



Aafia Siddiqui Day - Sample Sermon Friday 26th March 2010

Justice for Aafia Coalition
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إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ

"The Mu'minoon are but a single Brotherhood." (Q. 49:10)

How many a time have we heard this ayah? How many a time have we spoke to others, about the importance of Brotherhood in Islam? How many of us take pride in the concept of brotherhood in this Ummah of ours? Yet how many of us have actually considered and reflected on this ayah? How many of us, take pride in the brotherhood of Islam, have actually considered and understood this concept as it was as it was understood by those upon whom it was revealed?

These are questions we have to ask ourselves, there is no doubt that al-Rahman, has had His Mercy on this nation, He has tied every person who testifies to His Oneness, with a unique tie, a tie of brotherhood and sisterhood, a tie which transcends, race, language, ethnicity and nationality.

This is a tie that Allah 'azza wa-jall has made; and it is of such importance that it has actually been linked to Faith itself.

The Prophet said, *"None of you will have faith till he likes for his (Muslim) brother what he likes for himself."* (Bukhari)

And the enormity of this is clear, as we know without question that the key to Paradise is our faith itself. As the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) said: *'You will not enter Paradise until you have faith, and you will not have faith until you love each other.'* (Muslim)

Therefore, this issue of brotherhood is such that it sits upon the scales which decipher one's ultimate destination of Paradise or the Hell fire; how is it, then,

that we do not take the time to think about this matter, to understand it, to practice it and implement it with its due etiquette? These are questions we must ask ourselves, and when we do, we will rapidly realise that our understanding of it is vastly far from those we know to have understood it [from our pious predecessors and the companions of the Prophet 'alayhi al-salat wa'l-salam].

Let us cast our minds back to the era of the companions of the Messenger of Allah, and how they understood this concept of brotherhood; we will find that examples are too many to mention. At the most basic level, let us consider the general brotherhood of the Muhajireen and Ansar:

We find that when the people of Makkah emigrated to Madinah, they were welcomed with open arms into the homes, families and businesses of their Muslim brethren. The Muslims of Madinah, did nothing short of, opening their very lives to the Muslims of Makkah.

When they were made brothers, one to the other: a Muhajir to an Ansar, they saw their 'brothers' as their very own, and honouring this new tie, they gave their brethren, equally, from all that they were blessed with, so the Muhajirs would not feel that they had lost all from their worldly possessions when they left their beloved Makkah behind.

The sincerity of their taking the Muslims as their brothers, was founded on a pure understanding of the ayah:

يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا

يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ

And they prefer (their brothers) over themselves even if they are hungry.' (Q. Al-Hashr 59: 9)

Therefore they sought their very best to divide amongst themselves, so that no Muslim would feel inferior to another; that they might always know and feel the brotherhood, regardless of their situation.

However, their attachment was not one that was only for good/blessed times, rather, this is something that we find today. Ma sha' Allah some people show greatness to others, they share from all that they have been blessed with; and yet, how often it so happens that this kindness is stopped when one's own situation is a little restricted!

More often than not, even those that give openly and share from their blessings, stop doing so when their circumstances change, when difficulties

present themselves, they cut the ties of brotherhood, returning to focus on themselves.

Realise [beloved brothers and sisters, that] the companions, they were not like this.

Consider the way the death of Ikrimah Ibn Abi Jahl, and consider it word for word brothers and sisters, as herein we find a manifestation of true brotherhood, even, in the most difficult of times:

At the battle of Yarmuk, Ikrimah ibn Abi Jahl plunged into the attack as a thirsty person after cold water on a blistering hot day. In one encounter in which the Muslims were under heavy attack, Ikrimah penetrated deep into the ranks of the Byzantines. Khalid ibn al-Walid rushed up to him and said, "Don't, Ikrimah. Your death will be a severe blow to the Muslims."

"Let us carry on, Khalid," said Ikrimah, now at the peak of motivation, "You had the privilege of being with the Messenger of God before this. As for myself and my father, we were among his most bitter enemies. Leave me now to atone for what I have done in the past. I fought the Prophet on many occasions. Shall I now flee from the Byzantines? This shall never be." Then calling out to the Muslims, he shouted, "Who shall pledge to fight until death?" Four hundred Muslims including al-Harith ibn Hisham and Ayyash ibn Abi Rabi'ah responded to his call.

When the battle was over, the bodies of mujahideen lay injured on the battleground - among them Al-Harith ibn Hisham, Ayyash ibn Abi Rabi'ah and Ikrimah ibn Abi Jahl. Al-Harith asked for water to drink, when it was brought to him, Ayyash looked at him and al-Harith said: "Give it to Ayyash."

By the time they got to Ayyash, he had just breathed his last while saying 'Give it to Ikrimah' When they returned to al-Harith and Ikrimah, they found that they too had passed away.

Subhan al-Malik! Think about this hadith. Think about the conclusion of these [great/blessed] lives and then think about how you would be in such a situation? Consider these deaths, and consider them with the words of the Messenger who said: "*None of you will have faith till he likes for his (Muslim) brother what he likes for himself.*" [Bukhâri]

Look at the perfection of their knowledge and understanding of this ukhuwwa with the actions of upon which they died. Is it actions like these that won such people the favour of Allah, to the extent that we know that Allah, from His own testimony, was pleased with them and they Him?

Brotherhood is not something that is spoken of, rather it is something that is exhibited, for it transcends earthly relationships. As if you can honour the ties of brotherhood, know that you are creating a tie with Allah, the Messenger of Allah Jalla wa-Al'aa said: *"Allâh supports His slave as long as the slave is supportive of his brother..."* [Muslim]

And this is something the companions understood very well. Hence we find the words of Ibn Umar are so clear in illustrating genuine brotherhood and a sincere love for the people of Tawhid. He, May Allah be pleased with him said, *"By Allah, if I were to fast the whole day, to pray the whole night, and to spend every little part of my money for the cause of Allah, but were then to die on my appointed day without love in my heart for the people that obey Him [Allah] and hatred for the ones who disobey Him, all the above-mentioned actions would be of no benefit to me."*

Therefore this is an issue, brothers and sisters that we need to make time to consider. We need to explore this, and explore this on a practical level. Look at the relationships we have around us, and consider them in light of the hadith of the Messenger of Allah, *"By the one in whose hands is my soul! None of you can enter Jannah until you believe and none of you can believe until you love each other for Allah's sake."*[Muslim]

Now are we willing to forsake Jannah for the sake of the way we are with others? Or are we willing to take a step back, and rectify our affairs and test our sincerity through maturing the quality of our relationships with our brothers and sisters?

Khutbah II

Muslims are a single body and a single structure; each part supporting the other and each limb feeling the pain that the other limbs are suffering. The Prophet said: *"The Believer to the Believer is like a solid building, one part supports the other."* And he interlaced his fingers to demonstrate this [al-Bukhâri and Muslim]

However, do we experience this? Is this a reality in our times? Do we feel the pain of our brothers and sisters when they are tried with trials and tribulation? Do we genuinely feel hurt and suffering when we hear of the calamities that befall our brother, our sister or the Muslims?

Brothers and sisters, across the world the honour of the Muslims is being compromised, it is being annihilated, simply torn apart, however is this affecting the way we act? Moreover, does it even affect the way we feel??

The Messenger of Allah said, *"The destruction of the world is lighter on Allah than the killing of one Muslim man."* [Tirmidhi]

Yet, how many a Muslim do we see killed, and yet we simply change the TV channel or turn the page?

The Prophet said: *"The Blood of a Muslim is sanctified more than the Ka'bah."* [Sunan Ibn Majah]

Subhan Al Malik!!! That Ka'bah that we love so much, the Ka'bah that brings tears to our eyes when we visit it, is worth less than a single drop of a Muslim's blood. And yet, how are we in response to the shedding of millions of Muslim lives and their blood?

These are hard questions brothers and sisters that we must raise and seek to answer in our own hearts. What are we doing for the Muslims whose honour is being compromised?

Brothers and sisters: know the one thing that is harder to bear than the Muslims being killed is the Muslims being tortured and humiliated for their Islam. The oppressors know that Ahl al-Sunnah, consider dying for the sake of Allah a privilege, so they choose instead to torture, to rape, to humiliate us, and brothers and sisters, this is even worse. As Allah Subhanahu [wa-ta'ala] says,

وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ

"And oppression is worse than killing" [Q. 2:191]

And brothers and sisters, this is what makes this so important for us, and for how we deal with this. As this injustice is something that is growing rapidly in the lands in which we live ourselves. Oppression against the Muslims is rising in our very own countries and places of residences, so how do we reconcile this and the hadith of the Prophet,

"A Muslim is the brother of another Muslim. He does not oppress him, nor does he leave him at the mercy of others." (Sahih Muslim Book 032, Number 6219)

How is it that we are okay to leave our Muslim brothers and sisters to the oppression of others? How is it that we stand here, knowing of what they are being subjected to, and yet do nothing for our noble sister Dr Aafia Siddiqui (may Allah preserve her)?

Brothers and sisters, I wish to spend the remainder of this Khutbah speaking about this sister: that we might, collectively and individually, do something for her, and make a change in the way you see, work with, live with and engage your Muslim brothers and sisters.

Our sister Aafia, a graduate of the prestigious MIT university with a PHD from Brandeis, a hafidhah of Qur'an, has spent the last seven years subjected to torture, humiliation, physical and psychological abuse; currently, after being sold by the Afghan and Pakistani government to their masters the US, she is being held in a prison in the USA, awaiting sentencing for a crime she didn't commit.

