

Groups and Parties in Islam

In this special 8 page pullout of Khilafah magazine, we will examine the legality and objective of Islamic groups in a simplified and summarized manner.

QUESTION

The number of Islamic groups and parties has multiplied recently to the extent that it has become extremely difficult to identify or count them, and each one of them has appointed an amir, and has adopted its own methodology and objectives . These groups and parties include:

Tablighi Jama'ah, the Muslim Parliament, Hizbullah, the Islamic Shari'ah Council , Al-Murabitun , Islamic Party of Britain, the Jihad Organization, Hizb ut-Tahrir, Jam'iat Ihyaa' Minhaaj Al-Sunnah, Ikhwan al-Muslimeen (Muslim Brotherhood) (including its numerous charity organizations like Islamic Relief, its nationalist groups like Islamic Association of Palestinian Youth, and its political groups like Muslim Solidarity Committee - all are umbrella groups), the Islamic Salvation Front, Hizb An-Nahda, Hizbal Da' waand Jama'at Islami, Sufi groups, etc.

The fundamental point to address here is whether it is lawful to form parties and groups in the first place. And are Muslims allowed to join or support them?

ANSWER

Before attempting to answer these questions, the following points need to be examined, for they are directly linked to the issue.

- 1) The definition of the word hizb (party) or jama'ah (group) in Islam.
- 2) The definition of the word Ummah (Nation) in Islam.
- 3) Establishing an Islamic group or party is obligatory upon the Muslim Ummah.
- 4) Definition of Fard Ayn & Fard Kifaya.
- 5) There should not be any group(s) .
- 6) There should be only one group.
- 7) The establishing of group(s) does not require a license or permission from any body.
- 8) The aim and the objective of the group(s) .
- 9) The methodology of the Islamic group(s).
- 10) The characteristics of an Islamic party or group.
- 11) The definition of politics, siyasah, in Islam.
- 12) The art of politics among the disbelievers.
- 13) The art of politics among the believers.
- 14) Every Muslim must be a politician .
- 15) It is inevitable that the group or the party should be a political one.
- 16) "There's no political parties in Islam" is a Kufr idea.
- 17) The party of the Messenger (SAW).
- 18) The functions of the Sahabah [the members of the party of the Messenger (SAW)]
- 19) Definition of the principle: 'The Authority belongs to the Ummah (all Muslims)'.
- 20) The transfer of authority from the Ummah to the Khaleefah.
- 21) Holding the rulers (the state) accountable .
- 22) The need for an Islamic political party today.
- 23) Participating in bringing Islam back into life's affairs is a great opportunity for all Muslims.

24) Participation in this effort means winning the same honor that the Sahabah (RA) won.

Reference to the Divine Law (Shari'ah) derived from the Qur'an and the Sunnah will be made, and an individual analysis of each topic will be carried out before attempting to answer these questions. In this issue of Khilafah magazine, we will examine the legality and objective of Islamic groups in a simplified and summarized manner.

Allah's (SWT) says:

"There should be among you an Ummah (a band of people) inviting to the good (khayr), ordering what is right (ma'ruf) and forbidding what is wrong (munkar). Those are they who are the successful " [TMQ 3:104]

The definition of the word hizb (party) or jama'ah (group)

Jama'ah (group) linguistically means Hizb (party), so both having similar meanings, but Hizb is more specific than jama'ah. A Hizb characterizes a bond that links all its members around one ideology and one goal that unites them; the Hizb (party) is a man, his followers and friends who carry the same opinion and ideas and follow the same method.

In the leading Arabic dictionary written by Imam Fairuz Al-Abadi, Al-Qamus al-Muhit, it defines, "A hizb (party) is a group of people. A party is a man, his followers and friends who share his views and values .

Imam Al-Razi said in his book, Tafsir Mafatih al-Ghayb, "Al-hizb (party) is the companions of a man who share his views; it is the people who gather for the aim of their party." Furthermore, the word 'group' or 'party' has been mentioned in the Qur'an as " Ummah".

The definition of the word Ummah

The word Ummah usually means all of the Muslims. Imam Qurtubi has defined the word Ummah in his book, Tafsir Ahkam al-Qur'an, as multitudes of people bonded by the same 'Aqeedah (faith). But in the verse: "There should be among you a band of people ... " [TMQ 3:104], it means a group or band or party, because the verse clearly states 'min kum' (among you). If we study what the classical scholars understood from this verse, we learn the following:

Ibn Kathir says in his book, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Adhim, "The ayah means that there should be from this Ummah a group aiming to work for Islam and ordering what is right and forbidding what is wrong. And Ad-Dahhaq said, 'They are particular people from the Sahabah, and particular people from the narrators, meaning particular people from the Mujahideen and scholars.'

Imam Abu Bakr Ibn al-'Arabi said in his book, Ahkam al-Qur'an, "Ummah in this verse means jama'ah (group)".

Imam AI-Tabari, a leading commentator and interpreter, said in his book, Jami' al-Bayan, on the meaning of this verse, "Allah (SWT) means by this: There should be among you a jama'ah (group) inviting people to Islam and its laws."

