Status and Importance of Political Advice in Islam in the Light of Qur’an and Sunnah

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the definition, concept, importance, status and roots of political advice in Islam in the light of the Qur’an and Sunnah. This is in order for us to clarify the concept and show its relationship to both al-amr bi al-ma’rūf wa al-nāḥī’ an al-munkar (to enjoin good and forbid wrong) and shūrā, the research also gives examples on the issue in question from the life of the prophet (p.b.u.h) and his companions. This research introduces the Islamic library to this subject as it is one of the contemporary subjects which needs to be linked with the early days of Islam and applied in the present as a means of preservation of Muslim community and identity and as a confrontation of all extremist ideas which threaten the peace of such societies. This is with the goal of proving the peaceful nature of Islam.

Keywords: Political advice, Sunnah, Qur’an, al-amr bi al-ma’rūf wa al-nāḥī’ an al-munkar (to enjoin good and forbid wrong), shūrā.

Introduction

In this research we will provide reader with the definition of political advice in Islam, its status, importance and sources, we will also explore the relationship between political advice, and the Islamic principles of al-amr bi al-ma’rūf wa al-nāḥī’ an al-munkar and shūrā from an Islamic perspective, here by political advice we refer to all efforts made in order to advice Muslims in political matters, it records the incidents related to such topic in the prophetic Sunnah and provide scholars with them. This is the limit of our study.

In the Holy Qur’an, one finds that the Muslim Ummah (community of believers) is praised by the All-Mighty Allah and described as “those whose affair is determined by consultation among themselves” [42:38], this is in the chapter given the name al-Shūrā (mutual consultation). On another occasion, the prophet p.b.u.h is ordered by Allah to consult his people “So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter” [3:159]. The prophet p.b.u.h in his Sunnah has given a great deal of attention to the matter of giving advice to others especially to those who are in authority, in charge of public affairs and responsible for the benefits of others, or in a leading position. Moreover, in the Holy Qur’an, we find that the principle of enjoining good and forbidding wrong is also given a great deal of attention. For example, in the verse 104 of the third chapter of the Qur’an Allah orders Muslims to follow this principle: “And let there be arising from you a nation inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be successful”. Therefore, the prophet p.b.u.h applied the two principles in his life and mission. He taught his companions that Muslims should follow the same path in dealing with life matters and issues. In the prophetic Sunnah the two principles also have been confirmed through a number of aḥādīth. Therefore, from such principles one can extract the lawfulness and importance of the term in question, namely political advice. This research comes as a proof on the peaceful nature of the religion of Islam which can be clearly seen in the Sunnah of the prophet p.b.u.h. In the present time Muslims suffer from the absence of such concept which is urgently needed to be understood and applied in a civilized and modern way.

Importance of the Study

The study focuses on the definition and importance of political advice in accordance with Islam based on Qur’ān and Ḥadīth and the usage of them as the main sources of

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guidance in political advice looking to make the Muslim as well as the country a prosperous and harmonious place to live, with a historical view about political advice which link between what can be considered as examples on applying this principle in Islam even in its early days. The introduction of the term political advice to the Islamic literature and highlighting its existence and ways of practice with the aim of confirming its importance and status in Islam is of utmost importance to the present study. The collective and mutual responsibility in Islam is highlighted in the present research. This is by giving examples on the main Islamic principles which make giving advice and seeking it obligatory in all fields of life with special focus on political issues. This task could have not been possible without giving examples from the life of prophet pbuh and his companions. The research also gives evidence on the peaceful, humanitarian, real, and positive nature of Islam which is considered as safety tools and elements for the society and guardian of its stability. This is by the process of sharing ideas, views and opinions of all elements of the society in order to reach a sound and suitable view about issues and matters of consultation. It is worth mentioning that in our modern time Muslims are in need for applying the spirit of such principle and following its teaching in order to preserve their unity, security and solidarity.

Questions of the Study
1. What is the definition of political advice in Islam, its importance, roots, examples and sources?
2. What is the real status of political advice in Islam as presented in the Qur'an and Hadith, and during the prophet and his companions' eras, how was this concept applied at that time?
3. What is the relationship between political advice, al-amr bi al-ma'ra'if wa al-nahî 'an al-munkar and shûrâ from an Islamic perspective?

