

Avoid division (At-Tafarruq) and become united BS Foad, MD 2013

Definition

Tafarraqa comes from Faraqa, meaning separated and not united. When it is used regarding Muslims it means that the Muslim community or nation have become separated into sects and groups, rather being united and working together as it should be.

We will discuss the following concepts:

- 1-We are ordered to be united and work together and not become separated or divided into sects and groups fighting each other
- 2-There are pitfalls and ill effects for Furqa (Separation and division)
- 3-Why do Muslims become divided and working against each other?

We are ordered to unite and work together and we are ordered not to become divided or separated and fight each other

The Qur'an is clear in warning Muslims against division and urging them to work together and become united:

﴿وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا ۚ وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِيَعْتُهُ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾﴾

And hold fast, all together, by the Rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves; and remember with gratitude Allah's favor on you; for ye were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His Grace, ye became brethren; and ye were on the brink of the Pit of Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus doth Allah make His Signs clear to you: that ye may be guided?

Al-Imran (The Family of Imran) 3: 103

This verse explains several concepts:

- 1-We should be united and work together, and not divided
- 2-It is the mercy and blessings of Allah that He united the hearts of Muslims that they became brothers to each other, expressing kindness and love towards each other. It is a great blessing from Allah that we are kind and good to each other. The hatred and enmity that existed before was replaced with kindness and love towards each other:

﴿وَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ لَوْ أَنْفَقْتَ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مَا أَلَّفْتَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ أَلَّفَ بَيْنَهُمْ إِنَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٦٣﴾﴾

And (moreover) He has put affection between their hearts: not if you had spent all that is in the earth, could you have produced that affection, but Allah has done it: for He is Exalted in might, Wise.

Al-Anfal (Spoils of war) 8: 63

- 3-The way to unity is to hold on to the rope of Allah and follow his straight path. Whatever we differ in should be settled by the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH), not by following our vain desires and our likes and dislikes:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ تَنَزَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ﴾ ﴿٥٩﴾

O you who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and those charged with authority among you. If you differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if you do believe in Allah and the Last Day: that is best, and most suitable for final determination.

An-Nesa'a (The Women) 4: 59

4-Guidance can be attained only from following the straight path of Allah. If we follow other paths we will become misguided:

﴿ وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴾ ﴿١٥٣﴾

Verily, this is My Way leading straight: follow it; follow not (other) paths: they will scatter you about from His (great) Path; thus doth He command you, that ye may be righteous.

Al-Ana'm (The Cattle) 6: 153

Other verses in the Qur'an urge unity and warn against division and separation:

﴿ شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ كَبُرَ عَلَى الْمُشْرِكِينَ مَا تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَيْهِ اللَّهُ يَجْتَبِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يُنِيبُ ﴾ ﴿١٣﴾

The same religion has He established for you as that which He enjoined on Noah - that which We have sent by inspiration to thee - and that which We enjoined on Abraham, Moses, and Jesus: namely, that you should remain steadfast in Religion, and make no divisions therein: to those who worship other things than Allah, hard is the (way) to which you call them. Allah chooses to Himself those whom He pleases, and guides to Himself those who turn (to Him).

Ash-Shura (The Consultation) 42: 13

In this verse Muslims are ordered to stay together united and not be divided or separated.

Allah orders His prophet (PBUH) to avoid those who split and divide their affairs into different sects:

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا شِيَعًا لَسْتَ مِنْهُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴾ ﴿١٥٩﴾

As for those who divide their religion and break up into sects, thou hast no part in them in the least: their affair is with Allah: He will in the end tell them the truth of all that they did.

Al-Ana'm (The Cattle) 6: 159

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

(Allah likes and accepts three things for you, and He dislikes and does not accept three things: He likes for you to worship Him alone with no partners, and to hold all to the rope of Allah, and not become divided; and He dislikes for you talking and asking about other people's affairs, or asking about things that are not your concern, and dislikes that you waste money or spend it in ways that are not appropriate) Narrated by Muslim.