Qadi Al-Baydawi said in his book, Anwar al-Tanzil wa Asrar al-Ta'wil, on the meaning of this verse, 'Min ' (among) here aims at singling out a group of people, because inviting to what is good and forbidding what is wrong requires certain conditions and qualifications that are not shared by all of the Muslim Ummah, like the knowledge of the Divine Law (Shari'ah) and the manner in which the obligation is to be carried out. That is why Allah (SWT) addressed everyone at the beginning of the verse and then ordered the selection of a few people. This was to assert that it is the duty upon everyone; so if it is abandoned then everyone would fall sinful, but mitigated from the sin if even a single group of people - qualified for the task - established it."

Therefore, 'Ummah' here means jama'ah (group) or hizb (party). Furthermore, this group or party should be a political one.

Establishing an Islamic group or party is obligatory upon the Muslim Ummah

One of the orders of Allah (SWT) is for the Islamic Nation to have a group or a party to perform certain duties that are crucial in maintaining its vitality and energy. In response to this call, many Muslims have established Islamic parties and many others have responded eagerly by encouraging and working with these groups, for Allah (SWT) says:

"There should be among you an Ummah (a band of people) inviting to the good(khayr), ordering what is right (ma'ruf) and forbidding what is wrong (munkar). Those are they who are the successful " [TMQ 3:104]

This verse elucidates a clear command from Allah (SWT) for the Muslims to form a group(s) or a party (parties) that is obligatory for the following points:

1. Because the above verse is mentioned in Qur'an after the command to us to be unified,saying:

“And hold fast, all together, by the rope [Qur'an] of Allah, and be not divided..” [TMQ 4:103]

this clearly indicates that to raise a group from this Ummah is obligatory because the call for Unity is obligatory

2. Inviting to all that is good, i.e. inviting to Islam: This applies naturally to non-Muslims. And this inviting to Islam is obligatory

3. Inviting people to good deeds and forbidding what is wrong, this applies to Muslims, and this inviting to Islam is obligatory .

4. Allah says: " Those are they who are the successful " [TMQ 3:104] which the opposite understanding (Mafhoom al-mukhalafah), i.e. who ever doesn't do so, they are the losers.

Definition of Fard Ayn & Fard Kifaya

1- Fard Ayn: an obligatory action upon every individual mature Muslim, i.e. Salat, Fasting, Hajj etc.

2- Fard Kifaya: an obligation

which the Muslims are relieved from if some of them perform it, i.e. Jihad, forming a party, etc.

There shouldn't be any groups

On the other hand there are also some Muslims who oppose the idea of Islamic groups and even claim that having such groups is Haram. Their understanding contradicts with the ayah in the Qur'an which actually calls for establishing groups.

There should be only one group

There are those who claim that there must be only one group and everyone should be working with it. People who claim that there should be only one Islamic group submit the evidence from the Qur'an that the Ummah itself is the group:

"Those who split up their Deen, and become (mere)sects, each party Rejoicing in that which is with Itself: " [TMQ 30:31-32]

However, such Ayas are talking about the Mushriks (polytheists) on the prohibition of having more than one Aqeedah, because Allah (SWT) has stated clearly that the belief in Islam is one. This issue has no relation to the order of Allah (SWT) for the Muslims to establish a party or group.

It is forbidden to prevent others from establishing other Islamic groups

Verily the command to establish a group does not necessarily forbid the multiplicity of groups. This is demonstrated in the following two points: firstly; The verse "There should be among you a band "does not in fact specify a number; the word Ummah" (band) came indefinite this in Arabic grammar is known as the form of tankir, or nakira. This implies to establish a group is an obligation, and if a group were established the obligation would be fulfilled. However, it would not be unlawful to establish several groups, for if one group establishes the duty of sufficiency it does

not necessarily prevent others from fulfilling that duty as well. For example, when a Muslim gives the salutation "assalamu alaikum" to a group of people, to reply it will become sufficient duty (Fard Kifaya) upon them; however, if one of them fulfills the duty by replying, that will never restrict the others to exercise the sufficient Card.

Besides, in the remainder of the verse as the word 'Ummah' is in the plural form, this gives indication for the allowance of more than one group. They should call to the Khair, i.e. to Islam, and they should enjoin the ma'aruf and forbid the munkar, and those will be ones to attain felicity/success.

Moreover, the word "Yadd'un " they should call- refers to Ummah. If the verse were referring to only singular, i.e. only one group, it would read "Tadd'u" it calls, or invites. The same applies for the words "Ya'marun" they enjoin-, "Yan'hawn" they forbid-, they both refer to the word Ummah, and again if the verse were referring to only singular it would read "Ta'morn" - it enjoins- and "Tanha" it forbids; and the word "Ula'ika" plural pronoun translating as 'those' in reference to the key word "Ummah" in the verse meaning group(s), again the singular would read "tilka" meaning 'that', which is not present in the text. Furthermore, the same applies in the conclusion of the verse "humul muflihun", this translates 'the ones who are successful, or the ones to attain success', clearly in the plural form.

In Allah's (SWT) saying "Let arise amongst you (Ummah) group(s)." what is in fact indicated is not a specific group but rather a group, similarly in the saying of RasulAllah (SAW);

Whomever amongst you witnesses a munkar, let him change it." [Muslim, Abu Said al-Khudri].

What the Hadith here is indicating is not a specific munkar but a munkar, i.e., any act that is considered to be a munkar. Therefore,

the commands and prohibitions would apply in a general sense and not in the singular. Therefore it is lawful to establish one or more groups in the Ummah. For if one group fulfills the sufficient duty mentioned in the verse, the sin is removed from the neck of the Muslims, and it is forbidden for anyone to prevent others from establishing other groups, for this would be to prevent the performing of a duty and that is Haram and a sin.

