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# Obey the Khulafa with True Sincerity



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By Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad  
Khalifatul-Masih II

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*This profound essay explores the importance of obedience and sincerity to Khalifatul-Masih, the successor of the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>. As we explore the significance of expression and understand the importance of mindful communication, Huzoor reminds us of the etiquettes of presenting ourselves before khilafat and to wholeheartedly embrace the decisions made by the khalifa of the age.*



## Obey the Khulafa with True Sincerity

(Delivered on 29 June 1917)

After the recitation of *tashahhud*, *ta'awudh* and *Surah Fatihah*, Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih II<sup>ra</sup> recited the following verses:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقُولُوا رَاعِنَا وَقُولُوا انظُرْنَا وَاسْمَعُوا<sup>١</sup> وَ  
لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۝ مَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ  
وَلَا الْمُشْرِكِينَ أَنْ يُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مِمَّنْ رَزَقَكُمْ<sup>٢</sup> وَاللَّهُ  
يَخْتَصُ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ<sup>٣</sup> وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ۝<sup>١</sup>

Many people fail to exercise control over

<sup>1</sup> O ye who believe! say not 'Ra'ina,' but say, 'Unzurna' and hearken. And for the disbelievers is a painful punishment. They who disbelieve from among the People of the Book, or from among those who associate gods with Allah, desire not that any good should be sent down to you from your Lord; but Allah chooses for His mercy whomsoever He pleases; and Allah is of exceeding bounty. *Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:105-106 [Publishers]

their speech and writing. The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> quoted a maxim of the sufis: *courtesy is the root to all success*. So long as a person is unable to govern their words, whether spoken or written, and is not fully aware of what flows from their tongue and pen, they are hardly worthy of being called a human being. Indeed they are worse than animals, for even beasts steer clear of danger; yet some people never consider the consequences of their actions.

[For example], if an animal is dragged towards a treacherous place, such as a cave, it will resist. In his [well-known] work the *Masnavi*, Rumi narrates a parable in which a mouse pulls the string of a camel and drags it in the direction it is walking [causing the mouse to think that it is pulling the camel along]. On approaching a river, the camel abruptly turns around and starts to drag the mouse instead. Thus even a mouse might lead a camel, provided it does not perceive a threat; but the



moment the threat is perceived, the camel cannot be forced along by someone strong and powerful, let alone a mouse. In other cases, there are animals which camouflage themselves within trees and bushes against predators and hunters, such as hawks and falcons, to shield themselves from danger.

Conversely, there are a number of people who are often prone to making reckless comments, even though at times the slightest misstep can cause great harm. Allah the Exalted instructs the believers to not use such words that might be misinterpreted when addressing the Prophet<sup>sa</sup>, for otherwise, their faith will squander.

This implies that they were in fact believers. God says that while such people may be believers, they will eventually squander their faith. He will turn their belief into disbelief and afflict them with a severe punishment if they do not control their tongues. This

impropriety will bring about their downfall from being a believer to a disbeliever. Therefore, a person must guard against their words or risk losing their faith.

I have observed that there are certain people who are far from obedient, despite referring to me as Khalifatul-Masih in their speeches and writings. Such hollow honorifics are meaningless. Shias, out of a sense of irony and jest, use the term khalifa for barbers and tailors, but surely this does not lessen the status of khulafa. People have placed no value to this rank but before the eyes of God, khi-lafat has an elevated station. God has granted them respect and honour and affirms that the khulafa are divinely appointed. He says:

وَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ٢٠

That is, rejecting the khulafa is a form of

<sup>2</sup> Then whoso is ungrateful after that, they will be the rebellious. *Surah Al-Nur*, 24:56 [Publishers]

rebellion and whosoever turns away from them stands in defiance of God.

So while the word khalifa, in itself, is not important given that it may even be used in reference to barbers, rejecting and deriding the khulafa—those who are successors to the prophets of God—is a matter not to be taken lightly as it effectively transforms faithful people into rebellious ones. Therefore, do not think that giving free rein to your speech and writing will be beneficial for you. God Almighty says that He will remove such people from His community, as those who are insubordinate can have no connection with God.

Bear in mind that anyone, even if they are a believer, who belittles a system established by God Almighty through needless objections and fail to exercise control over their speech will die as a disbeliever. In the following verse, Allah the Exalted, addressing [the believers with regards to] the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>

says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقُولُوا رَاعِنَا وَقُولُوا انْظُرْنَا<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> O ye who believe! say not ‘Ra‘ina,’ but say, ‘Unzurna’.  
*Surah Al-Baqarah*, 2:105. [Publishers]

