Jumma Khutbah 26 June 2009

at

Henderson Mosque Auckland.

The Prophet (SAW) said, "*The example of the Believers in regard to their love and compassion for each other is as the example of the body: When one part suffers the whole body suffers.*"

In addition to the afore mentioned hadith, it can also be found that the Quran also emphasises that mutual love and compassion for each other will constitute Muslim Unity as it states: 'None of you is a true believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself',

Most Muslims very well know these Ayat and Ahadeeth, and while they adorn the walls of the masjids and other Islamic Institutions, it is a great pity that their message has not entered the hearts of most of the Muslim Ummah.

Brotherhood in Islam is the tie that binds Muslims together. It is the divine bond that unites their hearts and it is the strongest link of faith. The Prophet (SAW) said: "The strongest link of faith is love for the sake of Allah's pleasure." Brotherhood is one of the main elements which Islam depends on, to erect its structure and secure cohesion among all of its followers. On the day that the Prophet (SAW) established the Islamic community in Madinah, he made brotherhood its second pillar, after the unification of its elements, by building the Masjid.

Islam glorifies the concept of ukhuwwah (brotherhood), and it guarantees Thawab (reward) if it is based on birr and taqwa (righteousness and piety). Islam does not consider brotherhood as an end in itself but as a means to many ends.

A Muslim must select from among the good and righteous people for his companionship and brotherhood. The Prophet (SAW) said: "for whoever Allah wishes good, He will give him a righteous friend who will remind him if he forgets and aid him of he remembers." He also said (SAW): "Keep company with those whose sight reminds you of Allah, whose words increase your knowledge and whose actions make you desire the Hereafter."

The Muslim Ummah is the best of all Ummahs ever brought forth for mankind. The unity of the Ummah is a prime duty that has been stressed in the Quraan and Sunnah. Islamic unity is the means for realizing the overall implications of the message of Islam which cannot be realized when the Ummah is not unified. The current situation is indeed deplorable: Therefore a lot of work is needed.

To achieve Islamic unity and brotherhood, we shall now attempt to identify some of the factors and ways to achieve such an end:

1) Giving the Quran its due respect. It is the book of Allah which no falsehood can approach from before or behind. It is guidance for all people to lead them to the absolute Truth.
aIt is the standard document for every Muslim. It is the source of communication between man and his creator. It is the source of all understanding of one's life and duties. It is the source of settling disputes between Muslims and non-Muslims, and indeed between Muslims themselves. There is a solution in the Quran for every situation we may find ourselves in. Therefore, it is imperative that the Muslims come back to understanding it and being enlightened by its teachings.

The Quran must be accepted in its totality with the firm realization that it is pure Word of Allah. The Quran is self-explanatory and no contradiction may be found in it. Moreover, Ahadeeth regarding the explanation of various Ayat of the Quran must be taken at face value, as they are words of the truthful

prophet (SAW). And thereafter, any problem that might still arise regarding its interpretation or the deduction of a legal ruling from it should be referred to the learned and well-informed authorities.

Minor differences in religious doctrines have become one of the major causes of fragmentation of the Muslim Ummah. The question arises as to whether this fragmentation could have been avoided if the Ummah had only paid proper attention to the words of the Quran.

It is our great misfortune that we have not tried to understand the meaning of the Quran, and have instead found it more convenient to read other books. A return to the study of the text of the Quran can still generate unifying force among the Muslims.

2) Giving the Sunnah of the Prophet (SAW) its due respect. This is the second factor for achieving Muslim Unity and it is also the second source of Islamic legislation. Whatever the prophet (SAW) stipulated must be accepted in the same way as the Quran. Since the Sunnah of the prophet (SAW) is an explanation of the Quran, one must remember that the sayings of the prophet (SAW) and the example demonstrated by him is not an optional matter for Muslims to take or leave according to their desires.

"Whatever Allah gives you, you must take it, and whatever He forbids you from, you must refrain from it. And fear Allah..."

Our success and our good comes from obeying Allah and obeying his Rasul. The true cause of disunity is that we are not giving the Quran and the Sunnah their due. There would only be unity through holding fast to the Quran and the Prophet's Sunnah, and fighting against the Muharramat (forbidden things) and Munkarat (evils).

