

Unity of Muslim Ummah, It's Need, Importance and Suggestions

Dr Maqbool Hassan*

Abstract

No doubt unity and consensus has a miraculous role in developing a nation and achieving their higher goals. Muslim's unity is a major and undeniable problem of the time. The increasing sectarian ethnocentrism has spattered and blemished the fundamental Islamic teachings. Today's Muslims are suffering from numerous problems, and the basic reasons for their plight are i.e. sectarian hatred, creed prejudices, lust for power, intolerance and many other materialistic interests. All these things have combined to confirm falling for Muslims, which deprived them of their honor, dignity and power. On the other hand the enemies of Muslim are united and they are fully aware that their strength lies in the weakness of Muslims. Hence they are engaged in making conspiracies to divide Muslims. Historically, it is proved that sowing germs of disunity and disintegration among Muslims has been a very old and an effective tool of Jews and Christians. Where as the Holy Quran warns us to be united and to remain aloof from them. God also commands Muslims to observe patience and retain unity among them by following the principles of piety and brotherhood. It is possible only when Muslims involved in "fraternity" with broadmindedness. At the same time, it remains the core responsibility of the Muslim rulers to play their role in this connection.

Keywords: Unity, sectarian, Islamic teachings, Muslims, Holy Quran

Success of any nation is concealed in the mutual unity and harmony between its members. A strongly united nation becomes an invincible force and overcomes every hindrance which comes in their way. No one dares to confront such a tide and strong nation. The Holy Quran educated us this covert at the time of its revelation that: "You; by this (strength and unity) distressed the enemies of Allah and yours." [1]

In many other verses of the Holy Quran, Muslims have been commanded to be united. i.e.: "And keep hold on to the rope of Allah altogether and do not be divided into sects." [2]

In this verse the whole Ummah is addressed instead of an individual and of course it is the responsibility of every Muslim to do so. The Holy Quran emphasize on the harmony and unanimity by using the word "JAMI'EA"(Altogether)"as well. This verse definitely advise connection to "Habl Allah"- (rope of Allah), unity amongst the Muslims and prohibit the partition. Quranic interpreters called it (rope of Allah- ("Habl Allah") - the Quran and Sunnah of the Prophet. No doubt this is the basis for the unity and harmony of the Muslims; as the Holy Prophet said: "I'm going to leave two things among you: the Book of Allah and my Sunnah. You will not be misleading as long as you would hold them tightly." [3] [4]

Teachings of Allah Almighty are present in the form of "QURAN and the practical exercises of these can be seen in the life of Prophet. So these are the two exclusive bases for Muslims to be united upon them. By "unity" does not mean that one should surrender his/her personal and substantial right of expression and will, but it means to have respect and honor for others thoughts...It meant to show broadmindedness, respect, and to avoid of every sort of chauvinism. We should follow the respected companions of the Holy Prophet who in spite of having so many academic differences among them remained friendly and respected each other.

Allah Almighty has condemned the disunity and clash and declares a worst punishment/Azaab for it. "O Prophet! You Tell: He have control over it (if He want) put down the DOOM from the top of your head or beneath your feet or a group be in fight with other and you taste the fight between you. Ponder; how we state by overturn our injunction so that they understand that. . [5]

*Assistant Professor in Islamic Studies, Bahria College Karsaz Karachi, Pakistan. **Phone:** +923333578858. **Email:** drmaqboolhassan@yahoo.com

Ibn e Aseer is of the opinion that: Here by word group ("she'ia" شيعه) means to propagate dissection in Ummah. Allah Almighty commanded His Holy Prophet to remain detach from these types of people who create differences. He says in Quran:

"Peoples who create divisions in their religion and become pieces, (Prophet) of God has nothing to them, their case is in the custody of God, and then He will aware of them to their actions." [6]

Meanwhile Lord of the Universe has ordered the Muslims not to indulge in differences and not to take proud of mutual anomalies just like polytheists. "And do not be among the polytheists who have created divisions in religion and get divided into groups then they are happy on whatever they have." [7]

