

UNITY AMONG MUSLIMS

We start with the name of *Allah*. We praise *Allah* and thank *Allah* for the blessing of *Islam*. We humbly ask *Allah* to raise the rank of Prophet *Muhammad* ﷺ and his kind *Al* and Companions and to protect his nation from that which he fears for them. Thereafter:

Solidarity, cooperation, and standing together are important and basic elements for constructing a sound, united Islamic society. If the sincere Muslim were to take a brief look at the situation of Muslims throughout the world today, it would be enough to make him active in establishing unity among Muslims. A quick glance at the situation before and after the renewal of the call to *Islam* by Prophet *Muhammad* ﷺ would shed bright light on the sound foundation for unity among Muslims.

Prophet *Isa*, Jesus, peace be upon him, came before Prophet *Muhammad* ﷺ. The followers of Prophet *Isa* who adhered to the Religion of *Islam* but began to diminish in numbers after Prophet *Isa* was raised to the sky. Ignorance then began to spread among the people. Before Prophet *Muhammad* ﷺ renewed the call to *Islam*, the people were living in an era of ignorance. It was a period of time when widespread ignorance prevailed. This period of time, before Prophet *Muhammad* ﷺ renewed the call to *Islam*, was called the time of ignorance, because ignorance prevailed among the people. The Arabs in the Arabian Peninsula at that time were scattered tribes, dispersed throughout the land, fighting and plundering each other. The intensity of their wars drove some of them to bury their daughters alive, hoping to escape scandal should their daughters be captured by the enemy.

The strong did injustice to the weak. Women were considered worthless just because they were female. Drinking alcohol was prevalent. Some had dozens of wives. People unrightfully worshipped stones and idols. Some even worshipped idols made from dates, and when they felt hungry, they ate them!! Many buried their daughters out of fear of poverty. Prostitution became widespread unjust tribal solidarity (*Asabiyyah*) prevailed. People blindly adhered to their tribal judgements, even when these were unjust (*Asabiyyah*). This was the situation that prevailed before the Prophet *ü* came with his Message. People were living in ignorance and darkness.

When the Prophet ﷺ received the Revelation of Prophethood, he began to call the people to *Islam*. The Prophet *ü* made reference to the state of ignorance prevalent at that time in a *hadith* related by Muslim and others. He said:

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which means: <<When this Religion started, it was strange to the people, and it shall be strange again as it was when it started. Extremely blessed at that time will be the strangers- those who correct the discrepancies people made to my *sunnah* after me.>>

At first, people felt that the Religion was strange because of their rampant state of ignorance. They worshipped ignorantly and unrightfully many idols the period when the Prophet ﷺ came to tell them to worship one and only one God, Who does not resemble this creation. They felt that this was so strange because of the ignorance in which they were drowning.

In the above *hadith*, the Prophet ﷺ established, as well that this Religion would again become strange to many people, because ignorance would again prevail. He also established that when that time comes, some people will stand up and correct the misconceptions in the minds of others, they will teach people what the Prophet ﷺ came with, and will warn against those who contravene his laws.

As a result of the Prophet's call ﷺ, people united, and their hearts and hands joined together. Those who immigrated from *Makkah* to *al-Madīnah* were graciously received by the *Ansar*, the residents of *al-Madīnah*. The bonds of brotherhood were established to such an extent that a member of the *Ansar* offered to split his wealth and belongings with a Muslim brother from *Makkah*. They united and shared their money, wealth, and efforts together. They accepted many hardships for the purpose of raising the banner of *Islam* and spreading the message the Prophet ﷺ brought to them. Within a few years they became one body expressing solidarity. They united in the Arabian Peninsula. They opened *Makkah* and went far beyond the Peninsula teaching about *Islam*.

Allah said in *Surat Al-ʿImran, Ayah 103*:

which means: [Adhere to the true Religion of *Allah* and do not disunite. Recall the endowment of *Allah* upon you- that you were enemies and *Allah* mended your hearts together.] Hence, Muslims became one united nation. Non-adherence to the true Religion of *Allah* causes disunity. However, adherence to the true Religion of *Allah* requires knowledge about *Islam*.

