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Social units

The most critical issue in the social life is that how we can form a great and powerful unit from the small units.

Man's society has been in the form of various small and great units from the beginning days.

Following affairs have caused this variety and scattering.

1- Race

First of all, development of family and branching of different families from one family has been the origin of formation of a race, tribe and consequently a social unit, and in fact the first social colour of man is the same colour of race and tribe, and at present too, in the retarded societies, the issue of tribe and race forms the foundation of society, and in some cases, it is so strict that mixing of bloods of two tribes is strictly forbidden.

2- Geographical area

Different tribes, which were separated by race and blood, were gradually mingled, and formed the greater social units, being separated by various geographical areas.

At the beginning, geographical borders had a natural aspect, for example, a valley or big river and or high mountains were sufficient for separating two nations. However, it found an arbitrary aspect, and the natural borders were somehow invalidated by different contracts.

Although, still in most parts of world, natural borders form the geographical borders, for instance, the separation of Britain from France, and China from Japan, and such like are all caused by natural borders, but surely, the border of all countries are not determined by natural borders.

3- Ideology

Finally, formation of social units was based on belief, mentality, and ideology in the more perfect societies. Man understood soon that the issue of race and tribe could not separate the individuals. It is true that consanguine individuals have more common features in the physical and spiritual aspects, but this is never so critical to avoid their coexistence.

And it is easily perceived that difference of geographical areas, either natural or arbitrary, cannot cause separation, especially when the issue of geographical distance was totally solved through the facility of communication and transportation means, and all parts became close to each other.

So, little by little the social units changed into belief and ideological units, and mental borders replaced previous ones.

Division of world's countries into two communist and capitalist blocks is one of the manifest samples of this sort of classification.

Although, at the beginning it was supposed this classification is an eternal and everlasting one, and the non-possibility of reconciliation between these two doctrines was introduced definite and inevitable, but it was gradually found that the artificial aspect of this division and separation is much more than its real aspect, because there are thousands of common aspects among different classes as compared with aspects of mental and belief disagreement, the source of which is man's unity and unity of structure of his spirit and body resulting in sharing of different objectives.

So, different regimes and ideologies supported the murmur of coexistence among social units, and step by step, it was changed from speech to action.

Although, the friction between the profits of nations and insufficient intellectual development for coordinating these interests still prevents these scattered units to be mingled and united, and form a great unit based on unity of mankind, however, it is proved that none of the previous disunity and scattering factors is a real and inevitable one. This perception makes the way more clear and paves it for the future.

And thus, it is proved that all of human societies can be combined in one unit.

The most powerful social relation

Formation of a great social unit, particularly in the global and international scale, primarily requires following affairs:

1- Facility of communication means

This issue is considerably solved today, and surely it will become better and superior in the future through development in different equipment.

2- Unity of ideology

Although, as we told, it is possible to create a unique society without mental unity based on the "unity of vital interests" and "human common aspects", but there is no doubt that collaboration among different classes and wings of such society will be weak, cold, unstable and mixed with fear, terror and hesitance. And in such conditions, naturally cooperation is limited and precautionary, and such collaboration cannot create a fully organized, alive and happy society.

However, if a rooted mental unity relates the society's individuals to each other, and joins their hearts through strong connections, a very united society along with an extensive and overall cooperation, with full and everlasting understanding and collaboration will be formed.

3- Perfect mental and moral development

For establishment of such society, a sufficient mental development is required for understanding the interests of merger of all human societies in such a great unit in a wide insight, and also sufficient moral development is required for tolerance and digestion of inevitable disagreement points for agreement in common points, and adapting oneself with it.

Of course, the former, that is, believing that cooperation of all men is profitable for all is not so difficult, but the latter that is digestion of disagreement points is not very easy and facile.

It should be explained that understanding that if all human units are gathered in the society, their problems will be less and their solution are easier, is not difficult.

In case of scattering and dispersion, a major part of their most active human and economical powers is wasted. It often happens that the amount of wasted powers is even more than half of the total of their powers and facilities.

For example, the present world in which there is an intensive competition among the East and the West, perhaps more than half of their active human powers are consumed as follows:

Army members, reserve members, informative and intelligence services and their affiliated systems, margraves, customs, challenge with smuggle, scientists and workers who work in the war industries and their affiliated branches. Evidently, if there is not an exigency, such consumption is vain and has no positive social efficiency.

Nowadays, half of budgets are spent for such defensive, war and intelligence costs and other

competitions.

Yet, this is when a war does not occur in the world. Otherwise, the costs spent for compensation of destructive actions in small scales (local wars) and great scales (world wars) are really amazing.

All of these are the human and economical powers, which are completely wasted, and there is no reason save separation of human societies from each other. It is just like two commercial institutions spending fifty percent of their capital and time for retreating and repressing each other. It goes without saying that it will have no result save loss and damage for both of them.

