

## Becoming an Ummah that Gives Life to the World

The 28th of Rajab 1342 AH (March 3, 1924 CE) did not only mean the abolition of the Khilafah and replacing it with a new form/forms of governance. The removal of this governing system that merged out from Islam, that was Islam itself, teared the single body of Muslims in tens of pieces - 57 pieces today. That made them vulnerable and defenceless to all forms of oppression, exploitation, killings, and slavery. With the removal of the Khilafah, the Muslim Ummah became inflicted with differences, disputes, and disagreements just like the Ummahs before them, leaving them incapable of seeing, understanding, thinking, planning, setting goals, taking actions, and defending themselves against attacks as a single Ummah can do. They surely feel connected to each other in their sentiments, yet the discrepancies in their ideas and politics disables them from holding onto each other. The number of Muslim individuals increases day by day. However, they lost their belonging and a safe roof under which they belong. We hear that especially from the Muslims in Gaza, and Muslims oppressed elsewhere: **“Where is the Ummah?!”**

It is true; today the word “Ummah” is on everyone’s lips. Unfortunately, it is not possible to truly become an Ummah without the awareness about the difference between the primitive concept of a nation and the superior, vital Islamic concept of the “Ummah”.

The word “Ummah” comes from the root "أمم" which carries meanings such as “to intend, to aim towards, claim, lead, blaze the trail, pull ahead of a community, to motivate and manage”. [Ibn Manzûr, Kāmusu’l-Muhîṭ).

Linked to that, our Lord states: **﴿وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا﴾** **“And so We have made you believers *Ummatan WASATAN* so that you may be witnesses over humanity and that the Messenger may be a witness over you.”** [Al-Baqara:143]... Our Lord used the word ‘WASATAN’ together with the word “Ummah” in this ayah, consolidating its meaning and purpose. In Arabic the word وَسَط (wasat) can be summarized as “the centre/middle where value, strength, and beauty are gathered.” Whereby the centre is always the peak! Thus, the ability to be the most valuable, the most just, and the most virtuous is the essential element that qualifies the Islamic Ummah to be a “witness” over all mankind. The Islamic Ummah, just like the peak of the highest mountain – **وسط الجبل (wasat al-jabal)**- which is noticeable and draws attention even from far away, which is the most prominent, the most distinguished, and the highest point around, has always been and continuously is before the eyes of all mankind, and is its guide.

Likewise, the most respected and most honourable person or branch of a community or tribe has been called **وسط القوم (wasatu qawmihi)** “the Wasat of his people,” meaning “the most noble, the most eminent.” Our Lord has made this quality a title unique to the Islamic Ummah by saying: **﴿كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ﴾** **“You are the best nation brought forth for mankind...”** [Aal-i ‘Imran:110]. In the continuation of the verse, He (swt) ties this distinction to the condition **﴿تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ﴾** **“...you enjoin what is right, forbid what is wrong, and believe in Allah”** [Āal-i ‘Imrān:110] and to the duty of being an “imam” (leader), which is derived from the same root as the word “ummaḥ.”

As the “imam” is the leader who brings people together and unites them, the community of people formed around this leader is also called an “ummaḥ.” In that context, an **ummaḥ is a conscious/deliberate community gathered around a leader for a specific purpose.**

To consciously gather around a particular leader for a defined purpose means to unite upon an idea, an ideology - a deen- that ensures integrity/unity. It is Allah (swt) Himself, who explains that unity as an ummah is only possible through the deen - that is, upon an ideological system of life.

Accordingly, in the Noble Qur'an used the word "ummah" also as a synonym for the word "deen." For example, in verses 22 and 23 of Surah Az-Zukhruf, our Lord says: ﴿وَكَذَلِكَ مَا أَرْسَلْنَا ﴿٢٢﴾ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِّنْ نَّذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَا إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم مُّقْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ **"No! Rather, they say: 'Indeed, we found our fathers upon an UMMAH (deen, way of life, ideology), and we are following in their footsteps.' And similarly, We did not send before you any warner into a city except that its affluent said: 'Indeed, we found our forefathers gathered upon an UMMAH (deen, way of life, ideology), and surely we are following in their footsteps.'"** [Az-Zukhruf: 22-23].

Allah (swt) informed us that although He created humanity as a single ummah, but the people fell into اختلاف (division and dispute) by following their own desires, deviating from the path that Allah showed them and denying the prophets who were sent to them as warners and callers to the truth from their Lord - thus they became divided and fragmented. : ﴿وَمَا كَانَ ﴿١٩﴾ النَّاسُ إِلَّا أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً فَاخْتَلَفُوا﴾ **"And mankind was not but one community [united in deen], but [then] they differed."** [Yunus: 19].

