



# 40 Hadiths on Social Justice

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**Lecture Notes**

## Chapter 37: When Animals Indict Humans for Cruelty

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Abu Hurayra (rA) narrates: The Prophet (saws) said, "As a man was walking along, his thirst became intense. He climbed down a well and drank from it, then emerged to find a panting dog licking the dirt from thirst. He said, 'There has certainly befallen this [dog] what has befallen me.' He [returned] to fill his shoe, then held it in his mouth, then climbed upwards and gave the dog drink. Allah appreciated him, and so He forgave him." They said, "O Messenger of Allah, is there reward in [kindness to] animals?" He said, "In every moist liver (i.e., living thing) is a [an opportunity for] reward."

[Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim]

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ - أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ " بَيْنَا رَجُلٌ يَمْشِي فَأَشْتَدَّ عَلَيْهِ الْعَطَشُ، فَنَزَلَ بئرًا فَشَرِبَ مِنْهَا، ثُمَّ خَرَجَ فَإِذَا هُوَ بِكَلْبٍ يَلْهَثُ، يَأْكُلُ التُّرَى مِنَ الْعَطَشِ، فَقَالَ لَقَدْ بَلَغَ هَذَا مِثْلَ الَّذِي بَلَغَ بِي فَمَالًا خَفَهُ ثُمَّ أَمْسَكَهُ بِيَدِهِ، ثُمَّ رَقِيَ، فَسَقَى الْكَلْبَ فَشَكَرَ اللَّهُ لَهُ، فَغَفَرَ لَهُ ". قَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، وَإِنَّ لَنَا فِي الْبَهَائِمِ أَجْرًا قَالَ " فِي كُلِّ كَبِدٍ رَطْبَةٌ أَجْرٌ " [متفق عليه]

### Introduction

- There is a narration in which the prophet (saw) stood out of respect for a Jewish man's passing funeral. The prophet (saw) explained what he did by saying, "Isn't it a human soul"
  - The prophet (saw) was highlighting the inherent value of a human being. The soul was enough to allow that to be a sanctified moment.
- Today we will discuss animal rights. There are countless narrations on the treatment of animals.
  - If the prophet (saw) had such a high standard for animal rights, imagine how much more concerned he was with human rights.

### Narrations on Hunting Animals

- Ibn 'Abbâs (rA) narrates that the Prophet (saws) said, "Do not take anything containing a soul as a target."

- Source: Muslim
  - Hadith: لَا تَتَّخِذُوا شَيْئًا فِيهِ الرُّوحُ غَرْصًا
- Sa'eed b. Jubayr narrates that Ibn 'Umar (rA) passed by individuals who had erected a chicken and were shooting at it. When they saw Ibn 'Umar, they moved away from it. Ibn 'Umar said, "Who did this? The Messenger of Allah (saws) cursed those who do this act."
- Source: al-Bukhâri and Muslim
  - وَعَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ جُبَيْرٍ، قَالَ: مَرَّ ابْنُ عُمَرَ بِنَفَرٍ قَدْ نَصَبُوا دَجَاجَةً يَتَرَامُونَهَا، فَلَمَّا رَأَوْا ابْنَ عُمَرَ تَفَرَّقُوا عِندَهَا، فَقَالَ ابْنُ عُمَرَ: مَنْ فَعَلَ هَذَا؟ إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَعَنَ مَنْ فَعَلَ هَذَا
- 'Abdullâh b. 'Amr (rA) narrated: The Prophet (saws) said, "Any person who kills even a tiny sparrow without right will be questioned by Allah regarding it." It was said, "O Messenger of Allah, what is the sparrow's right?" He replied, "That it only be sacrificed to feed oneself, not to be thrown aside."
- ما من إنسان قتل عصفورا ، فما فوقها ، بغير حقها ، إلا سأله الله عز وجل عنها . قيل : يا رسول الله ، وما حقها ؟ قال : يذبحها فيأكلها ، ولا يقطع رأسها ، يرمي بها
  - Source: Sunan an-Nasâ'i 4349 – Grade: Hasan Li Ghayrih by al-Albâni in Sahih at-Targheeb.
  - Just because hunting is permissible, doesn't mean there is no sanctity to the animal's life.
- 'Abdullâh b. Mas'ud (ra) says, "We were on a journey with the Messenger of Allah (saws), and he went out to relieve himself. We saw a red sparrow that had two chicks with her, and we took her chicks, so the sparrow started to flap her wings. The Prophet (saws) came to us and he said, '**Who has devastated this [bird] by taking her children? Return her children to her.**' He also saw an ant colony which we had burned and he said, '**Who burned this?**' We said that we did it. The Prophet (saws) said, 'No one should punish with fire except the Lord of the fire.'"
- عن عبد الرحمن بن عبد الله عن أبيه قال كنا مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في سفر فانطلق لحاجته فرأينا حمرة معها فرخان فأخذنا فرخيها فجاءت الحمرة فجعلت تفرش فجاء النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال من فجع

