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The Muslim First (Part-1)

The Quranic Solution to Sectarianism

Part-1: <http://bit.ly/2J6XuD1>

Part-2: <http://bit.ly/2xuEygB>

Web: <http://SalaamOne.com/muslim-first>

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Introduction:

Over 1.6 billion Muslims, rich in history, culture and resources are in a state of decline from last few centuries. One of the factors is disunity among the Muslims due to sectarian differences which requires extraordinary efforts to tackle this menace. Sectarianism is a form of bigotry, discrimination, or hatred arising from attaching relations of inferiority and superiority to differences between subdivisions within a group. Common examples are denominations of a religion, ethnic identity, class, or region for citizens of a state and factions of a political movement. Wherever people of different religions live in close proximity to each other, religious sectarianism can often be found in varying forms and degrees.

The Thirty Years' War was a war (1618-1648) is the worst example of a war with sectarian factor playing a dominant role. This war was fought primarily in Central Europe. Initially a war between various Protestant and Catholic states in the fragmented Holy Roman Empire, it gradually developed into a more general conflict involving most of the great powers. These states employed relatively large mercenary armies, and the war became less about religion and more of a continuation of the France–Habsburg rivalry for European political pre-eminence. This was one of the longest and most destructive conflicts in human history, it resulted in eight million casualties mainly from violence, famine and plagues, but also from military engagements. People who perished over its course were overwhelmingly and disproportionately inhabitants of the Holy Roman Empire, and the rest were mostly fallen soldiers of foreign armies. It was the deadliest European religious war that left an everlasting national stigma in the German collective memory.

If we look at the Middle East, the long Iraq-Iran war (1980-88) resulted in at least half a million casualties and several billion dollars' worth of damages, but no real gains by either side. The recent devastation initiated by Daesh (ISIS) has smashed Iraq and Syria, Turkey also dragged in. The conflict has spread to Yamin with no end in sight.

The whole region is entangled in confrontation. Regional powers are engaged in conflicts in Syria and Yemen; Turkish troops are in Syria, Iraq and Qatar; Iran-backed militants are in Syria, Iraq and Yemen; and Israeli forces regularly carry out bombing raids against government, Iranian and Hezbollah targets in Syria. Global powers the US and Russia are involved in all these conflict zones and are fine tuning their own

competitive interests in the emerging global order. Talmiz Ahmad continues; After the fall of the “caliphate” in Syria, government forces have moved with alacrity against their opponents. Rebel groups, backed by regional powers, are lukewarm about the Russia-led peace process as they are uncertain about their interests being safeguarded.

Israel is alarmed at the presence of battle-hardened Iranian and Hezbollah fighters at its borders and the prospect of an Iran-controlled “land bridge” linking Tehran with the Mediterranean via Baghdad, Damascus and Beirut.

In northern Syria, the consolidation of Kurdish territorial gains at the Turkey-Syria border has worried Turkey. It sees the Syrian Kurds as partners of its own disgruntled Kurds and their territory as the training ground and sanctuary for Kurdish militants. It has moved its troops into Syria and has established itself over a wide swath that has broken the contiguity of the Kurdish “homeland.” This standoff could deteriorate into a wider conflict.

Israel has emerged as the real winner in this infighting among Muslims. Iran and Saudi Arabia, trying to exert their influence and domination. There is a need to learn some lessons from history and revert to Quran, the binding force for the peace and stability for the Muslims. If we do away with the sectarian titles and remain contented with the God given name “Muslim”, It will start a new era of Muslim community.

Importance of Name in a Religion:

Some people think that the name of a religion does not matter, the real thing is faith and work. Apparently it seems logical, but let's analyze it. Adam was first taught the knowledge of names by Allah. The names are very important, the reason that the Prophet (pbuh) changed the worthless names of the era of ignorance. Ayesha, the mother of believers (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated that, Prophet (pbuh) used to change the bad names with good ones (Tirmizi, 111/2). The name is very important as it is repeated again and again. If one is addressed with a good name it will have a positive bearing upon his personality and work.

If we look at the names of different religions of the world, it is found that mostly the religions are named after the founding personalities. Buddhism, after Buddha, Christianity after Jesus Christ, Judaism from Judea (tribal head). Similarly Zoroastrianism, Bahá'ism, Confucianism are also named after personalities. There is no founder of Hinduism and Jainism. Hinduism is also sometimes named after the sacred book Veda. Keeping in view the personality names, the followers of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) should have been called Muhamdians, but it did not happen, though the orientalist tried out but failed. If Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was founder of a new religion, it would have been his pleasure to name the religion after him but he could not do so because it is based upon Quran, the revelations he received from God. Quran carries name Muhammad only four times, once Ahmad. The names of his parents, family, children are not there. Allah Himself named the Deen (religion) as ISLAM, and the believers as Muslims (Arabic: Muslimen, Muslimoon), which have a link with ‘As-Salaam’, one of the attributive names of Allah.

The only religion in the sight of Allah is ISLAM (Submission), all the people of old, who accepted the religion of God were MUSLIM (surrendered to God). All the

revealed religions were on ISLAM (Submission), differed in the law. In the terminology of Quran Muslim (plural; Muslimeen) means total submission and surrender to the commandment of God in pure monotheism, free from any kind of polytheism. This is the reason that Quran introduces Abraham (pbuh) as a MUSLIM, who had bowed to the will of God. Accordingly all the followers of revealed religions like Judaism and Christianity were Muslim till their denial of Prophethood of Muhammad (pbuh), the last Prophet of God for humanity.

The present books of Bible despite many changes, still there are commandments to surrender to the will of God:

“Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”[James 4:7]

If **“Submit yourselves, then, to God”** [Greek: ὑποτάγητε οὖν τῷ] it is retranslated with the Arabic substitute “Muslim”, the verse read: *Be Muslim, Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*[James 4:7]

“I delight to **do Your will**, O my God; Your Law is within my heart.” [Psalm 40:8]. “Praise the LORD! Happy is the person who honors the LORD, who takes pleasure in **obeying his commands.**”[Psalm 112:1]. [“Surrender and obedience to the Will of God” also find in Bible: Psalms:148:8,103:20, Jeremiah 31:33, 1 John 2:1-29, 2:17, Matthew 12:50, 26:42, 6:10, John 5:30, 4:34, Acts 21:14, Romans 12:2, Hebrews 10:7]

Presently the name Muslim’ is applied to the followers of the last Messenger of God, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), who was given the last revealed book Quran for guidance of humanity. The Muslims believe in the all old scriptures (Bible, Old and New Testaments) and bow to command of God. The real Muslim is the one who confesses to accept Muhammad (pbuh) as the last messenger of God and adheres to the other beliefs and collective and individual practices like Shahdara (oral statement of Islamic creed), offering Prayer (Salah), Fasting, Zakah (charity) and Hajj (pilgrimage). Quran calls the real believer as Momin, also uses many other attributive names but more emphasis is on ‘Muslim’, why? Islam lasys lot of emphasis on unity of Muslims. The canonical prayers are worship of one God, offered while facing one direction i.e. Kabah, similarly one name ‘Muslim’ is very important for unity, the name chosen by God:

“This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour unto you, and have chosen for you as religion al-Islam.”(Quran;4:3).