Objectives of the Study
This study aims at:
1. Providing readers with a definition of political advice from an Islamic perspective based on evidence from the Qur'an and Sunnah and the practices of the prophet (p.b.u.h) and his companions, which will help in recording for the early beginning of such practice.
2. Describing the status and importance of political advice according to Islamic sources where an attempt is made to prove that Islam covers all aspects of life.
3. Giving an historical overview about political advice and its applications during the prophet's and his companions' time, in order to link the present with past of Islam and proving that such practices were suitable for the simple environment in which the first generation of Muslims lives, however such principles can be applied at any later time.
4. Exploring the relationship between the Islamic principles of shûrâ and al-amr bi al-ma'ra'if wa al-nahî 'an al-munkar (to enjoin good and forbid wrong) and political advice in the light of historical view about such matter in the time of the prophet (p.b.u.h).

The Methodology of the Study
In this study, researchers will use the following methods as illustrated in what follows:
1- Historical method: this is done by investigating sources and by referring to what was recorded by scholars. This is in order for us to find the roots and origins of the issue in question and collect evidence about the various views under investigation.
2- Deductive Method: by defining the concept and explaining the words so they achieve the objectives of the study, also by presenting the Qur'anic and Hadith texts related to the subject, principles, and controls with methods of approach and to suggest a practical step to apply the findings of the present study.
3- Inductive Method: begin with specific observations, formulate some tentative hypotheses, and finally end up developing some general conclusions regarding political advice.
4- Analytical approach: this is by analysing the data collected from sources and suggesting a sound understanding of them.

1.1 Definition Political Advice
Generally speaking, the word politics comes from Latin word, politico means Greece politicos, and it means something related to the citizens or residents of a city. Other meanings extend to expedient, shrewd or prudent in practical matters, tactful, diplomatic, and political. (Stevenson, 2005)
In Arabic, “politic” means “Siyāsah” (administration, management, policy) which comes from the root sās which has several meanings amongst which are: to administer, mange, regulate, and to dominate, govern rule, and to lead, guide, conduct, and to direct. (Wehr, 1976)
In Islamic political theory, politic is called Siyāsah.
The discipline where al-Siyāsah al-Sharʿīyyah (legal policy) is studied is defined by Khallāf as the administration, management and regulation of state affairs by laws and systems which reflect the Islamic principles with no need for clear or direct evidence concerning each one of these affairs in specific. It aims, he adds, at achieving peoples’ benefits and interests in a just and sufficient way. (Khallaf, 1988) Fiqh al-Siyāsah, therefore, is an Islamic teaching that regulates the aspects of power system and the government. Political affairs and all means of action, policy, and strategy of the government of a country, or a country’s policy towards other countries. Politics can also be seen as the policy or how to act in the face of a nation and how to handle a problem. (Khatbat, 2007)

Among the earliest works of the Muslim scholars who used the word Siyāsah which means politics is Abu Hassan al-Alhwazi’s book Tahdhīb Al-Siyāsah which he wrote in the year 446 A.H. This is the earliest book on Islamic political science (Al-Siyāsah al-Sharʿīyyah). (Maududi, 1969)

Therefore, the meaning of the word Siyāsah as explained above can be seen for example in the Prophet Muhammad’s (PBUH) initiative in bringing together his followers and other groups with various cultures in al-Madina into a form of community or a state which is structured, ruled and ordered under his leadership. He was the ruler and leader of the community with the virtue of being receiving revelation and orders from Allah. This is clearly a very early example on political practice which helps realizing his goal in establishing the society of al-Madina which is regarded as the first state built based according to Islamic principles. This example provides us with the main teachings and principles that should be followed, applied, and practiced by later Muslim generation. It is also considered the essence of all rulings and juristic material extracted from the two main sources of Islam.

Moreover, it is worth mentioning here that we often come across the term; “political Islam” which mainly consists of two parts, namely politics and Islam. Politics means political rulings that influenced the behaviour of the group yet to match the desire of the rulers. This is in the light of the fact that Islam means peace and Islam as a religion follows and is mainly based on the teachings of the Qurʾān and the Hādhīth of his Messenger. (Enayat, 2000)

Political Islam can also be interpreted as a way to influence the public, to behave in accordance with the teachings of Qurʾān and Hādhīth of his Messenger. In the concept of Islam, the highest authority is Allah. (Al-Awa, 1989)

Therefore, Political advice can be defined as the act of giving advice in public and state affairs in order to achieve the interest of a nation. This should include internal and external affairs. Therefore, by suggesting this definition, one finds that it is a two ways process that is done by both those who are responsible for people’s affairs and in charge of public affair and on the other side it is also done by individuals who have suggestions that would help in achieving the goals of such process.

1.2 Concept of Political Advice in Islam

The above mentioned definition can be found in the Qurʾān and the Sunnah of the prophet p.b.u.h. The main concept of advice is basically al-amr bi al-maʾrif wa al-nahāʾ ʿan al-munkar (to enjoin good and forbid wrong). It also meets with the concept of shūrā as one of the principles of Islam.