هذه بولدها ردوا ولدها إليها ورأى قرية نمل قد حرقناها فقال من حرق هذه قلنا نحن قال إنه لا ينبغي أن يعذب بالنار إلا رب النار

- Source: Abu Dawud 2675, and its chain was authenticated by an-Nawawi in Riyâd as-Sâliheen (455)
- This was during a military expedition. It shows us that just because there are other serious matters that deserve our attention, that doesn't mean we neglect issues like animal rights.

### Narrations on Feeding Animals

- Abu Hurayra (rA) narrates: The Prophet (saws) said, "As a man was walking along, his thirst became intense. He climbed down a well and drank from it, then emerged to find a panting dog licking the dirt from thirst. He said, 'There has certainly befallen this [dog] what has befallen me.' He [returned] to fill his shoe, then held it in his mouth, then climbed upwards and gave the dog drink. Allah appreciated him, and so He forgave him." They said, "O Messenger of Allah, is there reward in [kindness to] animals?" He said, "In every moist liver (i.e., living thing) is a [an opportunity for] reward."

- Source: al-Bukhâri and Muslim.

• بَيْنَا رَجُلٌ يَمْشِي فَأَشْتَدَّ عَلَيْهِ الْعَطَشُ؛ فَنَزَلَ بِئْرًا فَشَرِبَ مِنْهَا، ثُمَّ حَرَجَ، فَإِذَا هُوَ بِكَلْبٍ يَلْهَثُ، يَأْكُلُ التُّرَى مِنَ الْعَطَشِ، فَقَالَ: لَقَدْ بَلَغَ هَذَا مِثْلَ الَّذِي بَلَغَ بِي. فَمَلَأَ خَفَّهُ، ثُمَّ أَمْسَكَهُ بِيَدِهِ، ثُمَّ رَقِيَ فَسَقَى الْكَلْبَ، فَشَكَرَ اللَّهُ لَهُ، فَغَفَرَ لَهُ". قالوا: يا رسول الله، وإن لنا في البهائم أجرًا؟ قال: "فِي كُلِّ كَبِدٍ رَطْبَةٌ أَجْرٌ"

- This man didn't do anything to benefit Allah but Allah (swt) still thanked him because he cared for the creation of Allah. Caring for the creation of Allah is a way of showing appreciation to the creator.
- The prophet (saw) said "every moist liver". It doesn't matter what type of animal it is. It doesn't matter if it is ugly, impure, etc.

- Abu Hurayra (rA) narrates: The Prophet (saws) said, "As a dog was circling around a well, on the verge of dying from thirst, a prostitute from Banu Israel saw him. She removed her shoe [climbed into the well] and gave him drink from it. For that, she was forgiven."

- بَيْنَمَا كَلْبٌ يُطِيفُ بِرَكِيَّةٍ، كَادَ يَقْتُلُهُ الْعَطَشُ، إِذْ رَأَتْهُ بَغِيٌّ مِنْ بَغَايَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ، فَزَعَتْ مُوقَهَا فَسَقَتْهُ فَعُفِرَ لَهَا بِهِ.
  - Source: al-Bukhâri and Muslim
  - The woman acted in a moment of sincerity. Perhaps it was a catalyst for other good in her life.
- What religion establishes rights for animals, threatens those cruel to them, urges people to give them food and drink, and promises forgiveness for the enormities in exchange? How could a glass of water every compensate for fornication and ruining homes? The secret lies in what is behind the act; the mercy that prompts it and is so essential for an individual and society.
- ‘Abdullâh b. ‘Umar (rA) narrated: The Messenger of Allah (saws) said, “A woman once tortured a cat; she trapped it until it died, and she entered the Hellfire as a result. Neither did she feed her, nor give her drink, nor did she leave her to eat from the insects of the earth.”
- عَذَّبَتْ امْرَأَةٌ فِي هِرَّةٍ سَجَنَتْهَا حَتَّى مَاتَتْ، فَدَخَلَتْ فِيهَا النَّارَ، لَا هِيَ أَطْعَمَتْهَا وَلَا سَقَتْهَا، إِذْ حَبَسَتْهَا، وَلَا هِيَ تَرَكَتْهَا تَأْكُلُ مِنْ خَشَاشِ الْأَرْضِ.
  - Source: al-Bukhâri and Muslim
  - Is it impermissible to keep a cat temporarily in a cage?
    - Not if you feed it. It should only be done for a reason.
- A man once visited the great Companion, Tameem ad-Dâri (rA), while he served as the governor of Bayt al-Maqdis (Jerusalem). He found Tameem cleaning the wheat for his horse, so he said to him, “Don’t you have among your family someone who could suffice you this task?” Tameem said, “I do, but I heard the Messenger of Allah (saws) say, ‘No Muslim cleans his horse’s wheat, then serves it to him, except that it is written for him one good deed for every grain.’”
- زار رجلٌ تميمَ الداري صاحب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وهو أمير على بيت المقدس فوجده ينقي شعيراً لفرسه فقال له: أما كان في أهلِكَ من يكفِيكَ هذا؟ قال تميم: بلى، ولكنني سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: (ما من امرئ مسلم ينقي لفرسه شعيراً ثم يعلقه عليه إلا كتب له بكل حبة حسنة

