



The General Presidency for the Affairs of  
the Grand Holy Mosque and the Prophet's Holy Mosque

Translation of the Two Holy Mosques Khutbahs  
A Joint Project



Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University  
College of Languages and Translation

Sheikh Dr. Osama Khayat

28-1-1436 (21-11-2014G)

## **Rights of the Ruler and His Subjects**

### **Khutbah Topic**

His Eminence Sheikh Osama Ibn Abdullah Khayyāt –May Allah protect him– delivered this Friday khutbah titled “**Rights of the Ruler and His Subjects.**” He spoke about the duty to obey the Muslim ruler, to disengage from any disobedience to him or any type of insurgency against his authority. The Sheikh cited evidence from the Holy Book of Allah, the *Sunnah* of His Messenger (May Allah’s *Salat* and Peace be upon him) and some scholars’ statements in this respect.

### **Part One**

All praise is due to Allah, Who commanded believers to obey Him, His Messenger, and Muslim rulers. I praise Allah Almighty, for it is a duty to offer praise to Him at every single moment. I bear witness that there is no deity except Allah, alone with no associate. He is the Provider of Livelihood, the Powerful, the Invincible. I equally bear witness that our Prophet and Master Muhammad is the Servant and Messenger of Allah; he is the Seal of Prophets, the Imam (leader) of the Messengers, and the Mercy sent by Allah to the whole universe. O Allah! Send Your *Salat* (Graces, Honours, Mercy), Peace and Blessing upon Your Servant and Messenger Muhammad! O Allah! Be pleased with his family, all his Companions, the *tabi’in* (the contemporaries of the Companions of the Prophet [May Allah’s *Salat* and Peace be upon him] after his death) and all those who virtuously follow in their footsteps till the Day of Judgement!

Now then,

O servants of Allah! Observe *taqwa* (fear of disobeying Allah) and remember that you are bound to return to Him and be brought to account before Him:

﴿...the Day when man will see that (the deeds) which his hands have sent forth, and the disbeliever will say: "Woe to me! Would that I were dust!"﴾ [Al-Naba’: 40]

Thus, he who anticipates this awesome moment and makes preparations for the encounter will enjoy happiness. This is because he had already made provisions for this day by performing commendable deeds, traversing all twists and turns to seek Allah’s contentment, making strenuous efforts to attain Him, using every possible medium to come closer to His realm, and hoping for His favourable reception, pardon, and satisfaction.



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O servants of Allah!

Whenever ignorance of Allah's incontestable signs and blessed guidance revealed to His Messenger prevails, and knowledge of the truth taught by His Messenger (May Allah's *Salat* and Peace be upon him) regresses, many people will feel disorientated and their reasoning becomes fallacious. Once feeble-minded, they will soon deviate from the Path of Allah and follow bifurcated and twisted tracks, which will eventually diverge from the Path of Allah and lead them astray.

Consequently, many of these people would hasten to commit sins and perpetrate blasphemous acts through making false claims about Allah. Responding to the call of their ignorance, they proceed to propagate impermissible groundless claims prompted by their instinct-driven whims. In so doing, they are simply obeying Satan through worshipping him and adhering to what he and his party would embellish in their minds as ideal behaviour. They follow Satan who calls them to adopt certain methods, and spread rumours, slogans and claims which reflect sheer ignorance and sound totally unsupported by evidence from the Holy Book, the Noble *Sunnah*, and the tradition of the *Salaf* of this *Ummah* (early model precursors of the interpretation and implementation of Islam). Besides, their rumours and false claims are neither supported by tangible evidence nor justified by any plausible proof based on the exigencies of modern life. In fact, their rumours, slogans and claims can hardly construct a cogent argument.