"And do not be disputed with each other that weakened you and destroy your awesome and be patient Allah Almighty is with the patient ones." [8]

"And being warned not like those who cause divisions and differences after having taken clear signs and there is great penalty for them" [9]

...Establish the religion and do not be divided in it, the polytheists feel it difficult what you are inviting them for..." [10]

Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) educated His followers at various occasions about the importance of unity and condemned disagreement and conflict between Muslims. i. e. He said: "All humans are equal like the teeth of a comb". [11]

"Stay connected with the large majority of the Muslim community. [12]

"O people, your wealth, your fame, your blood...all are sacred to you as soon as these months (Zeeqaada, Zelhajjah, Muharram,etc) and this city are sacred." [13]

"He is not one of us who discriminate and fight on the grounds of discrimination and that too who pass away from this world having discrimination (in his/her heart)." [14]

" Faithful want Good faith and goodwill to each other and treat each other with respect. Although their bodies and houses are separate to each other's .But there are dishonest peoples want bad to each other and do not help each other although their bodies and houses are same with each other., [15] [16]

Research scholars have narrated about a man named "Shas bin Qays" grown up in the era of ignorance have had the jealousy in his heart about Muslims, prepared a Jewish youngster to create a conflict between two major tribes of Auws and Khzrej. He instigated them for clash and conflict by recalling the wars between the both tribes at time of ignorance and the tribes were ready to fight against each other. The incident was reported to the Holy Prophet; He rushed to the site with Ansaar and Muhajreen and said:

"O Muslim! Had you forgotten God and starting to improve symbol of ignorance while I am among you... God gave you the status by the light of Islam, abolished the ignorance developed affection and fraternity among you. Do you want to have again the disbelief? By the address of Prophet they understood that it was an evil plot and regretted on their action. Put their weapons on ground hugged each other in tears and began to express love and went back to their respective homes in the company of Holy prophet.. [17]

In the above mentioned tradition Prophet addresses all human being and particularly to the Muslims. At many places the Muslims have been stirred to awaken to protect their religion, culture, moral principles because enemies are using every sort of means to create gulfs and cleavages among Muslims. They are attempting to drift away Muslims from their primary responsibilities. Muslims need to understand the scheme of their enemies; further negligence may stir their existence in the world. Schools of thought and sectarian differences in Ummah: The academic opinions of the rated four Fuqaha, Imam Malik, Imam Abu Haneefah, Imam Shafi'i and Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal based on the understanding and interpretation of the Qur'an and Sunnah texts are known as the four schools of thought. Because there are mutual differences in their opinions and why there is a difference in their followers, due to this the Muslim community has been divided into several groups. Although these eminent Islamic /Fuqha are not responsible for this difference. Fault, lies then in fact in their followers. These rated Jurists tried to explore the will of God by going through the Holy Quran and Sunnah for which they deserve high reward. But no one claimed that he was right and truth is

confined to his school of thought and other one was wrong. So he has to follow the same trend as in all situations and be opposed to another view. However the Muslims have made it mandatory to follow one specific Imam and have declared opposition to the view to other one. Due to this, the view of bigotry born and started the confrontation against each other. Muslims has increased so much bigotry in the view of many Islamic teachings that hurt core of Islam. All believers in the Qur'an have been declared brother. Islam has even prescribed the rights of non-Muslims. But this temperamental /bigotry has gone afar to the point of no return.