Therefore, if a perfect unity is formed among all human societies, the "efficiency" of their activities in all aspects of life will be increased twice.

Everybody can understand this issue well, and can find the results of unity.

But, in respect to moral issues, there is no doubt that individuals are different with each other: difference in taste, tact, way of thinking, being advocate of calmness or severity or moderateness, difference in being sentimental or conceptual, difference in subjectivism or objectivism, in being affective or non affective, in regarding formalities and appearance or disregarding them, in degree of tendency to different scientific, economical and affairs.

It is true that we can make changes and modifications in the belief, affections, thoughts, and desires of different individuals, but anyway these differences are neither deniable, nor completely removable.

The people, who want to have a life full of peace and close cooperation in a great global society, should reach that level of "moral development" that after understanding the realities in respect to difference in mental, spiritual, and moral structure can tolerate and digest the difference points of others.

They should be able to respect desires of others in case of disagreement in marginal issues, as their own desires, and never expect the others to follow them in all cases, and neither impose their desires on them, nor change the marginal issues to the basic ones. Pay attention.

Forgiveness and connivance, heart tolerance, broad-mindedness, tolerance, subtlety, and patience are all the affairs necessary for digestion of these differences in moral view.

Even two persons cannot cooperate closely with each other, save they have perceived this reality and are ready for welcoming it.

Certainly, this moral readiness for digestion of disagreement points is not attainable through negotiation. Rather, it is the affair, which is only possible through purification and education causing sufficient development in moral aspects.

Islam and global unique society

Islam has paved the way for formation of a global unique society in different aspects, because:

First,—Islam appeared in a racist society, where the issue of tribe and gens constituted its infrastructure and the issue of race dominated all of its aspects. Even its cities were not a city in a real sense, because the tribes and gens were completely separate from each other.

However, Islam excluded totally the issue of race from the social issues, and devaluated it in general.

Sometimes, it fought with them with the same logic that their racial society originated from it (unity in blood, unity of original forebear of tribe), and made them understood that if you think in a higher level, the human society are all created from two spouses.

So, all should form one unit:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ

O mankind! Lo! We have created you male and female. (49: 13)

And thereby "human brotherhood" replaced "tribal brotherhood" and "mankind's blood" replaced "tribe's blood".

And sometimes Islam represented them that although the issue of preserving parentage, relation and connection of individuals to tribe as well as gens and forefathers is necessary, but it is not for boasting to the descents. Rather it is for knowing each other through this special social classification.

It is certain that preserving rights of individuals in the societies necessitates that individuals shall be distinguished and recognized from each other, and there is no more natural and correct way than relation to the forefathers, ancestors, nations and tribes, but it should be only a means of knowing, not boasting:

وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا

And have made you nations and tribes that ye may know one another. (49: 13)

And once Islam notified that "dignity" and "value" of individuals is for their spiritual virtues and carnal habits (virtue and piety), and this is never attainable through heritage, and in other words, if presumably

heretical attributes are "beautiful", they are involuntarily beautiful, and cannot be a criterion for personality and dignity.

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ ﴿٤٩﴾

Lo! the noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct. (49:13)

And in this manner, Islam has inflicted its final strike on the foundations of racism and the schisms caused by it.

Second, Islam has invalidated the cause of disunion through disregarding geographical borders, either natural or arbitrary, as well as including and expanding its invitation to all countries of world.

We can find this logic of Islam within the numerous phrases in the Holy Qur'an:

a- Qur'anic addresses, save what are specialized to believers, are so generalized that include all nations of world, like the addresses of "O people", "O My Servants", "O Children of Adam" and "O man", which are mentioned in different verses of Qur'an.¹

In these addresses, all of the world, from any tribe, nation, and country, are included and there is not any trace of different nations in them.

b- Qur'an assumed all of the earth as God's vast territory, as it says:

يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّ أَرْضِي وَاسِعَةٌ فَإِيَّايَ فَاعْبُدُونِ

O my bondmen who believe! Lo! My earth is spacious. Therefore serve Me only. (29:56)

And do not surrender to enemies' pressures.

And somewhere else it instructs to roam all around the earth for observing the remains of annihilated civilizations of the ancestors and taking lesson from their life associated with sin and injustice.

فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكْذِبِينَ

Do but travel in the land and see the nature of the consequence for the deniers! (16:36)

And also it invites people to correction on the earth, and avoiding corruption on it:

وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا

Work not confusion in the earth after the fair ordering (thereof). (7:56)

And someone else it calls the earth the inheritance of righteous and good doers, who finally will govern on it:

أَنَّ الْأَرْضَ يَرِثُهَا عِبَادِيَ الصَّالِحُونَ

My righteous slaves will inherit the earth: (21: 105)

c- Holy Qur'an explicitly instructs Muslims not to bind themselves to staying in a particular point in implementation of their divine obligations, and if they cannot implement them in a point, they shall immigrate to the other parts of earth, and it blames and rebukes refraining emigration:

قَالُوا أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضُ اللَّهِ وَاسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوا فِيهَا

(The angels) will say: Was not Allah's earth spacious that ye could have migrated therein? (4:97)

d- Qur'an has never emphasized on the social units being separated as different territories in such a lot of verses related to the commands, sorts of knowledge and moralities, and this is a clear reason for advocating and defending of Islam from global unique society, and so called "internationalism".

