

...وَمَنْ يَغْلُلْ يَأْتِ بِمَا عَلَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ...

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

إِنَّ رَجُلًا يَتَخَوَّضُونَ فِي مَالِ اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ فَلَهُمُ النَّارُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ.

RIGHTS OF THE PUBLIC ARE INVIOABLE

Honorable Muslims!

It was the day of the conquest of Khaybar. The Muslims had achieved a great victory. After the victory, the Companions were commemorating, one by one, the martyrs who had sacrificed their lives beside our Beloved Prophet Muhammad (saw). When one man's name was mentioned, our Prophet (saw) said, **كَلَّا إِنِّي رَأَيْتُهُ فِي النَّارِ فِي بُرْدَةٍ عُلِّهَا**

I saw him in the Fire, wearing a cloak he had stolen from the public treasury.”¹

With these words, the Messenger of Allah (saw) taught us that violating the rights of the public is such a grave sin that it can deprive even someone who dies in the path of Allah of the rank of martyrdom.

Dear Believers!

Public rights are ‘Huququllah’, the right of Allah the Almighty; a trust from our Lord entrusted to us. Honoring this trust is a core requirement of being a Muslim. To betray this trust is not just an injustice, it is a form of oppression.

Public property represents the collective welfare of an entire nation. No individual has the right to use or dispose of it for personal whims or gain. It belongs not only to the living but also to generations yet unborn, to the voiceless orphans, the poor, and the destitute. The act of unlawfully seizing treasury, public, municipality, endowment and association wealth and property, called ‘ghulul’ in the Holy Qur’an, leads not only to humiliation in this world but to a dreadful punishment in the next. In this regard, Allah the Almighty states, **“... It is not appropriate for a prophet to illegally withhold spoils of war. And whoever does so, it will be held against them on the Day of Judgment...”²**

Esteemed Muslims!

Let us once again recall what our sublime religion, Islam, teaches regarding public trust and its violations, a matter often raised in the news, discussed in digital forums, or exchanged in everyday conversation.

To embezzle, usurp, or alter the characteristics of movable or immovable properties belonging to the treasury, foundations, associations, or public institutions and organizations in order to gain illegitimate profit is akin to filling one's stomach with a burning coal. The warning from the Messenger of Allah (saw) is quite clear: **“Let no one take even a handspan of land unlawfully! For if he does, Allah will place the entirety of seven earths around his neck on the Day of Resurrection.”³**

To misuse public resources, delay or hinder public services, or neglect one's official duties is both a moral failure and a sin. Discriminating among people while providing public services, giving priority to acquaintances, and engaging in personal matters during working hours is a violation of rights and justice, and it is sinful. Demanding beyond what is rightfully earned for work done is asking for

haram. Our beloved Prophet (saw) warns us in this regard: **“If we appoint someone to a task and give him wages for it, anything he takes beyond that is a betrayal of trust.”⁴**

Dear Believers!

Any form of personal gain disguised as a gift is but a shard of hellfire. Manipulating public perception through lies and misleading information, whether in digital spaces, print, or broadcast media, and causing harm to society through such deception is haram. Hiring multiple people for a task that requires only one is a reckless waste of public resources. Engaging in favoritism, seeking or granting undue advantage, and protecting or promoting individuals unjustly is tantamount to stealing the dreams of our youth. Exploiting certain legal loopholes to virtually form a real estate mafia and unlawfully seize the property of the public and individuals, acquiring these through forged documents and false statements, is haram, it is an act of oppression.

Dear Muslims!

To steal electricity or water is to trespass upon the collective wealth of the entire society and is haram. Misusing government support intended for agriculture, livestock, or trade is a violation of public trust and a sin. Falsely claiming ownership of non-existent fields or exaggerating the quality of farmland to receive greater subsidies is blatant injustice and oppression. Deliberately leaving a farmer's produce in the field to decrease its value and purchasing it below its true worth, engaging in hoarding and black marketing to inflate prices, is an unjust seizure of the people's property and is haram and sinful.

Claiming social aid without genuine need, or staging a fake divorce just to continue receiving a deceased spouse's pension while living together in secret are like donning a shirt sewn from fire. Issuing fake invoices to dodge taxes and using false documentation to underreport wealth are haram and sin. Using a vehicle obtained under disability exemption for purposes other than intended and exploiting tax privileges to turn them into a means of personal gain is a usurpation of public rights and is haram. To give or receive bribes for personal gain is to become deserving of the curse of Allah the Almighty. In this regard, our Prophet (saw) says, **لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الرَّاشِي وَالْمُرْتَشِي** **“May the curse of Allah be upon the one who gives a bribe and the one who takes it.”⁵**

Dear Believers!

Yesterday, we entered the year 1447 in the Hijri calendar. May this new Hijri year be blessed for us all. May our Almighty Lord make this year a means for the unity and solidarity of the ummah of Muhammad, the deliverance of all who are oppressed, a season of reflection upon our missteps and repentance from our sins, and a time to renew our sensitivity and accountability regarding public trust and communal rights.

I would like to conclude this Friday's khutbah with our Prophet's (saw) following warning: **“Those who unlawfully benefit from public property will face nothing but the torment of Hell on the Day of Judgment.”⁶**

¹ Muslim, Iman, 182.

² Ali 'Imran, 3/161.

³ Muslim, Musaqah, 141.

⁴ Abu Dawud, Haraj, Fay' wa Imara, 9,10.

⁵ Ibn Majah, Ahkam, 2.

⁶ Bukhari, Fard al-Khums, 7.

