

March 5, 2010

Khutbah



Title: [The Food of Brotherhood is Iman \(Faith\). The Food of Iman is Ibada \(Worship\)](#)

DVD Title: Our Relationship to Adam and Hawa (as)
A Brother/Sisterhood of Faith/Iman through Worship/Ibāda

Opening duas.

Asalām aleikum. In Holy Qur'an, Allah reveals the concept of *iqwan*, brotherhood. It is very strong and sometimes the word commonly translated for community (*ummah*) is also translated as brotherhood. There are a number of examples that speak of this concept of brotherhood/sisterhood and the results of it.

Allah (swt) for example in Suratu-l-Anfal:

...and by bringing their hearts together. If you had spent all that was in the earth, you could not have brought their hearts together, but Allah brought them together. (8:63)

The implication here is that those who believe, their hearts are in resonance. Really, life is about attunement, causing resonance. They are all attuned. Somewhat in an indirect way, Allah says, of those going to the garden:

Truly those who are conscious of Allah preserve themselves from evil will be in the garden with springs, where it is said to them, "Enter in peace, secure." And We remove whatever resentment is in their hearts as brothers. They sit facing each other on couches upraised. No fatigue will touch them nor shall they ever depart from it. (15:45-48) Then He continues: Tell my worshippers that I am Ever-Forgiving and Singularly Compassionate. (15:49)

And again you see another implication here in Suratu-l-Anbiyā (the Prophets):

Surely this – your community – is one community, and I am your Lord, so worship Me. (21:92)

The question that I always like to answer is: How? I think that we have to look at the characteristics of the ideal Muslim and Muslim community to understand this. We have to understand the very beginning of brotherhood and sisterhood. In a way we could say, and I don't mean to make this incestuous in any way, that there was a brotherhood and a sisterhood between Adam and Hawa. Because they came from the same rib, that makes them brother and sister. I never heard the argument; therefore, it is okay to marry your brother or your sister. Of course it is not, but the idea is that they come from the same source. They come from the same rib, but with different characteristics. By implication, as we know, Hazrat Adam (as) is warned, in a way, don't try to straighten the rib out.

I think we can strive to achieve among ourselves a greater community, a greater brotherhood and sisterhood. Here we have the relationship, of course, that in a sense we are all related. We all come from Hazrat Adam (as). We have been talking about that. So, whoever gets married is marrying their cousin—at least. 5,000 times removed, but cousin, nonetheless. We come from the same source, the same one. In fact, as Tayie will tell you (and I don't even like to talk about it in that way as you know), there is only One; and all of this is happening within that One. But something we can achieve in the greater community and within this community is a living sense of *tawhid*, oneness, of unity. Except for today, I don't even like using the word oneness; rather, of one, of unity.

I believe that the ideal Muslim community, or as we try to approach the ideal Muslim community, as we see in the companionship and the Sahaba of the Prophet Muhammad (sal) and the Ahl al-Bayt, and if we aspire to be united, we should have some ideal or

model in mind. We may not attain to that highest level, but we should keep the goal clear, the objectives clear. As a criteria, if we judge how towards this awareness of unity [we are], we can have a sense of our own progress. The community of the companions of the Prophet (sal) was united. There were different characteristics among the people; there were disagreements at times, but they were united around this teaching and around Rasūlallah (sal). The characteristics of this community were many. I will talk about a few of them. At the basis is one of the most famous ‘*āyah* of Qur’an, we know and repeat many times:

Hold fast altogether to the rope of Allah which He stretches out to you and you will not be divided among yourselves. (3:103)

How does that happen, not to be divided among ourselves? *Alhamdulillah*, we think of our community here. There are many challenges, perhaps many differences of opinion, but we find ourselves united in this community. We have *adab* towards the community as a whole. We have *adab* towards each other. You could say, “Well, scratch the surface and you can see all these disagreements and all these problems.” Well, *alhamdulillah*, we do not scratch the surface too much. We don’t have to talk about all the problems. We know very well what needs to be done to keep things stable—financially stable, emotionally stable. We know what kind of respect it takes to be able to communicate with somebody. We know when it is breached. We know when it is strengthened. Hopefully, I think for most of us, we have a very positive attitude.

Many things should be changed, perhaps. Systems maybe should be changed and methodology should change and things should grow. But look at the compassion and mercy and the love. The question is: how will it be sustained? Well, we have the model of Prophet Muhammad (sal) to sustain our Islam. Yes we do. But do we look to that model on a regular basis? Do we model our behavior in that way? You have the model of the good people here, and you have the Shaykh. Well, the Shaykh is not always going

to be here. Are we going to depend on a system or depend on a form or are we going to depend on something that grows within ourselves, a sense of brotherhood/sisterhood, a present, a gift from Allah (swt), and a promise of Jannah.