“.. Allah named you "Muslims" before [in former scriptures] and in this [Quran] that the Messenger may be a witness over you and you may be witnesses over the people. (Quran;22:78)

“Surely those who divide the religion into sects and identify themselves as a sect, O Muhammad, you have nothing to do with them. Their case will be called to account by Allah Himself, He will inform them as to what they did.”(Qura’n;6:159)

And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided.. (Quran;3:103)

“The Messenger will say, Lord, my people did indeed discard the Quran”(Quran;25:30)

Surely all believers are brothers. So make peace between your brothers, and fear God, so that mercy may be shown to you. (Quran;49:10)

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said, that a Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hands the other Muslims are secure. [Bukhari Book of faith#10]

Salaam, Islam, & Muslim :

Arabic words, Islam, Muslim and Salaam are derived from the trilateral root *sīn lām mīm* (س ل م) (S-L-M), which occurs 140 times in the Quran, in 16 derived forms. Word 'Islam' (submission to the will of Allah to attain peace) has been chosen as name of Deen Islam (religion). Muslim (obedient, submitted, surrendered to the will of Allah in "Islam) is the name given to the adherents of Islam, while 'As-Salaam' (Giver of Peace) is one of many attributive names of perfection of Allah.

Salaam

Salaam is an Arabic word, its dictionary meanings are: peace – state of freedom ,harmony ,or friendship, greeting ; salutation ; salute, compliments , formal greeting , time of tranquility or self-composure or – state of...stability calm, peace, accord; agreement; armistice ; cheer ; concord ; harmony ; law and order ; rapport; suspension of... From the Latin *pax*, meaning "freedom from civil disorder," the English word came into use in various personal greetings from c.1300 as a translation of the Hebrew *shalom*. Such a translation is, however, imprecise, as *shalom*, which is also cognate with the Arabic "salaam", has multiple other meanings in addition to peace, including justice, good health, safety, well-being, prosperity, equity, security, good fortune, and friendliness. At a personal level, peaceful behaviors are kind, considerate, respectful, just, and tolerant of others' beliefs and behaviors — tending to manifest goodwill.

This latter understanding of peace can also pertain to an individual's introspective sense or concept of her/himself, as in being "at peace" in one's own mind, as found in European references from c.1200. The early English term is also used in the sense of "quiet", reflecting calm, serene, and meditative approaches to family or group relationships that avoid quarreling and seek tranquility — an absence of disturbance or agitation.

In many languages the word for peace is also used a greeting or a farewell, for example the Hawaiian word *Aloha*, as well as the Arabic word *salaam*. In English the word *peace* is occasionally used as a farewell, especially for the dead, as in the phrase *Rest In Peace*. Buddhists believe that peace can be attained once all suffering ends. They regard all suffering as stemming from cravings (in the extreme, greed), aversions (fears), or delusions. To eliminate such suffering and achieve personal peace, followers in the path of the Buddha adhere to a set of teachings called the Four Noble Truths — a central tenet in Buddhist philosophy.

Biblical Concept of Shalom (Salaam):

The equivalent cognate of Salaam in Hebrew is *Shalom* (Hebrew: שָׁלוֹם *shalom*; also spelled as *sholom*, *sholem*, *sholoim*, *shulem*), *sliem* in Maltese, *Shlama* in Syriac-Assyrian and *sālam* in Ethiopian Semitic languages from the Proto-Semitic

root Š-L-M. Shalom (Hebrew) word meaning *peace, harmony, wholeness, completeness, prosperity, welfare and tranquility* and can be used idiomatically to mean both *hello* and *goodbye*.

Biblically, *shalom* is seen in reference to the well-being of others (Genesis 43.27, Exodus 4.18), to treaties (I Kings 5.12), and in prayer for the wellbeing of cities or nations (Psalm 122.6, Jeremiah 29.7).

As it does in English, it can refer to either peace between two entities (especially between man and God or between two countries), or to the well-being, welfare or safety of an individual or a group of individuals. Stendebach and Ringgren writes that a more thorough etymological analysis of Hebrew roots reveal that 'Lom was the basic root word for Shalom.

The Talmud says, "**the name of God is 'Peace'**", therefore, one is not permitted to greet another with the word *shalom* in places such as a bathroom.(Shabbat 10b from Judges 6:24)

Biblical references make many Christians teach that "**Shalom**" is one of the **sacred names of God**

In Judaism, Shalom (peace), is one of the underlying principles of the Torah: "Her ways are pleasant ways and all her paths are shalom (peace)".[Proverbs 3:17]" The Talmud explains, "The entire Torah is for the sake of the ways of shalom".[Talmud, Gittin 59b] Maimonides comments in his Mishneh Torah: "**Great is peace, as the whole Torah was given in order to promote peace in the world, as it is stated, 'Her ways are pleasant ways and all her paths are peace'**".[Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, The Laws of Chanukah 4:14]

In the book '*Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin*', author Cornelius Plantinga described the Old Testament concept of Shalom:

The webbing together of God, humans, and all creation in justice, fulfillment, and delight is what the Hebrew prophets call **Shalom**. We call it peace but it means far more than mere peace of mind or a cease-fire between enemies. **In the Bible, shalom means universal flourishing, wholeness and delight** – a rich state of affairs in which natural needs are satisfied and natural gifts fruitfully employed, a state of affairs that inspires joyful wonder as its Creator and Savior opens doors and welcomes the creatures in whom he delights. *Shalom, in other words, is the way things ought to be.*[“Shalom: The Real Utopia”]

The Arabic word *salaam* (سلام) (“secured, pacified, submitted”) has the same root as the word *Islam*. One Islamic interpretation is that individual personal peace is attained by utterly submitting to Allah. The greeting “*As-Salaamu Alaykum*”, favoured by Muslims, has the literal meaning “Peace be upon you”.

Islam means submission. Muslim, etymologically directly related to **salaam** and the name Islam, means a person who submits to Allah in *salaam*. Submission to Allah is

based on humility. An attitude of humility within one's own self cannot be accomplished without total rejection of violence, and a personal attitude and alignment toward peace.

Word "Salaam" appears 33 times in Quran, Once as "As-Salam", for Allah, "The ultimate Giver of Peace"

The series of prophets and messengers coming from God throughout the ages to call the people again towards their innate identity of love and friendship.

The good life according to Islam is in submitting to God and in worshiping Him as The Creator and The Master and to recognize the innate nature of man. The individual who will recognize his true nature on which every person is created will be able to live together in society with peace and affection to each other. In his Last Sermon, the Prophet Muhammad admonished believers: "Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you."

There are various measures mentioned in Quran and Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) to guard against sectarianism. However adhering to just one simple and easiest measure, made obligatory by Quran can initiate an era of peace and love among Muslims:

Islam:

Islam, also rooted from S-L-M, means attainment of peace, live in peace, provide peace to others or to protect something. Quran uses it in many forms:

"whereby God guides to the ways of peace all who seek His good pleasure" (Quran;5:16)

Islam means, surrender, bowdown, obedience, submission, as clear from this verse:

"When his Lord said to him, "Surrender," he promptly responded, "I have surrendered to the Lord of the Universe (and become a Muslim)." (Quran2:131)

Islam also means being peaceful: "O Believers, enter completely into Islam.."(Quran;2:208). So Islam has multiple meanings according to context.

All three names, 'As-Salaam', 'Islam' and 'Muslim' (Arabic; plural Muslmeen, Muslimoon) are mentioned in Quran. "Muslim" appears about 44 times in 41 verses in Quran in various forms. This is the special name chosen and designated by Allah (God) to the believers through Quran also in previous times. A female adherent of Islam is a "Muslimah" (مسلمة). The plural form of Muslim in Arabic is muslimūn (مسلمون) or muslimīn (مسلمين), and its feminine equivalent is muslimāt (مسلمات).

