

# Theoretical an practical analysis of the Bediuzzaman on understanding of brotherhood in Muslim world and it's effect to contemporary Muslim society

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*In the name Of God, the merciful, the compassionate  
And from Him do we seek help.  
All praise be to God, the Sustainers of All the Worlds, and blessings and  
peace be upon our master Muhammad, and on all his Family and Companions.*

“We have there enemy enemies; ignorance, poverty and conflict. We shall have holy war against these three enemies with the weapon of education, industry and unity”

BEDIUZZAMAN SAID NURSI

## INTRODUCTION:

### Brotherhood and Unity in İslâm and World

“You will not enter Paradise until you have faith, and you will not complete your faith until you love one another” (Muslim)

Belief demands love, and Islam demands brotherhood. (Bediuzzaman)

In 21th century contemporary world there are currently 63 country which have Islam as official religion. Islamic world with its 1,5 billion adherents is consist of 23 percent of world population. With its ever increasing population and with new people preferring Islam everyday with great numbers it is presumed that by the end of year 2020 population of Islamic world will exceed 2 billion. Islam is a religion of diversity with hundreds of nationalities (Arabs, Turks, Persians, Greeks and Romans extending from Europe including middle east reaches far east asia) cultures and geographies and thus is a universal religion. Hence, this a strong evidence to show that Islam is the true religion and this is a great miracle of Qur`an and messenger of Allah Muhammad peace and blessings be upon Him. Bediuzzaman said Nursi argues it as follows: “The Qur`an, in this world, brought about in so luminous, felicitous and truthful a fashion, a revolution in the social life of man, as well as in the souls, hearts, spirits, and intellects of men, in their individual, social, and political lives, and having caused this

revolution perpetuated it in such a fashion, that for fourteen centuries at every moment its six thousand, six hundred and sixty-six verses have been read by the tongues of more than a hundred million men, training them, refining their souls and purifying their hearts. To spirits, it has been a means of development and advancement; to intellects, an orientation and light; to life, it has been life itself and felicity. Such a book is of a certainty unparalleled; it is a wonder, a marvel, and a miracle.”

It is my contention that Islam embracing that much diversity in its fold should pay an immense attention on brotherhood and unity. That is to say, to find and stress points of unification, highlighting and pointing out commonalities in diversity and attracting the attentions of muslims towards this end and making it the most vital duty of islamic world is to be the biggest mission of Islam. I would like to point out with the following two verses that urge and emphasize peace and universal brotherhood: “O mankind! Lo! We have created you male and female, and have made you nations and tribes that ye may know one another. Lo! the noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct. Lo! Allah is Knower, Aware.” with this verse corroborating the alliance of muslims and obliterating discord, rivalry, and dispute; “And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided. And remember the favor of Allah upon you - when you were enemies and He brought your hearts together and you became, by His favor, 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.”

Above-mentioned passage illustrates how universal peace, brotherhood, and love is so important either in Islamic world or in entire humanity. Moreover, I believe with all my heart that for the realization of this universal peace, brotherhood, and unity first condition is to disregard minor differences and focus on common ground upon which Community of Muhammed pbuh Could cold get united and form a strong alliance and the strength and effectualness of that unity is directly proportional with the genuineness, and whole heartedness of the determinations of Community of Muhammad in retaining and improving those unifying bonds and respecting the sacredness of it.

### **The Approaches of Bediuzzaman about Brotherhood and Unity in Islamic World**

“The believers are but brothers, so make settlement between your brothers. And fear Allah that you may receive mercy” Bediuzzaman in his book, treatise on brotherhood, while interpreting this verse he says: “Dispute and discord among the believers, and partisanship, obstinacy and envy, leading to rancour and enmity among them, are repugnant and vile, are harmful and sinful, by the combined testimony of wisdom and the supreme humanity that is Islam, for personal, social, and spiritual life.” Furthermore, he expounds the compelling reasons of necessity of brotherhood and love among believers. “The unity of belief necessitates also the unity of hearts, and the oneness of our creed demands the oneness of our society. You cannot deny that if you find yourself in the same regiment as someone, you

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will form a friendly attachment to him; a brotherly relation will come into being as a result of your both being submitted to the orders of a single commander. You will similarly experience a fraternal relation through living in the same town with someone. Now there are ties of unity, bonds of union, and relations of fraternity as numerous as the Divine Names that are shown and demonstrated to you by the light and consciousness of belief.

