

Section 2: Imposing belief

Islam has decreed that cooperation of different Islamic sects with one another must only be through friendly and logical discussions, more so with non-Muslims:

ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ
{أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ}

"Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good advice and dispute with them in a manner that is best. Indeed your Lord knows best those who stray from His way, and He knows best those who are guided." [1](#)

And He also remarks:

وَلَا تُجَادِلُوا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ وَقُولُوا آمَنَّا بِالَّذِي أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَأُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَإِلَهُنَا
{وَإِلَهُكُمْ وَاحِدٌ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ}

"Do not dispute with the people of the Book except in a manner which is best, barring such of them as are wrongdoers, and say, 'We believe in that which has been sent down to us and has been sent down to you; our God and your God is one (and the same), and to Him do we submit.'"2 [2](#)

Islam does not permit anyone to address the opposing faction by titles such as "ignorant polytheists", "enemies of God", "enemies of Tawheed (monotheism)"; to consider oneself as the axis of Islam, and to strike all and sundry with allegations of disbelief and polytheism, an act done ferociously in most of the books published by this community.

All Muslims share common principles in Islamic teachings and beliefs, and all the Islamic scholars, despite deviating interpretations of certain principles, share common doctrines in canonical matters.

These differences in opinion should not cause disputes, frays and bloodshed; they should rather, through logical reasoning and proper dialogue and discourse, harmonise ways of thinking.

The fanatic Wahhabis (the Salafis) oppose this logical and fair Islamic rationale. They believe that they must enforce their perceptions in polytheistic and monotheistic matters (*Shirk and Tawhid*) on others, even if it is achieved by bloodshed and plundering of property, proofs of which are present in the books of the founders of this faith.

When we tell their scholars that if you are erudite, we are also erudite and we are more educated than you, and have authored more books than you have. If you are clergymen (*Mujtahid*) [3](#) we are too clergymen, the scholars in Al-Azhar and the seminaries of Damascus, Jordan and other countries have many clergymen amongst them. Why should others be compelled to accept your beliefs (on the issue of Monotheism and Polytheism) which are undoubtedly flawed in our view? They insist that what they say is Islam!!

What is their advantage over other Islamic scholars that they intend to enforce their belief on them, and why do they beat others with lashes?! They have no logical answer.

Apparently they assume they sit on the peak of knowledge and piety and everybody else has fallen into the abyss of ignorance.

This is something that nobody favors in today's world and there is no place for it amongst the Muslims. It is for this reason that we claim they are at the end of their term in this world.

[A Bitter Memory!](#)

I cannot forget the first years of being blessed to visit the house of God, when I saw a very strange scene in Medina that left me deeply pondering. A group called "*The Commanders to virtue*" (from the fanatic Wahhabis) with long beards had surrounded the Prophet's (S) shrine. Each one was holding a whip in hand and anybody who approached the shrine of the Prophet (S) to kiss it was whipped and told:

"This sepulchre is nothing more than a piece of iron and wood, what you are doing is Shirk! (Polytheism)." [4](#)

They did not realise that no rational being kisses wood and iron for being wood or iron, rather, such conduct is a symbolic act for expressing devotion, love and passion towards the owner of the grave, just as all Muslims, including the Wahhabis themselves, kiss the cover of the Holy Quran whether it is made of leather, cardboard, cloth or wood.

Is the expression of love and devotion for the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet (S) shirk? No logic and rationale agrees with such belief.

All the people in the world kiss the flag of their country and show respect to it. Is their intention to express devotion towards a worthless piece of cloth which was part of a bolt, a piece of which has become a flag and the rest turned into shirts and trousers? Certainly not! Their aspiration is to show respect to the independence of their country and that is an exemplification of patriotism.⁵ Is there someone who considers respect towards his homeland and soil as Shirk?!

Interesting is that all the Wahhabis show respect towards *Hajar-ul-Aswad* (the Black stone) and kiss it. When we say: this is nothing but a stone and our destiny does not lie in its hands, they reply: "The Holy Prophet (S) used to kiss it so we follow his tradition and kiss it!"

We say: Do you mean that the Holy Prophet (S) gave you permission to commit Shirk (Polytheism), and this is an exception so it is a kind of permissible Shirk (polytheism), or rather kissing it is not Shirk?

They Remain Silent For They Have No Answer

We proclaim that all of you kiss the "cover of the Quran" and regard this as a permissible act of respect. What is a piece of leather and cardboard worth that you kiss it?

They reply: The intention is to express affection and respect towards the Quran!

We say: Is this not considered to be Shirk?