The main point for giving advice can be defined in two ways. Firstly, prioritising faith in Allah. Secondly, giving moral advices and justifying the importance of educations. For the rulers, they should also advice on the ways to run the system of a country and how to balance the manners of the problems faced by the rulers who had a high integrity with the help of Shariʿah. (Ibn Qudāmah, 1997) The act of giving advice is also referred to in Islam, whereas religion is used to practice so as to preach. To advice is obligatory, if there are people who carry it out, then the others are no longer obligated to do so. The act of giving advice is a matter that must be based on the ability of each person. (Ibn baṭṭāl, 2003)

1.2.1. Roots of Political Advice in Islam

Most of the duties and rights of the ruler are directly expressed but some of them are expressed indirectly. It is the duty of the state to implement and maintain justice and to maintain the rights of the people. The ruler of an Islamic state works in accordance with the teachings of Islam. It is the duty of the ruler of an Islamic state to look into Islamic teachings for guidance when needed. It is the duty of the ruler of an Islamic state to live his life to for the country, to put the interest of his people above his own interest. (Siddiqe, 2004)

It is the duty of the ruler to maintain the rights of life, property, freedom for conscience, freedom for religion. It is the duty of the ruler of an Islamic state to ensure that
the life of an individual or lives of all the groups are safe and are not harmed in any way. Another duty of the ruler is to ensure the safety of the property of his subjects, it should not be taken away with force and the subjects should not get into any frauds regarding his property. The ruler has the duty to ensure that the people have the freedom of expression and they can have the beliefs and opinions they want to keep. The ruler of the Islamic state has the duty to ensure that people of all the religions have the freedom to practice their own religions as long as their practice does not hinder the practice of other religions. (Siddiqe, 2004)

Advising ruler means assisting them in upholding the truth and reminding them gently and politely about the people's rights. Imam al-Nawawi said that advising rulers means helping them to run the truth, obeying them for good, reminding them gently on the wrongs they do, caution them against their neglects to the rights of the Muslims, not rebelling but helps to create stability in the country. (Al-Nawawi, 2009)

1.2.2 The Concept of Enjoining Good and Forbidding Wrong and its Relationship to Political Advice

Enjoining good and forbidding wrong is one of the policies in religion where by using it, the advantages became clear and dispersed. While following the ways that do not forbid the wrong, it will become vague and disappeared.

It was mentioned in the Qur'an on how fortunate one is if he enjoins good and forbids wrong which Allah says in Surat at-Tawbah verse 71:

Meaning: "The believers, men and women, are Auliya' (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another, they enjoin (on the people) Al-Ma'rūf (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. polytheism and disbelief of all kinds and all that Islam has forbidden); they perform al-Ṣalāh and give the Zakat, and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah will have His Mercy on them. Surely Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise." (9:71)

Also in Surat al-'Imrān, verse 104,

Meaning: " Let there arise out of you a group of people inviting to all that is good (Islam), enjoining Al-Ma'rūf (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do) and forbidding Al-Munkar (polytheism and disbelief and all that Islam has forbidden). And it is they who are the successful. "(3:104)

While the nature and a characteristic of the hypocrites can be seen in their acts of enjoining good and forbidding wrong. Allah said in Surat al-Tawbah verse 67:

Meaning: "The hypocrites, men and women, are from one another, they enjoin (on the people) Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief and polytheism of all kinds and all that Islam has forbidden), and forbid (people) from Al-Ma'ruf. They have forgotten Allah, so He has forgotten them. Verily, the hypocrites are the Fasiqūn (rebellious, disobedient to Allah)." (9:67)

Right must be enjoined absolutely and wrong forbidden absolutely. For the specific individual or group, its good must be enjoined, and its evil forbidden, its praiseworthy aspects praised, and its blameworthy aspects criticized in such a way that the enjoining of right does not include the loss of a good greater than itself nor the bringing about of an evil, and the forbidding wrong does not involve the bringing about of a greater evil or the loss of a good. (Ibn Abe lahiy, 2012)

When the issue is unclear, the believer must strive to understand it until the truth becomes clear to him. A person cannot undertake acts of obedience except with knowledge and correct intention. If he fails to do it, he is in disobedience to Allah. Neglecting what is obligatory is disobedience just as doing what has been forbidden in the area of enjoining right is also disobedience. This is a very wide and dangerous area, and there is no power and no strength except with the aid of Allah. (Ibn Abe lahiy, 2012)

