

The Prohibition of Boycotting the Sinful Muslims
Imaam Muhammad Ibn Saalih al-Uthaimen
May Allaah Have Mercy Upon him

عَنْ أَبِي أَيُّوبَ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ - أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - قَالَ: «لَا يَحِلُّ لِمُسْلِمٍ أَنْ يَهْجُرَ أَخَاهُ فَوْقَ ثَلَاثِ لَيَالٍ يَلْتَقِيَانِ، فَيُعْرَضُ هَذَا، وَيُعْرَضُ هَذَا، وَخَيْرُهُمَا الَّذِي يَبْدَأُ بِالسَّلَامِ» مُتَّفَقٌ عَلَيْهِ .

Narrated Aboo Ayyoob رضى الله عنه: Allaah's Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "It is not lawful for a Muslim to boycott (avoid/abandon) his brother for more than three nights. When the two of them meet, this one turns away and this one turns away (i.e. they turn away from each other); and the best of them is the one who initiates the greetings (to the other one first)." [Agreed upon (by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)].

Imaam Muhammad Ibn Saalih al-Uthaimen (May Allaah Have Mercy Upon him), said:

From the benefits of this Hadeeth: The prohibition (Tahreem) of boycotting the sinful Muslims, since the sinful person does not have *al-Ukboowah* (the status of brotherhood) removed from him just because of his sinning.

Have you not considered (the fact that) the **killings** (*Qatl*) of a human being intentionally – this is one of the most severe of the major sins. And in spite of this, Allaah, Azza wa Jalla, said: "O you who believe! Al-Qisaas (the Law of Equality in punishment) is prescribed for you in case of **murder**: the free for the free, the slave for the slave, and the female for the female. **But if the killer is forgiven by his brother** (or the relatives of the killed) against blood money, then adhering to it with fairness and payment of the blood-money to the heir should be made in fairness..." Al-Baqarah, 2:178. Thus, He (Allaah) has made the **killer** (*Qaatil*) to be a **brother** to the one who has been **killed** (*Maqtool*).

Similarly, **fighting** (*Qitaal*) with the believers has been called **disbelief** (*Kufr*) by the Messenger of Allaah (SallAllaahu Alaihi wa Sallam), where he (SallAllaahu Alaihi wa Sallam) said: "Abusing (*Sibaab*) a Muslim is disobedience (*Fusooq*) and fighting (*Qitaal*) with him is disbelief (*Kufr*)." And in spite of this, Allaah, the Most High, said: "And if two parties or groups among the believers fall to **fighting**, then make peace between them both. But if one of them outrages against the other, then fight you (all) against the one which outrages till it complies with the Command of Allaah. Then if it complies, then make reconciliation between them justly, and be equitable. Verily, Allaah loves those who are the equitable. The believers are nothing else than brothers (in Islamic religion). **So make reconciliation between your brothers**, and fear Allaah, that you may receive mercy," al-Hujuraat, 49:9, 10.

These are very severe sins due to which a person is considered a disobedient sinner (*Faasiq*), and in spite of that he is not considered to be outside the (status of) **brotherhood** (*al-Ukboowah*). Hence, it is prohibited to boycott the sinners.

However, the exception to this is if the boycott (*Hajr*) of such people is a (*Maslahah*), such that it becomes a deterrent which prevents them from committing sin. In this situation, the boycotting (*Hajr*) is obligatory (*Waajib*), since it will be a means to eliminating evil (*al-Munkar*). This comes under the subject of prohibiting evil (*Munkar*).

Otherwise, when boycotting the sinful people does not benefit them at all. Rather, perhaps they will increase in separation and alienation and dislike for the truth and the people of truth – as in the case today with many of the people - many of the sinful people – when they are boycotted by the good people (*Ahlul-Khair*) – they hate goodness (*Khair*) and the people of goodness, and they are increased in defiance [of the truth and what they are being called to].

Thus, we say:

Al-Hajr Dawaa'un (Boycotting is a medicine)

In Nafa'a, fa-f-'al-hu (If it benefits, then do it)

Wa In Lam Yan-fa', Fa-laa Taf-'al-hu (And if it does not benefit, then do not do it)

And if you are undecided, then what is the original rule? Not boycotting!

[Excerpts from the explanation of Buloogh al-Maraam entitled 'Fath Dhill-Jalaal wal-Ikraam', pgs. 293-295, by Imaam Muhammad Ibn Saalih al-Uthaimen (May Allaah Have Mercy Upon him). Translation: Abu Muhammad, 5th Jumaadaa al-Awwal 1435 AH (6th March, 2014 CE)]