Basically, an ideology based on humanistic principles and human rights should be so.

In other words, there is no geographical classification and border within the Islamic domain and only outside the domain of Islam too, mental and belief borders separate it from the others.²

Third, Islam has made an extensive attempt for establishment of a mental unity point and so called "ideological unity" among mankind through its disciplines and ordinances.

It should be noted the mental and belief unity that Islam is its founder, in contrary with the mental and ideological relations of political parties and such like being formed in recent centuries in the world, is not specialized to a particular class, population and nation. Rather, it is concerned with human society.

And this is assumed as a great privilege for Islamic ideology, which has no regional and classic colour.

But most of political parties and groups in the world and their affiliated philosophical doctrines, although

have founded the basis of their activity on mental and procedural unity, but all of them are common in this great "defect" that either they have not had a public and global aspect from the beginning or have lost it later.

We are not going to discuss about the correctness or inaccuracy of such doctrines and parties. We only want to explain that all of them have a great common weak point as not being able to create a mental unity among all men from all races and nations.

But the mental and belief unity, which Islam has founded, does not have a private aspect, and even is not restricted to followers of Islam; rather the followers of other religions too can share it.

And so a comprehensive plan is considered in Islam for protecting the rights of religious minorities living in the Islamic territories, as well as defending their interests, which will be clarified through sufficient study in Islamic resources.

How to create a mental unity

Now, we engage in studying a part of Islamic sciences and instructions, which can help us in achieving this great objective (creation of mental unity among men):

The principle of monotheism, which forms the basis of all Islamic sciences: Islam has completely washed out the "scattered lords" as the sign of diversity of thoughts and ideas and also an effective factor for social discords, and even instructs to its followers that there is no disunity and variety in God's essence and attributes. His essence is extensive and His attributes are all exactly the same.

We know that one of the factors of disunity among people in old ages has been belief in several lords, and each tribe, nation, race and sometimes city had their own "lord" or "lords", and after their conquest over the other nations, that lord too triumphed and was recognized, and at the time of defeat, it was forgotten.

As Albermaleh writes in the chapter related to religious beliefs of Chaldaeans:

At first, in Chaldea too, like Egypt, each city had its own lord. After formation of great states, worshipping the lords of different territories was generalized, and the lord of capital city became "the Lord of Lords"! And thus, at the time of Hamourabi 3, since Babylon was the capital of Chaldea, the lord of this city which was named "Mardouk", was considered as "the Lord of Lords" through Chaldea, and since at the beginning, capital of Assyria's government was Assyria, the lord of this city, which was also called "Assyria" became "the Lord of Lords" of Assyrian people.⁴ And he writes about religion of Egyptians:

"... It was not so that all Egyptians worship several common lords. Rather, each city had a separate lord, but once worship of some lords (of course, only in Egypt) was circulated throughout Egypt.

Whenever a city became more important and creditable, dignity of its lords was increased.⁵

The sample of this dispersion of lords appeared in the origin of Islam, that is Hejaz, and especially Mecca, and it was the source and sign of all types of mental and social dispersion and disunity, and since it is evident, there is no need to any proof. Islam terminated this situation with its brilliant instructions and sciences, and the motto of all Muslims became monopoly of deity in the unique God, "There is no God, except Allah", and attention to "Allah", the unique God.

Qur'an says: not only deity on the earth is God; rather He is the only rightful deity throughout the world of creation, where it says:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ إِلَهٌ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَهٌ ۗ

And He it is Who in the heaven is Allah, and in the earth Allah. (43:84)

And somewhere else it says:

إِنَّ كُلُّ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّا آتِي الرَّحْمَنِ عَبْدًا

There is none in the heavens and the earth but cometh unto the Beneficent as a slave. (19:93)

Islam has also expanded the reality of monotheism to the world of creation in its instructions, and introduces the entire world as a unit, originating from a unique source:

مَا تَرَىٰ فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِن تَفَؤُوتٍ ۗ فَاَرْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَىٰ مِن فُطُورٍ

Thou (Muhammad) canst see no fault in the Beneficent One's creation; then look again: Canst thou see any rifts? (67:3)

And also Qur'an introduces all living creatures from one single source:

مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ

We made every living thing of water? (21:30)

And thereby Islam rejects one of the other basic foundations of polytheism and belief in the lords of species. Because this belief mostly originates from the point that they assumed each of the world's creatures as an independent and separate unit, and considered an independent creator for each of them.