Muslim:

The ordinary word in English is "Muslim". The word Mosalman (Persian: مسلمان, alternatively *Mussalman*) is a common equivalent for Muslim used in Central and South Asia. *Musulmán/Mosalmán* (مسلمان) is a synonym for Muslim and is modified from Arabic. It is the origin of the Spanish, musulmán, the (dated) German Muselmann, French word musulman. Earlier during last century many

English-language writers used the term Mohammedans or Mahometans, Muslims considered these terms as offensive because they allegedly imply that Muslims worship Muhammad (pbuh) rather than God.

The Qur'an describes many prophets and messengers within Judaism and Christianity, and their respective followers, as Muslim (submitting to Allah): Adam, Noah, Abraham, Ishmael, Jacob, Moses, and Jesus and his apostles are all considered to be Muslims in the Qur'an. The Qur'an states that these men were Muslims because they submitted to God, preached His message and upheld His values.

In general terms a Muslim is someone who follows or practices Islam, a monotheistic Abrahamic religion. The Quran, holy book, is the verbatim word of God as revealed to the Prophet and messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him). The majority of Muslims also follow the teachings and practices of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), called 'Sunnah' as recorded in traditional accounts (hadith). Muslim is obedient to Allah, there is no mention of any sect: "O ye who believe! Enter into Islam wholeheartedly; and follow not the footsteps of the evil one."(Quran;2:208).

Allah named you "Muslims" before [in former scriptures] and in this [revelation] that the Messenger may be a witness over you and you may be witnesses over the people. (Quran;22:78)

Muslim- Attributive Names:

Apart from the common collective name MUSLIM, God has addressed the Muslims with different attributive names; *Mutiqeen*, *Momineen*, and like:

"Indeed, (*almuslimena waalmuslimati*) the Muslim men and the Muslimen, and the believing men and the believing women (*waalmu/mineena waalmu/minati*), and the obedient men and the obedient women (*waalqaniteena waalqanitati*), and the truthful men and the truthful women (*waalssadiqeena waalssadiqati*), and the patient men and the patient women (*waalssabireena waalssabirati*), and the humble men and the humble women (*waalkhash-aaeena waalkhashi-aaati*), and the men who give charity and the women who give charity (*waalmutasaddiqeena waalmutasaddiqati*) and the men who fast and the women who fast (*waalssa-imeena waalssa-imati*), and the men who guard their chastity (*waalhafitheena, waalhafithati*) and the women who guard (it), and the men who remember Allah much and the women who remember Allah (*zakereena, zakeraate*) has prepared for them forgiveness and a reward great." (Quran;33:35).

These attributive names are not the replacement of MUSLIM but, one should strive to acquire these attributes and qualities to become a good MUSLIM, one may excel in one or more of these attributes. Some people with malicious designs use the attributive names for their sect, and justify by claiming Quranic origin of their sects. This is depravity of their thought and reflective of bad intentions.

Broad Three Categories of Muslims:

There are three broad categories of Muslims according to their faith and practices:

"Then We bequeathed the Book to those of Our servants that We chose. Now, some of them wrong themselves and some follow the medium course; and some, by

Allah's leave, vie with each other in acts of goodness. That is the great bounty.”(Quran;35:32)

This implies the Muslims, who have been sorted out from all mankind so that they may become heirs to the Book of Allah, and convey its message to others after the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Though this Book has been presented before all human beings, those who accepted it in the first instance, were chosen for the honor to become heirs to a great Book like the Quran and the trustees of the teaching and guidance imparted by a great Messenger like the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). That is, All these Muslims are not alike but are divided into three classes:

(1) Those unjust to themselves (zalimun-linafsihi): They are those who believe sincerely and honestly that the Quran is the Book of Allah and Muhammad (peace be upon him) the Messenger of Allah, but in practical life they do not fully follow the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger. They (zalimun-linafsihi) are believers but sinful; culprits but not rebellious; weak of faith but not hypocritical and unbelieving at heart. Therefore, although they are unjust to themselves, they have been included among the chosen servants of God and among the heirs to the Book; otherwise, obviously the rebels and the hypocrites and the unbelieving people could not be so treated and honored. This class of the believers has been mentioned first of All because they are most numerous among the Muslims.

(2) Those following the middle course (muqtasidun): They are the people who fulfill the obligations of this inheritance to some extent but not fully. They are obedient as well as erring. They have not left their self altogether free but try as best as they can to turn it to God's obedience. However, at times they give it undue freedom and become involved in sin. Thus, their life becomes a combination of both the good and the evil actions. They are less numerous than the first group but more than the third; that is why they have been mentioned second.

(3) Those excelling in good deeds (sābiqun bialkhayrati): They are the people of the first rank among the heirs to the Book, and they are the ones who are doing full justice to the inheritance. They are in the forefront in following and adhering to the Book and the Sunnah; in conveying the message of God to His servants, in offering the sacrifices for the sake of the true faith, and in every pious and good work. They are not the ones who would commit a sin deliberately, but if they happened to commit a sin inadvertently, they would be filled with remorse as soon as they became conscious of it. They are less numerous than the people of the first two groups, and therefore, have been mentioned last, although they merit the first place in the matter of doing justice to the heritage of the Book of Allah.

As for the sentence, “the great bounty”, if it is related with the last sentence, it would mean that to excel in good deeds is the great bounty, and the people who excel in good deeds are the best of the Muslim community. And if it is taken to be related with the first sentence, it would mean that to be a heir to the Book of Allah and to be chosen for this heritage is the great bounty, and the people who have been so chosen on account of their faith in the Quran and the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) are the best among the human beings created by Allah.*

Classification of Obedient Muslims:

The obedient Muslims have further been classified into three broad categories:

“And he who obeys Allah and the Messenger -they shall be with those whom Allah has favoured -the Prophets, those steadfast in truthfulness (Siddiq), the martyrs (shuhada), and the righteous (Salih).” How excellent will they be for companions!”(Quran;4:69)

(1). Siddiq denotes someone who is utterly honest, someone whose devotion to truth has reached a very high point. Such a person is always upright and straightforward in his dealings. He supports nothing but right and justice and does so with sincerity. He opposes whatever is contrary to truth, and does not waver in his opposition to falsehood. His life is so unblemished and selfless that even enemies, let alone friends, expect of him unadulterated probity and justice.

(2). The term shahid (pi. shuhada') means 'witness'. It signifies one who attests to the truth of his faith with his whole life. He who lays down his life fighting for God is called a shahid because by this sacrifice he confirms that his confession of faith was backed by a deep, genuine conviction of its truth, and that he valued it above his own life. The term shahid is also applied to those outstandingly honest people who are so trustworthy that their testimony, on any matter, is accepted without hesitation.

(3) Salih denotes one whose belief and thinking, motives and intentions, words and deeds, are based on righteousness. In short, he is a person whose life as a whole is oriented to righteousness.

He who enjoys, in this world, the company of the kind of people mentioned in this verse, and whom God judges worthy of the same company in the Hereafter is fortunate. The fact is that unless a man's natural sensitivity has atrophied, the companionship of corrupt and wicked people is a painful punishment even in this transient world, let alone that one should be subjected to the perpetual companionship of such people in the abiding life of the Hereafter. Good people have always longed for the company of like people, both in this world and the Next.