O servants of Allah! The central focus of their contention now is the duty to obey the Muslim ruler and to disengage from any type of insurgency against his rule or retreat from loyal obedience to him. In fact, a number of sects, groups, parties and organisations are continually engaged in strife against this principle through denying its very existence, casting doubt on its essence, and falsifying its original significance. These groups have used this foundational principle of *Ahl Al-Sunnah wa-l-Jamā'ah* (the *Sunnites*)<sup>1</sup> as a springboard to expound on their denial of its existence, express their scepticism about its nature, and formulate falsehoods leading to totally unprecedented confusion. In so doing, they are actually shying away from sound evidence testifying that such a principle is unequivocally and overtly documented in clearly formulated verses of the Holy Qur'ān, in authentic *Sunnah* books containing explicit *hadiths* about this issue, and in the documented consensus of reliable Muslim scholars and imams of divine guidance.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah* are those who adhere to the *Sunnah* and who unite upon it, not turning to anything else, be it in matters of belief ('*aqeedah*) or matters of actions which are subject to *shar'i* rulings. Hence they are called *Ahl al-Sunnah* because they adhere to it (the *Sunnah*), and they are called *Ahl al-Jama'ah* because they are united (*mujtami'oon*) in following it. (retrieved from: <http://islamqa.info/en/ref/10777>)



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O servants of Allah!

The divine command to obey the Muslim ruler has been formulated explicitly and unequivocally in the Book of our Lord, Allah Almighty, when he said:

﴿O you who believe! Obey Allâh and obey the Messenger (Muhammad SAW), and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority. (And) if you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allâh and His Messenger (SAW), if you believe in Allâh and in the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination.﴾ [Al-Nissâ': 59]

According to the Sheikh of exegetes, Sheikh Ibn Jarîr Al-Ṭabari –May Allah bless his soul– the expression “and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority” in the verse refers to “*emirs and rulers, because in the authentic narrated hadith, the Messenger of Allah (May Allah’s Salat and Peace be upon him) ordered people to obey their emirs and rulers as long as their rule coincides with obedience to Allah and with the public interest of Muslims.*” This opinion is also shared by Imam Ahmed –May Allah have mercy on his soul– and by a number of other scholars.

Ibn Jarîr Al-Ṭabari elaborates on his argument by saying, “*If we know that no obedience can be exacted from people except to Allah, His Messenger, or an equitable Imam [i.e. ruler], bearing in mind that Allah has decreed in His verse that we must obey our rulers (... Obey Allâh and obey the Messenger (Muhammad SAW), and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority...)*, then we are equally supposed to know that the people Allah (Glory Be to Him) ordered us to obey from among those of us vested with authority are actually our Imams and exclusively those entrusted with Muslim affairs. In fact, although it is obligatory to listen to every person who orders people to refrain from disobeying Allah and who enjoins them to obey Him, yet none has the authority to exact obedience from other people in terms of directives and proscriptions except the Imams (rulers) to whom obedience has been decreed by Allah, whose servants (i.e. people) are in turn obliged to obey such rulers in their commands issued to the Muslim people they govern as long as they serve the interests of the entire governed community.”

Servants of Allah! This command about obedience to Muslim rulers vested with authority was as plain and evident as daybreak in the Prophet’s authentic *Sunnah*. Both Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim reported in their *Sahih Books* the *hadith* narrated by Abdullah Ibn Omar –May Allah be pleased with him and his father– where Prophet Muhammad (May Allah’s *Salat* and Peace be upon him) is reported to have said, “***The Muslim is required to acquiesce and obey both what he likes and dislikes, except when he is instructed to engage in sinful disobedience (to Allah); in such a case, he should show neither acquiescence nor obedience.***” What is meant by “*what he likes and dislikes*” is what coincides or conflicts with his own interests.



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In his *Sahih Book*, Imam *Muslim Ibn Al-Hajjāj Al-Kushairi* –May Allah have mercy on his soul– reported, with his own chain of narration, the *hadith* narrated by *Abu Hurairah* –May Allah be pleased with him: “*Prophet Muhammad (May Allah’s Salāt and Peace be upon him) said, “Show acquiescence and obedience in times of hardship and comfort, in affairs coinciding or conflicting with your own interests, and even in case the emirs favoured themselves to you.”* That is to say, in satisfaction and dissatisfaction, in hardship and comfort, in good and evil, and in what human nature finds arduous or otherwise, provided no disobedience to Allah is entailed.