The establishing of group(s) does not require a license or permission from anybody

It is worth mentioning here that forming a group (s); party or parties is obligatory and does not require a permission from anybody, i.e. a ruler. And furthermore it is prohibited to let the performing of this obligation depend on the permission of the ruler. Otherwise the command of Allah (SWT) would be delayed until the ruler granted permission, and this is totally in violation of the principle of accomplishing an obligation.

Therefore the establishing of political groups does not require a license from any state, even the Islamic state, because the accountability of the Khaleefah is a duty upon the Muslims, whether individuals or groups, and one does not need the permission of the Khaleefah to perform a duty. Rather it is a duty upon the Khaleefah to ensure that there is somebody from the Ummah to account him, as Umar Ibn al-Khattab did when he was appointed Khaleefah; he delivered a sermon and asked the people, "Is there any one

from among you who will correct me if I do wrong?" One man stood up and said, "I will correct you by my sword!" Umar said, "Thank Allah (SWT) that there is a person among those who I look after who will correct me if I do wrong."

The aim and the objective of the group(s)

The ultimate aim and ambition of the group(s) or the party is to attain Allah's (SWT) pleasure, for He (SWT) says:

"Seeking grace from Allah (SWT) and (His) good pleasure and aiding Allah (SWT) and His Messenger. Such are indeed the sincere ones." [TMQ 59:82]

Furthermore, since the call to Islam means the call to its Aqeedah (doctrine) and to the system which emanates from that Aqeedah, the group should inevitably have as its goal the resumption of the Islamic way of life and not to have as its goal the government seats, nor the call for moral values, nor sportive activities nor spiritual rites.

The implementation of the Shari'ah laws was compulsory in all aspects of life, and this is not possible except by the existence of an Islamic state. Therefore to resume the Islamic way of life within society by establishing the Khilafah state (as our situation necessitates today), or to hold the Khaleefah accountable when the Khilafah is established is compulsory following the Shari'ah principle which states, "Whatever is necessary to accomplish a duty (Wajib) is in itself a duty (Wajib) "

The methodology of the Islamic groups

The methodology of the Islamic groups, if their objective is to reestablish the Khilafah, should be taken from Islam (from the Prophet's methodology when he established the first Islamic state). It is the responsibility of the Ummah to recognize the Islamic political group which understands Islam, its objective, and the Islamic methodology to achieve it. The Ummah must join that effort and fully support it and not get mixed in any peripheral issues. If any Islamic group does not make its foremost priority in reestablishing the Khilafah, it would necessarily contradict the Islamic priority and methodology. Allah (SWT) says in the Qur'an:

"Say, This is my way I invite unto Allah (SWT) with certain knowledge, I and whoever follows me. Glory to Allah (SWT) and I am not from mushrikeen " [TMQ 12:108]

This is a clear evidence which makes it binding for the Ummah to follow the Prophet's way of carrying the Da'wa.

Even though establishing an Islamic group is Fard Kifayah, the obligation to establish Islam (the Khilafah) is an obligation which falls upon every Muslim's shoulder until it materializes. Only those who work through the group effort to reestablish it will be relieved from the sin of the absence of Islam in our affairs.

The characteristics of an Islamic party or group

The group or the party that is formed according to the above verse (3:104) must have certain qualifications:

a. The group or the party must be based only on the Islamic Aqeedah (creed), because Allah (SWT) says:

"If anyone desires a deen other than Islam, never will it be accepted of him; and he will be a loser in the hereafter. "[TMQ 3:85]

And "Inviting to what is good (al-khayr)" it means to Islam. In other words any matter which concerns this group or party such as its aim, objectives, membership and even administration must be derived from the Islamic Aqeedah.

b. Each group or party must have a leader (amir) who must be obeyed as long as his order does not contravene the Qur'an and the Sunnah, for the Prophet (SAW) said:

"It is not permitted for three individuals to be in any place of the Earth unless they appoint (ammiru) one of them as amir (leader) " (Sahih, related by Ahmad on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Amr Ibn al-As).

It is worth mentioning here that the Hadith did not say Baya'u (give a pledge of allegiance) but said ammiru (appoint). This is regarding appointing an amir. As for obeying him, the Prophet (SAW) said;

"Whoever obeys the amir obeys me, and whoever disobeys the amir he disobeys me" (Sahih, related by Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurayra).

c. The bond between the members of the party or the group must be the Islamic Aqeedah and ideology, and not the bond of nationalism, sectarianism, spiritualism or benefit. It should be the bond based on the Islamic belief and ideology which melted together in one party Umar (Arab), Suhayb (Roman), Salman (Persian), Bilal (Abyssinian), and others, because the Prophet (SAW) said:

"O people! Your god is one, your father (Adam (AS)) is one. All of you are from Adam and Adam was from clay. There is no difference in nobility between an Arab and a non-Arab except in taqwa (piety) " (From the Prophet's (SAW) Last Hajj, related by Ibn Hisham).

Taqwa is defined by the classical scholars as the result of the Islamic belief.

We conclude from the qualifications listed above that the group or the party that we have been ordered to form by the above mentioned verse (3:104) must be a political one. Being a political group or party means to look after the Islamic Nation's affairs at home and abroad, like the monitoring of the ruler's policies and decisions at home, making him accountable for them in case of a breach, and inquiring about his foreign policy and making sure that it is based only on the Divine Law of Islam.