"That's why there is a situation of war and violence in those places where people of different schools of thoughts are living. Many people are calling these schools the cause of chaos and violence. The Unity is the most important issue of Islam and Muslims and has superiority on all the needs and priorities. What is the reason that Muslims do not understand the need for unity? Muslim unity is undeniable demand of the present era. Such a tremendous need of Ummah could not come into being with narrow sectarian, ethnic prejudiced, and national and ethnic discriminations. Conspiracies of imperialist countries have also been effective in preventing Muslims to be united as well. Indeed, in recent centuries, Muslims state of being marginalized and lack of progress is due to mutual differences. Their national and religious differences have left behind them in different nations. When the second decade began Muslims were leaders in intellectual and scientific terms. Their cities were considered the center of Science and Industry. Muslim thinkers of that era were considered leaders of that time. Muslim world was considered the centre of political, economic, academic and scientific activities. What happened with the glory of Islam today? Where is the solidarity of Muslims? All these differences have ruined the Muslim dignity, respect and excellence. If they remained committed to the Divine teachings revealed and protect their political and social unity, their fate would have not jus like this. Even today, if Muslims come under a flag of Islam and spend their time for the welfare of the nation instead of indulging in useless differences they can emerge as a great power. It is the task of our intellectuals and Ulama that they should make the Muslims aware of the importance of unity and solidarity.

Unity has a miraculous role towards achievement of excellence and success and in the development of any nation. Today enemies of Islam are united and Muslims have division among them. Coalition of the enemies of Islam is based on well-acquainted with this point and they declared Islam as their common enemy and think it a biggest obstacle in the way of their imperialist goals. For this in spite of many ethnic, regional and political differences and getting near each other have continued efforts to abolish the Islam and Muslims.

Christians and Jews, for example, forgetting all their major differences have planned to work together against Muslims. Christians who claims that Jews are liable to crucify the Christ, now by ignoring this both are in coalition against Muslims. It is an undeniable fact that all Islamic sects have common fundamentals of Islamic beliefs and values. The whole Islamic system is based on these foundations. Muslims neither deny any other prophet or messenger of the law nor do they consider any other religion except Islam. All Muslim believe in equally the doctrine of Towheed/monotheism, the Holy Prophet's Finality and prophet hood of all prophets, revelation and revealed Books, hereafter, the existence of angels, , prayer, Zakat, fasting/ Soam ,Hajj etc. If there is any difference it is only to simple things i.e., to set details of basic knowledge and to theological Commentaries only. Because it does not affect the basics of fundamental believes of the religion. It does not affect then what is the reason that having belief on one God, same prophet, same Kaaba, same Deen, could not become one unit (Ummat e Wahida). The Holy Quran is constantly shaking the souls of the peoples that have chosen for the nation and have the same religion.

"(Creator of the universe), is set for you the same religion, Noah was commanded (by the revelation), (and sent you) and which we enjoined Ibrahim and Musa and Essa to establish the Deen/religion and put not broke."[18]

It is known from historical evidences that to create mutual differences is the old way of Jews and Christians. After Moses Jews divided into communities and Christians after Jesus divided into communities. Muslim, despite such instructions were divided into sections, which mean that Muslims, indeed recognized Islam merely but not understood it. If they would have understood Islam really, they never get divided into

sections and in practices of the teachings of Islam. "Union" is an object that if may be taken away not only from the world of humanity but from the whole universe, then the world system will be turned upside down within minutes.

Suggestions for Achievement of Muslim Unity

To achieve unity between Muslims we suggest the following tips;

1 -Commitment to Towheed

The shared beliefs of a nation can play an important role in people's alliance, solidarity between individuals of a nation. Particularly when it based on the belief in God's oneness and the whole ummah maintain it in all walks of life. Qur'an invites believers, to be united on Towheed (including its all aspects). In the sight of Holy Quran the philosophy of Prophetic Mission has been to invite people and to compete fashioned colonialists and imperialists, on the ground of Towheed, who caused division and separation among the nations. As Allah Almighty says in the Holy Quran;

"And verily, we have sent a messenger to every community so (people, in their direction) worship God and keep them aloof from the contumacies (Taghoot طاغوت)." [19]

The Holy Quran made it declared about the Prophetic Mission on the grounds of Towheed, by the Holy Prophet himself: "God is our Lord and yours both, and our actions for us and your deeds for you." [20]

"[O Prophet] Say: O People of the [Prophet's] book come and get agree on this just point that not to worship none but God, do not make someone a partner of Him, not to give status of God for each other, And then even if they deviate then tell them you to be witness that we are true Muslims and the real followers." [21]

