

Asabiyyah - Fanatism – Partisanship – Clanishness

The causes and the diseases that have weakened the Muslim Ummah are many, and the asabiyyah with all its kinds and forms is one of these deadly diseases that have weakened the Muslim Ummah in the past as well as today; the once unified, merciful, and cohesive Muslim Ummah has transformed into differing, conflicting, warring entities.

Idiomatically, asabiyyah is man's supporting his people to whom he belongs, whether they are right or wrong, oppressing or oppressed. The belonging to these people can be due to kith and kin, ethnicity, color, birth place, citizenship, school of thought, or a group of people with common interest.

The drive that causes asabiyyah is the feeling of being better than others, and that others are at a lower class. So, the person that has this feeling of asabiyyah thinks so highly of himself and of those to whom he belongs, and thinks that other people are as good as his own people.

This kind of thinking is corrupted, and it is in fact a kind of arrogance that comes from the mentality of Iblis, which led him to disobey the command of Allah when He ordered him to prostrate to Adam.

The most common form of asabiyyah, we Muslims suffer from is the regionalism and nationalism. It is not much different from the tribalism that existed in Jahiliya. This kind of asabiyyah has grown in intensity within the Muslim Ummah after the fall of the Islamic Ottoman Khilafa.

Regionalism is formed amongst a group of people who live in one region. They think that just because they are living together in one region, that by itself will give them better qualifications than others. So they look down on others and think highly of their own selves even if those other people have lived with them for tens of years and even if they were born in their region but they are not originally from them.

This regionalism was a goal that was sought by the enemies of Islam, so they planted this deadly thought and nourished it with all means, and people ended up victims of this deadly asabiyyah that only benefited the opportunistic people by keeping and strengthening their positions.

We need to ask ourselves, why Islam has fought asabiyyah and warned us against it?

Simply because gathering and mutual support on the basis of asabiyyah contradicts the fundamentals of Islam and its teachings. The Muslim who believes in Allah (S.W.T.) has his heart filled with love of Allah and love toward those who

are loved by Allah, and hatred toward those who are hated by Allah. The relationship between true Muslims and other people is based on this perspective only; he supports and allies himself with those who are loved by Allah and supports them when they are right even if they are the farthest people from him (in blood, ethnic background, race, birth place, or nationality....). And on the other hand, a true Muslim hates the enemies of Allah and shows animosity towards them even if they are the closest people to him (in blood, ethnic background, race, birth place, or nationality....)

This is the true stance of a believer and he adopts no other stance.

Allah (S.W.T.) gave us a good example of this kind of believer in Ibraheem (S.A.W.). Allah (S.W.T.) said in surat AI-Mumtahinah, (verse 4), what can be translated as, "Indeed there has been an excellent example for you in Abraham and those who believe with him, when they said to their people: 'Verily, we are free from you and whatever you worship besides Allah, we have rejected you, and there has started between us and you, hostility and hatred for ever, until you believe in Allah alone.'"

The society that Islam wants is the kind of society where people gather on the basis of Islam and Islam alone. So that the believers will have one united Ummah despite their differing colors, languages, ethnic backgrounds, tribes, so that this one Ummah becomes like one body. We must keep in mind that Islam does not cancel races, languages, and regions, but makes them members and parts within this one body; they move when the body moves towards a common goal, in a way that none of the roles of any parts of the body is canceled.

The scale of being better in this society is not the race, language, national origin, ...; it is righteousness and good deeds, Allah (S.W.T.) says in surat AI-Hujurat, (verse 13), what can be translated as, 'Verily, the most honorable of you in the sight of Allah is that (believer) who has At-Taqwa'

So how do we rid ourselves of Asabiyyah?

This is clarified in the Quran. Allah (S.W.T.) commanded us in surat AI-Emran, (verse 103), what can be translated as, "And hold fast, all of you together, to the Rope of Allah, (Islam) and do not be divided among yourselves." Holding tight and assimilating on the deen of Allah (S.W.T.) and no other deen, and assimilation on the basis of anything else is an un-Islamic, ignorant, and a rejected assimilation. This holding tight and assimilation on the deen of Allah should be done by all Muslims with no exception. If some do not do this, the cure will not be complete.

Also, it is a must that Muslims unite regardless of the factors that suggest differences, like skin color, languages, regions, national origins because unity is obligatory.

The cure is also with purifying the soul from the traces of Jahiliya and purifying it from arrogance, and looking down on people and planting the virtue of humility and respect of others.

The cure is also with the total awareness that asabiyyah is from the works of Iblees and a means of destruction in the hands of the enemies of the Muslim Ummah from within and from outside. Asabiyyah is a sharp knife that has cut the veins of the Muslim Ummah and is still bleeding and dying.

We ask Allah (S.W.T.) to protect us all from all forms of AI-asabiyyah AI-Jahiliya and make us true believers. (Ameen)