The definition of politics (siyasah) in Islam

Politics (siyasah) in Islam means to look after and be concerned with the affairs of people according to the principles of Islam. This word has been mentioned in the Islamic Shari'ah texts as meaning the ordering (O) of what is right (ma'ruf and the forbidding (nahy) of what is wrong (munkar).

Furthermore, it is narrated in the Hadith of the Messenger of Allah (SAW):

"The Children of Israel were looked after/governed (tasusuhum) by the Prophets." [Sahih Muslim on the authority of Abu Hazim].

The word tasusuhum is derived from the same root word as siyasah (i.e. saasa) .

Also, the word siyasah (politics) has been clearly defined in Arabic as looking after the affairs of people by ordering and forbidding them. Imam Fairuz al Abadi said in his book, Al-Qamus al-Muhit, "Sustu al-ra'iyata siyasatan amartuha wa nahaytuha" which translates, "Looking after the affairs of the citizens means ordering and forbidding them."

So governing and looking after the affairs of the people means ordering them to do what is right, as defined by Islam, and forbidding them to do what is wrong, as defined by Islam; this in Islam is a part of the Shari'ah (Divine Law). This is clearly contrary to the meaning of (and quite often in the common use of the word) politics in the disbelieving (Kufr) ideologies, which is the art of cheating and lying, twisting of the facts, misleading and deceiving, etc. This meaning of politics contradicts the meaning of politics in Islam which is being trustworthy and truthful and looking after the affairs of the people according to the commands of Allah (SWT), seeking only His (SWT) pleasure.

The art of politics among the disbelievers

The art of politics among the disbelievers is to deal with events based solely on what the situation itself demands, and this is called pragmatism, or in other words realism. This is what the disbelieving politicians mean when they chant their favorite slogan: 'be realistic' or 'be practical'. Naturally, this pragmatism requires flexibility, compromise and deceit. For example, if the situation demands democracy, the role of these politicians is to adopt it and call for it, even if they do not believe in it or

it contradicts with their ideology. Whereas in Islam every situation has an Islamic verdict (hukm shar'i)

based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah, which cannot be compromised whatsoever whether for pragmatism, convenience or anything else. Unfortunately today we find some Muslims, who are

affected by the disease of pragmatism, for example, starting to call for recognition of Israel because the situation demands that it be recognized, even though it contradicts their belief. In addition, they also try to 'Islamize' any matter which public opinion demands, even if it contradicts with Islam, as is the case with so-called 'Islamic secularism', 'Islamic socialism', 'Islamic nationalism', and 'Islamic democracy', all of which contravenes with the Shari'ah.

The art of politics among the believers

Politics in Islam is the art of making what appears impossible, possible. This art requires the believing politician not to be pragmatic, i.e. not to cheat, lie, deceive and compromise, because Islam prohibits all of this. For example, the Messenger of Allah (SAW) began by calling people to worship one God and leave all idol worship and embrace Islam, targeting to change their whole way of life, it appeared to the people at the time to be impossible, but he succeeded with Allah's (SWT) help. He was only one man, but with the help of Allah (SWT), Islam spread all over the world. And this understanding of the art of politics in Islam, i.e. to make what one believes in possible even if the situation appears to be impossible, without compromising, is exemplified from the incident when the rulers of the Quraysh asked the Messenger's uncle, Abu Talib, to convince him (SAW) to compromise and accept their offer, his glorious and well known reply was;

"If they put the Sun in my right hand and the Moon in my left to leave this path, I will never do that, until it is proclaimed and implemented everywhere, or I perish in the process. " [Ibn Hisham].

If the Prophet (SAW) understood politics as the art of being realistic and pragmatic, like the disbelieving politicians and some misguided Muslims, he would have accepted the situation, advocated it or remained silent, thereby being 'realistic', as those who are misguided always call for everyone to be.

In truth, he (SAW) did not compromise; how could he when he was a Muslim? Moreover, he rejected decisively the polytheist way of life and their idols, and he rejected sharing power with them, even though they offered it to him . He (SAW) did not 'Islamize' the situation or reform society, because he believed the very foundation of the existing society was Kufr, which cannot be reformed, except by radical change. And he (SAW) recited what Allah (SWT) revealed to him:

"Say: O you disbelievers! I worship not what you worship, nor will you worship that which I worship. And I will not worship that which you worship, nor will you worship that which I worship. To you your way, and to me mine. "[TMQ 109:1-6

Fundamentally, applying Allah's (SWT) Shari'ah on any matter in life's affairs is political, and this leads us to discuss the difference between a mufti, teacher, preacher and politician. For example, regarding the issue of alcohol; the mufti will say alcohol is Haram (prohibited), the teacher will say that methanol and ethanol are alcohols, the latter being an intoxicant. The preacher will say drinking alcohol will lead one to hellfire etc. But the 'Muslim politician' does all this in addition to his function as a politician. He will say, "Alcohol is Haram (prohibited), and Allah (SWT) ordered us to forbid it and to punish the one who drinks it and further the one who permits it to be sold and drunk; consequently, Islam obliges us to implement the punishment, and the only one who can do that on our behalf is the Khaleefah, appointed by us (the Ummah) as a matter of duty and worship for us, but in the absence of the Khaleefah, all of us will fall sinful unless we work to remove the Kufr regimes and establish Islam by appointing a Khaleefah to punish those who drink alcohol; and thereby relieving us of the sin which will lead us to the Hellfire". In this way, the politician looks after people's affairs by applying Islam on the situation. So he is a guardian, teacher, mufti and preacher.