An example punishment of Abdullah ibn bayn ibn Salul among the figures of hypocrisy and corruption because of his helpers and people loyal to him. The removing of their evil through punishment would have brought on the removal of other good because of the anger of his tribe and the arousal of tribe hostility against Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) and the Muslims. Thus when he spread among the people that which he spread in the slander against A’ishah and then denied it, and when Sa’ad ibn Mu’adh spoke to him harshly as he deserved, and pointed out his hypocrisy, and then Sa’ad ibn Ubadah though he was a believer and companion and righteous man invoked his protection that Abdullah ibn Ubayy be left alone, the tribe of each of these two men gave their loyalty to the position of their tribesman until chaos and bloodshed nearly resulted. (Ibn Taymiyah, 1998), (al-Mubarakpuri, 2002)

1.2. 2.1 Standards of Enjoining Good and Forbidding Wrong:

This principle is established as one of the Islamic
principles that concern all aspects of Muslims’ life. Therefore, it seems useful here to talk about the standards of enjoining good and forbidding wrong in Islam. This is in order for us to highlight it is meaning and relationship to the issue of giving advice and political advice in particular. Certain scholars say that this action is obligatory; however it does not take that same status of obligation as the five main pillars of Islam. (Ibn Abd al-Barr, 2000). Al-Nawawi says that this ruling is based on both the Qur’an and Sunnah and is considered as a consensus of the ummah, and that is kind of advice which is considered part of the religion of Islam. It is considered as a fard kifayah (collective obligation), when it is performed by a number of Muslims others will be exempted from performing it, however, if no one performs it all Muslims who are able to perform it will be lamed unless they have an excuse or in the status of fear. It is a fard ‘Ayn, he adds, if there on whoever is able to perform it and is the only person knows about it. (Al-Nawawi, 1972)

Scholars also paid a great deal of attention to the importance of this action, to the extent it is said that a general punishment of the ummah might be caused by abandoning this obligation, a hadith that can be cited here is what is narrated by al-Bukhari that “The Prophet (p.b.u.h) said, "The example of the person abiding by Allah's order and restrictions in comparison to those who violate them is like the example of those persons who drew lots for their seats in a boat. Some of them got seats in the upper part, and the others in the lower. When the latter needed water, they had to go up to bring water (and that troubled the others), so they said, 'Let us make a hole in our share of the ship (and get water) saving those who are above us from troubling them. So, if the people in the upper part left the others do what they had suggested, all the people of the ship would be destroyed, but if they prevented them, both parties would be safe."(Ibn Battal, 2003)

While discussing kinds and ways of sadaqah (voluntary charity), al-Sa’idi in his commentary on al-Nawawi’s Forty Hadith, points to the fact the Sadaqah is not confined to wealth and money, it could be done by something else which is more beneficial. For example, he adds, enjoining good and forbidding wrong. This is because it is considered as a call for obeying Allah and abstaining from disobeying Him, a matter which is has more benefits than what money has. (al-Sa’idi, 1997)

Here we can see that being sincere with the intention of reaching public benefits and interest is part of enjoining good and forbidding wrong. Moreover, enjoining good and forbidding wrong has to performed in accordance with one’s capacity, power, and knowledge, this is the meaning of the hadith “He who amongst you sees something abominable should modify it with the help of his hand; and if he has not strength enough to do it, then he should do it with his tongue, and if he has not strength enough to do it, (even) then he should (abhor it) from his heart, and that is the least of faith.” (Muslim), Which considered as a main evidence on the legislation of this Islamic principle, and sign of true faith that it should be performed as mentioned above according to capacity and knowledge. Muslims are also directed to choose the most effective and suitable way when enjoining good and forbidding wrong. (al-Sa’idi, 1997) Moreover, Iman Ahmad asserts that one who enjoins good and forbids wrong should patient and lenient. (Ibn Rajab, 1985) It is also ascribed to the earlier scholars that this action should be performed in a secret way between individuals (Ibn Rajab, 1985) Here, we can say that this is in order for people sins to be hidden and not announced in public and to avoid any kind of personal sensitivity or causes of embarrass to other. Ibn Rajab considers the abandoning of this obligation as a reason for Allah not answering Muslims’ supplications. (Ibn Rajab, 2001) This shows us how important this issue is. Furthermore, of the conditions of performing this action is the wrong should be a matter about which there is a consensus of scholars, and not of the disputable issues. (Ibn Daqiq, 2003)

Finally, Ibn Daqiq sees that the person who performs this action should necessarily be of the people who do not commit sins about which they advise people, this is because it is obligatory that everyone enjoins good and forbids wrong for others and for their own benefit. (Ibn Daqiq, 2003)

