

21<sup>st</sup> July 2006

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ ، نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا  
وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا. مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ، وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ.  
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ.

Praise be to **اللَّهِ**.

We praise him and ask him for help and forgiveness. We ask him for protection from the evilness in ourselves and from our bad deeds. Whomever God guides to the truth no one will lead astray, and whomever He leads astray, no one will ever guide.

I testify that there is no God but **اللَّهِ** to whom there is no partner  
and I testify that Muhammad **ﷺ** is his servant and messenger

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَايِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ  
وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾﴾

*"Allah commands justice, the doing of good, and the giving to the kin, and He forbids indecency, injustice and rebellion: He admonishes you that you may be mindful" (S16, A90)*



Dear brothers and sisters, ASA.

In the previous khutbah on the 7<sup>th</sup> of July, we remembered the innocent victims of the London bombings of last year and we spoke about the meaning of Jihad in Islam. I was going to cover other aspects of Jihad in Islam today, but as we are all aware, events over the past few days have overtaken us. I believe that it is important for us to tie the teachings of Islam to current events, and it is also important for us to understand what Islam expects of us if we wish to define ourselves as true Muslims.

It is important for us to understand Islam well, so as we can explain Islam well to others. In the present climate of universal violence and double standards, Muslims feel that the only way to address the balance is through aggression. When faced with such adversity, we sometimes succumb to our feelings of anger and frustration, and we feel that it is permissible for Muslims to use the same tactics against an adversary as is being used against the Muslims, and in the heat of the moment, it is our emotions that define our actions rather than our teachings of Islam. In that moment, we are no longer bettered by Islam.

For instance, when Israeli warplanes bomb residential areas in Lebanon killing scores of innocent civilians, some may believe that it is acceptable for Hezbollah, which is translated as "The party of Allah", to bomb civilian targets in Israel and in doing so kill unarmed civilians, men, women and children of all ages. If you are acting on behalf of Allah, is this what Islam teaches us? I know perfectly well that it is very easy for me to stand here and say these words as I am not subjected to the terror of Israeli warplanes and constant shelling. But the issue here is not whether it is easy to say these words, but it is whether we believe that these words define our understanding of Islam. Does Islam teach us that it is acceptable to bomb civilian targets in retaliation to the terror of Israeli aggression?

These are the times when the Muslim's understanding of Islam is being tested to the limit. We witness brothers and sisters all over the world being exterminated for the simple reason of them being Muslims. We feel helpless and impotent. So, when we see a group like Hezbollah fighting back, we get a sense of pride that there is a group that is willing to fight and give sacrifice in the name of Islam. Somehow, we start to think and to behave like the Israelis, the Americans and all those who sympathize with the Israeli cause. When the Israelis bomb Lebanon killing scores of innocent civilians, the press says "it was Hezbollah's strong holds that were targeted". By doing so, they attempt to dehumanize the innocent civilian victims. We witness acts of willful murder every day, but, in the manner it is presented, many people may not even blink an eyelid. But isn't that what we are also doing. When we hear about the rockets launched against Israel, we start to hear that it was against Israeli targets, it was only a few hundred rockets launched compared to the thousands of shells, rockets and bombs thrown at the Lebanese by Israel. In saying that, we Muslims are doing the same. We are using the same rhetoric and we tend to ignore the suffering caused by the killing of children and old people.

Islam does not permit that. Once we drift into the same mentality of the Israelis and the Americans, we become no better than them. Brothers and sisters, Islam teaches us to be much better than that. Muslims take human life very seriously, and that means all human life. The ideal that we aspire to is being compromised if we behave like the Israelis and the Americans.

Islam considers all life forms as sacred, and the sanctity of human life is very special. The first and the foremost basic right of a human being is the right to live. We already heard what the Quran says about the one who kills an innocent person: ***"...it would be as if he killed the whole of mankind: and if any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole of mankind."***(S5, A32)

Such is the value of a single human life; the Quran equates the taking of even one human life unjustly to the killing of all of humanity.