"I have left among you two things by holding fast to which you will never go astray: The Book of Allah and my Sunnah."

In regard to the obedience to Allah and His Messenger (SAW) to unify the Muslims Ummah, need the leadership, presidents, Imams, Muslim rulers, governors and Muslim leaders who can stand up and proclaim and declare, following the example of the first Khalifa Abu Bakr (raa):

And if I do bad, then put me back on the right path. Truthfulness is a trust and falsehood is a deception, and the weakest among you in my eyes until I secure his rights to him Inshallah. And the strongest among you is the weakest until I take away what is not his by right. A nation that becomes immoral is destroyed by Allah. Obey me as long as I obey Allah and his Messenger, but if I disobey Allah and his Messenger, then obedience to me is no longer incumbent on you.

3) The third factor in the achievement of Muslim unity is following the path of the Khulafa ar-Rashidin and the Sahabah.

"Follow my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly-guided Khulafa ar-Rashidin."

This Hadith shows that the status of the Sahabah, especially Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali (raa). It shows that nobody after the prophet (SAW) is infallible and that abiding by the judgment of the Khalifa, as based on the consensus of the Ummah, is binding upon all Muslims and essential for their unity.

4) Consulting the learned authorities.

"So ask the people of knowledge if you do not know."

Knowledgeable scholars must be consulted in any unclear or controversial issue. We should not jump to any hasty conclusions based upon our own limited understanding or interpretation of the Shari'ah, but instead ask those who are the most knowledgeable in this field. And when they give us an answer, they should answer based on the Quran and Sunnah.

5) Establishment of the Majlis ash-Shura. It is the duty of the Muslims to work hard to establish a Majlis ash-Shura. This is another major factor in uniting the stand of all the Muslims. The principle of Shura has been proved to be effective in the tradition of the rightly guided Salah. The tragic decline of the Khilafa in the 14th century after the Hijarah proved to be the beginning of the decline of the whole Muslim world.

6) Implementing the principles of Islamic brotherhood. Commitment to Islamic brotherhood is a fundamental basis of Islamic unity. For this principle to be achieved, we must lover each other for Allah's sake, visit, and help and advise one another.

Muslims have been strictly warned against annoying and hurting the feelings of each other.

"The Muslim is he from whose hand and tongue other Muslims are safe."
"O you who believe! Let not any people mock at another people, for it may be that they are better than you."

This is because true virtue, excellence and honour are not to be measured by worldly standards but by the standards of Allah, which no-one knows except He.
"Truly the most noble of you in the sigh of Allah is the most pious of you."

7) Individual efforts and responsibilities.

Any intelligent person who reads this ayah will see how important individual responsibility is in Islam

"Truly Allah never changes the condition of a people until they change what is within themselves."

Unless the Muslims make the effort to change their own condition for the better, Allah will never change their circumstances for their good.

8) Hold on to Islam with firmness at the time of adversity.

"Islam began estranged, and it will again be estranges, so good tidings to the estranged!"

At its beginning, Islam was generally considered to be a strange thing with which they were not acquainted. And it was at the beginning of Islam that its people were strong. Thereafter came a time when Islam became a popular, and everything against Islam was unpopular. And it was at the time between the ages of the Tabi it-Tabi b and the present day, that the Muslim decline took place. And after that, there will be a time when Islam will again be estranged from society as it was in the beginning. It could be, and Allah knows better, that the time that we are living in today is that time.

Today many Muslims feel shy to offer Salah in front of others. Whatever is Fard is different to the perfumed Haraam all around him.

But those who are content to hold on to their Islam despite all odds and be subjected to estrangement by society are the ones who will succeed in this life and in the Hereafter. And there are those who hold on to Islam with firmness, who do not care what the rest of the world says about them.

9) Another great hindrance to the path of Muslim unity is the presence of such poisonous doctrines in the Ummah of Tribalism, nationalism, statism etc., Islam condemns these in no uncertain terms.

10) The last factor to achieve unity is the warning of Rasullullah SAW in which the Prophet says" "there will be a time where you will all be disunited.' Sahaba asked him: "Why Rasulullah? What will be the reason for this?" Rasulullah replied: "You will love Dunya and hate death."