Therefore, it is quite clear from the above mentioned pieces of evidence that there are stages where one should go through in performing this duty after being sure that one is qualified for performing that. Firstly, by giving reminders before proceeding with advice. It is one of the factors towards goodness and making it better. People should make a constructive reformation towards making the country a better place for the people to stay in. They also should not keep themselves hidden as it is part of enjoining goodness and forbidding wrong. Moreover, the most important piece of advice is to go to them in order to convey the needs of the people as well as the
shortcomings and weaknesses of particular officials to explain the things that are negatively affecting the people. Reminding to them fear Allah and the hereafter, inviting them to do good deeds and preventing them from making vices as well as encouraging them to live in moderation.

1.3 The Importance of Political Advice in Islam

The existence of leadership in a country is important in Islam. Without strong, positive, and sincere effort, the support of the people will start to decrease and the leader will not be able to govern well.

When the community is left without a ruler, the situation is going to be chaotic whereby the powerful will oppress the weak. Thus, the leadership arrangement is one of the key policies in Islam. The word of Allah in Surat Al-Nâr, verse 55:

"Allah has promised those among you who believe, and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession to the present rulers in the earth, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practise their religion, that which He has chosen for them (i.e. Islam). And He will grant them the support of the people will start to decrease and the leader will not be able to govern well."

The way it was conducted during the time of Prophet Ibrâhîm was advising openly not only by words but also through his actions by destroying the statues that was built during his time. That was his ways of conversing with Namrûd from Babylonia which was witnessed by the royal princes there as mentioned in the Holy Qur‘ân in Surat Al-Baqarah verse 258:

Meaning: “Have you not looked at him who disputed with Ibrahim (Abraham) about his Lord (Allah), because Allah had given him the kingdom? When Ibrahim (Abraham) said (to him): "My Lord (Allah) is He Who gives life and causes death." He said, "I give life and cause death." Ibrahim (Abraham) said, "Verily! Allah causes the sun to rise from the east; then cause it you to rise from the west." So the disbeliever was utterly defeated. And Allah guides not the people, who are zalûnûn(wrong-doers, etc.)”(2: 258)

Regarding this verse, Zaid ibn Aslam said that the first dictator king on the face of the earth is Namrud. Every person passed by Namrud and he asked; "Who Is Your Lord?” They answered: "You are!” until Prophet Ibrâhîm’s turn which he asked the same thing: "Who is your Lord?” Prophet Ibrâhîm replied: "My Lord is the One who makes His slave alive and die whenever He wants." Namrud replied: "I also can make the people dead or alive whenever I want too.” Prophet Ibrâhîm said: "Allah rises the sun in the east and sets it in the west.”

(Al-Tabârî, 1986)

This verse, clearly describes that Prophet Ibrâhîm criticized and debated with King Namrud openly in front of many people. Other evidence that shows Prophet Ibrâhîm criticized and debated openly in front of his people, as mentioned by Allah in Surah Al-An‘ân, verse 83:

Meaning: “And that was Our Proof which We gave Ibrahim (Abraham) against his people. We raise whom We will in degrees. Certainly your Lord is All-Wise, All-Knowing.” (6: 83)

Similar to what has been done by Prophet Mûsâ and Harûn, which they advise Pharaoh in front of the other people with status and reputations. Prophet Mûsâ also made Pharaoh felt embarrassed and ashamed in front of other
his own squad in his palace by defeating Pharaoh’s magicians with the miracle of Allah that had been given to him. Nevertheless, it made the magician repent and submit themself to Allah. It is all recorded and mentioned in the Qur’an in Surah Tâha from verse 43:

Meaning: “Go, both of you, to Fir’aun (Pharaoh), verily, he has transgressed (all bounds in disbelief and disobedience and behaved as an arrogant and as a tyrant).” (20:43)

1.4.1.1 The Prophet Muhammâd’s (PBUH) Practice of political advice

Examples on the practice of political advice during the prophet’s time are available in the sources of hadith and Sirah, of which we will quote here the following incidents in which the prophet p.b.u.h was ordering his people to give and advice and at the same time he was seeking his people’s advice:

The first evidence is the hadith narrated on the authority of Jarir that he observed: I owed allegiance to the Messenger of Allah (may peace and blessings be upon him) on hearing (is commands) and obeying (them) and the Prophet instructed me (to act) as lay in my power, and sincerity and goodwill for every Muslim. (Muslim, n.d)

Also it is narrated from Abu Hurayra that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Allah is pleased with three things from you. He is pleased with you for gossip, squandering property, and asking too many questions.” (Malik, 1985)