According to Islamic instructions, the creator and lord of this world is not separate from this world, that is, while it is not the same as them, it is not separate from them too.

وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْكُمْ وَلَكِنْ لَا تُبْصِرُونَ

And We are nearer unto him than ye are, but ye see not – (56-85)

وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ

We are nearer to him than his jugular vein. (50: 16)

«مَعَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ لَا بِمُقَارَنَةٍ وَغَيْرُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ لَا بِمُزَايَلَةٍ».

He is with everything but not in physical nearness. He is different from everything but not in physical separation.⁶

Spirit of unity in Islamic instructions

The spirit of unity in the Islamic instructions is not restricted to the principle of "Unity of God" as the basis of all Islamic beliefs. Rather, even in the invitation of prophets and messengers and divine books, Islam considers all of them identical in view of principles, which only have some differences in perfection stages.

Of course, this spirit is also visible in the Islamic scientific ordinances, rules and regulations, because the subject of Islamic ordinances and regulations is only man (man on the condition of maturity and intellect), and there is no other condition.

All Islamic sorbs are common in this sense that they are warner and cause reflection:

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي

So serve Me and establish worship for My remembrance. (20: 14)

And they have a disciplinary effect and lead to simplism and control of rebellious sensual desires, and educating man. This is the unique spirit of all Islamic sorbs.

Islamic sorbs are all performed in one language, and this is the sign of unity, not for being in Arabic language belonging to a particular nation, rather for being the language of inspiration (and in addition to other reasons, the selection of this language may be for its simplicity, extent of words, derivations, compounds and its special tone).

The spirit of unity is apparent in the Islamic sorbs, especially in congregational sorbs, and in particular in pilgrimage which shows the highest manifestation of spirit of unity, and forms a unit in view of mentality, place and slogans which are expressed by different nations far from each other thousands of parasangs in view of body and soul. This situation has a particular splendour like that of unique system of the world of creation. Basically, the colour of Islam is the colour of creation, and consequently it is in coordination with it.

The arrays of Islamic congregational prayers for a supposed observer, watching the earth from outside, resemble the concentric circles gathering around a centre, and this indicates a perfect unity.

Islamic scales have been adopted based on natural scales as far as possible, which are identical for all, and there is no colour of a special nationality and for determination of some subjects, for instance, pace, palm and such like are used.

Islamic month and year are focused on the circulation of moon and sun (or more correctly circulation of earth around the sun), and they are identical for everybody, and there is no need to technical specialty for understanding them, and there is no difference in them save in view of difference in horizon, which is the natural property of different parts of the earth.

1- Moral development

The forgotten principles without which the world will not experience peace and tranquility.

As we already told, for formation of a real society, especially in a great global scale including all people of world, moral development is required in addition to ideological unity and mental development.

Without a moral development, the people living in a society can never tolerate each other, and solve the opposite sides of different mentalities and dissidences properly.

Like training of other moral aspects, the need of this part to the instructions of prophets and messengers

is clearer than any other part, because as we said before, morality without the executive guarantee of belief and the religion of prophets will not have a strong support, and does not exceed a series of inessential perfections and dispensable advices.

Now, we return to the plans prepared in Islam for training and development of social morality in men and preparing them for a social life. Of course, it should be noted that what we refer to hereunder are a part of these widespread instructions, and stating all of them is beyond the capacity of this concise discussion.

Notifying the variation of people in view of creation of body, soul, mentalities and sentiments as it is narrated in the well known tradition:

«لَوْ عَلِمَ النَّاسُ كَيْفَ خَلَقَ اللَّهُ هَذَا الْخَلْقَ لَمْ يُلْمَ أَحَدٌ أَحَدًا».

If people knew how God has created people, no one blamed the other.⁷

And also a reference is briefly made to the variation in creation as it is narrated from Prophet (S):

«النَّاسُ مَعَادِنٌ كَمَعَادِنِ الذَّهَبِ وَ الْفِضَّةِ».

The people are the mines like the mines of gold and silver.⁸

Taking into account that structure of spirit and sentiments, training and level of knowledge and mental backgrounds of individuals are very different, solves a great deal of association problems, and social conflicts.

For example, we have often seen that parents are very disturbed for an improper deed of a child (such as breaking a vessel or making dirty his cloths), and sometimes they make severe punishments for this little deed and blame the child many times. While if we study the matter correctly, we will see that there is not any reason for angeriness, or such blame and reproach.

Surely, neither the knowledge of child about the breakable and non-breakable vessels and the manner of keeping them for minimizing the possibility of falling down and being broken, and decreasing their slip and load on the fingers is sufficient, and nor, even if he knows all of these subjects, he has adequate scientific experience on that matter, and supposing that both his science and experience are sufficient, his physical power is little.