Every Muslim must be a politician

Every Muslim is obliged to be a politician as indicated by the Messenger of Allah (SAW) when he said:

"Each one of you is a guardian and each one will be questioned for those he is responsible for." [Bukhari, on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Umar],

Implying that you are all politicians and each one of you has the responsibility of guardianship and looking after those whom Allah (SWT) has commanded you to look after.

And the Messenger of Allah (SAW) said:

"By the One Who owns my soul, you must order what is right and forbid what is wrong, or Allah (SWT) will surely send His punishment upon you. Then you will pray to Him and not be answered." [Tirmidhi, on the authority of Hukhayfa].

And he (SAW) said:

"Whosoever is not concerned for the Muslims 'affairs is not one of them " [Muslim]

And the Prophet (SAW) said:

"The best Jihad is the word of truth spoken to a tyrant ruler" [Abu Dawood and Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Sa'id al-Khuiri].

And he (SAW) said:

"The deen is guidance." Upon this we asked, "To whom?" He replied: "Towards Allah (SWT), His Book and His Messenger, for the leaders of the Muslims and the general public. " [Muslim, on the authority of Abu Ruqayyah Tamim Ibn Aus al-Dari]

He (SAW) also said:

"The Prophets governed/ looked after (tasusuhum) the children of Israel. Whenever a Prophet died, another Prophet succeeded him, but there will be no Prophet after me. There will soon be Khulafa' and they will number many." [Muslim, on the authority of Abu Hazim].

Therefore, the Muslim must as a matter of his deen look after the Muslims' affairs, which means he should be principally a politician, according to the Shari'ah meaning of politics. Moreover, Islam is a way of life, and should be applied to every single situation in all aspects of life, and this cannot be done unless one is a politician. This is the way one should act, and not according to the Western understanding of politics, because it is prohibited for a Muslim to share power with the Kufr regimes, whether in Muslim countries or outside them, since this would be

an act of rebellion and a grave sin. Muslims are prohibited from adopting or proposing anything that carries disbelieving concepts, such as democracy, secularism, nationalism and patriotism under the pretext of working towards establishing the Islamic State; this is prohibited for in Islam the 'ends never justify the means'.

It is inevitable that the group or the party should be a political one

And since the other duty of the group would be to enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, and this includes rulers and subjects alike, to call the ruler to enjoin ma'aruf would be the highest level of ma'aruf for its effects would be reflected on the society, and to forbid the ruler from committing the munkar would also have a great effect on society. This is what is known as holding the rulers accountable, and this is a political activity, and since politics in Islam means looking after the affairs of the people in general and the Muslims in particular according to Allah (SWT)'s Messenger saying:

"He who rose in the morning and did not look after the affairs of the Muslims in not one of them" [Muslim]

It became imperative for this group to take the lead in making the affairs of the Muslims its major concern, and it is only natural for her role to be political. Besides, the concept of enjoining what is right and forbidding what is munkar means, in Shari'ah terminology, the political work, and since

the duty of the group were to enjoin what is ma ma'aruf forbid what is munkar, it is inevitable that the group or the party should be a political one.

And he (SAW) also said:

A group of people from my Ummah will always remain on the right path and continue to be triumphant their opponents shall not be able to do them any harm" [Muslim]

This in turn explains two issues:

a) That the establishing of a group from among the Muslims is a duty of sufficiency (Fard Kifaya) and not an individual duty (Fard Ayn)

b) The presence of a group that has the qualities of an Islamic group would be sufficient to perform this duty regardless of the number of members of this group as long as it fulfills the qualities of a group and as long as it is capable of performing the duty it is commanded to perform in this verse. The phrase "There should "is addressed to the entire Ummah, it is however linked to the word Ummah, i.e. group, this means that the command is directed to all the Muslims, and what they are commanded to perform is to establish a group that fulfills the qualities required of a group, therefore the meaning of the verse would be: O you Muslims, establish from among yourselves a group that would carry out two duties: The first would be to call to all what is good () and the second would be to enjoin what is good (ma'aruf and forbid what is evil (munkar).

The group or the party which the Muslims are commanded to establish by the verse; "There should be among you," would be the political party, the evidence about this is reflected in the fact that the command in the verse is directed to establishing the group and not to the two actions. The two actions, i.e. the call to khayr and the enjoining of ma'aruf and the forbidding of munkar are an indication of the duties of the group which the Muslims are commanded to establish, therefore they serve to describe the group; and in order for the group to remain worthy of the name group as Allah (SWT) ordered, it should carry out the two duties and continue to do so at all times.

'There are no political parties in Islam' is a Kufr idea

The Western idea of politics and its resultant practice, which is grounded in deception, corruption, and the misuse of power, has poisoned the minds of the Muslim Ummah. The Kuffar advocate political parties in their countries based on their own Kufr ideologies and even impose such puppet parties on our Ummah. The puppets trumpet and spearhead false ideas of "Laa hizb fi al-Islam" (No political parties in Islam). This is a Kufr idea in origin which calls for the separation between Islam and life by keeping Islam away from political activity. They advocate this idea because they know that the only way Islam as a way of life can come back and save the world is by the same way the Prophet (SAW) did it; through a political party.