Moreover, there is the great hadith in which the prophet says: "Religion is “giving advice” (sincerity), religion is sincerity, religion is sincerity." They said; "To whom, O Messenger of Allah?” He said: "To Allah, to His Book, to His Messenger, to the imams of the Muslims and to their common folk.” (Muslim, n.d)

One of the earliest examples of seeking advice about an issue which might be considered as a national security issue is when “… the prophet p.b.u.h consulted his people about the battle of Uhud where Then the Messenger of Allah [pbuh] held a head military consultation assembly to exchange views about the situation….Then he offered a suggestion that his Companions should not go out of Madinah and that they should encamp themselves within the city…. Some of the best honourable Companions, who had missed Al-Jihâd in Badr, suggested that the Prophet [pbuh] should go out of Madinah and urged him to accept their point of view. After weighing carefull the pros and cons of the issue, it was decided that the enemy should be resisted outside the city at Uhud. (al-Mubarakpuri, 2002)

Moreover, on a similar occasion the prophet p.b.u.h accepted his companion Salman al-Farisi’s advice after the tribes of Arabia had gathered in order to attack al-Madinah in the battle called the trench at that time “… the leadership inside the city was on the alert and the intelligence personnel managed to reconnoiter the area of the enemies, and reported their movement to the people charge in Madinah. The Messenger of Allâh [pbuh]
summoned a high advisory board and conducted a careful discussion of a plan to defend Madinah. After a lengthy talk between military leaders and people possessed of sound advice, it was agreed, on the proposal of an honorable Companion, Salman Al-Farisi, to dig trenches as defensive lines.” (al-Mubarakpuri, 2002)

Finally, we can add the example took place during the time of the Hudaybiyyah Treaty, there was a time where our Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) went to the extent of asking his wife ‘Umm Salamah for her view on something he needed to make a decision on. This shows that even our Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) asked for someone’s advice rather than making the decision by himself and acting rashly upon it. This is in contrast to the attitude of some people who consider themselves as someone who never commit any wrong doings and feel like they should not be reprimanded or advised. (Ibn Kathīr, 1992)

The prophet (PBUH) is the best example of human being as a leader. His sunnah and Sirah are the main sources for Muslims and non-Muslims who want to know more about the unique way by which he served as a leader of Muslims. However, what is of most importance here is to trace some of his teachings which stand as examples on the legitimacy of political advice as this is the main point in the present research. This is because of the fact the best practice witnessed ever in the Islamic history of the teachings of the two main sources was that of the prophet, in addition to the fact that he was directing his companions to follow these teachings in all matters.

The Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) demonstrations of ethics are directly linked to his faith and connection with the divine. Truth and trust is critical to any kind of leadership, whether it is business or as a husband or as a mother or a business partner. (Adair, John, 2010)

It is the starting point and plays a key role in all spectrums of leadership. Even before being commissioned as a prophet, he was known as the truthful and trustworthy. He became one of the key trustees in Mekka and people would leave their valuable possessions with him. (Adair, John, 2010)

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) also used his set and code of ethics in his domestic and internal affairs. One incident was when one of his wives, namely A’isha was giving some physical descriptions about a lady; the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) reminded her that it does not befit our values, ethics and judgement to talk disparage about other people. The words of ‘Aisha actually were not that significant but it can be seen that the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) has deep sensitivity to maintain high level of values. Even in the language that we use, Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) wanted us to refrain from looking down on others and accept all their differences. (Al-Maqdisi, 2004)

1.4.2 Time of the Companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

When Caliph "Umar ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb was delivering his sermons, he said that he wants to limit the dowry to 400 Dirhams, for the value that is being done by the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH). If there is more than that, then the rest is incorporated into the BaitūlMāl. This was protested by a woman, in front of the others, with the words: "O Caliph ‘Umar, you were trying to ban the dowry for women exceeding 400 Dirhams?" Umār replied: "Exactly" The woman said: "Did you not hear the word of Allah:

Meaning: “But if you intend to replace a wife by another and you have given one of them a Cantar (of gold i.e. a great amount) as Mahr, take not the least bit of it back; would you take it wrongfully without a right and (with) a manifest sin?” (4: 20)

‘Umar said; "O Allah, forgive me, for all humans know better than ‘Umar." Then ‘Umar revises his decision again. (Ibn Kathīr, 1992)

