one believer violates the rights of the other believer. Redress the situation or ask forgiveness; humiliation in this world is better than humiliation in the hereafter.

Read the *Risālatu 'l-Huquq* (the Charter of Rights) of Imam Zaynu 'l-'Abidiyn (a.s.) in which he has outlined fifty various moral and ethical rights of all three categories.

1. "Asking pardon isn't possible" here means a situation in which the person whose moral right was violated but he was not aware of this violation and, therefore, asking pardon will further spoil the relationship between the two.
2. "Istighfar" here means praying for forgiveness of sins of the person whose right was violated.
3. "Sadaqah" means giving something in charity to the poor and needy.
4. "Sihmu 'l-Imam" means the religious due which is to be paid to the mujtahid or utilized for religious purpose with the mujtahid's permission.
5. "Radd-e mazalim" means to redress the injustice or violation of other's rights; it is to be paid to the mujtahid.