- Source: Ahmad 16343 – Grade: Sahih according to al-Albâni in as-Silsila as-Sahihah 5/268
- ‘Āisha (rA) said, “The Messenger of Allah (saws) used to tilt his vessel for the cat, and she would drink, and then he would perform wudoo’ (ablution) with its remains.”  
Source: at-Tabarâni in al-Awsat – Grade: Sahih according to al-Albâni in al-Jâmi’ as-Sagheer 19/236.
- عن عائشة رضي الله عنها قالت: (كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يُصغي الإناء للهرة فتشربُ، ثم يتوضأ بفضلها)

### Narrations on Overburdening Animals

- ‘Abdullâh b. Ja’far (rA) narrates that the Messenger of Allah (saws) entered the garden of an Ansâri man and found a camel therein. When the camel saw the Prophet (saws), it whimpered and its eyes overflowed! The Prophet (saws) came to it, wiped its tears, and asked, “Whose camel is this?” A young man from the Ansâr came and said, “Mine, O Messenger of Allah.” He said, “Won’t you fear Allah regarding these beasts which Allah has placed in your possessions? For it has complained to me that you starve it, and overwork it.”
- عن عبد الله بن جعفر رضي الله عنهما قال: أردفني رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ذات يوم فأسرَّ إلي حديثاً لا أحدث به أحداً من الناس، وكان أحب ما استترَّ به رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لحاجته هدفاً أو حائش نخل قال: فدخل حائطاً لرجل من الأنصار فإذا جملٌ، فلما رأى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم حنَّ وذرفت عيناه! فأتاه النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فمسح ذفراه فقال: (من ربُّ هذا الجمل؟) فجاء فتى من الأنصار فقال: لي يا رسول الله. فقال: (ألا تتقي الله في هذه البهيمة التي ملك الله إياها، فإنه شكى لي أنك تجيعه وتدببه)
- Source: Abu Dawud 2186 – Grade: Sahih according to al-Albâni in as-Silsila as-Sahihah 1/19
- Sahl b. al-Handhaliyya (rA) reported: The Messenger of Allah (saws) once passed by a camel whose back neared its stomach, so he said, “Fear Allah regarding this beasts who cannot speak [from themselves]; ride them healthy and eat them healthy (i.e., do not neglect them).”
- عن سهل بن الحنظلية رضي الله عنه قال: مرَّ رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ببعير قد لحق ظهره ببطنه فقال: (اتقوا الله في هذه البهائم المعجمة فاركبوها صالحة وكلوها صالحة)

- Source: Abu Dawud 2185 – Grade: Sahih according to al-Albâni 6/48
  - Show mercy to the animals when they are alive and when slaughtering them.
  - On the day of judgment, everything will speak.
- Abu Hurayra (rA) narrates: The Prophet (saws) said, “Beware of taking the backs of your riding animals as pulpits, for Allah has only made them to deliver you to place you would not otherwise reach without great exertion...” In another narration, “Ride them healthy and leave them healthy; do not take them as couches for your street and market conversations.”
- عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: (إياكم أن تتخذوا ظهور دوابكم منابر فإن الله إنما سخرها لكم لتبلغكم إلى بلد لم تكونوا بالغيه إلا بشق الأنفس) وقال صلى الله عليه وسلم: (اركبوها سالمة ودعوها سالمة ولا تتخذوها كراسي لأحاديثكم في الطرق والأسواق فرب مركوبة خير من راكبها وأكثر ذكراً لله منه)
  - Source: Abu Dawud 2204 and Ahmad 15076 – Grade: Sahih according to al-Albâni 6/67 and and as-Silsila as-Sahihah 1/20
  - The same society that used to bury little girls alive would now fear that animals would testify against them on the Day of Judgement.