Even in a state of war, Islam enjoins that one deals with the enemy nobly on the battlefield. Islam has drawn a clear line of distinction between the combatants and the non-combatants of the enemy. As far as the non-combatant population is concerned such as women, children, the old and the infirm, the instructions of the Prophet<sup>(SAAWS)</sup> are as follows: *"Do not kill any old person, any child or any woman", "Do not kill the monks in monasteries" and "Do not kill the people who are sitting in places of worship"*. Thus non-combatants are guaranteed security of life even if they are in a state of war. These are the rules of Islam and they are there for a reason. There is no collective punishment in Islam.

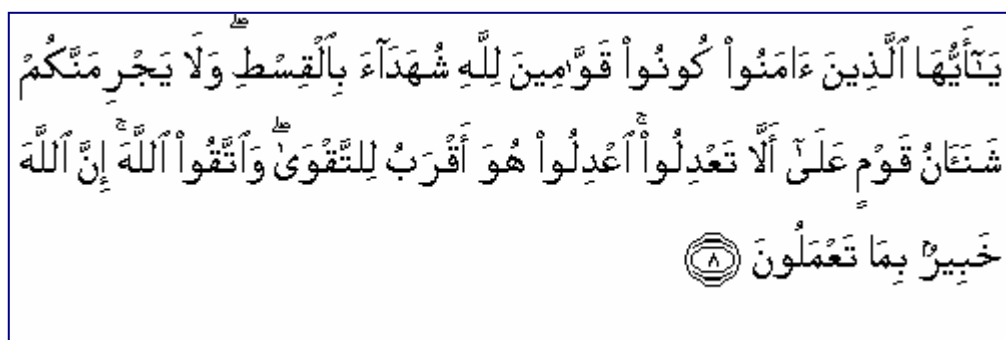
When indiscriminant rockets are launched at civilian Israeli targets, the people in the rest of the world will look at Muslims and say: They and the Israelis are much the same. What the world is now discussing is not whether what Israel is doing is considered as a war crime, but simply whether it was a disproportionate response to what Hezbollah has done.

We accept that it is permitted for Muslims to fight, but we automatically ignore other means of addressing conflicts, and more importantly, we also ignore the rules that govern Muslims who take up arms, *"Do not kill any old person, any child or any woman", "Do not kill the monks in monasteries" and "Do not kill the people who are sitting in places of worship"*.

Just as much as we have the right to declare that there is hypocrisy and double standard practiced by the United States and by other Western democracies in their dealing with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, they will turn back at us and declare that there is hypocrisy in what we say as Muslims. On the one hand we keep declaring that Islam is the religion of peace, and on the other hand we witness acts that do not fit our understanding of Islam and we do not condemn them openly and unequivocally.

Brothers and sisters, what we have witnessed in Lebanon over the past few days is clear violations of international law and of our understanding of what humanity stands for. The whole world is witnessing the deliberate destruction of an infrastructure of a sovereign nation and the killing of its civilians. It is being done in the name of war on terror. When we listen to Britons fleeing Lebanon, we get a very real meaning of the terror that Israeli warplanes are inflicting on all that are living in Lebanon. We sense

the hate and arrogance of the Israelis. However, as Muslims we need to implement this very difficult aya:



***"O you who believe! Be steadfast witnesses for Allah in equity, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety: and fear Allah. For Allah is well-acquainted with all that you do" (S5, A8)***

Muslims have been given a very difficult task by Allah. We are asked to be steadfast witnesses for Allah in equity. Is there a more important task that governs our interactions with others?

We are asked to be the witnesses of Allah in equity. To do so, we are instructed that let not the hatred of others to us make us swerve to wrong and depart from justice. When we read this aya, we say this is not fair. Allah is asking us too much. The Israelis and the Americans have done this and that to us, and we must have the right to do the same, and if that means bombing civilians, so be it. It is only fair to retaliate and to use the same tit for tat tactics. But this is exactly what the Americans and Israelis would say and do. They will say; we will give them the same punishment if not more. Collective punishment, killing civilians and destroying the infrastructure is the Israeli and the American way. It should never be the Muslim way.

