



Al-Absar (Research Journal of Fiqh & Islamic Studies)

ISSN: 2958-9150 (Print) 2958-9169 (Online)

Published by: Department of Fiqh and Shariah, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur.

Volume 03, Issue 02, July- December 2024, PP: 15-23

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.52461/al-abr.v2i2.2581>

Open Access at: <https://journals.iub.edu.pk/index.php/al-absar/about>

The Inevitability of National Unity and Harmony in the Country's Integrity in the Context of the Righteous Caliphate

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Abstract



Unity is the essence of all Divine teachings and Islam specifically paid high attention to establish the harmony among Muslim followers. The unity plays vital role in integrity of a country. The period of Rightly Guided Caliphs (Khilafat-e-Rashida) is counted as the golden period in Islamic History. The rulings received from the Rightly Guided Caliphs are actually the original version and the best course for the Muslims to follow and act upon. In this article some noble examples have been gathered from that era which emphasizes on the significance of unity and harmony and helps to eradicate the terror and conflicts among Muslims.

Keywords:

Unity, Harmony, Rightly Guided Caliphs, Khilafat-e-Rashida, Integrity



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1. Introduction

Unity is the most important factor for success in the world. The development of a country is possible only when its people live in harmony and unity. Pakistan as an Islamic country desperately needs mutual unity for its survival, development and integrity. Mutual unity is described in the Qur'an in a very clear manner, as Almighty Allah says:

[Al-Anfal: 46] وَلَا تَنَازَعُوا فَتَفْشَلُوا وَتَذْهَبَ رِيحُكُمْ وَاصْبِرُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ

“And dispute not one with another lest ye falter and your strength depart from you; but be steadfast! Lo! Allah is with the steadfast.”¹

The verse proves the importance of unity and discloses the basis of destruction and ruin and that is mutual disagreement. This is mutual disagreement which leads to mutual weakness of Muslims. All the powers will be engaged in fighting each other, the obvious result of which is that the Muslim power will be weakened, the terror on the enemy will be lessened, the impact of the Muslims will loose ground and the great disruption will spread in the world.

In the light of the verse it can be said that the most important factor for the integrity and development of the country is mutual unity. In another place, Almighty Allah has said in the Holy Quran:

وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا [آل عمران: 103]

“ And hold fast, all of you together, to the cable of Allah, and do not separate.”²

In this verse the importance of mutual unity has been highlighted, also at the same time the key of unity has been explained and that is the strong chain of Qur'an and Sunnah, an unbreakable rope. That is to say, Muslim ummah must conduct their affairs in the light of Islam. If they continue to resolve their disputes in accordance with the teachings of Shariah, they will never go astray or disperse. It is the right path and whenever a person goes on right path, he will definitely reach to his right destination successfully.

When it comes to the righteous caliphate (Khilāfat-e-Rāshidah) we believe that the time of the Rightly Guided Caliphs is the backbone of Islamic law. The Rightly Guided Caliphs are the four Caliphs. First and foremost was Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq, the second one was Hazrat Umar Farooq. The Third was Hazrat Uthman and forth was Hazrat Ali. Some have even counted Hazrat Hassan in the list too.³ The rulings delivered by the Righteous Caliphs are the best course of action for the Ummah. In this connection we have before us an instruction of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in which he said:

فَعَلَيْكُمْ بِسُنَّتِي وَسُنَّةِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الرَّاشِدِينَ الْمُهَدِّينَ عَضُّوا عَلَيْهَا بِالنَّوَاجِذِ

“You must adhere to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the Rightly Guided Caliphs and follow them firmly.”

In this saying of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, he guided us to follow the path of the Prophet ﷺ along with the path of the Rightly Guided Caliphs. It clearly means that if we don't find guidance in a particular incidence in the life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, we must examine and look into the lives of the Rightly Guided Caliphs and must obtain the guidance from them. They are the true interpreters of the Quran and Sunnah. The true successors of the Holy Prophet.

If we talk about or look towards the role of unity and harmony in the security of the nation and the country in the context of the Righteous Caliphate, we see very clear examples which prove that the Companions were extremely concerned about the unity of the Ummah and such matters and elements were completely discouraged and eradicated which might cause division among Muslims. The creators of disorder, hatred and unlawfulness were strictly smashed in that era. Some of the golden examples of the Righteous Caliphate are recorded below.