### Narrations on Slaughtering Animals

- Mu'âwiya b. Qurra narrates, from his father, that a man said, “O Messenger of Allah, I slaughter a lamb and feel mercy for it.” Or – he may have said – “I have mercy on a lamb [to the point] that I do not slaughter it.” The Prophet (saws) said, “If you have mercy on the lamb, Allah will have mercy on you.”
- عن معاوية بن قرة عن أبيه أن رجلاً قال يا رسول الله إني لأذبح الشاة وإني أرحمها أو قال إني لأرحم الشاة أن أذبحها فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: والشاة إن رحمتها رحمك الله
  - Source: Ahmad 19470 – Grade: Sahih according to al-Hâkim 15/126
- When the Prophet (saws) saw someone lay down a lamb while still sharpening his blade in front of it, he said, “Do you wish to kill it twice? Could you not have sharpened your blade before you laid it down?”

- أتريد أن تميّتها موتتين؟. هلا حددت شرفتك قبل أن تضجعها
- Source: at-Tabarâni – Grade: Sahih according to al-Hâkim and al-Albâni in as-Silsila as-Sahihah 1/23
- Shadâd b. Aws (rA) narrates: The Messenger of Allah (saws) said, “Indeed, Allah has written excellence on all things. So when you kill, kill with excellence, and when you slaughter, slaughter with excellence; one of you must sharpen his blade and comfort his slaughter.”
- عن شدّادِ بنِ أَوْسٍ قَالَ: تَبَّتْ أَرْبَابُ حَفِظْتُهُمَا عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ : إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَتَبَ الْإِحْسَانَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَإِذَا قَتَلْتُمْ فَأَحْسِنُوا الْقِتْلَةَ، وَإِذَا ذَبَحْتُمْ فَأَحْسِنُوا الذَّبْحَ، وَلْيُجِدْ أَحَدُكُمْ شَفْرَتَهُ، فَلْيُرِحْ ذَبِيحَتَهُ .
- Source: Muslim
- Jâbir b. ‘Abdillâh (rA) narrated: The Messenger of Allah (saws) passed by a donkey whose face was branded. He said, “Has it not reached you that I have cursed those who brand animals in their faces or strike them in their faces?” And he forbid them from doing this [again]. Source: Abu Dawud 2564 – Grade: Sahih according to al-Albâni 6/64. In another narration, al-‘Abbâs was riding with the Prophet (saws) on a camel whose face was branded by fire. The Prophet (saws) said, “What is this branding, O ‘Abbâs?” He said, “This is a branding we used to apply in Jâhiliyya.” He said, “Do not brand with fire,” meaning in the face.
- عن جابر بن عبد الله رضي الله عنه قال: مرَّ رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بحمار قد وسم في وجهه فقال: (أما بلغكم أني قد لعنت من وسم بهيمة في وجهها وضربها في وجهها) ونهى عن ذلك. وفي لفظ: كان العباس يسيّر مع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم على بعير قد وشمه في وجهه بالنار، فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: (ما هذا الميسم يا عباس؟) قال العباس: ميسم كنا نسمه في الجاهلية، فقال: (لا تسموا بالحريق)، يعني في الوجه.
- Source: at-Tabarâni in al-Kabeer 11814 – Grade: Sahih according to al-Albâni in as-Silsila as-Sahihah 1/304.

### Other Narrations on Animal Rights

- Ibn ‘Abbâs (rA) said, “The Messenger of Allah forbid instigating [fights] between the animals.” Source: Abu Dawud 2199 – Grade: Da’eef according to al-Albâni 4/208
- عن ابنِ عَبَّاسٍ رضي الله عنه قال: (نهى رسول الله عن التَّحْرِيشِ بين البهائم)

- Ibn 'Umar (ra) narrates that the Messenger of Allah (saws) forbid castrating animals (a practice done to make males leaner).

• عن ابن عمر رضي الله عنهما أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم نهى عن خِصاء الخيل والبهائم

• Source: as-Suyuti in al-Jâmi' 2912 – Grade: Sahih according to al-Albâni in Sahih al-Jâmi' 26/484

• What about neutering cats?

- This is not a definitive prohibition so if it needs to be done so that you can take care of the cat then it is okay. The Hadith was referring to larger animals. If you can avoid it then do so. Cannot do it for no reason.