Therefore, if at present we are more skillful in keeping these vessels, it is just for the several experiences

and examinations of our childhood, because childhood is the period of trial and acquiring knowledge about the environment with which man has no familiarity.

And if we put ourselves instead of that child, with the same little knowledge and skill, most of his deeds being considered as a great sin and offence by us, are neither a sin, nor an offence!

The same is true about the adults. Some habitudes of my friend may be unfavourable in my view, and I may decide on discontinuing my friendship, but when I consider the educational environment of my friend, and attach his spiritual structure to it, and take into account his mental history, I find that I would do the same if I was instead of him.

My neighbour speaks loudly and disturbs me. When I consider the basis of his sciences and structure of his larynx, nerves, and degree of sensibility of his eardrums, I see that although he is blameful, but his fault is not so great that I felt.

It should not be mistaken. We are not going to introduce people faultless in all of their deeds in this way as the predestinarians believe, and consider spiritual, physical and outward factors as the cause of everything.

On the other hand, hereby we are not going to deny necessity of training, and leave the people as they are so that they do whatsoever they want. Rather, if we take into account these realities, we will have more readiness for solving disputes and removing objections, and will easily tolerate each other. If we excommunicate each other for a little dissidence, it is due to not paying attention to these variations.

2- Forgiveness and pardon

There are a few people being infallible and immune from any mistake and sometimes intentional in violation of others' rights, and if it is to act according to the principle of "vengeance", social conflicts will proceed in a sequential series, and are increasingly intensified, because vindictive attacks are not controllable in view of quality and quantity, and often become more violent.

And supposing that they are controllable and measurable, determination of the degree of first offence is never similar and equal in view of the "wrongdoer" and "one who has suffered offence". Thus, even if the other party is going to observe equality in quantity and quality during his vindictive attack, still he feels that justice is not observed, and so decides on a new revenge, and so the quarrel is resumed.

The reason why the fire of sedition, war, and quarrel is never extinguished in a lot of tribes and nations in the past and present is that each of them replies the crime of the other with a more vigorous crime, and the battle is progressively continued.

The only thing, which can disconnect this sequential series and extinguish the fire of sedition, is the spirit of forgiveness, pardon and connivance.

It should be mentioned herein that those who cut the series of struggle and conflict through forgiveness and connivance, do not merely serve the other party, but also relieve themselves from the certain losses which they will suffer in the future for continuation of struggle, in addition to understanding a great moral virtue.

Moreover, if we study and note properly, we will see that vengeance has no rational profit for the revenge, save a transitory relief and sometimes an unreal superiority, and he is always waiting for the vengeance of other party, while the soothing effect of "forgiveness" is much deeper and the spiritual and social excellence caused by it, is a real one.

In the Islamic resources, it is referred to this matter with interesting and delicate phrases, and it is encouraged, and called as one of the most critical Islamic obligations.

Following samples prove this claim:

وَلْيَعْفُوا وَلْيَصْفَحُوا ۗ أَلَا تُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۗ

Let them forgive and show indulgence. Yearn ye not that Allah may forgive you? (24:22)

Above verse indicates this reality that anyway each of you has committed a sin, and as you like God to forgive your sin, you too should forebear your rights in encounters with your brothers.

Obviously, one who forebears usual vengeance, but remarks the sin of other party through tongue or sulking, has not actually forgiven him. Rather, complete forgiveness is the same forgetting and ignoring completely.

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلِ الْعَفْوَ

And they ask thee what they ought to spend. Say: that which is superfluous. (2:219)

There is an interesting point that expending is not merely concerned with wealth as you ask so much about it. Rather, forgiving one's own rights is more important than financial expending and granting wealth. Certainly, since this forgiveness is against the spirit of seeking vengeance in most people, it is more difficult, while its effect is much more in view of creating discipline and social justice.

This sort of turning from the reply to a question towards another reply is repeatedly observed in Qur'an, and this is one of the attractive points in Qur'an that uncommonly it is not bound to the requested question in its replies. Rather, it considers the real requirement of the other party and answers

accordingly.

As when it is questioned about the reason for transformation of falcate, instead of replying to it, Qur'an mentions its advantages and results:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَهْلِةِ ۚ قُلْ هِيَ مَوَاقِيتُ لِلنَّاسِ وَالْحَجِّ

They ask thee, (O Muhammad), of new moons, say: They are fixed seasons for mankind and for the pilgrimage. (2: 189)

عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) «ثَلَاثٌ وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَوْ كُنْتُ حَلَاظًا لَحَلَفْتُ عَلَيْهِنَّ: مَا نَقَصَ مَالٌ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ فَتَصَدَّقُوا؛ وَ لَا عَفَا رَجُلٌ مَظْلَمَةً يَبْتَغِي بِهَا وَجْهَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا زَادَهُ اللَّهُ بِهَا عِزًّا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ؛ وَ لَا فَتَحَ رَجُلٌ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ بَابَ مَسْأَلَةٍ إِلَّا فَتَحَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ بَابَ فَقْرٍ».