Your Creator, Owner, Object of Worship, and Provider is one and the same for both of you; thousands of things are and the same for you. Your Prophet, your religion, your qibla are one and the same; hundreds of things are one and the same for you. Then too your village is one, your state is one, your country is one; tens of things are one and the same for you. All of these things held in common dictate oneness and unity, union and concord, love and brotherhood, and indeed the cosmos and the planets are similarly interlinked by unseen chains. If, despite all this, you prefer things worthless and transient as a spider's web that give rise to dispute and discord, to rancour and enmity, and engage in true enmity towards a believer, then you will understand -unless your heart is dead and your intelligence extinguished- how great is your disrespect for that bond of unity, your slight to that relation of love, your transgression against that tie of brotherhood! "That is to say, regardless of from which nationality we are, where do we live, how many differences we have, the unity and intimacy and brotherhood that is brought by Islamic bonds which bind us each other firmly with unbreakable threads and establishes true brotherhood. For we all believe in one God, and the book He has sent, Quran, and confirming the cause of last Prophet, Muhammad pbuh, facing the same Qibla( direction ), with many more common points and values we are part of one whole and complete body. World of islam and different nations in the fold of Islam are like parts of this body with different duties altogether serving for the survival of this whole unit. Every single part or members of that body has different duties towards one another to comply with. Bediuzzaman mentions a principle of brotherhood in regard personal life which shows how crucial it is to preserve brotherhood in the personal level as well, it is as follows:

*First Principle:* When you know your way and opinions to be true, you have the right to say, "My way is right and the best." But you do not have the right to say, "Only my way is right." According to the sense of "The eye of contentment is too dim to perceive faults; it is the eye of anger that exhibits all vice;" your unjust view and distorted opinion cannot be the all-decisive judge and cannot condemn the belief of another as invalid.

*Second Principle:* It is your right that all that you say should be true, but not that you should say all that is true. For one of insincere intention may sometimes take unkindly to advice, and react against it unfavourably."

Considering all above mentioned insights that have shed light over how vitally and crucially we are in need of brotherhood and love Bediuzzaman stressing over and over again the significance of unity. Constituting almost one fourth of world population muslims failed to establish true

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unity and love and as a consequence of this in middle east in the face of a small force consist of 7 -8 million members became dominant over them. 7-8 million real alliances is able to be prevalent over 1.5 billion muslim population. Nursi tackles with this issue in his “Treatise on Brotherhood” as follows : “If the confrontation of views takes place in the name of justice and for the sake of truth, then the difference concerns only means; there is unity with respect to aim and basic purpose. Such a difference makes manifest every aspect of the truth and serves justice and truth. But what emerges from a confrontation of views that is partisan and biased, and takes place for the sake of a tyrannical, evil-commanding soul, that is based on egotism and fame-seeking -what emerges from this is not the ‘flash of truth,’ but the fire of dissension. Unity of aim is necessary, but opposing views of this kind can never find a point of convergence anywhere on earth. Since they do not differ for the sake of the truth, they multiply ad infinitum, and give rise to divergences that can never be reconciled.”

Today in Islamic world we actually experience all those things in our environment. We, as Islamic nations, and countries experience this sufferings, wars, internal conflicts as a consequence of our neglect in understanding and appreciating how vital and inevitable brotherhood and unity is for our happiness and peace in this life and the next. In Iraq, Syria , Afghanistan, Tunisia, and Turkey and entire middle painful examples are to be observed. In the face of all those painful experiences we were expected to unite and have consultations to resolve our problems but unfortunately some consulted and took shelter with USA, some with Russia and some others with the enemies of Islam. Ustadz Bediuzzaman evaluates this reality with a short and simple but insightful story and provides guidance in this regard: “A regrettable social condition and an awesome disease affecting the life of society, fit to be wept over by the heart of Islam: to forget and abandon internal enmities when foreign enemies appear and attack is a demand of social welfare recognized and enacted even by the most primitive peoples. What then ails those who claim to be serving the Islamic community that at a time when numberless enemies are taking up positions to attack, one after the other, they fail to forget their petty enmities and instead prepare the ground for the enemies’ attacks? It is disgraceful savagery, and treason committed against the social life of Islam.