The above mentioned verse declares clearly the "Towheed" the actual base for unity and consensus to the "men of Book" and who do not agree with it being told clearly they are out of list of the Muslims. As Allah Almighty said at other place:

"Remember the Grace of Allah when you were enemies with each other He created love and affection into your hearts and with His grace you became brother." [22]

Interpreters of the Holy Quran (Mufasssireen) are convinced that in citing the verse "blessing" means unity among Muslims. And brotherhood among Muslims can only be established on the ground of Towheed. Unity is presented as the primary member and the track axis in the Sunnah and Islamic traditions. Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) started his movement of Islamic revolution, indicating Towheed as the secret of the success, He said that: "Say Allah is to be worshiped alone, you will be successful."

Likewise He said while He was addressing to His relatives about Towheed and Prophet Hood:

"I invite you people towards two things easy to say but very difficult to practice. By these two things you can have the sovereignty of Arab and Ajam, can enslave other nations, be admitted into paradise/Jannat, and may be emancipated from Hell :(these two things are to have belief on) one is that Allah is to be worshiped alone and the second that I am the Prophet of God." [23]

Holy Prophet also said at occasion declaring Towheed the foremost thing that:

"O people your provident is same, your parents are same, you all are the off springs of Adam and Hawa and Adam made up of mud, the most pious among you is the most beloved by Allah Almighty. No one is better than other among you except on the basis of pity." [24]

In short in all Islamic teaching and tradition, Towheed is top most priority. On these grounds the Great Islamic thinker and revolutionist Imam Khumeni invoking Ummah on unity and harmony said:

"The Unity of Muslim Ummah is possible only under the flag of Towheed." [25]

2 -To Avoid Takfir

"Takfir تكفير (To declare someone "KAFIR" كافر) and Takfiri trend has nothing to do with Islamic teachings and practices, there was no concept of "Takfir" in life time of the Messenger of Allah (saw). But it became a tool to get personal interest on the basis of envy, hatred and prejudices. The reasons of conflict

between Muslims are not the basic principles but are the social and religious prejudices. Because Islamic teachings are against some so-called Islamic fractions teach Muslims to prevent takfir and resolve their disputes, maintaining unity love and tolerance. The Khawarij was the first Islamic group in Islamic history who introduced the Takfir of the Muslims. [26] After them many others kept continue this thing in their follower ship. According all religious school of thoughts the person confess verbally the principle of Towheed and all other principles of faith is Muslim. His/her life, wealth and honor are respected. On the basis of non-academic arguments one cannot be declared an apostate or infidel nor he/she can be killed.

3. Identification of Common Enemy

All Muslims, scholars, intellectuals should be aware of any risk from common enemy and should recognize such elements. Today Ummah is posed to serious threats in the terms of politics, economics and culture. The enemies are trying to create doubts in beliefs of Muslim young generation by cultural invasion.

4. Focus on Common Issues

An important issue that may lead to the unity of the Muslims is that the Muslim community should focus on their common issues and problems. Because their common issues are too high and there are very few differences .But alas, common beliefs and principles have been completely ignored. Towheed /Monotheism, Prophet Hood, Hereafter/Maad, Prayer, fasting, Zakat, Hajj, Jihad, Qibla, Quran and many other subjects are common to Muslims. Such common things can lead them to the unity of the Ummah. Such common issues are being ignored as they don't exist.

5. Adherence to Islamic Brother Hood

Islam declares all believers as brothers, as Holy Prophet said:

"All believers are brother of each other." [27]

Every Muslim is a brother to another; every Muslim should be aware of the situation of his brother and should share his pain and sorrow. They need to have tendency to grow a sense of sympathy and to promote the idea that we're one nation will help to unity of Ummah. Muslim world is one unit though on geographic and political terms scattered in many countries. All Muslims must work together to change the fate of the Ummah. Followers of imperialism are trying to shake the foundation of our "brotherhood" and to destruct the Muslim faith, soul and future.