Islam's Prophet (S) said: By God, Who my soul is on His hand, there are three things that if I was a swearer, I swore by them: no wealth is decreased for alms, so pay alms, no man forgives an injustice for God's satisfaction, unless God increases his dignity at the day of resurrection, and no one opens the door of demand to himself, unless God opens a door of poverty to him.⁹

عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) : «عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْعَفْوِ فَإِنَّ الْعَفْوَ لَا يَزِيدُ الْعَبْدَ إِلَّا عِزًّا فَتَعَاوَا يُعِزُّكُمُ اللَّهُ».

Do not forget forgiveness, because forgiveness increases man's honour. So forgive each other; God shall honor you.¹⁰

عَنْ الْبَاقِرِ (عليه السلام) : «النَّدَامَةُ عَلَى الْعَفْوِ أَفْضَلُ وَ أَيْسَرُ مِنَ النَّدَامَةِ عَلَى الْعُقُوبَةِ».

Regretting for forgiveness is better and easier than regretting for punishment.¹¹

عَنْ أَبِي الْحَسَنِ (الرِّضَا) (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) : « مَا التَّقَاتُ فِتْنَانِ قَطُّ إِلَّا نُصِرَ أَعْظَمُهُمَا عَفْوًا ».

Imam Reza (A.S.) said: When two groups confront each other, one who pardons more, will be helped. 12

As it is observed, victory is introduced as one of the direct effects of forgiveness in these traditions.

Its point may signify that vengeance at the time of having power is usually caused by an animal incentive, and so its exact form is observed in the animals too. But forgiveness and pardon is a sign of personality and a sort of self control, majesty and magnificence of spirit which can outshine the burning flame of anger and vindictive, and therefore the more pardon and forgiveness of individuals indicates their higher value and prestige, and so they will be honoured.

Furthermore, vengeance has never succeeded to attract people's respect and or affections towards the avengers, while forgiveness and pardon has a deep effect in attraction of public opinions and provoking affections and feelings in the favour of the pardoner, and this is considered as one of the effective factors in victory.

3- Replying vice with goodness

In Islamic resources, including Qur'an and traditions, it is referred to a more significant and higher stage of pardon and forgiveness, that is, replying vice with goodness!

Undoubtedly, this deed is the highest manifestation of humanistic spirit and requires moral education and special spiritual elegance, and has a miraculous effect in humanizing the hearts filled with enmity.

And also it is the best "lesson" which one can give to the aggressors and wrongdoers. On the other hand, it is the only "punishment" which does not cause any undesirable reaction in the wrong doers, and does not invite them to a new aggression.

All of these aspects have resulted in rendering it as one of the most effective ways in ending the enmities and hostilities.

We read in Qur'an:

ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ

وَمَا يُلْقَاهَا إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَمَا يُلْقَاهَا إِلَّا ذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ

Repel the evil deed with one which is better, then lo! he, between whom and thee there was enmity (will become) as though he was a bosom friend.

But none is granted it save those who are steadfast, and none is granted it save the owner of great happiness. (41:34 & 35)

The first verse points to the miraculous effect of "repel with that which is best" (replying vice with goodness), thanks to which one can change the greatest enemies to the intimate friends.

Then, in the next sentence, it is emphasized that only those are worthy for attainment to this rank who have a plenty share of belief, piety, and moral virtues, as well as a great share of patience and resistance against sensual desires, and these two are undeniable realities.

In fact, wonderful effect of "repel with that which is best" in termination of hostilities originates from this point that aggressors are always waiting for vengeance of the other party, and even they may conscientiously deem themselves deserving for such vengeance, but when, in contrary to this "expectation" and "merit", they see their evil deed is replied fairly, the latent power of their conscience is provoked and embattles them inwardly. Their conscience accounts this for innocence and purity of other party and their own sinfulness and impurity, and superinduces them for upturning. This pressure is so vigorous that a few people can ignore it, and continue their old hostile manner, and on this account, most enemies change their course in this way and become flexible.

In the attractive and subtle comments narrated in the traditions of Prophet (S) and Islamic leaders about this prominent attribute, it is introduced as one of the greatest and highest humanitarian attributes:

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) فِي خُطْبَتِهِ: «أَلَا أُخْبِرُكُمْ بِخَيْرِ خَلَائِقِ الدُّنْيَا وَالأُخْرَةِ؟ العَفْوُ عَمَّنْ ظَلَمَكَ، وَ تَصِلُ مَنْ قَطَعَكَ، وَ الإِحْسَانُ إِلَى مَنْ أَسَاءَ إِلَيْكَ، وَ إعْطَاءُ مَنْ حَرَمَكَ».

