



The Holy Quran and the Factors of Islamic Unity

The Qur'an has looked at the issue of unity from its social point of view and has emphasized the importance of unity among the worlds, religions, Muslims, and the institution of the family, and considers the connection between the hearts of believers as a kind of divine intervention, and in order to create and maintain such unity, it has predicted certain solutions, part of which are to prevent division, and the

other part is to strengthen unity.

1- Concentrating on the common points: There are certain common points that the Qur'an has specifically pointed out and has called on Muslims to unite on their basis. Emphasizing that humans are all created from dust (Al-Hajj: 5) or born from one parent (Al-Hujurat: 13). The fact that human dignity belongs to all humans - and color and race do not affect it - (Isra':70) is

to draw attention to these common points with regard to unity. The invitation to the followers of divine religions and People of the Book to come to common points of belief (Aal-e Imran: 64) has also been done for this reason.

2- Holding fast to Allah's cord: In its most explicit verse, in the call for unity, the Holy Qur'an has called on all the believers to grasp the divine cord and avoid

division: “And hold fast to the rope of God and do not be divide” (Aal-e Imran: 103) and also in Verses 146 and 175 of Surah Al-Nisa’ and verse 101 of Surah Aal-e Imran it talks about resorting to God. Furthermore, the Holy Qur’an has asked believers to turn to God in their conflicts and differences. In the words of the Qur’an: “And if you dispute concerning anything, refer it to Allah...” (Al-Nisa’: 59) Therefore, in addition to being the axis of unity, the Qur’an can, in case of the eruption of differences, restore unity in the Ummah. Such a role for the Qur’an is due to the fact that, in addition to calling on everyone to unity and warning them against division, it outlines a coherent and harmonious ideological, moral, and practical system that anyone who refers to it, will subconsciously connect with millions of the follower of the Qur’an.

3- Referring to the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH): In addition to the fact that the Qur’an recognizes the very being of the Prophet (PBUH) as a key for the unity and solidarity among Muslims (Aal-e Imran:159), it considers referring to the Prophet’s Sunnah to be a way for creating and preserving it: “And if you dispute concerning anything, refer it to Allah and His Messenger...” (Ibid.) The Sunnah of the Holy Prophet, explaining the teachings of the Qur’an can remove the ambiguities, mistakes, and misunderstandings, which may be the cause of dispersion.

4- Referring to the Ahl al-Bayt (AS): The Qur’an mentions the

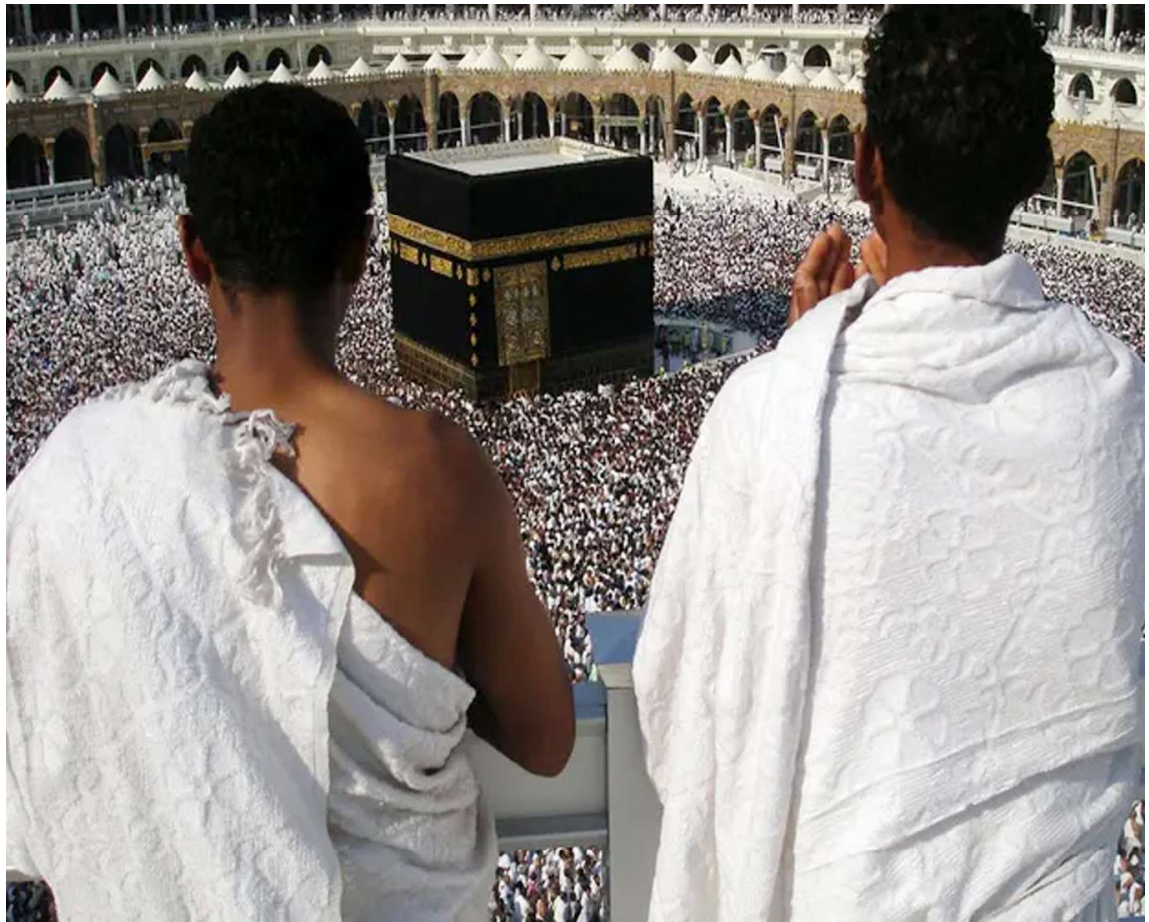
Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) as “those vested with authority” and considers obedience to them as obedience to God Almighty and the Messenger also considers their words to be the means of understanding: “O you who have faith! Obey Allah and obey the Apostle and those vested with authority among you.” (Ibid.) And it is for this reason that it asked Muslims to refer to them in cases of differences among them or their understanding of religion: “had they referred it to the Prophet or to those vested with authority among them, those of them who investigate would have ascertained it” (Al-Nisa’: 83)