Then it goes on, as you know, to describe how enemies were drawn in the hearts of people, how your enemy can become the nearest to you in your own heart by the way you treat a person, the way you act as a Muslim. But if we really want to begin to understand how to develop and hold onto this sense of brotherhood and sisterhood, of familial relationships; how to create a sense of unity among our own children, the parents of those children, the members of our community as committed individuals, and members of the larger Islamic community, especially when there is divisiveness in community, as we know exists in *masajid* around the world, with different ethnic groups and different racial groups, we have to understand what the characteristics of a united community are. I think we have to focus first on *iman*.

If we look at it, we may not find a word that gives us the depths of this word. Perhaps the first characteristic of *iman* is that we have the example of Prophet Muhammad (sal), that there should be no deviation in our faith and in our trust in Allah (swt). The natural result of *iman* is brotherhood and sisterhood. The natural result of *iman* is that because we sense the empathy between one another, the relationship. Allah (swt) told the Prophet (sal), “...**had you spent all your wealth on this earth, you would not have been able to bring their hearts together to make them brothers.**” It comes from something other than the physical, material things.

It was Allah (swt) who made us brothers and sisters. And it was Allah who made them brother by showing them how to believe in Him as the Creator, and how to worship. The implication is very important that faith brings brotherhood and sisterhood because Allah has shown us how to believe, shown us what creates faith. We have to bring sincerity. We have to bring regularity. We have to bring physical energy and the mental will.

Allah shows us the way. We worship Allah, and once His belief enters into our heart, then those people whose hearts have faith have entered into community of believers. We don't have to make any efforts to be brothers and sisters. It is the way it is.

So if we have problems with one another, where do you turn? You turn to your *iman*/faith. Don't turn to the details of what you think the problems are only. Because the problems are never what you think they are, are they? Children who do not get along together. What does that mean? Our children, *alhamdulillah*, get along across great differences in age. They run to pick up the baby. They play with the ones 3, 4, five years younger than them. They love each other. They pick on each other a little, but that is the nature of the game. What about the adults? We have to make a little more effort. Sometimes we communicate past each other.

We have to look towards our *iman*, not the methodology of communication first. We have to look to our faith. We have to look to the fact that we are related, that we are all children of Allah, that there is a purpose for our life. When we get into a difficulty, an argument, if we could only take a moment and step back and say, "Wait a minute! What is the purpose of all of this? To win the argument, to prove the fact or the truth?" The truth is not the fact. The truth is much deeper than the fact. The fact may belie the Truth. "The fact is you said this." "The truth is that I didn't mean to say it that way." "Well, you did." Let's go to round two and then to round three and get a TKO, a technical knock out. But if we go to our faith, who are we? We are Muslims. We are believers. We are related. We are children of Adam and Hawa (as). Who are we? What is the purpose of all of this? To win? I don't think so. To lose? I don't think that either. To be aware.

There is no effort the other way. I mean it takes a tremendous amount of energy the other way, but there is no effort to change. There is something we can learn by me standing here and talking. Of course, it is a *khutbah*. But there is nothing you can create in an

organization that allows you to say, “Okay, I have talked about this. From this point on, you are brothers and sisters. From this point on, let there be no argument or disagreement. Let there be no misunderstanding.” It has to come naturally as a result of *iman*. We know, of course. We have been a community for over thirty years, here. On this property, 35 years. Add another five, forty years, *alhamdulillah*. What lasts 40 years? Common faith is very important. It may not be the brotherhood and sisterhood of the time of the Prophet (sal). We cannot assume that we are the Sahaba. But we know how it happens. We know how it grows.

Another thing that we have to remember is *ibāda*, worship. The *ibāda* of the Sahaba was also according to what the Prophet Muhammed (sal) what they found in Qur’an. It was just to keep the *ibāda* clear. Keep it pure, because *ibāda* is what keeps the *iman* pure. It is not just putting your head down, standing up and bending over, putting your head down. *ibāda* comes from the awe of seeing. We say, even in English, “You like that doctor so much it is like you worship the doctor.” Don’t worship the doctor. Worship the Knowledge-Giver and see how well the doctor takes that knowledge and interprets it.