The Prophet (S) told in one of his lectures: Would you like me to inform you about one of the best moralities of the world and hereafter? Forgiving one who has been unjust with you, and relations with those who have broken their relation with you, and goodness with one who has been unjust with you, and bounty to one who has deprived you.¹³

According to this tradition which Prophet (S) has expressed it as a public lesson in an assembly of some Muslims (the lecture indicates this sense), the best ethic of this and the other world is "forgiveness" and "repelling vice with goodness". Three out of four phrases mentioned above are concerned with repelling vice with goodness and only one phrase is concerned with forgiveness and pardon.

عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ (الْبَاقِرِ) (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) : «ثَلَاثٌ لَا يَزِيدُ اللَّهُ بِهِنَّ الْمَرْءَ الْمُسْلِمَ إِلَّا عِزًّا: الصَّفْحُ عَمَّنْ ظَلَمَهُ، وَإِعْطَاءُ مَنْ حَرَمَهُ، وَالصَّلَاةُ لِمَنْ قَطَعَهُ».

Imam Al-Baqir (A.S.) told: There are three things which do not result in anything for a Muslim, save honour: forgiving one who has been unjust with him, bounty to one who has deprived him, and relation with one who has broken his relation with him. 14

In the above tradition too, three deeds are called the means of honour and power, two of which are concerned with repelling vice with goodness, and one is concerned with forgiveness and pardon.

It should not be mistaken; forgiveness and pardon shall never be confused with submission to an unjust enemy. Rather, submission is the sign of disability and lack of personality and humbleness, but forgiveness is the sign of magnanimity and personality.

Forgiveness and pardon are always in personal concerns towards one that a man is able to take revenge on him, not in social concerns and rights of the society. Even if forgiveness in personal affairs and individual rights results in daring of the other party, it is not a proper and correct action.

4- Stopping violence

Resorting to violence in solving social problems, particularly global and international problems, is one of the most important causes of conflicts and hard struggles as well as dangerous and unpleasant events.

Resorting to violence excites the sense of malice in the hearts and lightens the fire of vengeance.

Resorting to violence not only does not have any effect in relieving crises and problems, but also it often intensifies the crises and increases the problems and a lot of problems of present world originate from it.

Resorting to violence is never advisable, and man shall always spend a high cost for it, and those who commit it, should pay a heavy indemnity for it.

However, this deed, despite of all of its ominous defects, risks and consequences is the first solution which sounds to everybody for solving the problems, because resorting to peaceful solutions and stopping violence has an intellectual aspect and applying violence has an emotional aspect, and we know that man's intellectual growth and development is the latest stage of his growth, while emotion's evolution period is earlier. Most people live in emotional stage and are affected by it.

Childhood is the period of training emotions, and it is clarified through a precise study in situation of present men and societies that people mostly live in childhood ages in intellectual and moral aspect, and for this reason, they often advocate violence and exertion.

Anyway, although in view of common studies, this way is the first one, which attracts the attention, but it is in the last stage in view of value, and resorting to it, is only advised when all other ways are closed.

A brave individual or nation less often resorts to this way for solving his social problems, because most of problems could be solved in peaceful ways and through the power of thinking and ethic.

Islam has put a strenuous emphasis on this critical issue and numerous traditions are narrated from Islamic great leaders about the role of "tolerance"¹⁵ in man's life. Citing following traditions may be adequate for realizing Islam's logic in this respect.

عَنِ النَّبِيِّ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): «إِنَّ فِي الرَّفْقِ الزِّيَادَةَ وَ الْبَرَكَاتَةَ وَ مَنْ يُحْرَمُ
الرَّفْقَ يُحْرَمُ الْخَيْرَ».

There is bounty and blessing in tolerance and forbearance, and one who is deprived from forbearance and amenity, will be deprived from goodness. 16

In this tradition it is explicitly said that any goodness and blessing exists in tolerance and stopping violence, and those who resort to violence, are deprived from any goodness and blessing, and this logic clarifies the significance of the matter in men's life.

عَنِ النَّبِيِّ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): «لَوْ كَانَ الرَّفْقُ خَلْقًا يُرَى مَا كَانَ مِمَّا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ
عَزَّوَجَلَّ شَيْءً أَحْسَنَ مِنْهُ».

If tolerance was depicted, there was no creature better than it. 17

In this tradition, stopping violence is called the most beautiful moral visages, and it means that violence is the ugliest visage that human's spirit may have.

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): «مَا اصْطَحَبَ اثْنَانِ إِلَّا كَانَ أَحَدُهُمَا
أَجْرًا وَ أَحَبُّهُمَا إِلَى اللَّهِ أَرْفَقُهُمَا بِصَاحِبِهِ».