The party of the Messenger (SAW)

The Sahabah (RA) as a political group, with the Prophet (SAW) as their leader, transformed Islam from an idea believed by a few to an idea which became the basis and structure of a comprehensive and complete way of life.

The issue regarding the existence of at least one party in the Ummah is a vital issue. It was through the help of a party known to us as the Sahabah (RA) that the Prophet (SAW) was able to establish the Islamic State. The role played by this group of the Sahabah (RA) had a lasting and crucial impact on the Ummah.

The functions of the Sahabah [the members of the political party of the Messenger (SAW)]

- They (RA) carried the Da'wa with him (SAW).
- They (RA) kept working with the Prophet (SAW) by helping him take care of the affairs of the Ummah and strengthening the newly formed State.

- They (RA) helped the Ummah face the critical events following the death of the Prophet (SAW) by ensuring the selection of a Khaleefah.
- They (RA) played a major role in quelling the rebellion of the tribes against the Islamic State and those who reverted from Islam by insisting upon enforcing the rules of Allah (SWT). The strong stand by the group of Sahabah (RA) along with the Khaleefah Abu Bakr (RA) saved the Ummah from being fragmented.
- Their existence, and dealing with the critical event of the assassination of the Khaleefah Umar (RA) kept the security of the Ummah from being endangered.

After the death of the Prophet (SAW), the Muslims elected Abu Bakr (RA) as the Khaleefah. One of the first issues he was faced with was a disagreement between Fatimah (RA), daughter of the Prophet (SAW), on receiving inheritance from a piece of land which the Prophet (SAW) owned. Abu Bakr (RA) quoted a Hadith, stating:

"We Prophets do not leave things for inheritance. Whatever we leave is for charity " [Bukhari].

Thus, the matter was resolved. She then suggested to Abu Bakr (RA): "Why don't you give this property under my supervision and I will distribute it the way the Prophet (SAW) used to do". Abu Bakr (RA) said: "If I give you this authority then where is the Khilafah. It is not up to you to act on the behalf of the Ummah. This is my duty".

At that time, Abu Bakr (RA) gathered the Sahabah (RA) and asked them: "Where are you ? Why are you leaving me?". Abu Bakr (RA) was referring to the Sahabah (RA) leaving for new conquered lands. "If you want me to be the Khaleefah you cannot just leave me and go". Thus, Abu Bakr (RA) maintained this group of the Sahabah (RA) with him.

When Umar (RA) became the Khaleefah, he kept this group that had sought to go to the conquered lands, he would grant that person leave for a specified length of time, on the condition of eventual return.

When 'Uthman (RA) became the Khaleefah, he allowed the Sahabah to disperse. For instance, Ibn Masud (RA) went to Kufah and Ibn Umar (RA) stayed in Madinah. Some of them stayed in Madinah. Some of them stayed in Makkah. As a result, the two main groups of Sahabah were either in Kufah or Madinah. The absence of that core group caused the Ummah to fall into chaos and be at the mercy of the mob and Fitnah which led to the assassination of

Khaleefah 'Uthman (RA) and later to the assassination of Ali (RA).

Islamic groups and their crucial role, coupled with their misunderstanding of the meaning of politics in Islam, has caused it to nurture a stigma against political groups or parties.

Definition of the principle: 'The Authority belongs to the Ummah (all Muslims)'

This principle states that the authority belongs to the Ummah which is derived from Allah's (SWT) commands to all the Ummah to abide by Islamic laws to execute many duties such as:

- Abiding only by the Shari'ah:

"So take whatever the Messenger gives you, and refrain from whatever he prohibits you. And fear Allah (SWT), for Allah (SWT) is strict in punishment." [TMQ 59:77 and

"It is not fitting for a believer, man or woman, when a matter has been decided by Allah (SWT) and His Messenger, to have any option about their affair. If any one disobeys Allah (SWT) and His Messenger, he is indeed on a clearly wrong path. " [TMQ 33:36]

- Rejecting non-Islamic (Kufr) laws and systems:

"So judge between them by what Allah (SWT) has revealed, and follow not their desires, but beware of them lest they seduce you away from a part of that which Allah (SWT) has revealed to you. "[TMQ 5:49]

- Establishing the Islamic State (Khilafah):

"Whosoever does not judge by that which Allah (SWT) has revealed, such are disbelievers. "[TMQ 5:44] And:

"But no, by your Lord, they can have no (real)faith until they make you judge in all disputes between them, and find in their souls no reluctance against your decisions, but submit with the fullest submission. " [TMQ 4:657

- Holding the rulers (i.e. the state) countable:

'And do not incline towards, nor depend upon, those who commit oppression, or the Fire will touch you. "[TMQ 11:113], and

'And stop them, for they must be questioned." [TMQ 37:24]

- Carrying Da'wa to the people all over the world:

"Say: This is my way: I call towards Allah (SWT) with sure knowledge, I and whosoever follows me. Glory be to Allah (SWT)! And I am not of the polytheists." [TMQ 12:108], and

"Who is better in speech than he who calls (men) to Allah (SWT), works righteousness, and says, "I am those of who surrender unto Him, " [TMQ 41:33]

- Fighting in the way of Allah (SWT):

"Fight in the way of Allah (SWT), and know that Allah (SWT) hears and knows all things" [TMQ 2:244]

- Ordering what is right and forbidding what is wrong: (right and wrong being defined by the Qur'an and the Sunnah):

"You are the best of Ummah brought forth for mankind. You order what is right and forbid what is wrong. And you believe in Allah (SWT)"[TMQ 3:110]

Those type of duties and many others cannot be implemented by the whole Ummah to relieve her neck from the sin except if she appoints a ruler to implement those duties on behalf of her; by this process the Ummah will transfer her authority to the Khalif.