While the word "ummah" conveys unity, cohesion, homogeneity, and a social structure with minimal internal conflict, "ikhtilāf" denotes separation, conflict, and divergence. For this reason, Allah (swt) has defined the conscious purpose of the Islamic Ummah as worshipping Him alone: ﴿إِنَّ هَذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُون﴾ **"Indeed this, your Deen, is one Deen, and I am your Lord, so worship Me."** [Al-Anbiya: 92].

And in order to prevent it from falling into division by straying away from servitude to Him, like mankind did at the beginning, He (swt) commanded as follows: ﴿وَإِنَّ هَذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاتَّقُون﴾ **"And indeed this, your Deen, is one Deen, and I am your Lord, so fear Me!"** [Al-Mu'minun: 52].

**Is this verse not the one that most clearly explains the darkneses in which Muslims find themselves today?** Muslims, regardless of their number, should live as a single community, as one body, and act as one body. This is not merely a necessity for survival, but a command from Allah. **Anything else leads to humiliation in this world and the Hereafter.** Undoubtedly, there is only one Lord (Rabb) who can truly discipline and guide humanity. As Allah is Al-Jabbār (The All Compelling), Al-Malik (The King), Al-Hakeem (The Judge of the Judges), the Owner and Reformer/Improver, the Ruler, the sole sovereign authority - He is the only Rabb! Only the Rabb of the heavens, the earth, and all worlds is capable of disciplining all of humanity because He is Al-Qawiyy (The All-Strong). This is what we testified when taking the oath of "La ilahe illallah". However, instead of placing our trust in Allah -the Rabb of the worlds, who disciplines and governs all the rules and systems of life- we have been doomed to fragmentation through puppet rulers who fear not Allah's power, might, or wrath, but rather the international laws, regulations, and forces that preserve the national borders set up by fleeting, colonial, kufr (disbelieving) powers for their own capitalist survival. It is these puppets who today leave Muslims disconnected, disembodied, abandoned, and without a sense of belonging. Instead of having Taqwa, i.e., fearing Allah, they fear everyone and everything except Allah: America, Europe, China, and so on. These spineless, characterless leaders divide us into easily digestible pieces for the insatiable, ravenous monsters. Yet, the Messenger of Allah (saw) warned us against this very outcome:

The Prophet (saw) said: «يُوشِكُ الْأُمَمُ أَنْ تَدَاعَى عَلَيْكُمْ كَمَا تَدَاعَى الْأَكَلَةُ إِلَى قَصْعَتِهَا». فَقَالَ قَائِلٌ: وَمِنْ قَلِيلٍ نَحْنُ يَوْمَئِذٍ؟ قَالَ: «بَلْ أَنْتُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ كَثِيرٌ وَلَكِنَّكُمْ غَتَاءٌ كَغَتَاءِ السَّيْلِ وَلَيَنْزِعَنَّ اللَّهُ مِنْ صُدُورِ عَدُوِّكُمْ الْمَهَابَةَ مِنْكُمْ وَلَيَقْذِفَنَّ اللَّهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمُ الْوَهْنَ». «The people will soon summon one another to attack you as people when eating invite others to share their dish.» Someone asked: “Will that be because of our small numbers at that time?” He replied: “No, you will be numerous at that time; but you will be foam and rubbish like that carried down by a torrent, and Allah will take fear of you from the breasts of your enemy and last WAHN into your hearts.” Someone asked: “What is wahn?” The Messenger of Allah (saw) replied: “Love of the world and dislike of death.” (Abu Dawood)

When Muslims prioritized fear of the created over the fear of Allah (taqwa), Allah removed the fear of Muslims from the hearts of the disbelievers. Now they oppress anywhere in the world as they wish, commit genocides, and even show no mercy toward their own kind. They start wars across the globe at will, stir enmity under the banner of nationalism, and, as if that were not enough, divide humanity even further through racism. Since there is no Islamic Ummah to oppose them or break their power, they are able to unleash their savage teeth and claws anywhere in the world at any time. Those who impose nationalism as a supreme value can now cross the borders of other nations and conduct military operations, even abduct a country’s leader at will and replace him with someone of their own choosing. The colonial disbelievers hold nothing in their hands that could possibly unite mankind in harmony, peace, prosperity, and justice, nor do they have such a goal, because any form of unity is a threat to their survival. «تَحْسَبُهُمْ جَمِيعًا وَقُلُوبُهُمْ شَتَّى ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ» **“You think they are united, but their hearts are diverse. That is because they are a people who do not reason.”** [Al-Hashr: 14].