It can be noted that among the attributive names of Muslims, mentioned in Quran, we don't find the popular name like, Sunni, Shia, Hanafi, Barelvi, Deobandi, Maliki, Shafi'i, Hanbli, Maliki, Wahabi, Salafi, Ahle Hadith, Ahle Quran etc, etc.



Muslim - The God Given Name:

Quran is the ultimate guide, by just adherence to one commandment, a process can be initiated which will positively contribute towards the unity of Muslim. It is by, just adhering to the one unique common name 'MUSLIM' (Arabic; Muslimoon, Muslimeen) assigned by Allah in Quran to the believers and repeated again and again:

1. Allah named you "Muslims" before [in former scriptures] and in this [revelation] that the Messenger may be a witness over you and you may be witnesses over the people. (Quran;22:78)
2. And I have been commanded to be the first [among you] of the Muslims." (Quran;39:12)
3. O you who have believed, fear Allah as He should be feared and do not die except as Muslims [in submission to Him]. (Quran;3:102)
4. And who is better in speech than one who invites to Allah and does righteousness and says, "Indeed, I am of the Muslims." (Quran;41:33)
5. I have only been commanded to worship the Lord of this city, who made it sacred and to whom [belongs] all things. And I am commanded to be of the Muslims [those who submit to Allah] (Quran;27:91)
6. Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was one inclining toward truth, a Muslim [submitting to Allah]. And he was not of the polytheists. (Quran;3:67)
7. Our Lord, and make us Muslims to You and from our descendants a Muslim nation [in submission] to You. And show us our rites and accept our

- repentance. Indeed, You are the Accepting of repentance, the Merciful. (Quran;2:128)
8. And Abraham instructed his sons [to do the same] and [so did] Jacob, [saying], "O my sons, indeed Allah has chosen for you this religion, so do not die except while you are Muslims." (Quran;2:132)
 9. Or were you witnesses when death approached Jacob, when he said to his sons, "What will you worship after me?" They said, "We will worship your God and the God of your fathers, Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac - one God. And we are Muslims [in submission] to Him." (Quran;2:133)
 10. Say, [O believers], "We have believed in Allah and what has been revealed to us and what has been revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the Descendants and what was given to Moses and Jesus and what was given to the prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and we are Muslims [in submission] to Him." (Quran;2:136)
 11. Say, "O People of the Scripture, come to a word that is equitable between us and you - that we will not worship except Allah and not associate anything with Him and not take one another as lords instead of Allah." But if they turn away, then say, "Bear witness that we are Muslims [submitting to Him]." (Quran;3:64)
 12. Nor could he order you to take the angels and prophets as lords. Would he order you to disbelief after you had been Muslims? (Quran;3:80)
 13. Say, "We have believed in Allah and in what was revealed to us and what was revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the Descendants, and in what was given to Moses and Jesus and to the prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and we are Muslims [submitting] to Him." (Quran;3:84)
 14. No partner has He. And this I have been commanded, and I am the first [among you] of the Muslims." (Quran;6:163)
 15. And you do not resent us except because we believed in the signs of our Lord when they came to us. Our Lord, pour upon us patience and let us die as Muslims [in submission to You]." (Quran;7:126)
 16. And if you turn away [from my advice] then no payment have I asked of you. My reward is only from Allah, and I have been commanded to be of the Muslims." (Quran;10:72)
 17. Perhaps those who disbelieve will wish that they had been Muslims. (Quran;15:2)
 18. Say, [O Muhammad], "The Pure Spirit has brought it down from your Lord in truth to make firm those who believe and as guidance and good tidings to the Muslims." (Quran;16:102)
 19. Say, "It is only revealed to me that your god is but one God; so will you be Muslims [in submission to Him]?" (Quran;21:108)

20. *And you cannot guide the blind away from their error. You will only make hear those who believe in Our verses so they are Muslims [submitting to Allah]. (Quran;27:81)*
21. *And when it is recited to them, they say, "We have believed in it; indeed, it is the truth from our Lord. Indeed we were, [even] before it, Muslims [submitting to Allah]." (Quran;28:53)*
22. *And do not argue with the People of the Scripture except in a way that is best, except for those who commit injustice among them, and say, "We believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you. And our God and your God is one; and we are Muslims [in submission] to Him." (Quran;29:46)*
23. *And you cannot guide the blind away from their error. You will only make hear those who believe in Our verses so they are Muslims [in submission to Allah]. (Quran;30:53)*
24. *Indeed, the Muslim men and Muslim women, the believing men and believing women, the obedient men and obedient women, the truthful men and truthful women, the patient men and patient women, the humble men and humble women, the charitable men and charitable women, the fasting men and fasting women, the men who guard their private parts and the women who do so, and the men who remember Allah often and the women who do so - for them Allah has prepared forgiveness and a great reward. (Quran;33:35)*
25. *[You] who believed in Our verses and were Muslims. (Quran;43:69)*
26. *Then will We treat the Muslims like the criminals? (Quran;68:35)*
27. *And among us are Muslims [in submission to Allah], and among us are the unjust. And whoever has become Muslim - those have sought out the right course. (Quran;72:14)*

Wicked Islamic Scholars (Ulema):

The real, genuine scholars of Islam are the custodian of faith, but the knowledge will decline with the passage of time:

According to a Hadith :“Verily the scholars are the heirs to the Prophets. Verily, the Prophets did not bequeath deenars or dirhams. All they left behind was knowledge, so whoever takes it has indeed acquired a huge fortune.” [Musnad Ahmad (5/196) No. 21763; Also related by Abu Dawud (2/341) No. 3641; at-Tirmidhi (5/48 No. 2682; Ibn Majah (1/150) No. 223, ad-Daarimee (1/110) No. 342 and ibn Hibbaan (1/289) No. 88]

“Verily, those who conceal the clear proofs, evidences and the guidance, which We have sent down, after We have made it clear for the people in the Book, they are the ones cursed by Allāh and cursed by the cursers. Except those who repent and do righteous deeds, and openly declare (the truth which they concealed). These, I will accept their repentance. And I am the One Who accepts repentance, the Most Merciful”. (Quran: 2:159-160)

““The example of those who were given the Torah, then failed to uphold it, is like the donkey carrying great works of literature. Miserable indeed is the example of people

who rejected GOD's revelations. GOD does not guide the wicked people.”(Quran; 62:5)

Abu Dhar said, "I was with the Prophet (pbuh) one day and I heard him saying: "There is something I fear for my Ummah than the Dajjal." It was then that I became afraid, so I said: "Oh Rasool Allah! Which thing is that?" He (pbuh) said; "Misguided and astray scholars." [Musnad Ahmad (5/145) No. 21334 and 21335]

Ka'b ibn Malik (RA) reported that he heard Allah's Messenger (SAW) say: "If anyone seeks knowledge in order to compete with the scholars or to concur with the foolish or to direct the faces of the people toward himself, Allah will put him in the fire."

[Sunan Tirmidhi (5/32) No. 2654, Sunan Darimi (1/374) No. 379, Sunan Ibn Majah (1/170) No. 254, Mustadrak al-Haakim (1/161) No. 293, Sahih Ibn Hibban (1/278) No. 77, Shu'ab al-Iman al-Bayhaqi (3/269) No. 1636, al-Mu'jam al-Awsat al-Tabarani (6/32) No. 5708]

Ali reports that the Holy Prophet Muhammad said; There will come a time when nothing will remain of Islam but the name. The religion is gone! All that remains is this shell. The rice grain gone. All that remains is the husk. He said that time will come. And that time will certainly come when nothing will remain of the Qur'an except the pages that are mechanically read. Yes! No one goes to the Quran for the guidance that it has. Therefore no one follows that guidance that is in the Quran. When that time comes when nothing remains of Islam but the name and nothing remains of the Quran but the traces of the writing mechanically read.