From two persons, one whose friendship and tolerance is more than the other, will have more reward and is more favourite before God. 18

In this tradition, the greatest rewards and most favourite ranks before God belong to those who advocate

tolerance and peacefulness and flexibility in life.

عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ الْبَاقِرِ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): «مَنْ قُسِمَ لَهُ الرَّفْقُ قُسِمَ لَهُ الْإِيمَانُ».

One who is granted flexibility, belief is granted to him. 19

The late Feise Kashani, in "Vafi" book, in one of the traditions of this chapter, interprets the relation of "tolerance" with "belief" as follows:

Resorting to violence makes man's authority and nervous system out of control, and such person may perform any mistake and even say blasphemous words.

We can also interpret this relation in another way, that is, violence is often the source of suspicion and mistrust on God's people, and thereby the Creator, and none of these are compatible with belief. In other words, harsh individuals will always have fewer friends, and they will be gradually led to social seclusion, and social seclusion is the source of suspicion on the creature and Creator, and this is not compatible with belief.

عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): «إِنَّ الرَّفْقَ لَمْ يُضَعْ عَلَى شَيْءٍ إِلَّا زَانَهُ وَ لَا نُزِعَ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا شَانَهُ».

Tolerance and flexibility embellish whatever they accompany with, and disfigure whatever they separate from.20

According to this wise utterance, tolerance and peacefulness adorns everything, and violence disfigures everything and any deed and person.

عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): «إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ رَفِيقٌ يُحِبُّ الرَّفْقَ وَ يُعْطِي عَلَى الرَّفْقِ مَا لَا يُعْطِي عَلَى الْعُنْفِ».

God has tolerance, and likes tolerance, and whatever He bestows for tolerance, does not bestow for violence and harshness.21

In this tradition, tolerance and peacefulness are called as divine attributes.

The important point which should be surely remarked herein is that most of Islam's enemies try to give a

hostile appearance to Islam, and seek Islamic battles as a pretext, while only studying the procedure of Prophet (S) in the same battles and his behaviour with the enemies who were thirsty to his blood, and had established a dangerous barrier to his invitation, as well as his conduct with the prisoners of war and the defeated nations and the people injured in the battle field, are all of the most brilliant chapters in Islam's history as well as the most alive proofs for peace favouritism in Islam and stopping resort to violence.

And more important, some try to attribute violence to Islamic clergymen just like the Christian clergymen in the Middle Ages, and haply the immethodical deeds and severity of some of unknowable people whose social wisdom has not developed in parallel with their scientific wisdom have served as many pretexts for them.

These two aspects necessitate that we, in observance of such a lot of instructions about not resorting to violence, should be exactly careful for our actions in the society, and display the real face of Islam in this respect through our peaceful conduct and our flexibility, and wash out the deposits of poisonous propaganda of the enemies from the brains with our action. We shall explain the philosophy of Islamic battles and wars so that their "defensive aspects" and or in some cases "their liberation challenge aspect" are fully clarified.

Again, it should not be mistaken. Flexibility, mildness and not resorting to violence do not mean submission to injustices and violence of evil doers and the stubborn and bloody enemies and the imperialists. Rather, as Qur'an has explicitly specified in verse 29 of Sura 48:

أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ

Hard against the disbelievers and merciful among themselves (48:29)

We shall adopt a severe method against cruel enemies and be mild with the friends. Moreover, there should be mildness before the enemies who after victory over them, new strokes on their side is unlikely.

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1. « يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا » "O mankind! Lo! I am the messenger of Allah to you all", 7: verse 158, « يَا عِبَادِ يَا بَنِي آدَمَ لَا يَفْتِنَنَّكُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ » "My servants who believe, fear your Lord", 39: verse 16, « يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ كَدْحًا » "Children of Adam! Let not Satan tempt you!", 7: verse 27, « يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ كَدْحًا » "O man! surely you must strive (to attain) to your Lord, a hard striving ", 84: verse 6
 2. Refer to the book "Javaherol Kalam", vol. 21, beginning of "Warfare" book
 3. Hamourabi is a well-known conqueror king who is reputable for the interesting rules, which are left by him as memorial.
 4. Albermaleh, History of Eastern Nations, 81/1
 5. The same document, page 41
 6. Nahjul Balaghah, sermon 1
 7. Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, 164/69, tradition 3

8. Kulayini, Kafi, 177/8
9. Ghazali, Ehyaol Oloum, 182/3
10. Kulayini, Kafi 108/2, some narrators of Six Reliable Tradition Collections have mentioned it.
11. The same document
12. The same document
13. Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, 399/71
14. Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, volume 71, page 403
15. Tolerance is the opposite of violence and harshness.
16. Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 60/75
17. Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 63/75
18. Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, 268/76
19. Kulayini, Kafi, 118/2, narration 1
20. Kulayini, Kafi, 119/2, tradition 6
21. The same document, tradition 5

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