

Working collectively

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Question: Do you hold that the basis of the concept of “collective work” today is an innovation and haraam (forbidden), or does your criticism (of it) include (only) the errors made in its implementation?

Answer: Shaykh al-Albaanee (رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ)¹: No, there are no grounds for condemning collective work, so long as it is not accompanied by tahazzub (partisanship, i.e. to that group). Working collectively is comprised in numerous verses of the Qur’aan:

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَكُوْنُوْا مَعَ الصّٰدِقِيْنَ

O You who believe! Be afraid of Allaah, and be with those who are true (in words and deeds)²

وَلَا تَحْضُرُوْا عَلٰى طَعَامِ الْمِسْكِيْنَ

And urge not one another on the feeding of al-Miskeen (the poor)! [al-Fajr 89:18]

وَتَعَاوَنُوْا عَلٰى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوٰى

Help you one another in al-Birr and at-Taqwa (virtue, righteousness and piety); but do not help one another in sin and transgression and fear Allaah³

So this type of collective cooperation (mentioned in the above verse) cannot be forsaken in the general sense, for Islaam is based on this type of cooperation. However, the phenomenon that has appeared in present days, in which there is a deviation away from this goal of helping one another in goodness and fearing of Allaah, is that much tahazzub (partisanship) and ta’assub (fanaticism) has mixed into it.

And this is to the point that it has become something tolerated and readily accepted by many of the callers, such as piling up and amassing all in the name of partisanship. We know that Allaah, in many Qur’aanic verses, has forbidden holding partisanship and fanaticism to a (specific) group or a party that has its own specific agenda and methodology. And if this agenda and this methodology are not in conformity with the Sunnah, from every aspect, the partisanship, in these days, becomes a sect, which represents what the Prophet, (صلى الله عليه وسلم), warned of in some ahaadeeth regarded as his explanation and an elaboration of Allaah's saying:

وَلَا تَكُوْنُوْا مِنْ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ ﴿٥٠﴾ مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ فَرَقُوْا دِيْنََهُمْ وَكَانُوْا شِيْعًا كُلُّ حِزْبٍ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ فَرِحُوْنَ

¹ (رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah have mercy on him

² Soorah at-Taubah [09:119]

³ Soorah al-Maa'idah [05:02]

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And be not of al-Mushrikoon (the disbelievers In the Oneness of Allah, polytheists, idolaters, etc.). Of those who split up their religion (i.e. who left the true Islaamic Monotheism), and became sects, [i.e. they invented new things in the religion (bid'ah), and followed their vain desires], each sect rejoicing in that which is with it⁴

It is well known to every Muslims the vast amount of groups that are spread all over the Islaamic world today. And that each group has its own agenda and methodology. And these groups are in conflict with one another and hold hatred and enmity for one another. This is contrary to the objective of working and coming together in Islaam. Each group has its own methodology and its own leader. And every group has its own followers. All of these groups do not come together with one another. Without a doubt, this (understanding) is what is contained in the generality of the previous verse: **"And be not from among the polytheists – from those who divided their Religion and became sects – every group being pleased with what it has with it."**⁵

To summarise: Joining together and working together, in working for the Islaam that the Messenger, (صلى الله عليه وسلم), was upon, is an obligatory matter. No two people will disagree in this regard, nor will two goats ram into one another over it, as it is commonly said. Rather, the foundation of the Muslims will never be established nor will the (true) Islaamic society ever become a reality, nor will the Islaamic state ever be founded, except with the likes of this collective effort and working together. However, its condition is that it must not be done with fanaticism to one particular individual or group apart from another. Rather, the fanaticism and enthusiasm should be for Allaah with regard to what has been reported on Allaah and His Messenger, (صلى الله عليه وسلم), and it should be done upon the methodology of the Salaf as-Saalih (righteous predecessors).

⁴ Soorah ar-Room [30:31-32]

⁵ Soorah ar-Room [30:31-32]