The essential role of the group to transfer authority from the Ummah to the Khaleefah

The ruler would not acquire the authority with which he exercises the mandatory powers of rule unless the Ummah gave him the pledge of allegiance known as the Bay'ah; this Bay'ah has to be based on mutual consent and free choice. Transferring the Ummah's authority to the Khaleefah does not strip away her authority, rather the authority would manifest itself in the process of holding the rulers accountable, redress their errors and prevent any tyranny to the point of dismissal.

The Islamic political parties would act as the ideal tool that embodies the authority of the Ummah; which in turn is reflected in her right to hold the rulers accountable, and these parties would also serve as evidence of the Ummah's progress. This is so because the Muslim community would be unable to carry out the task of accounting the government bodies in the Islamic state in the absence of political groups. It would also be hard to imagine the Ummah performing the duties discharged by her authority unless Islamic political parties were established. Failing this, the Ummah would resemble the herd driven by the stick of a shepherd who has no sense of direction. That is why the Shari'ah rules derived from the Islamic Aqeedah have structured this, the Ummah's right, and was clearly demonstrated during the bright history of Islam; - it decreed the establishing of the Islamic parties as being a duty of sufficiency upon the Muslim Ummah. Evidence of this is Allah's (SWT) saying:

"There should be among you a band of people inviting to the good, ordering what is right and forbidding what is wrong. They are those who are the successful" [TMQ 3:104]

Holding the rulers (the state) accountable

a) Verily the Islamic ruling system is unique and distinct from all other existing ruling systems in the World, whether on the basis by which it is founded, or in the thoughts and concepts, or in the structure on which it is formed. The Islamic ruling system is not

monarchic like Saudi Arabia, nor is it republican like Iraq, Iran and Sudan, nor is it imperial like in Japan; it is not federal nor a confederation or democratic or a dictatorship; the Islamic ruling system does not approve of nor does it recognize any such systems, for its system is unique, the Khilafah system. It is a system of unity whereby the sovereignty does not belong to a family or an individual, nor does it belong to a people or a party, but the sovereignty is to none but Allah (SWT). Thus the first fundamental basis of the ruling system in Islam states that the sovereignty is to the Shari'ah of Allah (SWT); and this differs from all the conventional (man-made) systems in place all over the World today. In most of these systems the sovereignty is to the people, i.e. the duty of legislation has been left in the hands of the people, for they enjoy the sovereignty, the people in turn select their deputies, they in turn choose a head of state and put to vote all the legislative matters and enact various laws and execute them in lieu of the people, having already secured the consent of the head of state. Therefore, the post of head of state represents the highest executive body, and his mandatory powers may enable him in some cases to override the sovereignty of the people, and he may as a result enforce a rule or a law, while the people would be unable to stop him and unable to change such a law, or unable even to remove him from power.

b) Since man-made laws do not emanate from a unique free standing belief, the possibility of its alteration and readjustment is ever present, for the respect for such law is not deeply rooted in people's creed and sensations. However, in the Islamic Shari'ah the matter differs completely, for the laws and the constitution are derived from the Islamic Aqeedah (doctrine) which the Ummah embraces and aspires to safeguard, and ensures they are implemented throughout all walks of life. Any law and any concept that does not emanate from the Aqeedah would be considered invalid, and would have no value whatsoever if we were to maintain the sovereignty of the Shari'ah of Allah (SWT). Despite all this, Islam has laid down the Shari'ah rules in order to curb any excess or abuse of power by the ruler or the governing bodies, thus, safeguarding the Shari'ah's sovereignty. These regulations have been clearly reflected in the fact that Islam has given the Ummah the right to hold the rulers accountable for all their actions; it has also made it an obligation of sufficiency upon the Ummah; this obligation necessitates the founding of a group from among the Muslims, it commands the Ummah to establish political parties and groups to carry out the duty of holding the rulers accountable and to convey the Islamic Message to humankind as well as enjoining what is good (ma'ruf) and forbidding what is evil (munkar). Islam has also made the obedience to the rulers strictly dependent in turn on their obedience and adherence to the Islamic law, i.e. the Shari'ah, and made the whole of the ruling body, including the Khaleefah who is the head of state, subjected and answerable to the Islamic judicial system. Despite this conception of the Shari'ah restrictions (curbs) that Islam has laid down to safeguard Allah (SWT)'s rule and sovereignty, whereby the ruler would not transgress the limits of Shari'ah. However, it would be hard, if not impossible, to imagine the successful implementation of such restrictions in the absence of the rule by what Allah (SWT) has revealed. Therefore, the establishing of at least one group working towards reestablishing Allah (SWT)'s Shari'ah becomes a duty.

c) The fundamental duty of the ruler is to manage the affairs of the Ummah, for he is appointed exclusively to perform this duty, and it is forbidden for anyone else to take up his mandatory powers whether a Khaleefah exists or not. If the Khaleefah himself neglected this duty, he should then be held accountable, and this would be a duty of sufficiency upon the Muslims; it is therefore the Ummah's duty to supervise the Khaleefah's actions, and to condemn any mismanagement or abuse of powers and duties.