That was ‘Umar ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb. The open advice he received from the lady, with a great soul he admitted his mistake, and not saying: "You are right, but the way you advised is wrong, you should be advising secretly, not openly!” Caliph Umār did not completely deny the way the woman advised him in front of many people. Not only that, the companions who saw it ever nor deny such women. If the woman is wrong in it, then certainly he will be challenged simultaneously by many people at the time. In fact there is no perversion of it. This is because of the decisions made by Caliph Umār, which will take effect and give impact towards the people, which then the revising was done openly. (Ibn Kathīr, 1992)

This method is also invoked by the successors and to the next generation. It is recorded in the books of the scholars. If they advise the rulers in four eyes and furtively, it is certain from where humans can know these events. If human had been advising the caliph or governor, then this cannot be called tacit or four eyes, because there are others who listened or viewed, then the person is narrated to the next generation to our hands.
During time of Caliph 'Uthmān, news had been spread all over the Arabs peninsula on the corruptions that had been caused by Caliph 'Uthmān, which he implemented nepotism and cronyism, devour people of their wealth and did not rule properly. What have been stated above were all lies which had been fabricated on Caliph 'Uthmān because there are some groups who intend to steal the power and possess status and reputation for their own possession. (al-Suyuti, 1999)

Usamah ibn Zaid, step grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was asked by his fellow citizen to advise Caliph 'Uthmān. Usamah ibn Zaid then stepped up and said:

“How can you accuse me of not advising other than just telling tales to all of you? In the name of Allah, I have spoken with him (advising) between me and him and I never wish to be the one and the first person to open the door of defamation.” (al-Suyuti, 1999)

Look at the attitude preserved by the step grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). It was not meant to find popularity or to give opinions and suggestion on how to become popular, not exchanging feedbacks for the sake of getting power and status and also not for the sake of wanting to be complimented or praised. This is how sincere and pious one should be.

The companions and Usamah ibn Zaid reacted with a positive attitude and they were sincere on giving advices and warning them of their mistakes. Advice is not meant to be spread because Islam protects the dignity and privacy of each and every Muslim.

During the time of Caliph Ali, he advises the Governor of Egypt on being careful with the post that had been given to him. Caliph Ali said: “Indeed, there will be people who will look at how you manage your workloads, just like how you once look at how your leaders handled before this. Your citizens will take notice of you with their eyes open just like how you took notice of how the government work before this.” (Enan, 2002)

Caliph Ali continued: “They will talk about you just like how you discussed about them. Indeed, the citizens will speak highly of him if he does good to them. You will claim the biggest gift if you could assemble all the gifts that come from your good deeds. Protect yourself from your desires so as to protect yourself from getting involved in things which are forbidden. With such an alert and cautious traits that have been practiced in yourself, you can make a decision between something good or the other way round for your citizens.” (Enan, 2002)

1.5 Shūra in Islam

Shūra is one of the key principles in the constitution in Islam. This system will guarantee the political stability and the well-being of the people and the nation if it is done based on the Qur’ān and Hadīth.

The implementation of Shūra will also guarantee the nonexistence of the dictator system in Islam. The implementation of Shūra in the political system has been around since the time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). He held discussions with his companions in various problems that touch on the importance of the people.

1.5.1 Definition of Shūra

According to the language, the Shūra has two meanings, that is revealing and exposing something or take something. (Ibn Faris, 2001)

The words Shūra in terms of language means, consultations, or discussions. The discussions held by the scholars and Muslims are related to interest of their welfares and ended based on their faith and piety to Allah. (Ash-Shalih, 1994)

Whereas in the term, several scholars gave definitions of Shūra, among them was Al-Rāghibih, Shūra is the process as suggested and also by revising among the members of the Shūra. (Ibn Al-Aṣfahānī, Abi Al-Qāsim Al-Raghibh, 2010)

Ibn Al’-Arabi Al-Māılıkī has defined it with gathering to ask for an opinion (a problem) in which members exchanged opinions in which they owned. (Ibn Rajab, 2001)

Where as the definition given by the Shūra experts of contemporary scholars such as the process of tracing the opinions of experts in a problem to achieve a solution that approximates the truth. (Ash-Shalih, 1994)

‘Atr define the Shūra as the process that presents various opinions with diverse and argumentative side accompanied in a case or issue, tested by experts who are intelligent and wise, in order to choose the right and exact solution with the hope that the solution will be practiced and be realized in the near future. (’Atr, 1999)

The Islamic texts which talk about shūrā are general and flexible. Hence, this is a sign of both completeness and continuity of Shari’ah. It is considered as a tool for reformation of life. (Udah, 1981) However, he adds, there are principal rules for Shari’ah which can be summarized in its being a right for rulers and nations at the same time,
it is an obligation on rulers, it should be based on sincerity, it should be based on the view of the majority, and the minority should then follow that view (Udah, 1981)

To sum up, it can be described as the investigation of the opinions and views of the qualified experts in public matters in order to reach a sound view and make what seems to be the right decision.