In their *Sahih Books*, both Imam *Bukhari* and Imam *Muslim* reported a *hadith* narrated by *Abu Hurairah* (May Allah be pleased with him) where Prophet Muhammad (May Allah’s *Salat* and Peace be upon him) said, “*Whoever obeys me will have obeyed Allah; whoever disobeys me will have disobeyed Allah; whoever obeys my emir (i.e. the governor I appointed) will have obeyed me, and whoever disobeys my emir will have disobeyed me.*” In the version reported by Imam *Muslim* –May Allah have mercy on his soul– the second half of the *hadith* reads as follows, “*whoever obeys the emir will have obeyed me, and whoever disobeys the emir will have disobeyed me.*”

Imam *Bukhari* also reported in his *Sahih Book* via a narration chain reaching up to *Anas Ibn Mālek* –May Allah be pleased with him– that Prophet Muhammad (May Allah’s *Salat* and Peace be upon him) said, “*Acquiesce and show obedience even if you are governed by an Ethiopian slave whose head resembles a (dried) grain of raisin.*”

In their *Sahih Books*, both Imam *Bukhari* and Imam *Muslim* equally reported the *hadith* narrated by *Obādah Ibn Al-Şāmet* –May Allah be pleased with him– where he says, “*We were summoned by Prophet Muhammad (May Allah’s Salat and Peace be upon him) in order to take an oath of bay’āh (i.e. express vow of allegiance to him as commander of the Muslims). After we took the oath, he explained to us that by doing so we had actually acquiesced to obey him in times of hardship and comfort, in affairs coinciding or conflicting with our own desires, even in case he favoured himself to us, and that we should not contest for authority vested in people who deserve it. ‘Except when you notice overt disbelief for which you have valid evidence from Allah’, he added.*” By “overt” is meant crystal clear, unmistakable, instantly recognisable, and unquestionable.

O servants of Allah! One of the guarantees devised by the religious legislator to preserve this principle, exhort people to adhere to it, and train individuals to observe it, is to pay due homage to the ruler and venerate his prestigious status, avoiding any sign or act showing disrespect or denigration to him or sowing dissention in the community. Some scholars said, “*If backbiting the ruler (governor) or counselling him in public and traducing him is a kind of defamation whose perpetrator has been seriously warned by Allah, then it would certainly be incumbent upon scholars to take advantage of their privileged position whenever they are presented with the opportunity to meet rulers, pay private visits to them, keep their company, and benefit from their exclusive counselling and guidance.*”



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*In fact, public expression of disagreement with the ruler in matters that do not make part of the fundamental precepts of religion and condemning him in gatherings, mosques, newspapers, exhortation platforms, etc. are practices that are far too removed from the spirit and principle of admonition. Therefore, don't let those who indulge in such practices deceive you, though they may have good intentions, as this runs contrary to the long-time established tradition of Al-salaf Al-Ṣālih who set for us examples to follow in this regard. May Allah guide you to the right path!"*

No wonder then that religious scholars have judged the issue of reverence and veneration vis-à-vis the Muslim ruler to be an obligation on the part of his subjects. This is justified by *Imam Qarāfi*<sup>2</sup> (May Allah bless his soul) thus: *"Settling public matters is a duty. However, it may only be processed after glorification of leaders in the hearts of their subjects has been instilled, for any discord between the two parties would entail disruption of public interest. It follows then that whatever is deemed necessary to carry out an obligation becomes in itself an obligation."*

Therefore –O servants of Allah– you are urgently called upon to hold tight to this great tradition marking the creed of the *Sunnites*, to follow the examples of the *Ummah's* predecessors from among the Prophet's Companions, the *tābi'īn* (the contemporaries of the Companions of the Prophet [May Allah's *Salat* and Peace be upon him] after his death) and those who righteously followed them, and to observe commitment to such an infallible approach. Only then will you be able to put an end to the ongoing conflicts and discord, draw closer to one another at heart, unite your word, put out the burning flames of *fitnah* (sedition), avoid evil, suppress your enemies and make their cunning and plotting to their own detriment. Only then will growth and prosperity find their way forward so that you may be able to uphold your religion, enjoy your lives with much bounty and goodness, and widespread security and peace.