The era in which the achievements mentioned above were brought about was undoubtedly characterized by knowledge. It was characterized by that

knowledge of the Religion the Prophet ﷺ brought to the people. Hence, we can draw clear conclusions. When ignorance prevailed, the people were disunited and enmity was widespread among them. When the Prophet ﷺ brought the knowledge of the only true Religion to the companions, they accepted and implemented it, and consequently became united.

The message the Prophet ﷺ brought to his people was that the only true and acceptable Religion to *Allāh* is *Islām*, and he who chooses for himself a religion other than *Islām* is a loser in this life and in the Hereafter. The Prophet ﷺ called the people to worship one and only one God Whose Name is *Allāh*. He taught the people that *Allāh* exists, and His existence is without a beginning and without an end. He taught the people that *Allāh* does not resemble any of the creation, and hence, He is not a body; He is not a soul; He does not occupy places; He is not subject to time; He cannot be imagined in the minds; and delusions do not define Him. He taught the people that *Allāh* is attributed with the perfect, befitting attributes. He is attributed with Power, Will, Knowledge, Hearing, Sight, Life, and *Kalām* (Speech). None of His attributes are similar to the attributes of the creation. None of His attributes develop or change. None of His attributes are sequential, i.e no attribute precedes or follows another. In *Surat ash-Shurā Ayah 11*, *Allāh* attributed to Himself.



which means: [Nothing is like *Allāh* in any way whatsoever.] From that, the scholars of *Islām* established a well-known statement *Dhun-Nun al-Misriyy*, *Thawbān Ibn Ibrāhīm* and *Imām Aḥmad Ibn Hanbal* said:

This means: <<Whatever you imagine in your mind, *Allāh* is different from it.>> This is because what one imagines in one's mind is a creation, and *Allāh* does not resemble the creation.

The Prophet ﷺ taught the people he was the messenger and worshipper of *Allāh*. The Prophet ﷺ was truthful in all that he conveyed from *Allāh*. He taught that all the Prophets before him were Prophets of *Islām*; they all came with the basic message: *la ilaha illallah*. They all called the people to worship one and only one God, *Allāh*. Prophet *Muḥammad* ﷺ taught that all the Prophets have befitting attributes and are clear of all non-befitting attributes. Hence, they are attributed with befitting attributes, such as courage, handsomeness and intelligence; they are clear of the non-befitting attributes, such as stupidity, repelling illnesses, and vileness. They are also clear of handicaps which impede their ability to deliver their message to the people. The Prophet ﷺ taught that it was impossible for the prophets to commit blasphemy, enormous sins, or small mean sins before and after Prophethood.

The Prophet ﷺ taught the people about the tortures as well as the enjoyments of the grave, and about the scale on which the deeds of every person will be weighed. He taught the people about the Resurrection, the Assembly and the Bridge (*as-Sirat*) that extends over Hellfire. The Bridge will connect the recreated earth and Paradise, and all will come to it, some successfully, either walking on or flying over it, but others will fall from it into Hellfire. The Prophet ﷺ taught about Hellfire and Paradise. The enjoyments of Paradise and the tortures of Hellfire are not allegorical, rather they are experienced by the body and the soul. He taught the people about the Day of Judgment, after which there would be no more death. On that day, death will take on the shape of a lamb and will be slaughtered, and there will be no death afterwards. He taught that those who enter Paradise will be there forever, and those who are blasphemers are doomed to Hellfire forever. The Prophet ﷺ taught the people about believing in the Revealed Books, in the Angels and the messengers of *Allah*; and the belief in destiny, created by *Allah*, whether good or bad.

The Prophet ﷺ also taught that the believers will be rewarded in Paradise. Among the many rewards is that they will see *Allah*, not in a place or a direction and without distance between them and *Allah*, because *Allah* created the place and exists without a place. They would see *Allah*, not like creatures are seen, because *Allah* does not resemble any of the creation, and hence, *Allah* is not in a place. *Allah* is neither a body, nor is *Allah* light. Whatever one imagines in his mind, *Allah* is different from it.

The Prophet ﷺ called the people to worship one and only one God. He planted in them the correct creed of *Ahlu-Sunnah* and brought them the highest level of ethics and manners. He taught them how to deal with one another, observe the rights of others, fulfill one's obligations and responsibilities; how to be obedient to *Allah* and to refrain from all sins. The Prophet ﷺ taught the people that those who have the correct belief in *Islam* and die with that belief shall be winners on the Day of Judgment. Those who carry this correct belief, are obedient to *Allah*, and refrain from sinning are pious people and shall have great reward on the Day of Judgment.

The Prophet ﷺ praised the status of knowledge. He gave the people incentives to acquire knowledge, to better themselves, and to excel. He taught them that with knowledge, implementation, and sincerity one can attain high levels of belief, and thereby earn high levels of reward on the Day of Judgment.

The Prophet ﷺ brought to the people that which inspired and established change in the society. It did away with the enmity that existed during the Era of Ignorance and replaced it with a state of unity and bonding among the Muslims that led to a time of accomplishments as well as to the spread of *Islam*. It led to one nation, united under the banner of the correct creed, the creed of *Ahlu-Sunnah*.

Therefore, the message is clear. Those who sincerely advocate the unity of Muslims, need to know that unity among Muslims is only established and founded on the correct creed of *Ahlus-Sunnah*, the same creed the Prophet ﷺ came with, and on the methodologies which the Prophet himself prescribed and implemented. Unity among Muslims is founded on adherence to those principles, following the teaching of the Prophet ﷺ, and on following the scholarly consensus (*Ijma*[^]) and the sayings of the reputable and dependable scholars of *Islām*. On the other hand, enmity and disunity result from ignorance and the distancing of oneself from those principles.

Disunity and enmity are a result of ignorance, as we have clearly seen. This is why the enemies of *Islām* have openly declared during their conferences and assemblies the following: <<If you want to defeat the Muslims, take the *Qur'an* away from them.>> By this message, the enemies of *Islām* are saying that to disunite the Muslims and defeat them, take them back to a state of ignorance. As long as the *Qur'an* remains with the Muslims, they will have the knowledge of the Rules of the Religion to remind them of the Message of the Prophet and unite them around one sound and consistent creed.

To weaken the Muslim community, the enemies of *Islām* adopted many methods to distort Islamic teachings and return the Muslims to ignorance. They started injecting poison in the stream. They launched groups who claim to be Muslims but teach misguidance and preach ignorance in the name of *Islām*. They teach people erroneous matters, claiming that they teach the creed of *Ahlus-Sunnah*. Such groups emerged teaching erroneously that <<*Allāh* resembles the creation>>, which is blasphemy. Today, you will find many groups of people, particularly the Wahhabis, the followers of *Muhammad Ibn ^Abdil Wahhab*, who liken *Allāh* to His creations.

The Prophet ﷺ taught us that <<Nothing is like *Allāh*.>> The scholars taught us that <<Whatever you imagine in your minds, *Allāh* is different from it.>> The Wahhabis came to destroy that belief. They started injecting poison in the stream. In their hope to disunite the Muslims, they spread dangerous falsehoods like <<*Allāh* has a shape,>> <<*Allāh* sits,>> and <<*Allāh* is in the above direction.>>

Others, like *Ibn Taymiyah*, also likened *Allāh* to the creatures and associated partners to *Allāh*. *Ibn Taymiyah* said the world, (by its kind), exists without a beginning, likening the world to *Allāh*. This is blasphemy and another attempt to inject in the stream that which is contrary to the Religion of *Islām*, serving as another element to disunite Muslims.

Some of the people who claim to be Sufis believe *Allāh* dwells in things. They call it the divine dwelling (*al-hulul*). They believe the hand moves because *Allāh* is in the hand. They believe *Allāh* is in whatever good thing one sees around. Some of them say about themselves: <<I am *Allāh*.>> They believe man attains the attributes of *Allāh* and unites with the Self of *Allāh*. They believe that their shaykhs of misguidance are reflections of *Allāh* to humanity. All of that is blasphemy! These people are injecting into the stream

what is contrary to the Religion by what they claim. They are planting the seeds of ignorance and are disuniting Muslims.

Some people attribute to the prophets that which does not benefit them. *Sayyid Qutb* told people that Prophet *Musa*, peace be upon him, was indecisive, hesitant, irritable, tense, and a reactionary human being, which is clear blasphemy. He said that Prophet *Ibrahim*, peace be upon him, worshipped the planets, the sun, the moon, and the stars, which is blasphemy. He said Prophet *Yusuf*, peace be upon him, was about to commit fornication, this is also blasphemy. He claimed the Muslims at large are blasphemers for not revolting against their rulers, including those who call for prayers on the minarets. By this, *Sayyid Qutb* renders the blood shed of all those who do not follow him as lawful.

Some groups, like *Hizb at-Tahrir*, the followers of *Taqiyyuddin an-Nabahaniyy*, teach the people that *Allah* is not the Creator of the voluntary actions of people. This is clear blasphemy. Others, like the *Qadiyaniyyah*, claim that there is a prophet after *Muhammad* ﷺ; this is also clear blasphemy.

These are a few other examples of those who inject in the stream what is contradictory to the Religion of *Allah* in an attempt to reestablish ignorance. All these are elements for disuniting Muslims.

The Association of Islamic Charitable Projects (A.I.C.P.) calls to unite Muslims around the same message the Prophets brought, the message of *Islam* and the creed of *Ahlu-Sunnah*. The call to unite under the creed of *Ahlu-Sunnah* highlights the endeavors of the A.I.C.P. It is the A.I.C.P. motto.

Surat Al'Imran, Ayah 11:



means: [You are the best of the nations, brought to the people commanding the lawful and forbidding the unlawful.] The Prophet ﷺ taught us that it is an obligation to order the lawful and forbid the unlawful. *Al-Bayhaqiyy* related that the Prophet ﷺ said:

which means: <<Until when will you hold back from exposing the one who commits enormous sins? Mention about him that which is in him, so that the people will be cautioned against him.>> Also, *al-Hakim* related that the Prophet ﷺ said:

which means: <<If you see my nation fearful of telling he who is unjust: 'You are unjust', then know the support of *Allah* is withdrawn from them.>>

In the following *hadith* related by *Ibn Hibban*, the Prophet ﷺ ordered us to command the lawful and forbid the unlawful.

It means: <<He who does not respect the elderly among us, is not merciful to the youngsters among us, and does not command the lawful and forbid the unlawful is not following our methodology.>>

Knowing these *hadiths* makes it clear that when the people of *Ahlu-Sunnah* stand up to defend the creed of the Prophet ﷺ, they do so to fulfill the obligation of commanding the lawful and forbidding the unlawful. Commanding the lawful and forbidding the unlawful is an element protecting the unity of Muslims, not an element disuniting them.

However, because ignorance prevails today, you find many people in North America and other places claiming that those who order the lawful and forbid the unlawful are disuniting the Muslims. Yet, when they freely inject in the stream what is contradictory to the Religion, they claim to unite the Muslims. This is what the Prophet ﷺ meant when he said: <<This Religion started as strange to the people and it shall be strange again as it started.>>

In conclusion, the message is simple and clear: The unity of Muslims is founded on the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ. The creed of *Ahlu-Sunnah* is not a loose-ended creed, rather, it is well-preserved. The Muslim scholars established rules and set the methodologies to protect this creed. Hence, it is not open for anyone to say whatever he desires about the Religion. Those who speak in ignorance will be exposed because the Religion has rules. The Religion of *Islam* is the Religion of sound intellect, not a religion of delusions or personal whims. Those who want to unite the Muslims need to acquire the Obligatory Knowledge of *Islam*, teach it, implement it, order the lawful, forbid the unlawful, and stand as protectors of the creed of *Ahlu-Sunnah*, all in sincerity to *Allah*. Those are the people whom the Prophet ﷺ named the *ghuraba'* (the strangers). He said that the *ghuraba'* are those who correct what others have distorted of the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ. They are the people who will bring about unity among Muslims. The endeavors of the Association of Islamic Charitable Projects (A.I.C.P.) are centered around this concept of unity. (A.I.C.P.) endeavors to acquire the knowledge from its authentic sources, teach this knowledge, implement this knowledge, order the lawful, forbid the unlawful, follow the sayings of the trustworthy scholars, and adhere to the scholarly consensus (*Ijma'*), all in sincerity to *Allah* and not fearing anyone in doing so.

We ask *Allah* to guide us to what is acceptable, enable us to remain steadfast to the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ, and to always protect and defend the creed that the Prophet ü brought to the people. We ask *Allah* for all of us to be wise and active in propagating the true message of *Islam* to the people. Always remember that the doors of A.I.C.P. remain open for giving lessons and answering any questions on any platform in this country and elsewhere.

Allah knows Best.