The Prophet (PBUH) also said:

(Whoever disobeys and leaves the Muslim group or Umma, then dies, he dies in a state of ignorance)
Narrated by Muslim

There are pitfalls and dangers in being separated

1-Division and separation into different sects and groups **weaken the Muslims and causes their strength to vanish as they fight each other:**

﴿ وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَا تَنَازَعُوا فَتَفْشَلُوا وَتَذْهَبَ رِيحُكُمْ وَأَصْبِرُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴾ (17)

And obey Allah and His Messenger; and fall into no disputes, lest ye lose heart and your power depart; and be patient and persevering; for Allah is with those who patiently persevere:

Al-Anfal (Spoils of war) 8: 46

This verse warns against division and fighting amongst each other, because our strength then will dissipate and we will become weak, disunited and disorganized. It calls for patience and perseverance, and explains that Allah is with those who patiently persevere. The next verse explains that what is important in everything that we do is our sincere devotion to Allah:

﴿ وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بَطَرًا وَرِئَاءَ النَّاسِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَنِ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ ﴾ (18)

And be not like those who started from their homes insolently and to be seen of men, and to hinder (men) from the path of Allah: for Allah compasses round about all that they do.

Al-Anfal (Spoils of war) 8: 47

2-When we follow our vain desires and leave our unity we become easy prey for Satan. He will misguide from the straight path of Allah, and he will make our decisions seem fair in our eyes:

﴿ وَأَتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ الَّذِي آتَيْنَاهُ آيَاتِنَا فَانْسَلَخَ مِنْهَا فَاتَّبَعَهُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْغَاوِينَ ﴾ (19)

Relate to them the story of the man to whom We sent Our Signs, but he passed them by: so Satan followed him up, and he went astray.

Al-Araf 7: 175

﴿ وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنَاهُ بِهَا وَلَكِنَّهُ أَخْلَدَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ الْكَلْبِ إِنْ تَحَمَلَ عَلَيْهِ يَلْهَثُ أَوْ تَتْرَكُهُ

يَلْهَثُ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا فَاقْصُصِ الْقَصَصَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴾ (20)

If it had been Our Will, We should have elevated him with Our Signs; but he inclined to the earth, and followed his own vain desires. His similitude is that of a dog: if you attack him, he lolls out his tongue, or if you leave him alone, he (still) lolls out his tongue. That is the similitude of those who reject Our Signs; so relate the story; perchance they may reflect.

Al-Araf 7: 176

And

﴿ وَمَا تَفَرَّقُوا إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ ﴾

And they became divided only after knowledge reached them, through selfish envy as between themselves.
Ash-Shura (The Consultation) 42: 14

Satan spares no effort in doing his best to misguide us and cause division and separation between us. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) told us that the worst division is what happen when Satan separate a person from his wife (Narrated by Muslim). The Qur'an confirms this:

﴿ فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِ ﴾

They learned from them the means to sow discord between man and wife.
Al-Baqara (The Cow) 2: 102

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) told us to follow the straight path of Allah, and avoid other ways for it leads to misguidance because there are devils on each of these ways trying to misguide us:

Ibn Masoud stated that one day the messenger of Allah (PBUH) drew a line and said: (This is the way of Allah). Then drew lines on its right and on its left, then said: (These are ways, on each one of them is a devil inviting to it). Then he recited the verse:

﴿ وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَّيْنَاكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴾



Verily, this is My Way leading straight: follow it; follow not (other) paths: they will scatter you about from His (great) Path; thus doth He command you, that ye may be righteous.

Al-Ana'm (The Cattle) 6: 153

3-We are threatened with severe punishment if we become divided after we see things clearly and persist in our wrong-doing:

﴿ وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا وَاخْتَلَفُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ وَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴾

Be not like those who are divided amongst themselves and fall into disputations after receiving Clear Signs: for them is a dreadful Penalty.

Al-Imran (The Family of Imran) 3: 105

Why do Muslims become divided and fight each other?

1-Each group feels that they are the only ones guided by Allah and they are absolutely correct, and everyone else is completely wrong:

﴿ وَإِنَّ هَذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاتَّقُونِ ﴾

And verily this Brotherhood of yours is a single Brotherhood. And I am your Lord and Cherisher: therefore fear Me (and no other).

Al-Mumenoun (The Believers) 23: 52

﴿ فَتَقَطَّعُوا أَمْرَهُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ زُبُرًا كُلُّ حِزْبٍ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ فَرِحُونَ ﴾

But people have cut off their affair (of unity), between them, into sects: each party rejoices in that which is with itself.

Al-Mumenoun (The Believers) 23: 53

And

﴿ مُبِينًا إِلَيْهِ وَاتَّقُوهُ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴾

Turn ye back in repentance to Him, and fear Him: establish regular prayers, and be not ye among those who join gods with Allah,

Ar-Rum (The Romans) 30: 31

﴿ مِنَ الَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا شِيعًا كُلُّ حِزْبٍ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ فَرِحُونَ ﴾

Those who split up their Religion, and become (mere) sects, each party rejoicing in that which is with itself!