At that time he said: The Masajid will be grand structures. Long time it was a roof when rainfall used to leak, and used to be mud walls; but When that time comes when nothing remains of Islam but the name. The Masajid will be grand structures. Multi-million rand buildings, iron and steel: But devoid of guidance. The religious scholars who support and are embraced by such a blind people; who are holding on to nothing but the rice husk. Those Ulama would be the worst people [creatures] beneath the sky From them will emerge that which will constitute fitna for the people. Tests and trials! Corrupt people. They will become the centers of fitna for the people. The house burning down and the scholars of Islam don't even know that and they lecturing long, long, pretty, pretty lectures. Wah wah! But their house burning down and they cant even see their house burning down. Or they know their house burning down but they afraid to say it. they will be the worst people beneath the skies [Mishqat, Baihaqi] .

Narrated/Authority of Abu Huraira: The Prophet said, "(Religious) knowledge will be taken away (by the death of religious scholars) ignorance (in religion) and afflictions will appear; and Harj will increase." It was asked, "What is Harj, O Allah's Apostle?" He replied by beckoning with his hand indicating "killing." [(Fateh-al-Bari Page 192, Vol. 1) Hadith No: 85, From: Sahih Bukhari. Chapter 3, Knowledge]

The Messenger of Allah (saw) said: 'Allah will not take away knowledge by removing it from people (from their hearts). Rather He will take away knowledge by taking away the scholars, then when there will be no scholars left, the people will take the ignorant as their leaders. They will be asked questions and they will issue verdicts without knowledge, thus they will go astray and will lead others astray.'" [Hadith No: 52, Sunan Ibn Majah. Chapter 1, The Book of the Sunnah]

The Prophet (pbuh) said:"A time will come when nothing will be left in the minds of the people from the Qur'an except its calligraphy and from Islam except its name. People who call themselves Muslims will be the furthest from Islam. Mosques would be filled but empty from guidance. The Ulema (scholars) of that time are the worst under the heavens. From them, the elements of division and misguidance are spewed and unto them, will return." - Reported by Tabarani, Dailamy and Al-Hakam

"The objective behind Shari'ah is to liberate individuals from his desires in order to be a true Abd (slave) of Allah and that is the legitimate Maslaha... Violating the Shari'ah under the pretext of following Maqasid al-Shari'ah is like the one who cares about the spirit without the body and since the body without the spirit is useless therefore the spirit without the body is useless too." ~ Imam Shatibi - The greatest intellectual founder of Maqasid al-Shari'ah.

Sectarianism:

Islam emphasises unity among Muslims, which is reflected in all the basic tenets like Salah (canonical prayers) in congregation, facing Qibla (Kabah), lead by Imam (prayer leader), Zakah (almsgiving), Hajj (pilgrimage). Muslim community is a cohesive social unit at each level. Any disharmony due to sectarian reasons is totally anti Islam. Differences on religious matters among companions of Prophet (pbuh) were settled through mutual consultation and discussions. There was not reason to form sects, a practice against Islam.

Quran Rejects Sectarianism:

Quran rejects and condemns sectarianism in strongest words, disassociating the believers from such sinners, even equating with polytheism. Some verses here highlight the criticality of this danger, which has become part of Muslim life and culture. Allah says about sectarianism and schism(translations):

1. ***"Surely those who divide the religion into sects and identify themselves as a sect, O Muhammad, you have nothing to do with them. Their case will be called to account by Allah Himself, He will inform them as to what they did."*(Qura'n;6:159)**
2. *"Their doom is because Allah has revealed the Book with the truth; surely those who seek causes of dispute in the Book (The Qur'an) are in extreme schism (divergence)."*(Qura'n;2:176)
3. *..... and do not be one of those who associate partners with God, those who split up their religion and became divided into sects; each one exulting in what they have. (Quran;30:31-32)*
4. *And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided.. (Quran;3:103)*
5. *And do not be like the ones who became divided and differed after the clear proofs had come to them. And those will have a great punishment. (Quran;3:105)*

6. *But people have cut off their affair (of unity), between them, into sects: each party rejoices in that which is with itself. (Quran;23:53)*
7. *He has ordained for you of religion what He enjoined upon Noah and that which We have revealed to you, [O Muhammad], and what We enjoined upon Abraham and Moses and Jesus - to establish the religion and not be divided therein. Difficult for those who associate others with Allah is that to which you invite them. Allah chooses for Himself whom He wills and guides to Himself whoever turns back [to Him].(13) And they did not become divided until after knowledge had come to them - out of jealous animosity between themselves. And if not for a word that preceded from your Lord [postponing the penalty] until a specified time, it would have been concluded between them. And indeed, those who were granted inheritance of the Scripture after them are, concerning it, in disquieting doubt. (Quran;42:14)*
8. *But sects from among themselves fell into disagreement: then woe to the wrong-doers, from the Penalty of a Grievous Day! (Quran;43:45)*
9. *Say, "He is the [one] Able to send upon you affliction from above you or from beneath your feet or to confuse you [so you become] sects and make you taste the violence of one another." Look how We diversify the signs that they might understand. (Quran;6:65)*
10. *But the sects differ among themselves: and woe to the unbelievers because of the (coming) Judgment of a Momentous Day! (Quran;19:37)*
11. *"even as We had sent warning to those (Jews) who had divided their religion into fragments; those who had split up their Qur'an (Torah) into pieces.(Quran;15:90-91)*
12. *"Do you then believe in one part of the Scriptures and disbelieve in the other parts." (Quran;2:85)*
13. *"O ye who believe! Enter into Islam wholeheartedly; and follow not the footsteps of the evil one; for He is to you an avowed enemy. If ye backslide after the Clear (Signs) have come to you, then know that Allah is Exalted In power, wise."(Quran;2:208-209).*

Unfortunately during first century Hijrah the political differences resulted in to formation of a sect, the other violent sects like Khawarij had to be eliminated with sword but keep emerging in history. Daesh/ISIS, Boko Haram are its 21st century versions. The "Sunni" refers to those who follow or maintain the sunnah (practices) of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). In many countries, overwhelming majorities of Muslims are Sunnis, so that they simply refer to themselves as "Muslims" and do not use the Sunni label.

Islamic schools of jurisprudence, known as madhhabs, differ in the methodology they use to derive their rulings from the Quran and hadith.

Sunni, In terms of religious jurisprudence (fiqh), contains several schools of thought (madhhab) such as: The Hanafi school, founded by Abu Hanifa an-Nu'man, including subgroups like Barelvis and Deobandi. The Maliki school, founded by Malik ibn Anas. The Shafi'i school, founded by Muhammad ibn Idris ash-Shafi'i. The Hanbali school, founded by Ahmad ibn Hanbal. The majority of the Salafist movement claims to follow this school. The Zāhirī school, founded by Dawud al-Zahiri. There are many

Sufi orders, popular among masses in Turkey, Central Asia, Africa, India and Pakistan.

The Wahhabi movement was created by Muhammad ibn Abd-al-Wahhab in the Arabian peninsula, and was instrumental in the rise of the House of Saud to power in early eighteenth century. The terms Wahhabism and Salafism are often used interchangeably, although the word Wahhabi is specific for followers of Muhammad ibn Abd-al-Wahhab. Wahhabism has been accused of being "a source of global terrorism" and causing disunity in Muslim communities, and criticized for destruction of historic sites by its followers.