May Allah benefit me and you with the Guidance of His Book and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet (May Allah's *Salat* and Peace be upon him)! I say this and ask Allah, the Almighty, the Lord of Majesty to forgive you and me and all the Muslims, for He is All-Forgiving, All-Merciful!

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<sup>2</sup> Shihāb al-Dīn al-Qarāfi (1228–1285), was a Malikite jurist of Berber (Ṣanhājah) origin who lived in Ayyubid and Mamluk Egypt.





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## Part Two

All praise be to Allah! We praise Him, seek His assistance and guidance, and ask for His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Him from the evils of our own souls and from our wicked deeds. Whoever Allah guides no one can misguide and whoever He misguides no one can guide. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship but Allah, with no partners. I also bear witness that our Prophet, Muhammad, is His Servant and Messenger. May Allah's *Salat* and Peace be upon him, his family, and Companions!

Now then, O servants of Allah,

Worthy of mention in this context is an honourable *hadith*, included in Imam Ahmad's *Musnad* and narrated, through an authentic chain of narration, by Mohammad Ibn Jubair Ibn Muṭ'im via his father (May Allah be pleased with him) who said: "*The Prophet (May Allah's Salat and Peace be upon him) stood up in Al-Khaif Mosque at Mina and said: 'May Allah make his face radiant him who hears my words and retains them in his memory; then he conveys them to those who did not hear them. It may be that the bearer of knowledge does not understand it, and it may be that he takes it to one who will understand it more than he does. There are three things against which the heart of the believer would bear no rancour: integrity at work for the sake of Allah, offering sincere advice to the rulers of the Muslims.'*" In another version, the *hadith* proceeds as follows: "... and obedience of the rulers and adhering to the *Jamā'ah* (main body of the Muslims) as their supplication is answered." In yet a different version: "...their supplication encompasses all the people."

This *hadith* is sublime and comprehensive as it touches on fundamental matters without which there would be no basis for religion and life and no well-being in the herein and the hereafter.

The three qualities comprised in this *hadith*, as *Ibn Taymiyyah* –May Allah bless his soul– said, "*encompass all the foundations of religion as well as all the rights pertaining to Allah and to His servants and set in order the interests of this life and those of the hereafter. That is to say rights fall into two different categories: those proper to Allah Almighty and those pertaining to His servants. Allah's right is to be worshipped (by us) alone with no associate. But, with respect to Allah's servants, there are two types of rights: private and public. The private rights include –for instance– those of the parents, wife, and neighbours to be treated with kindness, and they form a subsidiary part of religion as they may not apply to certain people, in addition to the fact that the interests involved are purely private. Insofar as the public rights are concerned, there are two classes of people: rulers and subjects. The rulers' rights include their exhortation and obedience while those of the subjects involve commitment to congregation as their interests may be accomplished only through it. Certainly, they do not congregate on the premises of perversity. Rather, their gathering and commitment to the "rope of Allah" is but a prerequisite towards realizing their interests in*



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*the herein and the hereafter. Hence, such qualities encompass the fundamental principles of religion.”*

Therefore, do observe *taqwa*, O servants of Allah, and make of this prophetic guidance the best instrument towards achieving happiness and well-being in the herein as well as securing everlasting bliss in the gardens of paradise on the Day of Resurrection.