If it increases your *iman*, then it is *ibāda*. Again, it is not something you say, “Well, I know how to worship, so therefore I’ve got it. I am a *mu’min* today, therefore I will be a *mu’min* my whole life.” You cannot say it. You cannot be sure of it. You might be a *mu’min* today. You might be a *kafir* tomorrow. Remember what Prophet Muhammed (sal) said: “**People may go to sleep a believer and wake up a disbeliever. People may go to bed a disbeliever and wake up a believer.**” So one way of preserving your *iman* is through *ibāda*. They feed each other, especially *dhikrullah*. Remembering Allah in your prayer is a remembrance. Your *muhasabah* is a way of remembering Allah. That is *dhikr*. What did I do today that was good? What did I do today that was not so good? What can I do to change it? That is a form of *dhikr*. It is also a form of *ibāda*.

Then there is *akhlaq*, our behavior, our ethic. The food of *iman* is *ibāda*. The fruit of *iman* is *akhlaq*/good behavior—true belief, *‘aqīda*. That is why the Prophet (sal) said, **“The best of the mu’min in iman is the best of them in their akhlaq.”** If you look at the word *khuluq*, it is not just equivalent to morality or ethic. [It is not] confined to the way of treating people, [but] is more general than this. The best of the *mu’min* are the best in the way they treat others—another implication of this word. The Prophet also said, **“The best of you are the best to your wives.”** We are back to this relationship thing. (Where is “The best of wives is the way they treat their husbands”?) It is a way of treating people. But it is an attitude, and nobody can really tell you what your attitude is. You know what your attitude is.

Some of you think, “Well, if you buy me pretty things, that means you love me.” Some people say, “If you buy me pretty things, that does not mean you love me. If you spend five minutes talking to me, that means you love me.” Some people say, “You love me if you argue with me and really prove something to me.” It is attitude. It is not what you do, but it is your intention behind what you do. And who can say what your intention is? Just you and Allah know. The way you treat people could just be a matter of cultural *adab*. There could be a lot of *taruf*. That is not negative. It is just a cultural way of doing. It could be behavioral. Sometimes that is very good.

(A scenario:) “Hello? I hope I am not taking you from anything?” “Yes you are!” “(What do I say now?) I’m sorry.” “Call me back!” “Okay.” (Another scenario:) “I hope I am not taking you from anything.” “Oh, no, no, no, no, no. I am just trying to finish one thing. But if you don’t mind, can I call you back in five minutes?” See, it is a difference. *Adab*. *Taruf*, but it is okay. It is good. (Another scenario. Simulates walking with a limp.) “Did you hurt your leg?” “No, no, no. I am fine, *alhamdulillah*.” “Let me help you.” “No, I’m fine.” “Can I get you a chair?” “No, don’t bother.” “Here take this chair.” “Thank you.” Why do we have to go through all of that? We are Americans. “Can I get you a chair?” “Yeah. Get me a chair. No, not that one. Get me

that one. Hurry up! Don't you know my leg is hurting? Jesus Christ! Didn't you see me hobbling all the way down here? Why did you ask me how I was feeling?" *Taruf*, a little is good. It is the intention of it.

So these are the qualities that bring unity, bring out love, in a community of people. We say in English, "You know a tree by its fruit." If you do not see a person treating people in a good way, especially their family, it means that there is something wrong with their *iman*, with their *ibāda*. There is something wrong because they have the fruit of *akhlaq* has not grown on the tree. It is like I was saying in Charlottesville, "The only thing you can do with a green mango is to make it into mango pickle. Because you cannot eat it as a sweet fruit." Another point is our *jihad*, our struggle. We like to concentrate on our *jihad al-akbar*, struggle with our inner self. The Muslims who were with the Prophet (sal) knew both. They knew the lesser and the greater *jihad*. When they were in Mecca, they were in the minority. They were weak. They had to restrain their hands. They didn't fight. They were ordered to make the *hijrah* and they were ordered to fight, but only for a short period of time.

There were only 453, 463 people died in all of those battles. That is [equivalent to] one plane going down. In all of the battles. This is the man who conquered the world by a sword. What kind of sword, a rubber sword? A sword of the Truth. How is it possible? Some may say it is revisionist history. But that is what we know. Prophet Mohammed said, "Look! I think the implication is to look at the community we are fighting for sometimes. Look. Look at what you are doing?" Just think about what happened. The Ottomans conquered large portions of the world. Before that the Persians had the Persian Empire. Then there were the empires of the Judaic period, and later the Nazis conquered, and the Russians occupied all the way to the Pacific Ocean. What did anybody gain from all of this? What did they gain? Nothing. Misery. Loss.