The Holy Qur’an suggests that the Jews often schemed to undermine the profound reverence Muslims held for the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>. One of their deceitful tactics was to address the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> in a manner that lacked discipline and respect, or contained ambiguous words with both positive and negative connotations. Some Muslims, unaware of the Jews’ intentions, innocently imitated their language. One such word used by the Jews was راعنا “Ra‘ina” which means “have regard for us.” However, “Ra‘ina” is derived from a linguistic form that implies reciprocity, suggesting mutual respect on equal terms, which could be interpreted as “have regard for us so that we may have regard for you.” The word Raina is derived from the root رعن i.e., he acted foolishly in which case راعن would mean, a fool; a conceited person; a proud man. Because this expression was disrespectful towards the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>, God prohibited Muslims from using such words and advised them to employ language that is consistently respectful and clear. Instead of “Ra‘ina” Muslims were encouraged to say “Unzurna” which carries a similar meaning but without any negative implications. [Publishers]

However, this commandment is equally applicable to others who are worthy of respect. For example, God elevated Abu Bakr<sup>ra</sup> to an exalted station. When discord arose [within the Muslim community], Abu Bakr<sup>ra</sup> declared that even if the entire world stood against him, he would not hesitate to confront those who refused to pay [the zakat] with the same spirit and commitment as they showed during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>, even if their dues were of as little value as a small rope.<sup>4</sup>

So do not think that showing disregard to your rulers is a minor affront and confined to an individual. It is imperative that everyone show respect to those in positions of spiritual khilafat or temporal leadership. Would a person not face punishment if they disgraced a worldly sovereign?

I have narrated the following story many times. There used to be a famous poet,

<sup>4</sup> *Tarikh Al-Khulafa lis-Sayuti*, p. 51, 1892 Delhi [Publishers]

InshaAllah Khan, who wished to remain unrivalled in his ability to praise the king. Once, during a procession at the court, a person admiringly asked: ‘how noble is our King?’ InshaAllah countered: “Just noble? How *anjab* is our King?” The word *anjab* which means most noble, can also be interpreted as son of a concubine. It so happened that the king was born to a bondwoman. No sooner had InshaAllah uttered these words, all around him fell silent, construing his remark as a jibe against the sovereign. The king also took it to his heart. At the king’s command he was sentenced to prison, and while there, he lost his mind and perished.

Hence, uttering honorific titles such as Khalifatul-Masih and feigning respect for me is meaningless. In a recent letter I have received, the writer alleges that I made a judgment against him because he came from an underprivileged background. However,

anyone who issues verdicts on the basis of social rank and status, is both wicked and corrupt, let alone worthy of being addressed as the khalifa. Have you not witnessed that I do not concern myself with people, who in my opinion, are opponents of the community, even if this means that all of them desert me. It is God, Who has appointed me the khalifa, and not any individual. A person appointed by people cannot be protected by them. For example, if God caused such a person to die from a [fatal] disease, there is nothing that his selectors could do about it.

I consider any khilafat which does not emanate from God, a curse. Similarly, I have no desire whatsoever for being addressed as Khalifatul-Masih. I affirm my belief in divinely established khilafat, and disregard all forms of khilafat instituted by human beings.

It is alleged [in the same letter] that I fail to dispense justice or aid the poor. If I am

unjust, why does this individual maintain ties with me? An inequitable person is of no benefit or value. Such people can do me no harm. I have been called far worse things: a murderer, a usurper of the movement, and been referred to in other abusive ways. Therefore, this particular allegation is little more than a minor insult.

A person pleading a case always thinks that they are in the right. However, they have to accept whatever verdict is given by the court. Allah the Exalted says [to the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>]:

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ<sup>5</sup>

That is, such people cannot become true believers until they wholeheartedly accept your decisions. When they have no choice but to submit to verdicts made by worldly courts, why do they refuse to accept rulings passed by

<sup>5</sup> But no, by thy Lord, they are not believers until they make thee judge in all that is in dispute between them. *Surah An-Nisa'* 4:66 [Publishers]



God's appointed khulafa? After all, if worldly courts can issue judgments, surely God can too?

A person who gives verdicts on behalf of God carries in their hand a sword, which though it cannot be seen, strikes hard and causes lasting ruin. Whereas the sphere of a secular court is limited to this world, [the court of] God is convened in the next life. His punishment, though seemingly unobservable, is severe. Therefore, show restraint in your written and spoken words. And if you do not refrain from objecting to the khilafat established by God, you will be granted no respite, and divine wrath will fall upon you in ways you cannot imagine.

May Allah the Exalted enable you to recognise your status and the status of the one He has chosen for you. A person does not attain [spiritual] rank because of who they are. The Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup> was not superior

to others because of his Arab ethnicity or just because he was the son of Abdullah, but rather because of the status that God had bestowed on him. I am merely a human being, nothing more. But given my divine status, if you do not forgo such disrespectful behaviour, you will not escape God's wrath. Therefore, certain matters may seem trivial to you, but they hold great significance in the sight of God. May God give you insight into these issues. *Ameen*.

(*Al-Fazl*, 07 July 1917)

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