Ask Allah to send His *Salat* (Graces, Honours and Mercy) and Peace on the best creature of Allah, Muhammad Ibn Abdullah, for you were commanded to do so in the Book of Allah:

﴿Allâh sends His Salât (Graces, Honours, Blessings, Mercy) on the Prophet (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), and also His angels (ask Allâh to bless and forgive him). O you who believe! Send your Salât[1] on (ask Allâh to bless) him (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم), and (you should) greet (salute) him with the Islâmic way of greeting (salutation i.e. As-Salâmu `Alaikum.﴾ [Al-Aḥzâb: 56]

O Allah! Send Your *Salat* (Graces, Honours and Mercy) and Peace on Your Servant and Messenger, Muhammad! O Allah! Be pleased with the four Caliphs: Abu Bakr, Omar, Othman and Ali, with all his family, his Companions, the *tābi'īn*, and those who follow them righteously until the Day of Resurrection! O Allah! Be also pleased with us all, along with them, by Your Pardon, Generosity and Bounty, O You, the Most forgiving of all!

O Allah! Grant glory to Islam and Muslims! O Allah! Grant glory to Islam and Muslims! O Allah! Grant glory to Islam and Muslims! And protect the unity of Your Religion! Destroy the enemies of Your religion and all despots and corrupters! Unite the hearts of Muslims and unify them, guide their leaders and unite their word on the Truth! O You, Lord of al-'ālamīn (the worlds)!

O Allah! Grant victory to Your religion, Your Book, the *Sunnah* of Your Prophet Muhammad (May Allah's *Salat* and Peace be upon him) and Your truthful, believing, and Mujahideen servants!

O Allah! Grant us security in our homelands, make good our leaders and those responsible for our affairs, support with truth our Imam and leader, provide him with a righteous retinue and guide him to do whatever you love and accept! O You, the All-Hearing of our prayers! O Allah! Guide him, his Crown Prince and his brothers to do what is good for Islam, for the country and for the people, O You to Whom people shall return on the Day of Resurrection!

O Allah! Protect us against Your enemies and ours in any way that pleases You! O Allah! Protect us against Your enemies and ours in any way that pleases You! O Allah!



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Protect us against Your enemies and ours in any way that pleases You! O Allah! We leave them to You (to deal with them) and seek refuge in You from their evils! O Allah! We leave them to You (to deal with them) and seek refuge in You from their evils! O Allah! We leave them to You (to deal with them) and seek refuge in You from their evils!

O Allah! Make good all our last deeds (just before we die)! Save us from the disgrace of this worldly life and the punishment of the Hereafter!

O Allah! Make better our religion which is our bond, make better our *Dunya* (life in this world) which is the source of our living, make better our Hereafter to which we are returning, and make life an increase of everything that is good, and death a relief from every evil!

O Allah! We ask You to guide us to do the righteous deeds, to forsake evil deeds and to love the needy! O Allah! We ask You to forgive us and have mercy upon us! O Allah! If You will to send an affliction on a nation, please make us die before Your affliction was sent!

O Allah! Protect Muslims everywhere! O Allah! Spare their blood! O Allah! Spare their blood! O Allah! Spare their blood and reconcile their differences! O Allah! Save us and them from the evil of *fitnahs*! O Allah! Save us and them from the evil of *fitnahs*! O Allah! Save us and them from the evil of *fitnahs*, those apparent or concealed, O Lord of *al-'ālamîn*!

O Allah! Cure those of us who are sick. O Allah! Bless the souls of our dead! O Allah! Fulfill our hopes in accordance with Your pleasure! And make our last deeds good ones!

﴿(They say): "Our Lord! Let not our hearts deviate (from the truth) after You have guided us, and grant us mercy from You. Truly, You are the Bestower."﴾ [Āl Imrān: 8]

﴿Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If You forgive us not, and bestow not upon us Your Mercy, we shall certainly be of the losers!﴾ [Al-A'rāf: 23]

﴿Our Lord! Give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and save us from the torment of the Fire!﴾ [Al-Baqarah: 201]

O Allah! Send Your *Salat* (Graces, Honours, and Mercy) and Peace on our Prophet, Muhammad and on his family and Companions! All praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds!