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## **Who Will Stand up for the Muslim Prisoners?**

by Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah Al Habdaan

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Here is the English translation of a Friday Sermon delivered by Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah Al Habdaan, Imam of Al Izz bin Abdus Salam Mosque in Riyadh, Arabian Peninsula, on Friday 16 August 2002 (07/06/1423AH). The title of the sermon was 'Who Will Stand up for the Muslim Prisoners?'

It was an outstanding sermon and it is hoped that all those who were not present can benefit from it, especially on an issue that has been overlooked by many, even the Islamic propagators.

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### First Half of the Sermon

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

O Ummah of Islam: The struggle against Truth and Falsehood continues, between Light and Darkness, between Guidance and Misguidance, between Islam and Disbelief... and it will continue until the Day of Judgement. A struggle in which the People of Iman will often be victorious, but on occasions they may succumb to defeat...and that is only because of certain surrounding factors that will do no more than delay the victory. As a result of this struggle, Allah the Supreme chooses who He wishes from amongst His servants. From amongst us are those that succeed with the honour of martyrdom in the Cause of Allah. Amongst us are those that are injured in the Cause of Allah, and thus some of our limbs precede us into Paradise. And amongst us are those that are captured and fall in to the hands of our enemy and this is nothing more than the natural outcome of all battles, including the battlefields of Jihad.

Whoever turns the pages of history, will be informed that such a likelihood is the norm and that there is nothing strange about it at all. How many heroes have been killed? How many men have been injured and how many knights have been taken prisoner? But, were their souls overcome with weakness? Were their hearts plagued with cowardice? We wonder, did frailty and misery creep into their hearts on account of their capture??!! We have the example of Khubaib bin Adiy (may Allah be pleased with him) who fell into the hands of the Polytheists who escorted him from the Sacred

Masjid-ul-Haram to kill him. He said to them, "Let me pray two rakahs." When he finished he said to them, "If it were not that you were to think that I am afraid of death, I would have lengthened my prayer." He became the first to establish the tradition of praying two rakahs before execution. He then said, "O Allah! Count them one by one! Kill them one by one! And let there not remain a single one from them alive!" He then said, "As long as I am killed as a Muslim for the Sake of Allah, I do not care on what side I fall. All this is for the sake of Allah: if He wishes, He will bless me with the reunion of the torn pieces of my body." He was then finally killed by Uqbah bin Al-Harith.

Indeed, Allah may show kindness to such a prisoner and gift him with things that soothe his heart. Khubaib, for example, when he was taken prisoner, was given such kindness by Allah as related by one of the women who witnessed the event: "I have never in my life seen a prisoner in a better state than Khubaib. Indeed I saw him eat of the grapes and the fruits that were available that day in Makkah - all this while he was fettered in iron chains - it could only have been a provision provided for him by Allah." On the other hand, a prisoner may be tortured, humiliated and tested; only, however, for Allah to raise his station and rank in Paradise.

Allah says: "Do men think that they will be left alone by saying, 'We believe,' and that they will not be tested? Indeed, we surely tested those before them so that Allah may know those who were truthful to their covenant and those that lied." [Quran 29:2-3]

O Ummah of Islam: Such are the prisoners that have fallen into the hands of our enemies: prisoners in Palestine and prisoners in Cuba and in other areas of the globe. These men: they are the ones who went forth to raise the flag of Jihad; they are the ones who went forth to aid their brethren, to defend the sanctity of the Muslims and their honour at a time when many had become despondent. Such people have a right over the Ummah to come to their aid and to stand by them in their trial. Such was the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) who ordered his Ummah, "Secure the release of the captive!" [Al-Bukhari]

Imam Malik (may Allah have mercy upon him) said; "It is obligatory upon the people to ransom the prisoners with all what they possess, and there is no difference in this (amongst the jurists), because the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) said "Secure the release of the captive!" [Al-Bukhari]

Indeed the scholars of Islam have said, "If the State was to spend its entire treasury to ransom the Muslim captives from the hands of the enemies, it would not be deemed as too much." That is correct: it would not be deemed too much, yet what calamity can be worse than a Muslim to be humiliated at the hands of a loutish Christian seething with hatred?

Indeed you have seen, we have seen and the World has seen footage of the tragedy that has befallen our brothers in Cuba. They were transported from Pakistan on a cargo plane - their beards and heads shaven, stripped of all their clothing, bound from head to toe, blindfolded and deprived of all sensory perception. Where is the respect for the human soul?! Where is the respect in placing human beings in steel cages, the very sight of which reminds people of animal cages?

They are not allowed to leave these cages to relieve themselves except once a day. They are taken out for questioning - hands and feet chained, with their heads lowered, their self esteem broken and running through their thoughts are, "Where are the glorious days of the Muslims? Where are the days of the conquerors? And where are you O Muslims??"

Our prisoners live under the smouldering heat of Cuba. That is in the winter, so what will be their condition in the summer? Even the night, which Allah has made as a time of rest and sleep, the captors have turned it into a spectre of light with their blazing lamps. In the day, the sun burns them and in the night those blazing lamps prevent them from sleeping. So how will they taste the pleasure of sleep and how will they get to take pleasure in food and drink while they are undergoing this pain?

In fact their pain is of two types. The first is the pain of living as captives under Christians seething with malice, and the second is the pain at the Muslims who have deserted them, that there is none standing up against their bleak treatment and that they have been forgotten about as if nothing has happened.

How can the Muslims live in comfort? How can they find their food appealing while their brothers are held prisoners at the hands of their enemies? How can a person take pleasure in sleep while their brothers over there are living under the humiliation of loathing Christians?

How can the tears of a human stop flowing while he sees his brothers over there living in conditions of wretchedness and suffering?

How can it please the Muslims to allow their sons to be handed over to the disbelieving enemy, that they can be deported to the farthest reaches of the Earth and yet nothing is stirred in their breasts and nor do we hear from them a word or an outcry? What of the position of the countries? What of the position of the tribes? Rather, even their families and relatives? Is it not obligatory for them to do something and make a stance?

They should let the American enemy know that these prisoners are not cut off from the rest of the world, that there is someone that is monitoring their case. They must make America understand that the issue of the prisoners is not over yet, rather it has just begun.

No one is excused in keeping silent about this, especially as we have seen the vile treatment that has been meted out to these Mujahideen who raised the head of this Ummah up high:

*Buried for Islam and its people*

*Are our prisoners living well like you are, O Muslims?*

*Indeed the thunder has raged in the hearts*

*Are the prisoners in dignity as you have been, O Muslims?*

*Disgrace is not in shackles and bricks*

*The worst humiliation, O Prisoner, you have left far behind you*

*You have aided the Religion of the Knower of the Unseen*

*And indeed honour, truly you have gained*

*For the honour of honours lies in the depths of hearts*

*Our prisoners have we forgotten, nay rather we have forsaken*

*An enraged lion will not even alarm us*

*For our World today remains long in its silence*

*As if people; the worshippers of the Crucifix*

*Have for sure been following the path of truth*

*What pain to see such estrangement from a Muslim relative?*

O Ummah of Islam! Indeed the previous Muslims have left a legacy for us: exceptional examples of how prisoners were rescued from the hands of the enemy. When Mansur bin Abi Amir returned from one of the battles from the North of Andalusia, he met a Muslim woman at the gates of Cordova. She said to him, "Indeed my son has been taken prisoner at the hands of the Christians - so you have to pay the ransom or bring him back."

Mansur did not even enter Cordova. Rather, he returned with his army until he managed to secure the release of this single Muslim prisoner.

And when the ruler of Andalusia, Al Hakam bin Hisham, heard that a Muslim woman had been taken prisoner and had called out, "O AlHakam! Rescue me!" the enormity of the matter overcame him. Therefore, he gathered his forces, prepared himself and moved his army towards the land of the enemy in the Year 196AH (812CE). He drove through their land and conquered several fortresses. He destroyed the country and plundered all its wealth. He killed the men and took the women as captives and for what purpose but to free that one Muslim woman. Having secured her release he returned back to Cordova victorious.

News also reached Mu'tasim that a noble Muslim woman was being held captive by a Christian brute in Umuriyyah, that one day he slapped her in the face upon which she cried out, "O Mu'tasim!" Upon hearing this he responded to her cry, "I am coming to respond to your plea! I am coming to respond to your plea!" He then departed at the head of a contingent of seventy thousand soldiers until he reached Umuriyyah and conquered it. He then asked for the Christian brute, severed his head and freed the noble woman.

This is how the Muslim leaders of the past used to be: as soon as they heard a plea for help they would rush to respond and aid the oppressed. Indeed, once Umar bin Abdul Aziz wrote to some of his ministers to ransom the Muslim prisoners, even if it exhausted all the wealth that was in the Islamic Treasury.

Abu Ghalib Hammam bin Al Muhadhib Al Ma'ry mentions in his history that Saif Al Daulah spent all the money that he possessed in his ransom of the Muslim prisoners from the Romans, and that Abul Abbas Al Khuza'i, the Governor of Shaam (the Levant), spent one million Dirhams in securing the release of the Muslim prisoners from the Turks.

If money cannot secure the release of prisoners, then other means of threats and provocations have to be used. When Qutaibah (may Allah be pleased with him) ratified an agreement with the ruler of Shuman, he wrote a letter warning and threatening Naizak Turkhan to release the Muslim prisoners. Naizak was frightened and promptly obliged.

The scholars have always had a large role in encouraging people to rescue the Muslim prisoners of war, whether it was by writing to the Muslim rulers or visiting the enemy and demanding the release of the Muslim prisoners or at least in praying that Allah sets them free. Indeed Ibn Taymiyyah went to meet Bulai, one of the Mongol generals and demanded from him that he releases the Muslim prisoners, and thus he was able to rescue many of them before returning home.

Ibn Taymiyyah wrote the following letter to the King of Cyprus:

*"O King, how is it that you can allow for blood to be spilt, the women folk to be taken into slavery and people's possessions to be taken from them without any justification from God and His Messengers? Is the King not aware that in our lands reside untold numbers of Christians living in peace and security? Our dealings with them are known to all. How can it be then that our prisoners are treated in such ways that no morally upright man or person of religion can ever be pleased with?!!! Rather, many of them were taken through treachery and treachery is forbidden in all religions, legislations and politics. How can you allow holding captive, those that were taken through treachery? Do you think you will be granted safety when you will face the Muslims after all what you have done and the treachery that you have displayed? Allah will aid them and give them victory, especially in these times when the Ummah has bolstered its ranks for the Jihad and prepared for the fight ahead. The righteous and the allies of the Most Merciful have become observant in obeying His Commands. The coastal borders are now being manned by stern and strong commanders whose results we have already seen and their ranks are always increasing.*

*In addition, amongst the ranks of the Muslims are men committed to martyrdom operations - they are capable of assassinating kings whether they are in their beds or on their horses. Their accounts, both new and old, have reached the ears of the kings. Amongst them are righteous people whose prayers Allah does not refuse nor does He make their demands come to naught. They are such people that if they are angered, Allah gets angry and if they are pleased, Allah is pleased.*

*O King, knowing that the Muslims border you from many fronts, what good can arise from treating these Muslim prisoners in a way that no sound minded man, whether a Muslim or one that has agreed to a peace treaty with the Muslims could ever reconcile?"*

Abu Saeed Al Tha'labi mentions that when Ibrahim and Muhammad rebelled against the famous Abbasi Khalifah, Abu Jafar Al Mansur, he wanted the frontier guards to help him against the rebels. However, they refused and many thousands of them fell into the hands of a Roman ruler who was always keen on surrendering the Muslim prisoners for a ransom. However, the Khalifah refused to pay their ransom. Thus, Imam Al Auzai (may Allah have Mercy on him) wrote to the Khalifah:

*"Indeed Allah Most High has elected you to look after the affairs of thiUmmah - that you always observe your duty with justice and follow the dictates of His Prophet(Allah alayhi wa sallam) in lowering your wing of humility and being gentle with the people. I ask Allah Most High that He placates the Leader of the Believers regarding the masses of thiUmmah and that He grants him His Mercy.*

*Indeed the Polytheist invasion was successful in the first year and managed to overrun the Muslim defences - their destination being the Muslim women and the expulsion of the old men and children from their fortresses. All this was due to the sins of the Muslims yet the sins that Allah had pardoned were even greater. Thus it was the sins of the Muslims that expelled the old men and children from their fortresses - they could not find anyone to help them nor did anyone come to their defence. The women were taken with their heads and legs exposed for all to see and hear of, just as Allah looks at his Creation and sees how they have turned away from Him. So the Leader of the Believers should fear Allah and should follow the Way to Allah by paying the ransom. He should not forfeit the Love of Allah in this regards, as Allah says:*

*"And what is the matter with you that you do not fight in the Way of Allah and (for the sake of) the*

*oppressed men, women and children who call out, 'Our Lord! Deliver us from this town whose people are oppressors and help us with an ally from You and support us with a helper from You!'" Quran 4:75]*

*I swear by Allah, O Leader of the Believers, that the captives do not have any frozen assets (through spoils of war) nor any taxable property - but only their personal belongings. Indeed I have been informed that the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) said:*

*'Indeed I sometimes hear the crying of a baby behind me in my prayer and thus I shorten my prayer fearing the anguish I will cause his mother.'*

*So how can you leave them at the hands of the enemy, O Leader of the Believers? They are being tested and their bodies are being exposed in ways that we would never allow except only through marriage, yet you are supposed to be the Allah's ambassador on Earth. Allah Almighty is above you and He will take his right from you and deal with you on a Day when the Scales of Justice will be brought forward for the Judgement Day - a Day when no soul shall be wronged, even if we came with a deed the weight of a mustard seed. His Judgement is sufficient for us."*

*When the letter reached AbuJafar, he ordered the ransom to be paid in order to release the Muslim captives.*

*The scholars used to feel the anguish of a stricken mother and a hurt father and thus from their hearts would radiate sincere prayers for the Muslim prisoners. Ibn Katheer mentioned that a woman came to Imam Baqi Bin Mukhallad (may Allah have mercy upon him) and said to him:*

*"Indeed my son has been captured by the Franks and I cannot sleep the night because of my longing for him. I have a small house that I can sell as a ransom for my son, so can you guide me to anyone that would buy it so that I may work at setting my son free with the price that I obtain from the sale? For indeed I live my day and night unsettled, I cannot find any sleep or patience or rest." (And this is the situation of the mothers of today - for how can her eyelids close when she knows her children are captives at the hands of her enemies - and to Allah she raises her complaint.) Thus Imam Baqi said, "Depart now so that I may look into this matter by the Permission of Allah."*

*The scholar bowed his head and moved his lips, praying to Allah the Almighty to release her son from the clutches of the Franks. It was not long before the woman returned to the scholar with her son beside her. She said, "Listen to his story, may Allah have mercy upon you."*

*Imam Baqi said, "Tell us your story." The boy said, "I was amongst those who used to serve the King - all the time bound in fetters, and one day, while I was walking, the chain broke loose from my feet. Therefore, my guard then came to me and swore at me and said, 'Why have you removed the chain from your feet?' I said, 'No, I swear by Allah I did not even touch it. It just came loose and I didn't even feel it fall.'*

*So they brought the blacksmith, who put the chain back on my feet, fixed the link and tightened the screws firmly. As soon as I stood up, the chain again broke loose so they put it back again - this time even more securely, and again it fell. They then asked their monks about the cause of this. Their monks asked, 'Does he have a mother?' I replied, 'Yes.' They replied, 'Indeed she has prayed for you and her prayers have been answered. Set him free!' So they set me free and guarded me until I arrived at the Islamic lands."*

Baqi bin Mukhallad asked the boy about the exact hour in which the chain broke loose from his leg and lo and behold it was the exact hour in which he prayed to Allah to set the boy free!

Do the Muslim scholars follow in the path of such unique examples and play their part in trying to rescue our prisoners from the hands of the wicked enemy? Are the scholars moving to advise those responsible, to make this into a real cause and issue? O Allah! Have I conveyed the message? O Allah may You be my witness! May Allah bless me and you through this great Quran.

### Second Half of the Sermon

O Ummah of Islam! This is a letter from a prisoner to all those who are responsible: to every scholar... to every Muslim... to all men and women...O Muslims...

*"Indeed I am living through testing times. Illness has overwhelmed me and fatigue has exhausted me. The sun blazes continuously until sunset and the dealings of the captors are very harsh. Every time I enter or exit my cage, the chains are on my hands and feet. I am weighed down by their weight. What can be bitterer than to fall into the hands of a seething enemy? What can be more distressing than to be forced to bow and be humiliated in front of a Christian lout? However, to Allah I complain of my helplessness, the weakness of my stratagem and my dishonour in front of people. O Most Merciful! You are the Lord of the oppressed! You are my Lord! Whoever have you entrusted me with, whether into the hands of a distant person who frowns upon me or to an enemy who has been given control over my affairs, but as long as Your Wrath does not fall upon me then I do not care.*

*But Your Pardon is sufficient for me. I seek protection from the Light of Your Face that illuminates the darkness, through which the affairs of this World and the Hereafter are set right. May it never be that I should incur Your Wrath, or that you should be angry with me. And there is neither power nor recourse but to You Alone!*

*O to the one who hears my letter, whatever situation I am in from anguish, misery and distress, it pales in comparison to what runs through my head when I think of how the Muslims have forsaken us. How they have forgotten our issue, how they have not raised awareness of our plight ... as if we are people of another planet ... as if we are not Muslims. It is indeed shameful that the Western organisations are moving to defend our cause in the midst of the incompetence and apathy of the Muslims towards our situation. It is strange how Australian-American relations can become strained because of one Australian prisoner and how the relationship between the Anglo-American Alliance has become worse because of a few British detainees. As for us, no one will cry for us despite there being more than six hundred of us. Rather, if it was not for America declaring our nationalities, the Arab countries would have continued pretending to ignore us and our existence.*

*O to the one who hears our letter ... we are the prisoners...we will stand against you all before Allah*

*on the Day of Judgement and we will say to Him ... 'These people, they knew the orders of your Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) regarding freeing the prisoner, but they did not oblige nor did they take all the courses of action that could lead to our freedom.'*

*Indeed we call out to all people who are jealous of their religion. We call you with the bond dīnan that is between us, that you move to make our issue a living issue. Through lawyers that can demand our release, to speak about our plight via the media, to put pressure on America, to warn her that it is against her interests if she does not let us free. As for the one who can do nothing then the very least that he can do is to raise his arms in the last third of the night praying against the oppressor and the despondent one, asking Allah to relieve us of our woes and to remove the burden from us. The Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) said, 'Whoever forsakes a Muslim in a situation while he has the ability to help him, Allah will forsake him at a time when he would want the help of Allah.' And he said (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam), 'Whoever removes a grief from a Muslim, Allah will remove a grief from him on the Day of Judgement.'*

*If you do forget us - then please do not forget our wives and our children, to care and look after them, for we can bear with resolve - and to Allah do we pass our complaint. And finally to my dear and beloved mother and father, have patience; seek the reward from Allah and say often, 'There is no recourse or power except with Allah,' as our Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) advised us.*

*Indeed Auf bin Malik Al Ashja'i came to the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) and said, 'O Messenger of Allah! Indeed the enemy has taken my son prisoner and his mother has become distressed. What do you order me to do?' He (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) replied, 'I order you and her to say as often as you can, "There is no recourse nor power except with Allah."' The woman said to her husband, 'What a blessed thing he has asked you to do.' So they began to repeatedly say this, until the enemy then became negligent and the son managed to flee with a herd of four thousand sheep, which he then brought to his father. The following verse of the Quran was then revealed, "Whoever fears Allah, Allah will find a way out for him (from every difficulty) and He will provide for him from sources that he could never have imagined." [Quran 65:2-3]*

*Finally do not forget our plight. We are the prisoners... we are your sons in Cuba... do not forget our plight ... do not forget our plight..."*

O Muslims these letters will I first address to the scholars... yes, the scholars who are the inheritors of the Prophets. On their shoulders is a responsibility that is not on others. You have seen what lengths your predecessors went to in rescuing the Muslim prisoners. You have seen what Sheikh-ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah did and what Imam Al Awza'i did and many others like them have done. So what role will you play in making this an issue and speaking to those in authority to try to secure the release of the prisoners, or at least in improving their dealings with them, speaking about them in the general media, generating the opinion of the masses against this seething enemy and telling people the risks they are taking in their religion by forsaking these prisoners and keeping silent about their plight? So fear Allah, O scholars of Islam, and be amongst the best successors so that you can be amongst the best predecessors.

The second letter to the families of the prisoners, to the families of the heroes, to the families of those who raised our heads... you should know that your sons were not imprisoned because of giving into lowly desires, nor due to a crime that people would hide away from in shame. Rather, the whole

World is proud of your sons, they were not taken except from the highest peaks of this religion, doing Jihad in the Cause of Allah, defending the honour and fighting the disbelievers. This rank should delight you and this honour deserves your congratulations and that your eyes should be soothed at the sight of these heroes.

And the third letter to our brothers...to our beloved ones...to those with whom we share their pain and we sense their affliction... to our brothers who have been captured...O heroes of Islam...patience, perseverance and steadfastness! O to you who remain lofty at a time of disgrace, I send to you these following lines of poetry to lift your spirits, let them speak on behalf of you, O Knights of Honour: To my beloved brothers whose enemies captured them in the proud land of Afghanistan, some of whom were sent to Cuba and others to the prisons of Pakistan. To all of them, I send these words of determination and defiance. And whosoever is truthful with Allah, then Allah will not disappoint his opinion!!

*I will live with honour my friends  
And I will always pulverise the people of hypocrisy  
I will continue on my path towards glory  
Even if the enemies cut my hands and legs  
I will continue towards martyrdom in firmness  
For I and Death are in a race  
And my passing away will not end the War against Disbelief  
For the Religion of Allah is protected and everlasting  
So O those who know me, do not say  
Why did you lead yourself to strangulation?  
For I am a believer with high ambitions  
And I am not pleased with humiliation or disgrace  
And my ultimate goal is pleasing my Lord  
And achieving Success in the topmost of my goals  
And my highest wish is to continue towards Eternity  
For I long for the Paradise Maidens  
So O my Father if you could see my state  
And they have placed shackles upon my shoulders  
And they have bound my hands with the steel of oppression  
And they have bowed my head like an invalid  
And they have removed my clothing for no sin  
And they have marched me whilst tears were in my eyes  
And the whips of treachery have exacted from me  
So I became prey beneath the feet of the predator  
And you saw me whilst the blood of my face  
Was flowing with the hands of skillful politicians  
So do not be sad, O my father, for I  
Seek protection with my Creator since to him belongs my end  
And what can the enemies do?  
Since Allah is for Islam a Preserver  
So if they spilt my blood everyday  
And they placed barriers between me and my brothers  
And if they made my life hell*

*And the universe became black like eternal darkness  
 And if they prevented the air from reaching my nose  
 And if they placed my veins on the noose  
 And if they poured flames of molten brass  
 Upon my body like cool water to my skin  
 Then they will never reach, O my father,  
 To my heart and they will never bend my determination  
 I will remain defiant, for my provision is my Book,  
 And the words of the Chosen Prophet, in them is my inspiration  
 I will remain, my father, an impregnable fortress  
 I will remain lofty in the sky of glory  
 And soon I will revive the days that have passed, into the memories of  
 Salahudeen and the rest of the lions  
 And soon will come a day in which will feel misery  
 The tyrants and the heads of hypocrisy  
 The people taste worry through desires  
 And some of them will burn by fire  
 But I live pure of heart  
 I taste, through my dignity, the sweetest of tastes*

O Muslims! After this long exposition, I summarise to you in point form and I advise you all:

1. Keep alive the plight of the prisoners in the media, shed some light on it and expose American politics towards the Muslims.
2. Contact institutions and organisations that are concerned about human rights, to intervene and lighten the torture that the Mujahid prisoners are undergoing.
3. Put pressure on governments demanding them to extract information about the prisoners and to return them to their countries.
4. Form a body of sincere lawyers to give weight to the issue both in their own countries and abroad.
5. Announce Jihad against the heads of disbelief in order to secure the release of the Muslim prisoners, as our leaders and rulers had done previously...this is what Mansur bin Abi Amir did, and Mu'tasim, and Al Hakam bin Hisham and others had all done.

*O Allah, the Living, the Everlasting!  
 O Allah, release the Muslim captives!  
 O Allah, release the Muslim captives!  
 O Allah, release our prisoners and the rest of the Muslim prisoners!  
 O Allah, release our prisoners in Palestine! And in Kashmir! And in the Philippines! And in Cuba!  
 O Allah, hasten to them a solution to their plight!  
 O Allah, hasten to them a solution to their plight!  
 O Allah, hasten to them a solution to their plight!  
 O Allah, end their captivity!  
 O Allah, have Mercy on their weak!  
 O Allah, have Mercy on their weak!  
 O Allah, make their hearts firm!  
 O Allah, bond Iman to their hearts!*

*O Allah, bond Iman to their hearts!*  
*O Allah, bless them with steadfastness!*  
*O Allah, bless them with steadfastness!*  
*O Allah, make them firm, O Living, O Everlasting One!*  
*O Allah, make them firm, O Living, O Everlasting One!*  
*O Allah, have Mercy on their weak! And strengthen their broken ones!*  
*O Allah, upon You is the fate of the treacherous Jews! And the oppressive Christians!*  
*O Allah, unleash Your Might against them!*  
*O Allah, unleash Your Might against them!*  
*O Allah, unleash Your Might against them!*  
*O Allah, curse them a Mighty Curse!*  
*O Allah, show us in them the wonders of Your Power!*  
*O Allah, let there not remain a military plane of theirs in the skies except that you bring it down!*  
*And not a tank on the Earth except that You destroy it!*  
*And not a cruiser in the sea except that You sink it!*  
*O Allah, upon You is the fate of the hypocrites and traitors!*  
*O Allah, let them not establish a banner! And let them not achieve their goals!*  
*And make them for those that come after them, a lesson and a sign!*  
*O Allah, help the Mujahideen in every land!*  
*O Allah, establish the banner of Jihad!*  
*O Allah, establish the banner of Jihad!*  
*O Allah, establish the banner of Jihad!*  
*And make it overpower polytheism, disbelief and injustice!*  
*O Allah, guide this Ummah towards righteousness!*  
*And towards Your Obedience!*  
*And away from disobedience of You! And to enjoin the good! And to forbid the evil!*  
*O Glorious One, Full of Honour!*  
*O Allah, protect our homelands and our dwellings!*  
*And reform the leaders amongst us! O Great All Forgiving One!*  
 Glory be to Your Lord, the Lord of Honour above what they ascribe to Him... and peace be upon the Messengers... and Praise be to the Lord of the Worlds. And Peace and Blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad.

## **Statements of the Classical Scholars On Freeing Muslim Captives**

The scholars have many positions on this subject, but they are agreed upon it being obligatory to free the Muslim prisoners of war, by either sacrificing ourselves or by our wealth.

Ibn Qudamah Al-Hanbali said (Al-Mughni 9/228):

It is obligatory to pay the ransom money for the Muslim prisoners, if it is possible.

This was also said by Umar bin Abdul-Aziz, Imam Malik and Ishaq. It has been narrated from Ibn

Zubair that he asked Al-Hassan bin Ali about freeing the prisoners. Al-Hassan replied: "It is obligatory upon the entire Earth on which he was fighting."

It has been established from the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) that he said: "Feed the hungry, visit the sick and free the prisoner."

It has been narrated by Saeed through his chain from Hibban bin Jabalah, that the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) said: "Indeed it is obligatory upon the Muslims to free their captives or to pay their ransoms."

The Messenger of Allah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) wrote a letter advising the Muhajireen and Ansar: "To restrain the enemy soldiers in their fortresses and to free the Muslim captives with goodness."

The Messenger of Allah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) paid the ransom for two Muslim men with a man who he (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) had taken from Bani Uqail, and he paid the ransom for two people with a woman who was given as a gift by Salamah bin Al-Akwa.

These evidences show how the prisoners were freed, not specifying any particular way. However, if we are able to free the prisoners through a particular way then it becomes obligatory upon us to take that course. This is what the jurists did and they said: "It is compulsory upon us to even wage war in order to release the Muslim captives, if we are in a position to wage war."

Imam An-Nawawi said (Ar-Raudah 10/216):

If the enemy capture a Muslim or two, then is it equivalent to invading a Muslim land? There are two opinions on this. The first opinion is no, because the troubling of one Muslim soldier is insignificant. The more correct and other opinion of the two is yes, because the sanctity of a single Muslim is greater than the sanctity of an entire state. Therefore, if the Islamic State is close to the location where the prisoner was captured, then it should release the prisoner and exact a fine from those who have captured him. (Otherwise, paying the ransom money is wajib (compulsory) if we can free the prisoner by it).

Al-Qurtubi (2/26) said:

Our scholars have said that ransoming the prisoners with money is wajib (obligatory), even if one dirham does not remain in the Islamic Treasury. Ibn Khuwaiz Mindad has confirmed the existence of verses of the Quran that indicate the obligation of releasing the prisoners. It has also been narrated from the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) that he ransomed the prisoners and ordered others to do so as well. This has also been course taken by the Muslims and their consensus that it is incumbent to free the prisoners by taking money from the Islamic Treasury, and if that is not possible, then it becomes compulsory as a collective duty: if one person executes it, the sin is lifted from the shoulders of the rest of the Muslims.

Related from the author of The Book of Jihad and Fighting in Islamic Politics from the author of As-Seer Al-Kabeer with its commentary (3/1583):

It is OK to exchange both male and female non-Muslim prisoners who are in the hands of the Muslims, for Muslim prisoners. This is the opinion held by Abu Yusuf, Muhammad and it is the strongest opinion held by Abu Hanifah (may Allah be pleased with him).

Ibn Juzai Al-Maliki said (Page 172 of Qawaneen Al-Ahkam Ash-Shar'iyyah):

It is necessary to rescue the Muslim prisoners from the hands of the disbelievers by fighting them. If the Muslims are unable to do so, then it becomes compulsory upon them to pay the ransom money. It is incumbent on a rich person to ransom himself and on the Imam (leader), to pay the ransom money for the poor people, from the Islamic Treasury. If they still fall short, then it becomes compulsory to take from the wealth of all the Muslims, even if it finishes their wealth.

Al-Izz bin Abdus-Salam said (Page 97 from Ahkam Al-Jihad wa Fadailihi):

Rescuing the Muslim prisoners from the hands of the disbelievers is one of the best means of coming close to Allah. Some of the scholars have said: "If even one Muslim is captured, it becomes compulsory upon us to persevere in fighting the disbelieving enemy until we either free the Muslim captives or destroy the disbelieving enemy. Therefore, what do you say if they capture a large number of Muslims!?"

Ibn Nuhaas transmits from An-Nawawi in Ar-Raudah (2/838 from Mashari Al-Ashwaq ila Masari' Al-Ushaq):

If the enemy capture a Muslim or two, then is it equivalent to invading a Muslim land? There are two opinions on this. The first opinion is no, because the troubling of one Muslim soldier is insignificant. The more correct and other opinion of the two is yes, because the sanctity of a single Muslim is greater than the sanctity of an entire state.

Sheikh-ul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said (Al-Fatawa 28/635):

Freeing the prisoners is one of the greatest compulsory deeds and spending ransom money and other means towards that, is one of the greatest ways to come close to Allah.

Ibn Al-Arabi said (Ahkam Al-Quran 2/440):

Unless the prisoners are from the weak and oppressed, then the State should be steadfast in their cause. To help them with our bodies is wajib (obligatory) and no one should remain behind until they all leave to rescue them or spend all of their wealth to rescue them. This was said by Imam Malik and all of the scholars. Verily, to Allah we belong and to Him we must return, if we leave our brothers in the hands of the enemy and they have wealth, weapons, number, strength and authority.

Ibn Hajar Al-Haithami said (Tuhfah Al-Muhtaj 9/237) said:

If the enemy captures a single Muslim, it becomes wajib (obligatory) on every one who has the ability, to rush to their rescue (even without seeking anyone's permission). It is apparent that it is compulsory on everyone, similar to the situation where the enemy invades our land. Moreover, saving our brothers is of a higher priority, as the sanctity of a Muslim is greater (than the sanctity of a State).

Abu Bakr Al-Jassas (Ahkam Al-Quran 1/58) said:

The ransoming of Muslim prisoners is one of the obligatory deeds that has been established upon us. Al-Hajjaj bin Artaah narrated about this ruling from his grandfather, that the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) wrote a letter to the Muhajireen and Ansar, to detain the enemy prisoners in their stronghold, ransom their prisoners for something befitting and for peacemaking amongst the Muslims. Mansoor narrated from Shaqeeq bin Salamah from Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari that the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) said: "Feed the hungry, spread the greeting (salam), visit the sick and free the prisoner."

These two serve as evidences for freeing the prisoners because the word, 'Al-Aani' in Arabic refers to prisoner. Imran bin Hussain and Salamah bin Al-Akwa' narrated that the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) ransomed pagans for Muslim prisoners.

Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalani said (Fath Al-Bari 6/167):

The saying of Imam Al-Bukhari, 'The Chapter on Freeing Prisoners' refers to freeing them from the hands of the enemy by money or by other means. The word 'Al-Fakak', where the fa (Arabic letter) from the word has a fatha (it is also permissible for it to take a kasrah), means to free. This word is mentioned in two hadiths. The first one is the hadith of Abu Musa: "Free the prisoner." Ibn Battal said that freeing the prisoners is compulsory on a collective duty (Fard Kifayah). This opinion is also held by the majority of the scholars.

**Source:** cageprisoners.com