2. The incident of Saqifa Bani Sa'ida

After the passing of the Prophet ﷺ, the issue of his succession arose immediately which was certainly the most important issue at that time. The Ansar Companions of the Holy Prophet gathered in Saqifa Bani Sa'idah and decided that vicegerent or Khalifat ur Rasool should be appointed from among the Ansar. The Muhajireen Companions were busy arranging the funeral when it was reported that the Ansar had gathered at Saqifa Bani Sa'ida and were about to appoint Khalifat ur Rasool by themselves. Realizing the seriousness of the matter, Hazrat Omar, Hazrat Abu Bakr and some of other companions went there. Some people forbade them to go there so that there would be no dissension but they considered it necessary to go there. When they arrived there, they learned that the Ansar had about to appoint caliph from among them, the said Companions perceived a great danger of deep division and separation in the ummah in future due to this selection.

As The Arab would not accept the rule of anyone except the tribe of Quraysh and interestingly among the Ansar, there were two tribes of Aaws and Khazraj and one would not accept the rule of another tribe wholeheartedly. In order to save the Ummah from this great exploitation, high-ranked Muhajireen and Ansar present there chose Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq as the Caliph of the Prophet ﷺ.⁵

This whole incident of Saqifa Bani Sa'ida underscores the importance of unity for the country's integrity because the State of Madinah could have been saved only if a unanimous caliph had been appointed. And if the disputed caliph had been chosen due to the delay in this election then there would have been an element of rebellion in the state of Madinah which would have caused a great deal of confusion and disorder.

Therefore, the great Companions took this direct and right step and immediately attended this meeting, settled all the issues with good manner and appointed Afzal Al-Bashar as the first Caliph after the Prophet ﷺ. Some of the Companions had some

pause on this allegiance but in order to save the Ummah from breaking, these Companions also took allegiance on the hand of Hazrat Siddiq Akbar wholeheartedly. In this way the Ummah was refrained from a great disaster.

2.1 Siddiq Akbar's time ; Symbol of the unity of the Ummah

The entire caliphate of Siddiq Akbar was to maintain the unity of the Ummah and to strengthen the integrity of the country. In this regard, he sent dozens of armies aimed at crushing the apostates and taking disciplinary action against those who were tearing apart the Islamic unity. Many tribes turned back towards the disbelief and infidelity. Many refused to follow Islamic teaching and denied to pay zakat. Some False claimants of prophecy appeared in the country and tried to disunite Muslims. Abu Bakar Siddique foiled all these conspiracies and brought all of them to the right path successfully. Apart from sending troops, his correspondence was an important part of maintaining the unity of the Ummah, so he sent dozens of letters to those who were causing any kind of mischief and disorder in the country.⁶

All these efforts of the Siddiqui era became a role model and an important means for the survival and development of the Islamic State and for the elimination of the division occurred in the Ummah in a threatening situation.

3. Unity of the Ummah; Real reason of the Qur'an's compilation

In the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the Qur'an was not preserved in book form. On the occasion of the battle of Yamama when many Huffaz Companions were martyred, on the initiative of Hazrat Umar, Siddiq Akbar ordered Zaid bin Thabit to compile the Qur'an on papers. Zaid bin Thabit along with his team gathered all the verses from the companions and wrote it in book form. In this way the Holy Quran preserved in a place for any future reference.

It is worth noting here that the Holy Quran has been revealed on Holy Prophet in multiple ways of recitations. It was due the easiness of different tribes of the Arab . But there happened an incident in the time of Hazrat Uthman which shocked the Companions. The incident was that Huzaifah bin Yaman saw during the war of Armenia and Azerbaijan that the Muslims were using the difference of recitations as a basis for accusing each other of Disbelief and misguidance.

The people of Syria used to recite the Qur'an according to the recitation of Hazrat Obaiy Bin Ka'b and the people of Iraq used to recite the Qur'an according to the recitation of Hazrat Abdullah Bin Masood. ⁷ Definitely both ways of recitation were narrated from the Holy prophet but the two nations began to consider each other's recitation as wrong and misleading. Seeing this, Hazrat Huzaifa got very upset and immediately went to Hazrat Uthman and said:

! يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَدْرِكْ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةَ

O Amir al-mu'minin! Save this ummah before it becomes as divisive as the Jews and the Christians.

Upon this, Hazrat Uthman, due to the seriousness of the division of the Ummah, immediately issued an order to compile the Qur'an on the Quraish dialect. Therefore, the Holy Qur'an was compiled on the Quraish dialect in such a way that all recitations narrated by the Holy Prophet were preserved and the rest of the dialects were merged into it or ignored completely.