73 Sects Hadith:

The sectarian enthusiasts frequently quote a Hadith to justify sect formation. This Hadith was a prophecy, the division of Muslims into 73 sects was is a prediction, the Prophet (pbuh) did not say that Muslims should be active in dividing themselves into sects which is against Quran. It was a warning but some sects use it as justification for sect formation. They ignore the clear commandments of Quran:

“And do not be like the ones who became divided and differed after the clear proofs had come to them. And those will have a great punishment.” (Quran;3:105)

There are differences which are based upon minor difference in interpretation of Quran and Ahadith and comes under category of permissible differences. Such groups fall under the category of Saved Sect of Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat. The differences among the four Imam who follow a particular Madhab, such as the Shafi'i, Hanafi, Hanbali, Maliki are not different group rather they are one and Ahle sunnat Wal Jamaat. However, if these very subsidiary debates will be invested with the status of the mainstream of religion, and differences arising out of them were to become a cause of controversy, confrontation, insult and vilification, then, this too will be considered blameworthy. There are those who don't follow four madhbs but adhere to Quran and Sunnah, are part of Ahle sunnat Wal Jamaat. (Allah knows best). Presently there is shift in balance and there are many sub sub sects/groups emerging like mushroom, creating disharmony and discontentment. This obviously goes against the teachings of Quran and Sunnah.

Allah's Messenger (pbuh) said: There will befall my Ummah exactly all those evils which befell the people of Israel(Jews and Christians), so much so that if there was one amongst them who openly committed fornication with his mother, there will be amongst my Ummah one, who will do the same. And if the people of Israel were fragmented into seventy-two sects, my Ummah will be fragmented into seventy-three sects. All of them will be in Hell Fire except one sect. The noble Companions asked: O Allah's Messenger (pbuh), which one is that? Whereupon he (saws) said: It is one to which I and my companions belong.[Al-Tirmidhi Hadith 171 Narrated by Abdullah ibn Amr]

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said: And if the people of Israel were fragmented into seventy-two sects, my Ummah will be fragmented into seventy-three sects. All of them will be in Hell Fire except one sect. The noble Companions asked: O Allah's Messenger (pbuh), which one is that? Whereupon he (pbuh) said: It is one to which I and my companions belong.[Sahih Muslim Hadith 1885 Narrated by Jabir ibn Abdullah]

The Jews fragmented their scripture (Torah), they believed in one part and ignored the other.

"And clearly tell the unbelievers: "I am most certainly a plain warner," even as We had sent warning to those who had divided their religion into fragments; those who had split up their Qur'an into pieces.(Quran;15:89-91) [Unfortunately, Muslims are following on the footsteps of Jews]

The schismatic were the Jews for they had split their religion into many parts and caused division in it. They believed in certain parts and rejected the other parts, and detracted some things from it and added others to it. Thus they had been divided into many sectarian groups, which were opposed to one another.

"They have made the Quran (Torah) into pieces" means that they believe in certain parts of it and reject other parts. The same thing has been stated like this:

"Do you then believe in one part of the Scriptures and disbelieve in the other parts." (Quran;2:85)

This warning is like the warning We sent to the schismatic Jews. This is meant to warn the disbelievers that they should learn a lesson from the plight of the Jews who neglected the warning that was given to them by God, and persisted in their wrong ways, as if to say: You are beholding the degradation of the Jews. Do you like to meet with the same end by neglecting this warning?

The Blessed "Sect"?

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said in an authentic narration: I (pbuh) leave behind me two things, which if you (the believers) follow, you will never be misguided: One: The Al Quran and Second: My Sunnah.

That the Prophet of Allah (pbuh) said in a sermon: The best speech is that which is embodied in the Book of Allah, the Al Quran; and the best guidance is the guidance given by me, Muhammad (pbuh). The most evil affairs are the innovations, and every innovation is an error.

It may be kept in view that sect is referring to groups that will differ in their creed ('Aqīda). Groups that differ on branches of practice are called jurisprudence schools (madhhab).

The best way to determine which amongst all these sects is on the one Right Path that leads to Allah's Mercy is to, without any predisposition and bias, study and understand the Holy Quran and the authentic and established Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh). This will help to know which community or jamaa (large group) is closest to the path followed by the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) and his companions, the way of Quran and Sunnah. Since these groups are among the believers, worshipper of one God, Allah, so they after requisite punishment of sines are likely to be taken out:

"Surely, God does not forgive that a partner is ascribed to Him, and He forgives anything short of that for whomsoever He wills. Whoever ascribes a partner to God commits a terrible sin".(Qur'an;4:48, 116)

And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided.. (Quran;3:103)

Don't be your own judge, Allah is the Final Judge:

The final judgment rests with Allah, there is no need for any one group (as being done) to call themselves the blessed sect and condemn others to hell.

"Allah will judge between you, on the Day of Judgment, about what you used to dispute."(Quran;22:69)

"Is not God the greatest of the judges?"(Quran;95:8)

"Follow what is revealed to you, and be patient until GOD issues His judgment; He is the best judge."(Quran;10:109)

"Say: O Allah! Originator of the heavens and the earth, Knower of the unseen and the seen! Thou (only) judgest between Thy loop servants as to that wherein they differ."(Quran;39:46)

"On that Day all control will belong to God. He will judge between them. Those who believe and do good deeds shall enter the Gardens of Bliss"(Quran;22:56)

"Should I seek a judge other than God, when it is He who has revealed the Book, clearly explained."(Quran;6:114)

".. Allah will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection concerning that wherein they differ."(Quran;2:113)

"The opponents of the Clear Verses will make up weird stories, such that Allah would descend from one heaven to the other heaven and then into dark dense clouds, accompanied by winged angels. And then He would decree all matters. Nay! All matters of guidance have been expounded in this Book. Allah is Omnipresent and all actions return to Allah for judgment."(Quran;2:210)

"God will judge between you [all] on Resurrection Day. And never will God allow those who deny the truth to harm the believers."(Quran;4:114)

One can be a good believer, performing good deeds, and pray with hope for His Mercy, however final Judgement rests with Allah:

"Surely those who divide the religion into sects and identify themselves as a sect, O Muhammad, you have nothing to do with them. Their case will be called to account by Allah Himself. He will inform them as to what they did."(Quran;6:159)

"But the sects differ among themselves: and woe to the unbelievers because of the (coming) Judgment of a Momentous Day!" (Quran;19:37)

"A party He has guided to the Right Way, and for another party straying is justly its due for they have taken satans, rather than Allah, as their guardians, even though they think that they are rightly-guided."(Quran;7:30)

Articles of Faith & Pillars:

The Muslims should overlook minor differences. All the branches of Islam testify to six principal articles of faith known as the six pillars of iman (Arabic for "faith"), which are believed to be essential.

They are to belief in

1. Oneness of God
2. Angels of God
3. Divine Revelations (Books)

4. The Prophets of God
5. Resurrection after Death and the Day of Judgment and
6. Preordainment (Qadar)

The Five Pillars consist of:

1. Shahadah: sincerely reciting the Muslim profession of faith
2. Salat: performing ritual prayers in the proper way five times each day
3. Zakat: paying an alms (or charity) tax to benefit the poor and the needy
4. Sawm: fasting during the month of Ramadan
5. Hajj: pilgrimage to Mecca once in life if one can afford it.