This sister of ours was kidnapped in 2003 in Karachi on her way to the airport, the US denied their involvement, stating they did not take female prisoners. For years, her whereabouts and those of her children remained unknown. However, in 2007 Amnesty International, along with other human rights organisations, identified her in a report as someone who 'may have been held' in a CIA secret prison; and then in 2008, the story broke that, our sister, Aafia was actually being held at Bagram Airbase in US custody.

She was then quickly extradited to the US and court proceedings were initiated against her on fabricated charges of attempted murder. Since 2008, due to her wavering health and circumstances, her case has been opened and closed by the US courts, and only this month she was convicted of random charges which sought to justify her time in custody.

The situation was summarised by a journalist amazingly well, when he spoke about her after she had been identified as one of the female prisoners. All those who have left Bagram speak about that one sister who was abused daily, and were led to believe she was their wife, mother, sister:

I don't know if Dr. Aafia has done anything illegal or not but the way she has been picked and handed over to US authorities along with three innocent children is a violation of even basic human rights and human dignity. What happened to the moral values, respect for law and Human Rights? If she has done something wrong, she should have been held accountable in the court of law and punished. But why detaining her illegally, along with 3 children, with any charge whatsoever for 5 years?

Brothers and sisters, where have been our voices, where are our appeals, and where, our actions? The honour of our sister and many more like her, unknown to us, is being compromised and yet this is not even on our agenda - how?

Let me take you back, O brothers and sisters, to a time when the honour of a Muslim was such that it would make the earth shake with the repercussions

of any challenge to it. When the Romans invaded Malatya, lots of citizens were killed, and there was a woman who had been captured by the Romans, she screamed "Ya Mu'atasimah" which translates to "O Mu'tasim", she was asking for help.

When the Caliph al-Mu'tasim was told of this, it is said that he had had a cup of water in his hands and he left the cup immediately [not drinking from it], deploying his army in retaliation against the Romans.

Brothers and sisters, an army set sail to respond to the call of one [oppressed] sister in that time, and dare we ask ourselves, will even one du'a leave our lips beseeching Allah to free our sister Aafia now? Will we take any steps, within our reach, to do something for this victim of the greatest crime of our time, the crime of saying *la illaha illAllah*.

Brothers and sisters, consider this case of this most amazing sister. Consider how this mother of three has spent the last seven years being abused, tortured, humiliated, and then consider the words of the Messenger of Allah, upon whom be peace:

"A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim, he should not oppress him, nor should he hand him over to an oppressor. Whoever fulfilled the needs of his brother, Allâh will fulfil his needs; whoever brought his (Muslim) brother out of a discomfort, Allâh will bring him out of the discomforts of the Day of Resurrection, and whoever screened a Muslim, Allâh will screen him on the Day of Resurrection." [Bukhâri]

Ya Salaam!

Brothers and sisters wal'humdulillah we are not the criminal hypocrites who handed this sister over to the enemies of Allah jalla fi'Ula, however we are from those not taking advantage of the proposition that the Messenger made clear here, when he said, *'whoever brought his Muslim brother out of a discomfort, Allah will bring him out of a discomfort on the Day of Resurrection'*; we have to ask ourselves, what are we doing to help this sister and her family? What are we, as individuals, as a Jamm'ah, as a community doing to respond to the needs of this sister, this 'aalimah, this mujahida, this embodiment of faith?

Are we lobbying for her release?

Are we writing her letters?

Are we giving money to help her family fight her case?

Are we lending our skills to mature her case?

Are we rising in the middle of the night to ask Allah al-Qawi, al-`Aziz to have His mercy on this sister, and continue to give her the patience she needs to be successful in her test, and bring destruction on every single soul that has caused her to feel any second of pain, embarrassment or hardship?

Brothers and sisters, are we doing all these things? Leave that - are we doing half of these things? Leaving that are we doing even one of these things?

If the answer is no, then we should not let this day escape, except that we start a journey to do all these things. We start a process to attempt to fulfil the rights of this sister, and beg Allah to not punish us for not having done more for this amazing slave of Allah.

Now brothers and sisters I bring this dialogue of this sister to a close, and ask you to think about this now, and all this day, with the words of Allah Subhana firmly in your mind, with a view for us all to ask ourselves, are we the protectors Allah Subhana referred to in the Quran or are we simply not believers, as he the Magnificent makes clear in his book;

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ

"The believers, men and women, are protectors of one another. "(9:71)

After the words of Allah, jalla wa-`Aala I leave you with her words brothers and sisters, I leave you with words, I wish will stay firm in your mind, your heart and your soul and that move your very senses, and mobilise you to awake in the night, raising your hands to the heavens invoking your Lord, the words of your sister, which she addressed to the judge when she was presented in court:

"The power you gave them to torture me, rape me, and every time allow them to search me naked, I'm dead. I was dead since the very first time I was raped, searched naked, and every time you need to present me in court I'm searched naked. I do not consider you judge, court, this country. Leave me alone or send me back to my country!"