Brothers and sisters, this is exactly the response of those who hate and those who are full of arrogance, for in their blinded and blinkered state, they lose the divine sense of justice. Justice in American terms is probably 5000 must die for every American. Those American soldiers who invaded Iraq thought they were avenging the 9/11 attack on their sovereign state. Justice in Israeli terms is probably 10 to 20 Lebanese must be killed for every Israeli killed. That type of American and Israeli justice is filled with hatred and arrogance. This is not the justice that Islam wants us to enforce.

The justice that is accepted by Allah is that justice that is not coloured with hate. But this justice is so difficult to apply. When we witness democracies like America and Israel committing massacres, we get angry and hateful ourselves. Somehow, we ignore the will of Allah in all that is happening and we revert to being ordinary people again. Islam is not about being an ordinary person. An ordinary person can lose the sense of justice when hatred is involved. Being a Muslim is very hard. We must uphold justice despite hatred. That is what Allah has ordered us to do. This is one of the true acts of Jihad, an act that suppresses hatred in the pursuit of justice.

Brothers and sisters, please forgive me for going on about this issue when we witness the Israeli atrocity in Lebanon, but it is exactly in this time that we need to remind

ourselves as to what Islam orders us if we want to behave as Muslims. The world is again looking at us. Let us give them the Islamic response. Let us not beat about the bush. The messages of Islam are clear:

Firstly, the sanctity of life:

*"For that reason, We decreed for the Children of Israel that whosoever kills a human being for other than murder or corruption in the earth, it shall be as if he had killed all mankind, and whosoever saves the life of one, it shall be as if he had saved the life of all mankind" (S5, A32)*

Secondly, justice in Islam:

*"O you who believe! Be steadfast witnesses for Allah in equity, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety: and fear Allah. For Allah is well-acquainted with all that you do" (S5, A8)*

أقول قولي هذا وأستغفر الله لي ولكم

2<sup>nd</sup> Khutbah:

الحمد لله ثم الحمد لله . الحمد لله نستعينه ونستغفره ، ونعوذ بالله من شرور  
أنفسنا وسيئات أعمالنا . أما بعد :

Having said all that, it is important for us to look at the example of one of the companions of the Prophet<sup>(SAAWS)</sup>. The story of this companion will highlight to us how the Muslims who were taught by the Prophet<sup>(SAAWS)</sup> understood Islam and the value of this divine message. This companion is Khubaib Bin Adi.

Khubaib was from the tribe of Awss in Madinah. He embraced Islam early after the Hijra, and was one of those who witnessed the battle of Badr. During the battle, he fought and killed "Al-Hareth Bin Amer Bin Nawfal". We know that the losses of Qureish were high in this battle, and Qureish wanted to avenge their loss. Banu Al-Hareth became aware of the name of the person that killed their father in battle.

After the battle of Uhud, the political scene in the Arabian Peninsula was still unsettled. Tribes were trying to determine who they should pay allegiance to, the old Qureish or the new Muslims. In this scenario, a great deal of treachery and treason took place. One such act involved Khubaib Bin Adi. An authentic narration describes how as he went to teach Islam to neighboring tribes with a group of companions, they were abducted and sold off to Qureish in an act of allegiance by this tribe to Qureish.

Banu Al-Hareth saw their moment of revenge, and their anger and hatred blinded them from any sense of justice. The people of Qureish killed every member of that group of sahabah, and Khubaib was left till last.

As luck would have it, one of the "Ash-hur Al-Hurum" started. According to the tradition of Qureish, it was not permissible to kill Khubaib during such a month, and they have to wait until the month is over before they can do so. So Khubaib was imprisoned during this month, awaiting his fate. He was well aware that his fate was death. One can only imagine the anguish that was going through his mind as he was kept waiting for his fate. A slave named Mawiyah was asked to look after him. Towards the end of the month, he asked Mawiyah to bring him a blade so as he can cut his nails and trim his hair. He knew he was about to meet his maker, and he wanted to look good for this occasion. That was the manner in which these Muslims behaved when they knew that their end is nearing, and in that, their return to Allah is also nearing. That was the tranquility that Allah bestowed upon him during this time of adversity.