• Also should not declaw animals.

- Abu Hurayra (rA) narrates: The Prophet (saws) said, "When you travel during a green pasture period, give the camels their share of [grazing] the earth."

• إذا سافرتم في الخصب فأعطوا الإبل حظها من الأرض

• Source: Muslim 1926

• The

- "And there is no creature on [or within] the earth or bird that flies with its wings except [that they are] communities like you." [al-An'âm (6): 38]

• وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَّمٌ أَمْثَالُكُمْ ۗ مَا فَزَّعْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يُحْشَرُونَ

• Some have said: "communities just like you" means entitled to mercy just like you.

- There are also Ayaat of Sulayman (as) when he passes by an ant colony.

### Narrations of Sahaba and the Salaf

- Abu ad-Darda' (rA) said on his deathbed; "O Camel, do not indict me with your Lord, for I never made you carry beyond your capacity."

- 'Adi b. Hâtim (rA) would crush bread for the ants and say, "They are our neighbors, and so they have a right upon us."



- 'Umar b. al-Khattâb (rA) once saw a man dragging a lamb by its foot to the slaughter, and said, "Woe to you, lead it to its death beautifully."
- Abu IsHaq ash-Shirâzi walked with companions when a dog appeared on the road. When one of his companions rebuked him, the Imam stopped him and said, "Don't you know that the road is a mutual entitlement between us?"
- Historians document that when 'Amr b. al-'As (rA) conquered Egypt, a pigeon landed on his fustât (tent) and took it as its nest, laying an egg there. When 'Amr wanted to depart, he noticed the pigeon and chose not to dismantle the tent. He decided to just leave the tent there, and people started building around it, making it the first capital under Muslim rule. Hence, the city is today called Fustat.
- Ibn 'Abdil-Hakam narrates in his biography of 'Umar b. 'Abdil-'Azeez that, using his capacity as caliph, 'Umar forbade kicking one's horse except for a need, and that he had his patrolmen ensure nobody was donning them in heavy reins, or poking them using sticks with metal tips. He also wrote to his governor in Egypt, "It has reached me that Egypt has delivery camels on which 1,000 ratl (~380kg) are carried. If my message reaches you, let me not discover that any camel is carrying over 600 ratl (~228kg)."

### Fiqhi Rulings and Historical Awqaf

- Jurists laid down rules people even nowadays wouldn't imagine:
  - a blind cat straying into a house must be spent on by them because she can't find her way home
  - a horse owner must be forced to feed animal or sell it, max weight for a donkey/ camel to carry is debated, and reparations for when that is violated.
  - One jurist even objected to others' conclusions by saying, "You have been just with the camel at the expense of the donkey!"
  - Animals hurting one another wasn't punishable, but owners were if they neglected tying them down, etc.
- Awqâf (endowments) were a hallmark of the Islamic Civilization, unmatched by any other nation in history. It not only protected people's beliefs and human dignity, but

also the comfort of their lives against whatever could harm them. Muslim endowments even widened to include \*needs of animals\* to the point that chroniclers document endowments for sick animals, elderly, and handicap animals.

- One example being al-Marj al-Akhdar Pasture in Damascus
- Another example is Madrasat al-Qattât (where hundreds of cats lived) in ash-Shâm. These existed in al-Qaymariyya, Hayy at-Tujjâr, of Damascus.
  - Was called a school because they trained cats to take care of themselves.
- There was also an endowment strictly for stray dogs to be sheltered and treated, known as Mahkayamat al-Kilâb, located in Hayy al-'Umâra.

### Conclusion

- When the prophet (saw) came to Makkah (before the treaty of Hudaibiyah), his camel refused to move forward at one point. Some companions said that Qaswah (the name of the camen) has become stubborn. The prophet (saw) said, "I swear by Allah, Qaswa is not stubborn and that is not a proper trait to attribute to her. What held her back is what held the elephants back (when Abraha came to destroy the Ka'bah)."
  - Allah (swt) stopped the camel for a specific reason.
  - The prophet (saw) was standing up for the animal was telling the companions not to wrong the animal by giving it a trait that isn't true to it.
- When there are people or animals on this Earth that are completely at our mercy, they are a test for us just like we are a test for them. It is an opportunity for us. The spiritual incentive makes you do Ihsan to those people or animals
- Imam Subki's son saw a dog outside and told it to go away. He called it "dog son of a dog". Imam Subki called his son and said, "Don't you know that the permissibility of speaking truth is when there isn't an intention of an insult behind it?"
- Show mercy to animals because you know that the dependence you have on your creator is far greater than the dependence those animals have on you.