A story to be pondered over: There were two groups of the Hasanan, a tribe of nomads, hostile to each other. Although more than maybe fifty people had been killed on each side, when another tribe such as the Sibgan or Haydaran came out against them, those two hostile groups would forget their enmity and fight together, shoulder to shoulder, until the opposing tribe had been repelled, without ever once recalling their internal dissensions.

O Believers! Do you know how many tribes of enemies have taken up position to attack the tribe of the people of belief? There are more than a hundred of them, like a series of concentric circles. The believers are obliged to take up defensive positions, each supporting the other and giving him a helping hand. Is it then at all fitting for the people of belief that with their

biased partisanship and hostile rancour they should facilitate the attack of the enemy and fling open the doors for him to penetrate the fold of Islam? There are maybe seventy circles of enemies, including the misguided, the atheist, and the unbeliever, each of them as harmful to you as all the terrors and afflictions of this world, and each of them regarding you with greed, anger and hatred. Your firm weapon, shield and citadel against all of them is none other than the brotherhood of Islam. So realize just how contrary to conscience and to the interests of Islam it is to shake the citadel of Islam on account of petty hostilities and other pretexts! Know this, and come to your senses! We could have no reasonable excuse to justify the discord and dispute among us while there are thousands of external enemies of Islam. As i have pointed out in previous parts of my paper that peace and unity among muslim will bring about and ensure world peace and prosperity for this brotherhood, love , and unity will put a stop at the injustices had been perpetrated by wrongdoer proportionately.

### **Causes of the Conflict in Muslim World According to Bediuzzaman Said Nursi**

In his book called “The Flashes “Bediuzzaman had been asked a very significant question. In this framewok of question and answer Said Nursi elaborately expounds and analyses the reasons why muslims fell into disunity while disbelievers are able to have a strong alliance among themselves. The questions goes like this : “Why is it that while the worldly and the neglectful, and even the misguided and hypocrites, co-operate without rivalry, the people of religion, the religious scholars, and those who follow the Sufi path, oppose each other in rivalry, although they are the people of truth and concord? Agreement belongs in reality to the people of concord and dispute to the hypocrites; how is it that these two have changed places?” This question has been expounded through seven reasons by Bediuzzaman . I am going to embark on explaining a couple of them:

First Reason: “Just as dispute among the people of the truth does not arise from lack of the truth, so too the agreement prevailing among the people of neglect does not arise from any possession of truth. Rather it is that a specific duty and particular function has been assigned to the classes in society, like ‘the worldly’, those engaged in politics, and those who have received a secular education, and thus the functions of the various groups, societies, and communities have been defined and become distinguished from one another. Similarly, the material reward they are to receive for their functions in order to maintain a livelihood, as well as the moral reward that consists in the attention they receive from men for the sake of their ambition and pride-this too is established and specified.<sup>2</sup> There is therefore nothing held in common to the degree that it might produce conflict, disension and rivalry. However evil be the path that they tread, they will be able to preserve unity and agreement.

But as for the people of religion, the scholars, and those who follow the path, the duty of each is concerned with all men; their material reward is not set and specified; and their share in social esteem and acceptance and

public attention is not predetermined. Many may be candidates for the same position; many hands may stretch out for each moral and material reward that is offered. Hence it is that conflict and rivalry arise; concord is changed into discord, and agreement into dispute.”

Ustad Bediuzzaman` s prescription for this sickness is ‘ sincerity ‘ , that is to say in all our deeds first and foremost and exclusively to seek the approval and good pleasure of Allah SWT and on account of afterlife (akhira) not seeking for the approval of people and to expect any reward from them and basing our acts upon their fanciful wishes. Verily my reward is from God alone. Consequently, that point of view will enable muslims gaining sincerity and nobility in their actions to the extent sacrificing one` s right for the other (isar) like the Companions of Rasulullah peace and blessings be upon Him.