As he was doing that, Mawiyah's son goes up to Khubaib and sits in his lap. As Mawiyah enters she finds her son sitting in the lap of this Muslim, who is about to be killed, with a knife in his hand. The look of anguish was on her face, as she feared he will harm her child, or use him as a means of escape. If you were there, what would you have done? A group of disbelievers acting as a lynch mob about to kill you. You are sitting there with a blade in your hand, and a child that can be used as a bargain is now in your lap. These people have already killed all your companions mercilessly, and are about to kill you. What would you do? I don't think that anyone would blame you for using this child as a bargaining tool.

Khubaib looked at Mawiyah and recognized her anguish. He asked her, are you afraid that I may harm him? She was too scared to answer. So he replied; **how can I harm him while I am a companion of the Prophet<sup>(SAAWS)</sup>**. Brothers and sisters, listen very carefully to his reply. His reply while he was about to lose his life "How can I harm him while I am a companion of the Prophet<sup>(SAAWS)</sup>."

This was the impact of the teachings of the Prophet<sup>(SAAWS)</sup> on this young man. The teaching was very clear. This is an innocent child. This child cannot be harmed whatever the situation. And as long as Khubaib is considered as a companion of the Prophet<sup>(SAAWS)</sup>, he will act as a companion, with all the responsibilities that come with such a role. The role of a companion of the Prophet<sup>(SAAWS)</sup>. The question for us today is: **do we want to act as companions of the Prophet<sup>(SAAWS)</sup>**.

We know from the seerah that Khubaib was later crucified and killed very slowly with children piercing his body tens of times while asking him "would you not rather be safe and the Prophet<sup>(SAAWS)</sup> in your place". His response was "I would not want to be among my family enjoying the wealth and health of this life and the Prophet<sup>(SAAWS)</sup> is harmed by a thorn". These Muslims loved the Prophet<sup>(SAAWS)</sup>, and in doing so they acted according to the teachings and the example of the Prophet<sup>(SAAWS)</sup>. These Muslims knew very well that their actions, their words and their feelings reflect the teachings of the Prophet<sup>(SAAWS)</sup>. This is the Prophet<sup>(SAAWS)</sup> that they loved more dearly than anything else. This is the example of Khubaib.

In days like these, when we see the aggression, the hate and the indiscriminate killing of civilians in Lebanon, let us not forget what Islam stands for. Khubaib knew that perfectly well. Islam stands for justice and for peace. Let us ask ourselves, who narrated the story of Khubaib, for Khubaib died and those who killed him were the disbelievers. The answer is the slave Mawiyah. When Mawiyah saw what Islam stood for, and she witnessed what Qureish stood for, she knew where the truth lies, and she converted to Islam. Through the last actions of Khubaib, she entered Islam. Our duty as Muslims is to define to the world what the truth about Islam is, and when we do that, their response may well be like that of Mawiyah.

The task of being a good Muslim is so difficult, and as we see from the story of Khubaib, it demands tremendous sacrifice. It is difficult enough to maintain our five daily prayers and other acts of worship, so one can imagine how difficult it is to change our perceptions and our attitudes towards a world that seems to care very little about the plight of Muslims.

We ask Allah to guide us to the truth, and to guide others through us unto the truth. We ask Allah to send down His mercy and His tranquility on the civilians of Lebanon and Gaza. We ask Allah to lessen the impact of the atrocity of the Israelis on the Lebanese and Palestinians and to guide our brothers and sisters in Lebanon to the true message of Islam.

Brothers and sisters, the topic of this khutbah was very difficult, and I sincerely hope I did not offend any one. I also sincerely hope that I did not misrepresent the message of Islam, a message of justice and peace. I know that in this period of adversity, our hearts are full of anguish and fear for those in Lebanon and Palestine, and equally so, our hearts are full of anger and hatred. Let not this anger and hatred swerve us Muslims from being the witnesses of Allah in justice on earth.

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ  
شَتَانُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ ءَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا أَعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ  
خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨﴾

***"O you who believe! Be steadfast witnesses for Allah in equity, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety: and fear Allah. For Allah is well-acquainted with all that you do" (S5, A8)***