Allama Qastalani has explained that the compilation of the Qur'an by Siddiq Akbar was for the preservation of the Qur'an in one place and the compilation of the Qur'an by Hazrat Uthman took place at a time when Muslims began to disagree with each other in recitation and on this basis they started to declare each other misguided and infidel. 8

Allama Qastalani's statement proves that the main purpose of Hazrat Uthman's collection of Qur'an was to eliminate the disunity and division of the Ummah and to make them united on one platform.

This shows the significance of the unity of the ummah that in order to establish unity:

- Hazrat Uthman asked Hazrat Hafsa to provide the original version of Quran compiled by Zaid bin Thabit in the era of Abu Bakar Siddique.
- the Qur'an was compiled anew according to the Quraish dialect keeping in view the original version.
- apart from the Quraish dialect other dialects were ignored completely or merged into it.
- then Hazrat Uthman prepared seven copies of this Holy Quran and sent them to seven major Islamic centers at that time including Mecca, Medina, Syria, Yemen, Bahrain, Basra and Kufa⁹
- And in the end an official order was issued to abolish all the mus'hafs except this Mus'haf so that no one could disunite the Muslim Nation afterwards.

All these efforts were carried out only for creating the unity and harmony in Muslim Ummah.

3.1 A special act of Hazrat Uthman for the unity of the Ummah

Apart from compilation of Quran, Hazrat Uthman's whole life was devoted for the unity of Muslims. A special action of Hazrat Uthman is narrated that when he was asked about offering prayers behind the seditionists and the committers of fitnah, he allowed it. Even though he was imprisoned in his own house at that time by these seditionists.¹⁰

It also shows that he wanted to maintain unity in the Ummah till the last breath of his life.

3.2 An expression of unity even in seeing the moon

One of the rulings received from the Rightly Guided Caliphs is that if a person sees the moon of Eid alone and the judge does not accept his testimony, then he must fast. That is, it is not permissible for him to leave the fast in spite of seeing the new moon.¹¹ This also proves the importance of national unity.

3.3 Hazrat Ali's hatred of divisions and disunions

Fourth Rightly Guided Caliph Hazrat Ali had a strong desire that Muslims should remain united and keep their ranks free from all kinds of differences. A famous saying that he used to say has been narrated from him as follows:

إِنِّي أَكْرَهُ الْإِخْتِلَافَ، حَتَّى يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ جَمَاعَةٌ¹²

That I dislike the differences between Muslims and want them to be united.

3.4 Hazrat Muawiyah's answer to Hercules Rome

Due to some misconceptions or misunderstandings Hazrat Muawiyah fought against Hazrat Ali in some cases as an ijtihad mistake. One of the incidents of those war days is that Hercules Rome, who was very much afraid of Hazrat Mu'awiyah, when he heard that the Muslims were fighting with each other, seized the opportunity and brought a large army to the Islamic frontiers and sent a message to Hazrat Mu'awiyah that I want to fight with you against Hazrat Ali. And we both when fight collectively against him, can easily defeat him and you will be the winner in the war.

Hazrat Mu'awiyah rejected this offer angrily and responded to King with a very harsh reply that if you do not immediately leave the Islamic borders along with your army then I will reconcile and make peace with my cousin Hazrat Ali and then we will both fight against you in such a way that the earth will become too small for you.¹³

This statement of Hazrat Muawiyah is a clear proof that even the fighting and conflicts among these people on the basis of Ijtihadi slips did not prevent them from uniting against the enemy. This incident proves that even if Muslims are fighting each other on the basis of misunderstandings, they should unite on a platform against the common enemy and keep the unity alive in their ranks forever.

3.5 Hazrat Hassan's Reconciliation just for the Unity of the Ummah

Hazrat Hassan's rule of six months is also considered as a part of the Righteous Caliphate as we have described it earlier in this article. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had said about him :

14 إِنَّ ابْنِي هَذَا سَيِّدٌ، وَلَعَلَّ اللَّهَ أَنْ يُصَلِّحَ بِهِ بَيْنَ فِئَتَيْنِ عَظِيمَتَيْنِ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

“This son of mine is leader and I hope from Allah that he will bring about reconciliation between the two great groups of Muslims.”