Bigotry between Muslims in the world today is nothing else but a satanic conspiracy. We should aware of it and our success is possible only when we are in the commitment to the Islamic teaching and brotherhood. At the time of Hijra/Migration, Holy Prophet said to the Muslims:

"O, Muslim!" Surely God invites you towards brotherhood and He has called it for you the home of peace." [28]

Today it is alarming situation for us in the world that more than a half billion Muslims are living in the world. But they still could not solve the problem of Holy "BAIT AL MAQDAS." If the present situation of Muslims remains same then enemies attack not only on Muslim countries but openly attack on our sanctity and the sacred places.

6 - Responsibilities of Muslim Governments

Muslim governments should play role to maintain brotherhood among Muslims, particularly the following steps should be taken by them.

A -Media Watch

Muslim governments should monitor their media so that they do not on air or do not communicate anything that spread hatred among different religious sects and religions. Uncontrolled media is too much harmful for Islamic Union on various aspects. The present so called independent media is not based on any principle. All matters are within the scope of check & balance and how this important field of society could be excluded from the scope of check & balance? Freedom of expression does not mean unrestrained comment at all. So our governments could control this important sector instead of being influenced by that apparently terrible and horrible philosophy of freedom. It is requested directly to media stake holders to build

strategy of "Freedom of Media" on real grounds too. So that our religious, ideological, national and cultural aims must be met seriously. Just to follow everything and to answer every call coming from west, blindly without any deep consideration will cause us severe damage. Actually it is the part of the global Jewish plan. It needs deep vision to be understood.

B-Monitoring of Intelligentia

The second step is to monitor academics, authors and writers. It is the duty of intellectuals, and writers of Islamic society to aware the nation about the sectarian provoking acts of enemies. Intellectuals and writers feeling responsibility should avoid personally from the conflictive issues while they write their articles, essays and books, they should work in favor of unity and the national interest of the Ummah. However research on religious issue must be limited to intellectuals only and the general public should be kept away from the abstruse academic discussions, otherwise, they fell into confusion. Government need to plan particularly in this connection.

C -Monitoring of Pulpit and Arcade/Member O Mehrab:

It is the responsibility of our governments to monitor the imams and khutba (religious speakers) of the mosques because they are directly connected to the society and their sayings/speeches are the most affective for the people. [With due excuse] some [of the less discerning] people of this field are also a big hand to create discrimination and extremism in the society. Government should plan training sessions in this regard at large for the people of this field with due consultation of the senior Ulma and scholars. Muslim jurists, scholars and Imams are the religious leaders of the people and there is great respect and trust between them. It is their responsibility that they should guide and train people through their Friday sermons and other religious events and to build their characters rather than to confuse them into differential matters. In fact all these things are beyond the intellectual frame work of common people and relate only to high caliber Ulma and scholars. Pulpit and arcade (Member wa Mehrab منبر و محراب) are not the proper places to discuss these contradictory problems. It required special forums of highly religious intellectuals. Common people must not be indulged into these issues of religious contradiction; they only need their religious training and character building.

Enemies of Islam and Muslims want to create rift and chaos between them by raising such issues and less discerning Muslims can easily get involved in these issues. Muslim scholars need to be aware of these conspiracies and try to keep away Muslims from them. It is need of the time that all followers of the different schools of thought should be above of all these contradictory matters and show tolerance, perseverance, fraternity and broadmindedness. They should give up all sort of prejudices and be united. Muslim scholars being the leaders of the Ummah can play a vital role to unite the Muslims.

D-Controle over Extremism

It is mandatory for Muslim governments to control the extremism and the extremists at the gross root level. Strategies should be formulated to cope with this situation by the help of eminent Muslim Ulma and intellectuals. We need to know the root causes of such extremist attitude i.e.; socio-political injustices etc.

E-Special Focus on Education Sector and Educational Syllabi

It is also duty of the government to focus on educational sector and the syllabi. This area is highly wisdom demanding. We should design our educational syllabus from the gross root level in such a manner that we can be successful to develop the tolerance, perseverance, fraternity and broadmindedness in minds of our youth resulting national harmony in our societies. Our enemies want to destroy our education system and try to develop rift between the students and their teachers in many aspects. We should aware of such conspiracies on the name of educational slogan .Because it will be very much harmful for us in future.