The minor differences should not be cause of sect formation and, hatred :

- Those who says Ameen loudly in the prayer and the other don't, both should be respected.
- Those who want to perform prayer with fasten hands and the other with open arms, both should be respected.
- Those who say Salam on the Prophet (peace be upon him) by standing and the other do not want to say, both should be respected.
- Those who want to celebrate Prophet's Birthday and the others don't, both should be respected.
- Someone breaks FAST right at the sunset and the other after ten minutes, both should be respected.
- Someone calls an Islamic gathering, Mehfil-e-Seerat and the other call it Mehfi-e-Milad, its OK.
- Do not force people. We should not pass judgement, leave the judgement to the differences for God to decide, excel each other in good deeds..

Allah is Merciful and Forgives Repenants Muslims:

Muslims should not become self appointed watcher over others, remind brother Muslims about good things in a respectable, decent way, then just get a side, no need to quarrel. Allah says:

“You shall invite to the path of your Lord with wisdom and kind enlightenment, and debate with them in the best possible manner. Your Lord knows best who has strayed from His path, and He knows best who are the guided ones”.(Quran;16:125)

“Therefore do remind, for you are only a reminder.You are not a watcher over them;”(Quran:3:21-22)

“With truth We have sent it (the Qur'an) down and with truth it descended, and We did not send you but as a bearer of good tidings and as a warner.”(Quran;17:105)

“And if Allah had pleased, they would not have set up others (with Him) and We have not appointed you a keeper over them, and you are not placed in charge of them.(Quran;6:107).

If Allah is kind with the believers, ever ready to forgive their sins, no one has a right to declare other believers among 72 sects and condemn them to hell?

“As for those who believe and do good deeds and believe in what has been revealed to Muhammad and it is the truth from their Lord God will remove their sins from them and set their condition right.”(Quran;47:2)

Remember, Allah is Merciful and forgiving to the believers, who repent and seek forgiveness:

- **Yet anyone who does evil or wrongs his own soul and then asks God for forgiveness will find God forgiving and merciful. (Quran:4:110)**
- God wishes to lighten your burdens, for, man has been created weak. (Quran:4:28)
- Your Lord has said, "Call on Me, and I will answer your prayers." But those who are too arrogant to worship Me will certainly enter Hell, in disgrace. (Quran;40:60)
- God wishes to explain things to you and guide you to the ways of those who have gone before you and to turn to you in mercy. God is all knowing and all wise. (Quran:4:26)
- He wishes to turn towards you in mercy, but those who follow their own passions want you to drift far away from the right path. (Quran:4:27)
- God does not wrong anyone by as much as a grain's weight. If there be a good deed, He will repay twofold, and will bestow out of His own bounty an immense reward. (Quran:4:40)
- If you shun the great sins you have been forbidden, We shall cancel out your minor misdeeds and admit you to a place of honour. (4:31)
- God will not forgive anyone for associating something with Him, while He will forgive whoever He wishes for anything besides that. Whoever ascribes partners to God is guilty of a monstrous sin. (4:48)
- All the messengers We sent were meant to be obeyed by God's leave. If they had come to you and sought forgiveness from God whenever they wronged themselves, and the Messenger had prayed for forgiveness for them, they would have found that God is ever-forgiving and merciful. (Quran;4:64)

Quran, Islam and Muslims:

Quran is the last book of guidance from the God for humanity. Quran is the basis of Islam, to be a good Muslim, one has to understand the message and act accordingly:

“And those who, when reminded of the verses of their Lord, do not fall upon them deaf and blind.”(Quran;25:73)

There is need to understand well, the importance of Quran, though every Muslim confess orally, and accord highest reverence to Quran.

Quran on Quran

Quran explains Quran, a summary of extracts (meanings) from holy verses:

1. Revealed by God (Quran;3:60)
2. God revealed Quran and will protect it (Quran;15:9)
3. Free from any ambiguity (Quran;18:1-2)

4. Neglected nothing in the Book” (Quran; 6:38)
5. Falsehood cannot approach it (Quran;41:42)
6. Book in truth and [also] the balance.(Quran;42:17)
7. Nobody, not even Prophet can change Quran (Quran;10:15)
8. Messenger conveyed all what was revealed of this Book from Lord. There is nothing that could alter His words(Quran;18;27, 6:19)
9. Allah's Words never change.(10:64) [And changeless are His Laws (33:62), (35:43), (48:23) (17:77)]
10. Delivered the messages of the Lord (72:28, 5:67)
11. He encompasses in His knowledge their surroundings and keeps a count of all things.”
12. Book with the truth, verifying old Scriptures and a guardian over it (Quran;5:48)
13. Verses of established meaning, further explained in detail (Quran;11:1)
14. The most beautiful Message in a consistent Book wherein is reiteration.(Quran;39:23)
15. Healing and a mercy to the believers, and it adds only to the perdition of the unjust. (Quran;17:82)

Guidance

16. Book of God, without any doubt, guidance for those who fear God(Quran;2:2)
17. Bring mankind out of darkneses into the light (Quran;14:1)
18. “This book to provide explanations for everything, and guidance, and mercy, and good news for the Muslims”(Quran;16:89)

Judge in Differences

19. The Criterion to judge right and wrong (Quran;25:1)
20. Book with truth, to judge between people in that in which they differed (Quran;2:213)

Read, Ponder

21. In clear Arabic, easy to understand (Quran;12:2)
22. Study the Quran, as it should be studied (Quran;2:121)
23. Ponder over its verses, and that those endowed with understanding may be mindful.(Quran;38:29)
24. Do they not then think deeply in the Quran, or are their hearts locked up?(Quran;47:24)

Concealing

25. Those concealing revelations of Quran are cursed by Allah (Quran;2:159)

26. Who conceal in the scripture, for a cheap material gain, incur painful retribution. (Quran;2:174)

Deniers and Rejectors:

27. Woe unto every fabricating impostor, the one who hears GOD's revelations but ignores arrogantly, Grievous punishment awaits (Quran;45:7-8)

28. Those who dispute Ayas have turned away from the right path (Quran;40:69)

29. Those who deny the revelations, will suffer a dreadful doom. (Quran;45:11)

30. Who disbelieved in Quran, are doomed (Quran;90:19)

31. And none but the Zalimun (polytheists, wrongdoers) deny Ayat (Quran;29:49)

32. And be not like those who said, We hear, and they did not obey (Quran;8:21)

Quran is Called Hadith (discourse, statements, word):

In which Hadith other than the Quran will they believe? (Quran;77:50)

1. In what Hadith (discourse) after this (Quran) will they then believe? (Quran;7:185)
2. These are the revelations of God which We recite to you for a genuine purpose. In what Hadith (statements) other than God's and His revelations will they then believe? (Quran;45;6)
3. Let them produce a Hadith (discourse) like it if they are true in their claim. (Quran;52:34)

Great Jihad with Quran:

Great Jihad against disbelievers with this Quran (Quran;25:52).

Islam: The Perfected Religion - Declared at the Farewell Hajj Sermon:

“ This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion.” (Quran;5:3)

The Prophet (pbuh) left for the eternal abode after few days of revelations of this verse, having completed his mission. The Rightly Guided Caliphs continued with the consolidation of power and spread of Islam. Caliph Abu Bakr Siddiq and Umar (r.a) concentrated towards Quran, which was collected and kept in safe custody besides preservation in the memory of hundreds of Companions. During the era of Caliph Usman (r.a) the official copies of Quran were circulate in the entire caliphate, even to the far off places. There was only One Holy Book, The Quran. The matter of compilation of traditions of Prophet (pbuh) was also considered, but the opinion was divided. Caliph Umar (r.a) kept on thinking, he mediated, resorted to *Istikhara* (special supplications for guidance from Allah) and after about a month's deliberation he decided not to have any other book besides Quran, because the previous nations (Jews and Christians) followed many other books besides the book of God, and thus

lost the right path. Prophet (pbuh) had already ordered the Muslims to strictly follow the rightly guided caliphs, he specially mentioned Abu Bakar Siddiq and Umar (r.a) by name. For over a century this practice was adhered to.