They reply: The companions of the Holy Prophet (S) used to kiss the Quran.⁶

We say: Has His Holiness (S) given you permission to become polytheists? Even though it is impossible for the cause of polytheism to encounter an exception:

{إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا}

"Indeed Allah does not forgive that any partner should be ascribed to Him, but He forgives anything besides that to whomever He wishes. And whoever ascribes partners to Allah has indeed fabricated [a lie] in great sinfulness." ⁷

The annulment of Shirk (polytheism) is purely a rational decree which does not allow exception. They have no answer to offer. In short, they are submerged in a vortex of contradictions.

The Main Duty Of The Custodians Of The House Of God

The Holy Places and the Sacred House of God belong to all the Muslims of the world:

جَعَلَ اللَّهُ الْكَعْبَةَ الْيَبُوتَ الْحَرَامَ قِيَامًا لِلنَّاسِ وَالشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ وَالْهَدْيَ وَالْقَلَائِدَ ذَلِكَ لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِيهِ

{السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ}

"Allah has made the Ka'bah, the sacred House, a [means of] sustenance for mankind, and [also] the sacred month, the offering and the garlands, so that you may know that Allah knows whatever there is in the heavens and whatever there is in the earth, and that Allah has knowledge of all things." [8](#)

Every individual from near and remote should benefit equally from the house of God;

{...سَوَاءٌ الْعَاكِفُ فِيهِ وَالْبَادِ...}

"The native and the visitor are equal therein." [9](#)

Thus the responsibility of the custodians of the House of Ka'bah is only to establish order and security and provide the required facilities to the pilgrims, **not to designate this Islamic centre as a base for preaching their creed and enforcing their beliefs on others.**

They have no right to enforce on the pilgrims their specific perceptions on Islamic matters which oppose the knowledge (*Ijtihad*) [10](#) and conceptions of the scholars of other countries. Even in the era of Ignorance [11](#) the job of the custodians was nothing more than what is referred to in the Holy Quran; providing water to Hajj pilgrims and the maintenance of the Holy Mosque:

{...أَجْعَلْتُمْ سِقَايَةَ الْحَاجِّ وَعِمَارَةَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ...}

"Do you regard the providing of water to hajj pilgrims and the maintenance of the Holy Mosque..." [12](#)

Therefore if the scholars of this region have a particular view on the issue of Tawheed (Monotheism), they have no right to enforce their belief on others, especially when other great Muslim scholars consider these perceptions as invalid. For example this group regards as blasphemy [13](#) the "seeking of intercession" [14](#) from the Messenger of God (S) inferring that he intercedes for the servants whereas, others note this as perfect Tawheed. Often they regard something as Heresy while others consider it a tradition.

The Wahhabis, nor any other group, has the right to impose their thoughts and perceptions on others. I stress this point: they must only deal with the order, security and maintenance of this holy place, not designate it to a centre for preaching their creed, and it is interesting that the king of Saudi Arabia deems himself as the '**Servant of the Two Holy Shrines**' not the '**ruler of the Two Holy Shrines**'. How come the scholars of the Salafi (extremists) Wahhabis regard themselves as the '**rulers of the Two**

Shrines"[15](#) even though they believe that obedience to their Rulers"[16](#) is compulsory for them.

Of course, they must prevent acts that are prohibited according to the consensus of the scholars of Islam. In brief, the enforcement of thought by a small group who are on a lower level of knowledge, on the majority of the Muslims is not rationally acceptable. However, the fanatic Salafies use the worse kinds of methods to impose their ideology upon the pilgrims, which is very unfortunate.

The Worse Form Of Imposing Belief!

The fanatic Wahhabis have recently written some books rejecting some of the Islamic creeds and distributed them amongst the pilgrims. They are books with indecent language and obscene terminology, containing all sorts of lies and slander, accusing others of polytheism (shirk) and blasphemy. This is in a state where if only one logical and polite answer was written to these hideous books, it was practically impossible for them to allow the publication of even one edition of those books.

Is this the meaning signified in the following Holy Verse?

{...فَبَشِّرْ عِبَادِ * الَّذِينَ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقَوْلَ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ أَحْسَنَهُ...}

"So give good news to my servants- who listen to the word [of Allah] and follow the best [sense] of it." [17](#)

It is clear that such a creed with such a culture has no place in today's world where respect towards other people's beliefs, according to intellectuals, is of significant value. This very fact has prepared the grounds for the isolation and fall of this creed, because no Muslim can tolerate allegations of being polytheists and infidels, that the custodians of the House of God openly declare them as.

The Prophet's (S) shrine and the graves in *Baq'* belong to all Muslims and their guardians are only responsible for establishing order and security, providing the required facilities and preventing that which is against the consensus of all Muslims, and nothing more.

They must respect the beliefs of all Muslims of the world and refrain from profanity and disparaging remarks about their sacred adherence and not over extend themselves, as neither God nor the Servant of God (S) are pleased with that nor has this act any laudable aftermath.

