



Unity of Muslims; the Universal Message of the Prophet of Islam (PBUH)

Muslim Unity (Ittihad) is a term that refers to establishing good and peaceful relations among the various Islamic denominations. The primary objective of

Muslim Unity or Islamic Unity is to unite all Muslims around the world. Although some divisions such as Sunni/Shia exist among Muslims, according to the propo-

nents of Muslim Unity these divisions are negligible and Muslims from different countries should forge closer ties with each other.

It has become cliché to say



that Muslims have reduced the religion of Islam to rituals and forgotten other important tenets. While it is crucial to practice the main pillars of Islam, we cannot ignore other basic aspects of the faith that emphasize brotherhood and sisterhood.

Learn tolerance towards other points of view: Is it not interesting that we can attend classes at college or speak with colleagues from work and discuss issues while being willing to disagree with them? But the minute some of us step into a mosque or Mus-

lim community function, all that tolerance seems to go out the window.

Islam is very broad and wide, contrary to popular belief, and you can find a range of scholarly views on many different issues. If our scholars from the past and present have shown such tolerance towards differing views on various issues, why should the average Muslims, who do not have that level of knowledge, express intolerance for another point of view? Let us not forget that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) has said “Ikhtilafu Ummati Rahmah” meaning “The intellectual difference of opinion in my Ummah is a blessing.”

Learn to criticize without hurting: The way some Muslims criticize each other; you would think they were talking to an Islam-basher instead of a fellow brother or sister. This type of ignorant behavior is a sure way to create anger, hurt, and dissension. We must learn the etiquette of criticism, whether it is towards individual Muslims or our leaders. Observing this will not only help solve problems in a practical manner, but it will also lead to a greater sense of brotherhood and sisterhood in the community.

Do not call anyone a Kafir, Mushrik, or Bid’atee: This horrible phenomenon of calling fellow believers Kafir, Mushrik, or Bid’atee must end immediately if we want to create a climate that is conducive to Muslim Unity. Calling other Kafir is a sure way to isolate individuals from the Muslim community. If a person is expressing ideas that are not

in line with Islamic values, he/she must be gently corrected. By the same token, calling others Kafir will only fuel their ignorance, anger, and stubbornness, not to mention humiliate and embarrass them.

Surah Al-Hujurat of the Holy Qur’an provides excellent guidance on the kind of behavior that Muslims should avoid to establish Muslim unity. For instance, Allah the Almighty, advises us to avoid mockery, defamation, suspicion, and backbiting. These are all things that serve to divide us and create hatred, hurt, and dissension because one of the famous traditions of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) says, “A Muslim is the one from whose hands and tongue other Muslims are safe.”

It is important to understand that Muslim unity is not an option. According to the Holy Qur’an and traditions of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) Muslim unity is an obligatory duty. Consider the following references given below:

► **Surah Al-Hujurat of the Holy Qur’an provides excellent guidance on the kind of behavior that Muslims should avoid to establish Muslim unity. For instance, Allah the Almighty, advises us to avoid mockery, defamation, suspicion, and backbiting.**

“And hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves.” (Holy Qur’an, 3:103)

“The believers are but a single brotherhood. Make peace and reconciliation between your two (contending) brothers and fear Allah so that you may receive mercy.” (Al- Hujurat: 10)

“As for those who divide their religion and break up into sects, you have no part in them in the least: their affair is with Allah. He will, in the end, tell them the truth of all that they did.” (Al-An’am: 159)

Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, “The Muslims are like a body, if one part of the body hurts, the rest of the body will also suffer.” Meaning that the Muslims, from whatever origin they may be, are one Ummah and they cannot be separated from each other.

He is also quoted saying, “Believers are brethren, their lives are equal to each other and they are as one hand against their enemy.” “It is not permissible for two Muslims to be annoyed and angry for more than three days.” “When Muslims are angry with each other for three days. If they do not compromise, then they go away from the limits of Islam and the one who compromises first will enter Paradise earlier.”

The utmost important duty of every Muslim is to preserve and protect the Muslim unity and not to cause any division in the Muslim rank and that is the reason that the late Imam Khomeini (RA) declared 12th to 17th of the month of Rabi’ al-Awwal as the


Unity Week of Muslims

Sectarianism serves the purpose of enemies of Islam

Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution of Iran has issued a fatwa (religious verdict) declaring it unlawful to insulting any of the Sunni Islamic symbols; a fatwa that has been welcomed by the former president of al-Azhar University of Islamic Sciences, Ahmad al Tayib, and Muslims around the world. This fatwa has greatly paved the path for Islamic Solidarity and Unity)

In a statement that the fatwa was prudent and timely and would help ram the door shut to seditions, Ahmad al-Tayib wrote: “I received the blessed fatwa with appreciation, it was incumbent on all Muslims to try to keep inter-Muslim unity and certain differences among the Islamic sects should be allowed to harm the unity of the Islamic Ummah.”

► **Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, “The Muslims are like a body, if one part of the body hurts, the rest of the body will also suffer.” Meaning that the Muslims, from whatever origin they may be, are one Ummah and they cannot be separated from each other.**



Surprisingly the Western media have preferred to remain silent about this fatwa.

Statement of Grand Ayatollah Sistani on the subject of Muslim Unity

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate

“And hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves;” (the Holy Qur’an, Surah Aal-e-Imran, Verse 103)

The Islamic nation is going through difficult circumstances, and facing major crises and enormous challenges affecting its present and threatening its future. Everyone is aware of this situation and needs to close ranks and reject those who fan the flames of sectarianism and we must avoid stirring sectarian differences.

Those differences that have existed for centuries, and no completely satisfactory resolution - pleasing to all parties - seems to exist, and hence should not be pursued for the sake of creating controversy and strife, but only within the framework of scientific research in a sober and in particular in a manner that does not affect the fundamentals of Islam.

Everyone believes in One God, and the message of Prophet (PBUH), and in the concept of Ma’ad (Resurrection/Judgement), and the fact that the Quran - which is guarded and protected by Allah from distortion - along with the Honorable Prophetic



Sunnah (Tradition), which is the source for the Shari'ah (Islamic Legal) rulings and the affection for the Noble Ahl al-Bayt (AS), etc. The fundamentals of Islam are shared by the Muslims in general, among which are the pillars of Islam: Prayer, Fasting, Hajj and so on. These common concepts form the basic core of Islamic Unity. We must focus on them to establish closer bonds of love and affection between the people of this Ummah, and indeed do no less than work on peaceful co-existence amongst each other, and move away from the bicker-

ing and communal and sectarian rhetoric under whatever guise or title.

Muslim Ummah is like a Tasbeeh/Tasbeeh

A Tasbeeh/Tasbeeh is used to keep count of dhikr. It is usually made up of 100 beads which are held together in a necklace form by a thread. As long as the Tasbeeh/Tasbeeh remains in its original form, it can be used for doing good deeds. However, what happens if the thread rips? The beads fall all over the place and create a mess. Similar is the ex-

ample of this Muslim Ummah. As long as the Muslims remain united together, good results will come out of them. However, as soon as they are divided, there arises troubles and problems; something that has been experienced many times.

Lastly we end discussion on this important issue by quoting a statement from Grand Ayatollah Imam Khomeini (RA) who said: "We Muslims are busy bickering over whether to fold or unfold our arms during prayer, while the enemy is devising ways of cutting them off."