But it is Allah, the Rabb of the worlds, who is capable of uniting all religions, languages, and races under a safe, just, and prosperous roof! It is Allah who once united through Islam even the hearts of those who were enemies to become leaders in the world upon justice and morality, to become the Ummatan Wasatan: «وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَى شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ» **“And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided. And remember the favour of Allah upon you - when you were enemies and He brought your hearts together and you became, by His favour, brothers. And you were on the edge of a pit of the Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus does Allah make clear to you His verses that you may be guided.”** [Aali-Imran: 103].

Nationalism, chauvinism, racism, and sectarianism have only made people enemies of one another. For this reason, simply being a Muslim is not sufficient enough. The number of Muslims, whether few or many, also means nothing on its own. «كَمْ مِنْ فِئَةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ غَلَبَتْ فِئَةً كَثِيرَةً بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ» **“How often, by Allah’s will, has a small force vanquished a big one?”** [Al-Baqarah: 249].

This means that the most important criterion for escaping the darkness is firstly to be a Muslim, and then to unite with other Muslims into a single body, which is the **Islamic Ummah**. However, to achieve that in accordance with the meaning of the word “ummah” and the command of the following verse, there must exist a community that guides and leads by example the others along the way outlined by Allah and exemplified in the model of the Messenger (saw): «وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ» **“And let there be [arising] from you an UMMAH (community, Jamaa) inviting to [all that is] good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be the successful.”** [Aal-i Imran: 104].

That means, in order to attain the salvation promised by Allah, there must be a special community that leads the entire Muslim society. The most distinctive characteristic of this community is that it calls to goodness (khayr - to Islam and the commands of Allah), enjoins what is right and forbids what is wrong - that is, it calls to the Shar'ī rulings. Enjoining good and forbidding evil must first and foremost be directed toward the rulers, for uniting and sustaining the Ummah of Muhammad solely upon the Deen of Allah, governing the affairs of Muslims according to Islam, and delivering all the goodness of Islam to them, protecting them against the enemies of Islam and the Muslims, and conveying the justice and light of Islam to all nations of the world - actually are all the responsibilities of the ruler.

The first duty that a community committed to Islam must fulfil today is to establish the leader of the Ummah, for the "imam" is the one who unites and integrates. Without an imam, unity is not possible. Muslims who cannot unite are unable to fulfil their duties as an Ummah, nor can they attain the title and honor that Allah has deemed worthy for them. The name of the Ummah's leader is the Khalifah (Caliph). This is expressed by the Messenger of Allah (saw) in the hadith mentioned above and in many other Ahadith, also was practiced by the Noble Companions and, after them, by the Muslims for centuries. The Khalifah rules solely and exclusively by the system of Allah, knowing that anything else would sever the Ummah from the rope of Allah, and therefore he gives no room whatsoever to anything outside of Islam. And there is only one Khalifah! It is absolutely impermissible for the ONE Ummah, which must not be divided by nationalism or sectarianism, to be split under more than one Khalifah - even if they claim to govern by Islam.

Abu Said al-Khudri (ra) narrated that the Prophet (saw) said, **«إِذَا بُويعَ لِخَلِيفَتَيْنِ فَأَقْتُلُوا الْآخَرَ مِنْهُمَا»** **“When the Bayah has been taken for two Khaleefahs, kill the latter of them.”** [Muslim]

So therefore, as community from among yourselves and upon Islam, Hizb ut Tahrir invites all Muslims to establish this leadership that will bring dignity for the Muslims and salvation (falah) for all of mankind. It calls all Muslims to join their hands on this noble Dawah - the crown of all obligations.

**O Muslims! As much as we as Muslims are in eager need of the Khilafah under the leadership of a Khalifah, the entirety of mankind is in eager need of our leadership.** If we are ONE again, if we hold fast on the rope of Allah again, we can become the Ummah that gives life to the world. If we work solely on the way that the Messenger of Allah (saw) has showed us, upon the Method of Prophethood, without fearing anyone else but Allah, and establish the Khilafah Rashidah System (the rightly guided system of Khilafah ruling), then all - we, the entire mankind, the clouds in the sky, the soil on the earth, the mountains and rocks, the fresh waters and salty waters - will come to life again.

Allah's Messenger (saw) said: **«لَيَبْلُغَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرُ مَا بَلَغَ اللَّيْلُ وَالنَّهَارُ وَلَا يَتْرُكُ اللَّهُ بَيْتَ مَدْرٍ وَلَا وَبَرَ إِلَّا أَنْخَلَهُ»** **“There will not remain on the face of the earth a mud-brick house or a camel's hair tent which Allah will not cause the confession of Islam to enter bringing both mighty honour and abject abasement. Allah will either honour the occupants and put them among its adherents, or will humiliate them and they will be subject to it.”** (Ahmed b. Hanbel, Mūsned, 4/103; Taberani el-Kebir, 20/254, h.no: 601)

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by**

**Zehra Malik**