The secure Abode of God must remain secure at all costs. What sort of security is that when *non-Wahhabi Muslims* put a foot forward and back they must be accused of blasphemy!?

I can never forget my first visit to the House of God, when I saw a group of Muslims from different countries wanting to kiss the rostrum of the Prophet (S) and enraged the police. One agent of the *"instructors to virtue"* stood and uttered this profanity:

"I swear to God that it is permissible to attack this group with the sword (and shed their blood!)" [18](#)

What is the difference?! You kiss the cover of the Holy Quran and they kiss the rostrum that was for years the position of guidance and indoctrination of the Holy Prophet (S) of Islam. Why do you issue the decree for their murder and not for your own followers?!

You consider this act as heresy [19](#) but yours as a rite [20](#). Now we understand why the Taliban and Al-Qa'idah, who are the same extremist Wahhabis, killed in just one explosion one hundred and fifty innocent people and cause injury to three hundred, amongst which are children, infants, women and the elderly in Najaf (two years ago). These are the painful and bitter results of misguided ways of thinking which has damaged the image of Islam in the world and has made their foothold insecure, even in the Saudi kingdom, which has been their place of origin.

Can such an ideology survive?!

[The Intellectual And Moderate Wahhabis](#)

Recently some trends towards moderation and signals of reappraisal of past ideas have been seen from both the Saudi government and from some intellectual Wahhabi scholars. This trend is extremely firmfooted, so, it is hoped dialogue and discourse will soon replace dispute, war, dissension, slander and accusations of blasphemy and polytheism. Although this has not yet become a universal practice but numerous cases indicate the budding of this auspicious sapling.

The news received is that some of the Shia clerics of the Hijaz (Saudi Arabia) have sat for dialogue with some of the moderate Wahhabi scholars and their declarations broadcasted in some of the public media. This is exactly what the fanatical Wahhabis consider as blasphemy and heresy and are so angry about. They deem it the decline of their convoluted system of Islam, whereas, if this amicable rule of conduct, that orders Muslims to "*discuss in a manner which is best*" [21](#), becomes universal, Islam will get rid of the aggressivists and the ground will be paved for the true image of Islam to take root in the world, an Islam in which logic, reason and friendly discussion will replace excommunication, insult, bloodshed and plunder, and Islam in the Hejaz will return to its true path.

A group of moderate writers of this country have traversed this route mounting their pens. For instance a scholar by the name *Yousef-ibn-Alav* [22](#) has recently authored a book titled "*Ideas- that Need to be Re-examined and Corrected*" [23](#).

This book is regarded as one of the wonders of its kind and we hope to explore it, God willing, at the end of this book.

[1.](#) – Surah Al-Nahl 16:125.

[2.](#) – Surah Ankabut 29:46.

[3.](#) – (مجتهد) A clergyman practicing religious jurisprudence, who has the authority to deduce religious rulings from divine law.

4. - (هذا حديد هذا خشب و هذا شرك!).
5. Safinat-ul-Bihar (سفينة البحار), under the root word وطن (homeland), it is reported in a tradition from Imam Ali (A) that he said: The prosperity of nation states is through the love towards homelands (عَمَرْتُ الْبُلْدَانَ بِحُبِّ الْأَوْطَانِ) Mizan-ul-Hikmah, Volume 4, page 3566. In the course of prophet's immigration from Mekkah to Medina a seemly tradition has been reported in al-Dor-ul-Manthoor (الدر المنثور) Volume 1, page 300.
6. - In the Kuwaiti Encyclopedia, under root word Taqbil (تقبيل) we read: it is prominent amongst the Hanbalies (حنابلة) and also Hanafies (حنفية) that kissing of the Quran is permissible and it is narrated from Omar that he kissed the Quran every morning and it is also narrated from Othman that he used to kiss the Quran and wipe it on his face.
7. - Surah Nisa 4:48.
8. - Surah Ma'idah 5:97.
9. - Surah Hajj 22:25.
10. - اجتهاد.
11. - عصر الجاهلية.
12. - Surah Tawbah 9: 19.
13. - كفر.
14. - شفاعة.
15. - حاكم الحرمين.
16. - ولاية الأمر.
17. - Surah Zumar 39: 17 & 18.
18. - والله يجوز قتال هؤلاء بالسيف.
19. - بدعة.
20. - سنة.
21. - جدال بالتي هي أحسن.
22. - Yousef-ibn-Alavi is one of the respected and influential scholars of Mekkah who had a large seminary and has recently passed away. He has authored different kinds of books which have attracted the attention of many researchers, amongst them is the book "Ideas" (مفاهيم).
23. - مفاهيم يجب ان تصحح.

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