Ar-Rum (The Romans) 30: 32

They misunderstand the Hadeeth (saying) of the Prophet (PBUH):

(Indeed those before you of the people of the Book became divided into seventy two sects, and this Umma (nation) will become divided into seventy three sects, seventy two are in the Fire, and only one in paradise, and that is those united in one group)

Abou Dawood & Ahmad

2-Our arrogance causes us to be stubborn and not listen to reason and persist in doing wrong:

﴿ وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا وَاخْتَلَفُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ وَأُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴾

Be not like those who are divided amongst themselves and fall into disputations after receiving Clear Signs: for them is a dreadful Penalty.

Al-Imran (The Family of Imran) 3: 105

And

﴿ وَمَا تَفَرَّقُوا إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَعْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ ﴾

And they became divided only after knowledge reached them, through selfish envy as between themselves.

Ash-Shura (The Consultation) 42: 14

Work together and be united, and not become separated or divided into sects BS Foad, MD 2013

The Qur'an & the Sunnah (Tradition of Prophet Muhammad PBUH) orders Muslims to unite and work together, and not become divided or fight each other

"And hold fast, all together by the rope which Allah (Stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves, and remember with gratitude Allah's favor on you, for you were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His grace you became brothers" Al-Imran 3: 103

"As for those who divide their religion and break into sects, you have no part in them" Al-Ana'm 6: 159

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: (Whoever disobeys and leaves the Muslim group, then dies, he dies in a state of ignorance) Muslim. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: (Allah accepts for you three things, and hates for you three things: He accepts that you worship Him alone with no partners, and that you hold all together to the rope of Allah, and not become divided; and He hates for you talking and asking about other people's affairs, or asking too many things that are not your concern, and dislikes for you to waste money in ways that are not appropriate) Muslim.

It is expected that we will differ among ourselves; such differences are settled according to the

Qur'an & Sunnah: *"O you who believe obey Allah, and obey the messenger, and those charged with authority among you. If you differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah and His messenger, if you believe in Allah and the Last Day; that is best and most suitable for final determination" An-Nesa'a 4: 59*

It is the mercy of Allah that He unites the hearts of believers so they become brothers:

"And He has put affection between your hearts; if you spent all that is on earth you could not have produced that affection, but Allah has done it, for He is exalted in might, wise" Al-Anfal 8: 63

There are pitfalls and dangers in being divided and separated

Division and separation leads to weakness and failure

"And obey Allah and his messenger, and fall into no disputes, lest you loose heart and your power depart, and be patient and persevering, for Allah is with those who patiently persevere" Al-Anfal 8: 46

Division can lead to misguidance

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) one day drew a line on the ground and said: (This is the way of Allah, leading straight); then drew lines on the right and on the left and said: (These are ways, on each one of them is a devil inviting to it) The he recited the Qur'anic verse: *"Indeed this is My way leading straight: follow it, follow not other paths, they will scatter you about from His path, thus does He command you that you may be righteous" Al-Ana'm 6: 153* (narrated by Muslim).

Division can lead to punishment

"Be not like those who are divided among themselves and fall into disputes after receiving clear signs: for them is a dreadful penalty" Al-Imran 3: 105

Why do Muslims become divided and fight each other?

Each group feels that they are guided, while others are misguided

"But people have cut off their affairs of unity between them, into sects: each party rejoicing in what it has" Al-Mumenoun 23: 53

"As to those who split up their religion and become sects, each party is rejoicing in that which is with itself!" Ar-Rum 30: 32

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: (Indeed those before you of the people of the Book became divided into seventy two sects, and this Umma (nation) will become divided into seventy three sects, seventy two are in the Fire, and only one in paradise, and that is those united in a group) Abou Dawood

When we follow our vain desires we leave our unity and become easy prey to Satan

"Relate to them the story of the man to whom We sent our signs, but he rejected them, so Satan followed him, and he went astray. If it had been our will, We could have elevated him with Our signs, but he inclined to the earth and followed his own vain desires" Al-Araf 7: 175 & 176

Our arrogance causes us to be stubborn, not listen to reason and persist in doing wrong

"They became divided only after knowledge reached them, through selfish envy as between themselves"

Ash-Shura' 42: 14

"Those who were given the Book only became divided after clear evidence reached them"

Al-Bayyena (Clear Evidence) 98: 4