Now the American Congress is sticking their nose in everybody else's business, passing a resolution condemning the Turkish genocide of the Armenians. Why is this happening? Just at the time that the Turks and the Armenians are quietly sitting down together and we have to stick our nose in it. Because there is an Armenian lobbyist in the United States pushing. Why? This is an indication of a weakness in *ibāda*, a weakness in *iman*. It is not that it is wrong. It is not that they shouldn't condemn. It is not that the Turks should not admit what their errors have been. How many people died, how many Americans and Iraqis died? Maybe 100,000? More maybe. Why? [They were/are] brothers and sisters, cousins. This is a weakness in *iman*, a weakness in *ibāda*, a weakness in *akhlaq* and not understanding what real *jihad* is. It is the struggle with the self.

So my brothers and sisters, this is an endless discussion. Allah says clearly: obey Allah, obey His Prophet and those who are in authority, those who understand brotherhood and sisterhood, those who love each other for Allah's sake. Why do we love each other? Because we all wanted to come and live in Bedford, VA and we found each other. These are the lovers of Bedford, Virginia and we found each other. We came from Manhattan and from Orlando and from Jacksonville, and from Bedford and from whatever. We came here because we love Bedford, VA. That is ridiculous. We love each other *fī sabīli-Llāh*, for the sake of Allah. We love each other because we love to know the Truth. We love each other because we seek out knowledge and wisdom. We love each other because we know there is more, and there seemed to be a good sells pitch that said, "I can show you the way to more"—a spiritual Fuller Brush salesman. They don't exist anymore. That is too bad.

Can you imagine what would happen if there were a Fuller Brush salesman today? How many people would be killed knocking at the door? (A scenario:) "Who is there?" "The Fuller Brush Salesman." "Sure!" (makes a noise like a gun going off) In the old days, the Fuller Brush salesman would come to the door and we would all run, and cry out, "Oh, the Fuller Brush salesman is here!" We would all sit in the living room as he

showed us his wares: the hair brushes and nail brushes and the cuticles things. We would all watch him takes these out. He would take out his order pad and he would go to his car and fill the order. Right? Can you imagine what would happen to a Fuller Brush salesman today? “No comprende Fuller Brusho.” How many languages would he have to speak?

How the times have changed. We don't have faith in people. We don't believe that the person knocking at the door has a good intention. We don't believe in the brotherhood and the sisterhood of humanity. When I was a kid, the man would come in a truck, like the Cavalier truck. Who was he? He was the grocer. He would knock on the door. An Italian guy. And my mother would order fresh vegetables right from the truck, and sometimes other fresh things. What else came to the door? Milk. You would leave a note for him, or if you didn't have the money, he would say, “Don't worry. I will collect tomorrow.” He would deliver the milk, butter or cheese in the little box. At Christmas time, because they were Christians, we would leave a little something for him or the mailman or for the other man. The grocer would come and we would ask, “Do you have any cole rabi?” Who knows what cole rabi is? “No, no, no, I don't have that.” But by the end of the day, he was back, “I was downtown picking up some more produce. I bring to you cole rabi.” This is brotherhood and sisterhood. He was a good Catholic man. He wasn't a crazy politicized Christian or Muslim or Jew. They were good people that believed in God. This was his way of serving you. He was serving you.

I walk into the kitchen and one of you asks, “Ah, Shaykh, how can I help you?” “Can you open some tofu for me.” “Yes. I will take care of it and drive it home for you.” “Are you going home now?” “No. I am going to my office.” “I will drop it off for you.” This is how you are. Question is are you like that if it is not the Shaykh walking in but somebody else walking in. Are you like that with everybody. Ask yourself. I don't want to know. Why are you like that? Because I said, “Try to be brothers and sisters,” today? Sign this contract. “I will treat everybody like a brother and sister. I will serve

everybody. I will treat everybody with love and respect.” Is that what you do every day? No! It has to be in your heart. How do you do that? You pray to Allah. You make your *ibāda*. You serve one another. You remember you are a Muslim.

So there are so many stories. So many things to be said. We will come back to it. Inshallah. How? Think. Be the best person you can be. Know when to say, “I am sorry.” Fulfill your responsibilities and duties and obligations to each other, emotionally, mentally, physically, socially—fulfill them. Trust in Allah, fulfill them. Sometimes we say something: “Ah, you are just saying that because the Shaykh gave a *khutbah* today, that is why you are being nice to me. You don’t really mean it.” “I do mean it.”

Open this book (picks up the Qur’an). In the middle of the night, I sometimes just reach over and open the book and read. All these things were given to us. We can be aware too.

Closing duas.