After taking over the caliphate, from the first day Hazrat Hassan was very much worried and concerned due to the stunning condition of Muslims at that time and continued thinking to take step towards the betterment of Muslim nation. Meanwhile he received request from Hazrat Muavia for reconciliation. So on consecutive requests of Hazrat Muawiyah, Hazrat Hassan reconciled with him after deep thought and consultation with the elderly companions alive at that time. In this way Muslim Ummah got united on a single platform and hence the prediction of the Holy Prophet ﷺ came true.

Hazrat Hasan said with great sorrow that this Ummah has been filled with its own blood.¹⁵ On another occasion he said that the unity of the Ummah is far better than its disintegration.¹⁶

It is clear from these sayings of Hazrat Hassan that the main purpose of his peace was to establish unity in the Ummah. So for this purpose he sacrificed his power and caliphate and withdrew from his supremacy.

Some people of his era criticized him very much on his reconciliation with Hazrat Muavia and named it an act of cowardice but Hazrat Hasan faced this criticism from the people with open heart, tried to describe the right path to the critics with strong and firm arguments. But eventually he had to endure it for the sake of unity of the Ummah.¹⁷

3.6 Loss of Islamic conquests due to lack of unity

Many arguments have been gathered here regarding the importance of unity, another one is that due to absence of unity, the Muslim Ummah has suffered irreparable damage. Historians agree that remarkable victories could not have been achieved during the reign of Hazrat Ali in spite of his unmatched courage and bravery and his unparalleled wisdom and intellect. According to some historians, there were only a few victories in Sistan and Kabul. When we search for the the main reason behind this, there is only one thing we can blame for all this damage and that is lack of mutual unity.¹⁸

4. Conclusion

From the above arguments, it is clear that the greatest role in the integrity and survival of the country is played by mutual unity and harmony of the nation. National consensus is the key to all development and prosperity in the country.

Therefore, for the survival and integrity of Pakistan, it is imperative that the Muslims of Pakistan maintain unity in their ranks and never allow such corrupt elements to enter among themselves who are calling for sedition and disorder or any kind of terror activity in the homeland.

Rather, they must respond bluntly to such conspiratorial elements in the same way as Amir Mu'awiyah did to Hercules of Rome as mentioned earlier in details.

These are all incidents and arguments which show the inevitability of unity and consensus in the country's integrity. In the article under review, the importance of national security was highlighted in the context of the Rightly Guided Caliphs so that the Islamic Republic of Pakistan would be united according to the teachings and style of the Rightly Guided Caliphs.

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 أَنْ حُدَيْقَةَ قَدَمٍ مِنْ عَزْوَةِ فَلَمْ يَدْخُلْ بَيْتَهُ حَتَّى آتَى عُثْمَانَ فَقَالَ: يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَدْرَكَ النَّاسُ! قَالَ: وَمَا ذَاكَ؟ قَالَ: غَزَوْتُ فَرَجَ أَرْمِينِيَةَ فَإِذَا أَهْلُ الشَّامِ يَقْرَأُونَ بِقِرَاءَةِ أَبِي بِنِ كَعْبٍ فَيَأْتُونَ بِمَا لَمْ يَسْمَعْ أَهْلُ الْعِرَاقِ، وَإِذَا أَهْلُ الْعِرَاقِ يَقْرَأُونَ بِقِرَاءَةِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مَسْعُودٍ فَيَأْتُونَ بِمَا لَمْ يَسْمَعْ أَهْلُ الشَّامِ فَيَكْفُرُ بَعْضُهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ أُنْتَهَى. وَكَانَ هَذَا سَبَبًا لَجَمْعِ عُثْمَانَ الْقُرْآنَ فِي الْمُصْحَفِ، وَالْفَرْقَ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ الْمُصْحَفِ أَنْ الْمُصْحَفَ هِيَ الْأُورَاقُ الْمَحْرُورَةُ الَّتِي جُمِعَ فِيهَا الْقُرْآنُ فِي عَهْدِ أَبِي بَكْرٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ، وَكَانَتْ سُورًا مَفْرَقَةً كُلُّ سُورَةٍ مَرْتَبَةً بِآيَاتِهَا عَلَى حِدَةٍ، لَكِنَّ لَمْ يَرْتَبْ بَعْضُهَا إِثْرَ بَعْضٍ، فَلَمَّا نَسَخَتْ وَرْتَبَ بَعْضُهَا إِثْرَ بَعْضٍ صَارَتْ مُصْحَفًا، وَلَمْ يَكُنْ مُصْحَفًا إِلَّا فِي عَهْدِ عُثْمَانَ.
- 8 Al-Qastalānī , Aḡmad bin Maḡmūd bin Abī bakar Al-Qastalānī (d. 923), **Iršād Al-sārī šarah šahīḡ al-Buḡārī**, āl-maḡba āl-kubrā āl-amīriya ,Egypt, (7/ 449) :
 قال السفاسقي: فكان جمع أبي بكر خوف ذهاب شيء من القرآن بذهاب حملته إذ إنه لم يكن مجموعاً في موضع واحد، وجمع عثمان لما أكثر الاختلاف في وجوه قراءته حين قرؤوا بلغاتهم حتى أدى ذلك إلى تحطئة بعضهم بعضاً فنسخ تلك الصحف في مصحف واحد مقتصرًا من اللغات على لغة قريش إذ هي أرجحها.
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 إِلَى مَكَّةَ وَإِلَى الشَّامِ وَإِلَى اليمِينِ وَإِلَى الْبَحْرَيْنِ وَإِلَى الْبَصْرَةِ وَإِلَى الْكُوفَةِ وَحَبَسَ بِالْمَدِينَةِ وَاحِدًا.
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¹² Al-Buḥārī , Muḥammad bin Ismā'īl al-Buḥārī, **Ṣaḥīḥ al-Buḥārī** , (5/19)