Second Reason “The agreement among the poeple of misguidance is on account of their abasement, and the dispute among the people of guidance is on account of their dignity. That is to say that the people of neglect-those misguided ones sunk in worldly concerns-are weak and abased because they do not rely on truth and reality. On account of their abasement, they need to augment their strength, and because of this need they wholeheartedly embrace the aid and co-operation of others. Even though the path they follow is misguidance, they preserve their agreement. It is as if they were making their godlessness into a form of worship of the truth, their misguidance into a form of sincerity, their irreligion into a form of solidarity, and their hypocrisy into concord, and thus attaining success. For genuine sincerity, even for the sake of evil, cannot fail to yield results, and whatever man seeks with sincerity, God will grant him it.

But as for the people of guidance and religion, the religious scholars and those who follow the Sufi path, since they rely upon truth and reality, and each of them on the road of truth thinks only of his Sustainer and trusts in His succour, they derive dignity from their belief. When they feel weakness, they turn not toward men, but toward God and seek help from Him. On account of difference in outlook, they feel no real need for the aid of the one whose outlook apparently opposes their own, and see no need for agreement and unity. Indeed, if obstinacy and egoism are present, one will imagine himself to be right and the other to be wrong; discord and rivalry take the place of concord and love. Thus sincerity is chased away and its function disrupted.”

In the above mentioned passage ustadz Bediuzzaman points out that the discord and dispute among muslim groups do not arise from lack of truth and dignity of muslims and Islam while the unity and solidarity of disbelievers do not arise from truthfulness and having a dignity in their cause. On the contrary, the dignity and self-sufficiency of different groups and their reliance on Allah SWT respectively apparently does not allow them to feel the need for solidarity and unity among muslims. Whereas the reason why people of misguidance is successful in obtaining success and unity is that they restrict all their endeavour to acquire worldly goods and they even sacrifice their dignity by uniting with even their enemies for

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petty , minor interests. That is to say, their success and unity is not due to dignity or holding the truth in hand but their enslavement to their carnal desires and to understand their weaknesses in procurement of those base desires. But every muslim individual directly relies on the power and help of Allah SWT that is why is unable to truly appreciate the need for unity and solidarity among believers hence discord , disunity becomes natural consequence of this wrong reliance on Allah. Bediuzzaman enumerates the following remedies for this wrong perception:

“1. To act positively, that is, out of love for one’s own outlook, avoiding enmity for other outlooks, not criticizing them, interfering in their beliefs and sciences, or in any way concerning oneself with them.

2. To unite within the fold of Islam, irrespective of particular outlook, remembering those numerous ties of unity that evoke love, brotherhood and concord.

3. To adopt the just rule of conduct that the follower of any right outlook has the right to say, “My outlook is true, or the best,” but not that “My outlook alone is true,” or that “My outlook alone is good,” thus implying the falsity or repugnance of all other outlooks.

4. To consider that union with the people of truth is a cause of Divine succour and the high dignity of religion.

5. To realize that the individual resistance of the most powerful person against the attacks through its genius of the mighty collective force of the people of misguidance and falsehood, which arises from their solidarity, will inevitably be defeated, and through the union of the people of truth, to create a joint and collective force also, in order to preserve justice and right in the face of that fearsome collective force of misguidance.

6. In order to preserve truth from the assaults of falsehood.”

With those principles the real bonds of brotherhood is founded and alongside with those principles Bediuzzaman warns muslims in the last part of his treatise on brotherhood : “O people of faith! If you do not wish to enter a humiliating condition of slavery, come to your senses and enter and take refuge in the citadel of:

Indeed the believers are brothers to defend yourselves against those oppressors who would exploit your differences! Otherwise you will be able neither to protect your lives nor to defend your rights. It is evident that if two champions are wrestling with each other, even a child can beat them. If two mountains are balanced in the scales, even a small stone can disturb their equilibrium and cause one to rise and the other to fall. So O people of belief! Your strength is reduced to nothing as a result of your passions and biased partisanships, and you can be defeated by the slightest forces. If you have any interest in your social solidarity, then make of the exalted principle of “The believers are together like a well-founded building, one part of which supports the other”<sup>14</sup> your guiding principle in life! Then you will be delivered from humiliation in this world and wretchedness in the hereafter.”