5- Enjoining the good and forbidding the evil: After calling on the Muslims to hold fast to the divine cord and avoid division, the Holy Qur’an asks them to rise up to enjoin the good and forbid the evil: “There has to be a nation among you summoning to the good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong.” (Aal-e Imran: 104) And immediately warns them not to disperse like the followers of the previous religions who suffered from many mistakes in their religion: “Do not be like those who became divided and differed after manifest signs had come to them.” (Ibid.,: 105) This shows that enjoining good and forbidding evil plays a special role in establishing unity and preventing division. Accepting such an effective role for these two divine decrees is the reason that fragmentation among the followers of religion is either a result of a

mistake in understanding religious teachings or it originates from selfishness on the part of individuals and groups. Enjoining the good and forbidding the evil in the form of social supervision can prevent the approach to and spreading such deviations.

6- Respecting the rights of brotherhood: The Holy Qur’an considers believers as one another’s souls and asks them not to find fault with each other: “And do not defame one another (Al-Hujurat: 11); avoid suspicion, spying on each other, unjust slanders, and backbiting (See Al-Hujurat 12 and Al-Nur: 23) and refers to backbiting as eating the flesh of one’s brother: (Al-Hujurat: 12). And due to the alignment of such a bond with God’s will, it has asked the believers to thread on the path of truth, avoiding which would be tantamount to opposing the Prophet (PBUH) (Al-Nisa’: 115). The Holy Qur’an asks the believers that - like those in heaven - to remove grudges from their hearts (Al-Hijr: 47), and to be compassionate to each other in their souls, and ask God to forgive their religious brothers before themselves: “Our Lord, forgive us and our brethren who were our forerunners in the faith, and do not put any rancor in our hearts toward the faithful.” (Al-Hashr: 10)

7- Reconciliation: Despite the existence of elements of unity, such as the unity of faith, differences, and disputes among religious brothers are natural to a certain extent and part of social life. In order to deal with such differences and to perpetuate



the former unity of the believers, the Holy Qur'an has asked them to promote reconciliation among religious brothers and to resolve disputes (Al-Hujurat: 9).

8- Worship programs: Acts of worship have been defined in Islam in such a way that they, very naturally, promote practical convergence and unity among individuals and in the community.

A) Supplication: In addition to calling believers to supplicate to God (Al-Ghafir: 60), the Holy Qur'an contains the highest themes of prayer, and an examination of the themes of these prayers shows that most of them are presented in the

plural form. For instance, verses 191 to 194 of Surah Aal-e Imran recommend praying for forty believers before praying for oneself and this indicates that Islam places great emphasis on the soul of unity among the Ummah.

B) Congregational prayer: Emphasis on attending mosques and participating in congregational prayer: "and bow along with those who bow (in prayer)" (Al-Baqarah: 43) as well as the promises for many rewards for performing - it many hadiths - are among the Islamic factors to create convergence.

C) Hajj: The Qur'an has con-

sidered one of the wisdoms of Hajj to be joint benefits on the part of Muslims: "that they may witness the benefits for them..." (Al-Hajj: 28). It is quite evident that one of the most important benefits intended in this verse is the strengthening of the bond of brotherhood and unity among believers and reflecting upon the strength caused by unity. The impermissibility of quarrels and disputes in Hajj (Al-Baqarah:197), wearing simple clothes of the same color during ihram, and performing the rituals of Hajj together and next to each other, pursue this important goal.