¹³ Ibn Kaṭīr, Abu āl-fidā' Ismā'īl bin 'umar bin Kaṭīr (d. 774 H) , **Al-bidāyah wa Al-nihāyah** , ṭ: dār āl-fikr ,(1986) ,8/119:

فَلَمَّا كَانَ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ وَأَمْرِ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلِيٍّ مَا كَانَ، لَمْ يَقَعْ فِي تِلْكَ الْأَيَّامِ فَتْحٌ بِالْكَلْبِيِّ، لَا عَلَى يَدَيْهِ وَلَا عَلَى يَدَيْ عَلِيٍّ، وَطَمِعَ فِي مُعَاوِيَةَ مَلِكِ الرُّومِ بَعْدَ أَنْ كَانَ قَدْ أَحْشَاهُ وَأَذَلَّهُ، وَقَهَرَ جُنْدَهُ وَدَحَاهُمْ، فَلَمَّا رَأَى مَلِكُ الرُّومِ اشْتِغَالَ مُعَاوِيَةَ بِحَرْبِ عَلِيٍّ تَدَانَى إِلَى بَعْضِ الْبِلَادِ فِي جُنُودِ عَظِيمَةٍ وَطَمِعَ فِيهِ، فَكُتِبَ مُعَاوِيَةَ إِلَيْهِ: وَاللَّهِ لَئِنْ لَمْ تَنْتَهَ وَتَرْجِعْ إِلَى بِلَادِكَ يَا لَعِينُ لَأُضْطَلِحَنَّ أَنَا وَابْنُ عَمِّي عَلَيْنِكَ وَالْأَخْرَجَتْنَا مِنْ جَمِيعِ بِلَادِكَ، وَالْأَضْيَقَنَّ عَلَيْكَ الْأَرْضَ بِمَا رَحِبَتْ. فَعِنْدَ ذَلِكَ خَافَ مَلِكُ الرُّومِ وَأَنْكَفَى، وَبَعَثَ يَطْلُبُ الْهُدُنَةَ

¹⁴ Al-Buḥārī , Muḥammad bin Ismā'īl al-Buḥārī, **Ṣaḥīḥ al-Buḥārī** , ṭ : dār ṭawq āl-niḡāh, 3/

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¹⁵ Isma'il Raihan, **Tarikh Ummat-e-Muslima**, Al-Manhal Publishers, Karachi, 2/339

¹⁶ Abū ḥanīfa, Aḥmad bin dāwūd Al-dinawrī, (282 h) , **Al-aḥbār al-Ṭiwāl** , dār Iḥyā' āl-kutub āl-'arbiyyah , (P: 217) :

ان الذي تكروهون من الجماعة افضل مما تحبون من الفرقة،

¹⁷ Al-ṭabrī, Muḥammad bin ḡarīr bin Yazīd (310 h), **Tārīḥ al-Ṭabrī = Tārīḥ al-rusuli wā-Imuluk**, dār āl-turāt, Beirut, (5/ 165):

فلما خرج إلى المدينة تلقاه ناس بالقادسية فقالوا: يا مذل العرب

¹⁸ Isma'il Raihan, **Tarikh Ummat-e-Muslima**, Al-Manhal Publishers, Karachi, 2/367