Imam Muslim reported in his Sahih, chapter 12 - page 244, on the authority of Umm Salma that the Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: "There will be Amirs, some you will acknowledge and others you will disown, he who acknowledges is innocent, and he who disowns is safe, as for he who consents

and follows [they are the sinful]. They said: Do we not fight them? He (SAW) said: No, as long as they performed Salat. "

In other words as long as they establish the rule, for Salat is in fact tantamount to supplication and tantamount to the rule.

Al-Bayhaqi also reported in his book entitled Al-Sunan Al-Kubra, chapter 8, pages 157158 on the authority of Abu Hurayra relating that: The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said:

"There will be after me Khulafa' who will act upon what they know, and perform what they are ordered, the after them will come other Khulafa' who will act without knowledge, and perform what they have not been ordered, and he who disowns himself from them is relieved from the sin, and he who brings them to the Book is safe, but those who consents and follows them [are sinful]."

This means that he who recognizes the evil (munkar) should change it, and he who is not capable of changing it but in his heart condemns it, he is safe. Therefore, all the Muslims are obliged to hold the ruler accountable and reproach him if he erred; they would be sinful if they consented and followed the ruler's actions, which should be disowned and struggled against. The fact that the Ummah holds the ruler accountable does not in any way contradict the obligation of obeying him; this is so because the obedience to the ruler comes only in matters that are good, i.e. in ma'ruf, and if the ruler went astray and contravened the Shari'ah, he should not be obeyed; the Ummah in this case would even be sinful to obey him; for there is no obedience to the created when it entails disobeying the Creator. Islam has been the leading system when it comes to reproaching or accounting the rulers, to the point where it has called for their confrontation by physical means if necessary; Islam considers he who dies as a result of holding the rulers accountable, as a result of committing a flagrant act of disbelief, as being a martyr; for the Prophet (SAW) has emphasized so in the following Hadith:

"The master of the Shaheed (martyrs) is Hamza and a man who is killed for accounting the ruler " [Muslim]

The need for an Islamic political party today

Today, problems of grave proportions face the Ummah unlike any other time it faced throughout its history. Our deen given to us by Allah (SWT) along with the responsibility of ensuring its implementation, has ceased to exist in practice. The authority of Islam, which was established by the migration of the Prophet (SAW), has been demolished for over 70 years by the dissolution of the Khilafah in 1924. Consequently, the objective of the Islamic groups today must be to reestablish the political entity which applies Islam (Khilafah) and to insulate the Ummah from any call of deviation and corruption. As was the destruction of the Islamic State, the Khilafah, an earth shattering calamity upon the Muslim Ummah, let the reestablishing of the Khilafah shatter the corruption spread all over the earth.

Participating in bringing Islam back into life's affairs is a great opportunity for all Muslims

Muslims and the rest of humanity are living in difficult times. Yet, it is at this time that a great opportunity for all Muslims exists. It is a time to participate in bringing Islam back into life's affairs as was done by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his Sahabah (RA) . This is an opportunity that will never come again because the Prophet (SAW) has prophesied that a time will come when the Khilafah is reestablished on the model of Prophethood until the end of time

Participation in this effort means winning the same honor that the Sahabah (RA) won

The establishing of the Islamic State is the duty which was fulfilled only once, which was by the noble Prophet (SAW) and his companions (RA) and nobody else has been honored to participate with this duty since, this is because of the continuous presence of the Islamic state until her destruction in 1924.

So the participation in this effort means winning the same honor that the Sahabah (RA) won by working with the Prophet (SAW). By giving support to establish Islam means liberating people from Kufr (oppressed) systems. The uniting of the Ummah under the flag of Islam and subsequently the whole world, means winning the ultimate reward of acquiring the pleasure of Allah (SWT) and Jannah (eternal paradise).

However, abandoning the Khilafah as our foremost priority means distancing ourselves from that sweet reward, and gaining the wrath of Allah (SWT) and hellfire, because it is like one who refuses to join the Prophet (SAW) in his call to establish Islam. The call for this cause is the same call for which the Prophet (SAW) was summoned to. He who answers it wins all, and he who turns it down loses all. Have we answered this call? It is a question that each and every one of us who lives through this crucial time will have to answer on the Day of Judgment!

"O you who believe, answer the call of Allah (SWT) and His Messenger when He calls you to that which gives you life. " [TMQ 8:24]

Some other subjects relevant to this topic also need to be dealt with in a similar manner, some of these subjects are listed below:

- Islam's ruling on the disputes and differences between these parties, their causes and the means to cure them.
- What the difference is between the terms firqah (sect), jama'ah (group) and madhab (school of thought) ?
- Do the above mentioned verses r apply to these parties and groups?
- Do the following verses apply to these parties and groups or to the schools of thought (madhab), or to the sect (firqah)?

"And be not of those who ascribe (partners to Him). - Those who split up their deen, and become (mere) sects each party delighting in but what they themselves hold!" [TMQ 30:3 1 -32]

'As for those who divide their deen and break up into sects, you have no part in them in the least. Their affair is with Allah (SWT): He will in the end tell them the truth of all that they did," [TMQ 6:159]

"Verily, this is My Way leading straight: follow it. Follow not other paths: they will scatter you about from His Path," [TMQ 6:153]

All these questions will be answered in next issue of Khilafah Magazine, insha'Allah.