The Sunnah of Prophet (pbuh) was also important as he was a role model, for the believers, according to Holy Quran:

The messenger of GOD has set up a good example for those among you who seek GOD and the Last Day, and constantly think about GOD.(33:21)

The Sunnah was transferred from generation to generations, in continuous chain (mutawatir). All essential fundamental practices like Salah (prayer), fasting, Zakat, Hajj and other mentioned in Quran had the details in Sunnah which was available even before compilation of famous six Hadith books in third century Hijrah, till this day. Jalaluddin Suyuti (1445–1505 C.E) has collected together **113 Mutawatir Ahadith** in a book titled: *Qatf al-Azhar al-Mutanathara fi al-Akhbar al-Mutawatirah*. He treated a Hadith Mutawatir if it had 10 narrators at every link. These Ahadith are also include **concerning certain rituals, such as, Prayers, fasts, etc**, having been narrated by huge number of narrators at each link of the chain of narrators. Scholars opine that a mutawatir report is almost as certain as the Qur'an, and, therefore, rejection of a mutawatir hadith entails kufr.

The Ahadith literature is a great treasure of knowledge which is very useful. Islam is safe with Quran and Sunnah Mutawatir. If today all the books of the world go blank, millions of Hufaz Quran, found in each Muslim village and towns around the world will get and produce millions of copies of Quran all around the world simultaneously. Similarly the practices of worship and other Islamic practices are also available being practiced by billions of Muslims, practicing or non practicing Muslims are fully aware of. Hence Islam is a living religion. The Muslims should remain united ignoring minor differences in practices. Quran prohibits sectarianism, Quran is the uniting rope of Allah.

Conclusion:

The Quran provides a solution to end the menace of sectarianism among Muslims.

The Narrative - Unity of Muslims through Quran

All the Muslims while adhering to their present beliefs (which they consider as true Islam, based upon Quran and Sunnah) abandon their sectarian names, symbols and prominent distinguishing marks of identification and adopt the one specific name given to them by Allah in Quran i.e. *Muslim* (plural), (singular, *Muslim*). This will be one giant step against menace of sectarianism.

This will be the first step to revive the spirit of 'Perfect Deen' at the occasion of Farewell Pilgrimage (632 C.E/10 Hijrah) when it was revealed:

"This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour unto you, and have chosen for you as religion al-Islam."(Quran;4:3).

No need of recognition through the names of sects, prefixes, all stand united as **Muslims**. Every year during Hajj, Muslims of all colours, nationalities and sects from all over the world display unity through same dress, same rituals. The good works with faith bring great rewards and pleasure of God.

The **Muslims** are followers of the religion of Islam, they have submitted their will to obedience to Allah (God). Muslims accept the commands of God and adopt them in their speech, actions and in moral character. A Muslim rejects the evil suggestions for inner soul and bow to the Will of Allah:

“Have you ever considered the case of the person who has made his lust his god? Can you take the responsibility of guiding such a one aright?”(Quran;25:43)

“by the soul and how He formed it, then inspired it to understand what was right and wrong for it. He who purifies it will indeed be successful, and he who corrupts it is sure to fail.” (Quran;91:7-10)

The First Step Against Sectarianism

The sectarian menace cannot to be eradicated overnight, however initially just one step taken in line with the commandment of Quran, will initiate a process of reconciliation to reduce the negative effects of sectarianism. This will pave the way to start a new era of peace and harmony among Muslims. Allah says:

“Allah named you Muslims earlier and even in this [Book (Quran)], that the Messenger may be a witness over you, and that you may be witnesses over all mankind.”(Quran;22:78)

1. Every sect claim that they are the real Muslims, truly adhering to Quran and Sunnah, the claim rejected by others, who have counter claim to be true followers of Islam. They all use different labels, as distinguishing and recognition marks of their respective groups/sects.

Everyone is well aware that except ‘Muslim’, other labels and religious titles were introduced much later. It is therefore logical to restore the original Quranic name ‘Muslim’ [plural Muslemeen, Muslimoon] without any addons, labels, recognition marks and symbols.

2. All Muslims (Muslemeen, Muslimoon) to keep following their present jurisprudence (fiqh, madhbs, schools) but call themselves with one common name ‘Muslim’[plural Muslemeen, Muslimoon]. This God given name is complete in all respect and does not need extra titles. The tendency to identify sects be rejected. This is the first step against sectarianism. Anyone keen to develop intimate relationship can find more details through discussion. Display of sectarian symbols, marks with names, Masjids, religious institutions, homes and at public places be avoided. The self (nafas) will resist but as Muslim we have to submit to will of Allah, this is a test of our ‘surrender to will of Allah’. With sincerity we can pass this test while keeping faith and trust in Allah who knows our inner feelings.

3. This single step will take us back near to the time of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), the time of ‘Perfect Deen’. Allah and the Messenger (pbuh) would be pleased and we can hope for the blessings of Allah. The Messenger (pbuh) had said that ‘those following the way of Prophet (pbuh) and his companions’ will be on way to paradise, finally Allah will judge. It's not befitting for us to indulge in self praise and claims.

4. The Hadiths about the division of Muslims into 73 sects was a prediction a prophecy. The Prophet (pbuh) did not urge that the Muslims should be active in dividing themselves into sects, nor he mentioned that all 73 sects will exist all the times. It appears that this covers entire period of human history. Many sects existed but are no more. This prediction was a warning but some sects use it as justification for sect formation. They ignore the clear commandments of Quran:

“And do not be like the ones who became divided and differed after the clear proofs had come to them. And those will have a great punishment.” (Quran;3:105)

All those adhering to the way of Prophet (pbuh) are promised paradise.

5. The Muslims should not indulge in Takfeer [declaring other Muslims as unbelievers or apostate] due to petty differences. According a Hadith, the such Takfeer falls back upon the person or persons declaring other Muslims as non believers [Abi Dawood 4687 (meanings)]. The final judgement rests with Allah, all the Muslims have to protect the faith and excel in performance of good deeds.

6. A central board or commission, comprising religious scholars (Ulema) from all the Muslim groups be formed which should workout 'Minimum Common Points of Agreement' to avoid unnecessary debates and acquisitions. Society should be purged of un Islamic inhuman cultural customs and traditions like veni, honour killing etc. The religious scholars be trained on modern lines using latest technology and teaching techniques. The religious scholars and Imam masjid should be given a befitting financial package . All these reforms/ measures be implemented in close coordination of clergy by the state.

The mindset and stagnation of centuries cannot be changed overnight through an article, book or discussion. However it can help to open the doors of intellectual thought process and knowledge.

“The worst of creations in the Sight of Allah are those deaf, those dumb who do not use their intellect” (Quran;2:18),

“Only those of His servants, who possess knowledge, fear God.”(Quran;35:28)

On Day of Judgement the Messengers will say: "Lord, my people had abandoned this Quran."(Quran;25:30)

To be concluded

Part-2: <http://bit.ly/2xuEygB>

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