For not complying with those principles in our lives we fall into dispute and discord thereby our power departs further it makes us disrespectful

towards our brothers, and toward our glorious and source of pride ancestors. This is why Our Master Muhammad (pbuh) after the conquest of Mecca said now minor jihad is over but is the start of major jihad which is to struggle against the evil demands and caprices of our souls (nafs). Currently there exist 63 Islamic country in the world , however, there is no serious alliance even between 3 countries among them, and this is a matter of great significance and urgency to be pondered over.

### **Necessities of Sincerity in Brotherhood**

In Islamic terminology sincerity is to do everything in the name of Allah and for gaining His good pleasure. Ustadz Bediuzzaman aptly elucidates the essence of sincerity in his treatise called “Treatise on Sincerity” and puts forward principles of sincerity. It could be considered to be a guideline on how to preserve and maintain sincerity at every sphere and stages of life of believers. Each principle has a crucial role in strengthening bonds of brotherhood and love towards one`s brothers, family, homeland, and mankind. The living exemplification of this truth is to be observed on millions of the students of Ustadz Bediuzzaman in present day Turkey. Hence, those principles are not merely theoretical matters guidance in sincerity but so aptly applicable realities to or day- today life. Guide of this guideline is of course the Holy Quran. Shortly to cite those principles:

First Rule “You should seek Divine pleasure in your actions. If Almighty God is pleased, it is of no importance even should the whole world be displeased. If He accepts an action and everyone else rejects it, it has no effect. Once His pleasure has been gained and He has accepted an action, even if you do not ask it of Him, should He wish it and His wisdom requires it, He will make others accept it. He will make them consent to it too. For this reason, the sole aim in this service should be the direct seeking of Divine pleasure.”

Second Rule “This is not to criticize your brothers who are employed in this service of the Qur’an, and not to excite their envy by displaying superior virtues. For just as one of man’s hands cannot compete with the other, neither can one of his eyes criticize the other, nor his tongue object to his ear, nor his heart see his spirit’s faults. Each of his members completes the deficiencies of the others, veils their faults, assists their needs, and helps them out in their duties. Otherwise man’s life would be extinguished, his spirit flee, and his body be dispersed.”

Third Rule “You should know that all your strength lies in sincerity and truth. Yes, strength lies in truth and sincerity. Even those who are wrong gain strength from their sincerity in their wrongdoing.”

Fourth Rule “This is to imagine your brothers’ virtues and merits in your own selves, and to thankfully take pride at their glory.” These principles point out the meaning of one`s own peace and love for others. In fact, prosperity, peace and brotherhood themselves are the epitomes of Islam. One who is in peace with oneself, one`s environment and society and takes as his aim solely the good pleasure of God lives with peace and love with all believers. That is to say, he first applies fundamentals of islam and brother-

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hood in himself so that its impact on others becomes more effectual. For this reason Ustadz Bediuzzaman among his 130 pieces treatises places a special emphasize on the significance of his “Treatise on Sincerity” and suggests his students to read it at least every fortnight for it establishes and instills genuine sincerity in its readers. Furthermore, through reading the “Treatise on Brotherhood “ it strengthens the bonds between believers and becomes a great cause for unity and love. Sincerity is the most important hallmark of Islam. “Love, brotherhood, and affection are basic to Islam, and are its bond.” says Bediuzzaman.

### **Conclusion**

Just as brotherhood is a strong and certain command of Islam, so too is a vital principle in Islamic World. It is the most significant trait to be acquired by muslim mass community as a whole in this contemporary age. The salvation, unity and happiness of Islamic world in this world and the next firmly dependent on the usage of this most effectual weapon of brotherhood. It is the revival of brotherhood and its actualization among muslims that will bring about a peaceful world and I believe that is the solely possible through it.

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