Conclusion

Muslim's disunity is a major and undeniable problem of the time. The increasing sectarian ethnocentrism has spattered and blemished the fundamental Islamic teachings. Today's Muslims are suffering from numerous problems, and the basic reasons for their plight are i.e. sectarian hatred, creed prejudices, lust

for power, intolerance and many other materialistic interests. All these things have combined to confirm falling for Muslims, which deprived them of their honor, dignity and power. On the other hand the enemies of the Muslims are united and they are fully aware that their strength lies in the weakness of Muslims. Hence they are engaged in making conspiracies to divide Muslims. Where as the Holy Quran warns us to be united and to remain aloof from them. The unity of Muslim Ummah is possible only under the flag of Towheed توحيد . Allah Almighty also commands the Muslims to observe patience and retain unity among them by following the principles of piety and brotherhood as well. At the same time it remains the core responsibility of the Muslim rulers to play their role in this connection.

References

- 1-AL QURAN-Al-Anfaal-60
- 2-AL QURAN-Aal e Imran-103
- 3-Muslim (1334 A.H) Sahi Muslim. Egypt: Maktaba Sabih,Hadith 2137
- 4-Al Hakam,Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Abdullah Nisha Puri Al Mustadrak . Hyderabad: Dair e maarif Nizamia p-318
- 5-Al Quran-Al-Inaam-65
- 6-Ibid-159
- 7-AL QURAN-Al Room-31, 32
- 8-AL QURAN-Anfaal-46
- 9-AL QURAN-Aal e Imran-105
- 10-AL QURAN-Al shoora-13
- 11-Mehmood Ahmed Ghazi,Dr.(2010) Maazrat e Fiqh.Lahore: Al-Faisal Nasheran wa Tajran e Kutab,p 120.
- 12-Muhammad bin Ismaeel Bukhari (1966) Al Jame Al Sahi, Kitab al Fitan.Qairo: Maktaba Mustafa Albabi Al Halbi, Hadith 1966.
- 13-Sajastani abu Daud (YNA) As Sunan. Qairo Maktaba Mustafa Albabi Al Halbi, Hadith -1215
- 14-Sajastani abu Daud : Ibid
- 15-Sayoti,Ala ud deen ,Abdur Rehman, Hafiz (1312 A H) Jameh al Ahadith-III, hadith 23616,
- 16-Al Muqti, Ali, Alau ud Deen (1312) Kanzul Aamaal. Hyderabad: Daira tul Maarif Al Nizamia, Hadith 757.
- 17-Ibn e Hamam, kamal ud Deen (YNA) Fath ul Qadeer. Berut: Dar Ihya ul Turas Al Arabi, vol II, p368.
- 18-AL QURAN-Al shoora-13
- 19-AL Quran-Al Nehl -36
- 20-AL QURAN-Al shoora-15
- 21-AL QURAN-Aal e Imran-64
- 22-Ibid-103
- 23-Mufeed, Akbari Baghdadi, Muhammad Bin Muhammad (Hassan Mooswi-Translator) (1388 A H) Irshad e Mufeed. Qum Iran: Maktaba Saroor, p 21.
- 24-Sayoti, Ala ud deen, Abdur Rehman, Hafiz. Ibid, Vol- III, hadith 5736, p, 110.
- 25-Khumeni, Imam (YNA) Sahifa e Noor.Iran: Ministry of Farhang wa Irshad.
- 26-Ibn e Jozi, Allama (YNA) Talbees e Iblees Qairo: Maktaba Mustafa Albabi Al Halbi,. p-126,127.
- 27-Al-Quran-Al Hujrat-10
- 28-Ibn e Jozi, Jamil ud Deen Abul Faraj(YNA) Tareekh e Ibn e Hashaam. Karachi : Maktaba Rahmania Urdu Bazar, Vol-II, p 109.

.....