1.5.1 Shūrā and Democracy

In its basic meaning democracy come to mean the authority of the nation, this means that in this process nations are given rights to participate in the decision making and management of country affairs. (al-Mahdi, 2006) In this context, by finding the meeting points between shūrā and democracy, the differences can be in the origins of each of the two as shūrā is based on Qur’an and Sunnah and is considered as part of Muslims faith and is considered as nations contribution in governing the country, while democracy was established by humans and considers nations as a source of authority. (al-Mahdi, 2006)

Here, Khattab says that “The qualification of modern democracy is not merely election or voting but freedom, justice, equality, coexistence and human rights as well. None of these qualifications can work or even exist in any society without some regulations, that is to say laws and norms regulating the existence and the work of these qualifications. Society is not a society without law; law is not law unless it is practiced; to practice the law needs authority that is government.” (Khattab, 2007) In conclusion, we find that these humanitarian principles can be found in Islam and they are of the results of the principles of enjoining what is good and forbidding what is wrong and shūrā.

1.5.2 Members of the Shūrā Council

The implementation of Shūrā contains heavy duties and responsibilities because it involves the solutions to heavy cases that occurred among the Muslims. Therefore, the members of the Shūrā council need to depend on the scholars who are knowledgeable, fair, considerate, and wise with high qualifications. The conditions of members of the Shūrā council are briefly described as: devotion to Allah and God-consciousness, honesty and trustworthiness in every acts and practices, knowledgeable in all fields of religion and other fields such as political or economics, professionals and have deep practices not just normal experience practice. (‘Atr, 1999)

Moreover, regarding the conditions of members of consultation council, Udah illustrates that they should be of the people of integrity, knowledge, wisdom and sound views. (Udah, 1981) Theses, therefore, should be the best qualities of consultant and advisers, at the same time they constitute qualifications that make their suggestions acceptable. Such conditions should ensure the peaceful nature of the process of shūrā, the preservation of its goals and the achievement of public benefits and interests.

1.5.3 Importance And Benefits of Shūrā

Shūrā is a crucial part of the Islamic political system. It allows common people to participate in the decision-making process. It helps create a society that engages actively with rulers. Consultation is important in building a solid relationship between the ruler and the people ensuring that the ruler does not go astray or regress into an authoritarian government. In Surat Ash-Shūrā verse 38:

Meaning: “And those who answer the Call of their Lord [i.e. to believe that He is the only One Lord (Allah), and to worship none but Him Alone], and perform As-Salat (Iqamat-as-Salat), and who (conduct) their affairs and to worship none but Him Alone], and perform As-Salat (Iqamat-as-Salat), and who (conduct) their affairs by mutual consultation, and who spend of what We have bestowed on them.” (42:38)

Shūrā is one of the basic fundamentals of the Islamic political system. It extended to include all the affairs of Muslims. Thus, the Islamic state might have preceded the modern democratic systems with regard to the necessity of unanimity over choosing the one who runs its affairs and cares for its interests, something which stresses the value and effectiveness of unanimity among Muslims. (Al-Nabarawi, Fathiyāh, 1981)

The Shūrā principle in Islam on three basic precepts. First, that all persons in any given society are equal in human and civil rights. Second, those public issues are best decided by majority view and third, that the three other principles of justice, equality and human dignity, which constitute Islam's moral core, and from which all Islamic conceptions of human and civil rights derive, are best realized, in personal as well as public life, under Shūrā governance. (Al-Nabarawi, Fathiyāh, 1981)

Ibn’Attyah said, “The Shūrā is the most important rules in Islamic law”. He said so because Allah has made Shūrā as an obligation for His servant in the search for solutions to various problems in need of togetherness of
mind with others. In addition, Allah has made Shūra as one of the chapters in the Qurʾān. Both of these are enough to show how important Shūra is in the eyes of the religion (IbnʿAtyyah, 2007).

Caliph Ali also narrated the benefits of Shūra. He said, “There are seven virtues of Shūra, which is acquiring the right solution, get a brilliant idea, avoid mistakes, protected from curse, survived the disappointment, unites a lot of heart, and follow others.” (Raysuni, 2011)

The importance and benefits of Shūra are much explained by the scholars, such as Imam Fakhr ad-Din ar-Rāzī. In a nutshell, he mentions that the Shūra has a lot of benefits among others are as follows: (Al-Rāzī, 2007)

A. Discussion between the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) with his companions showed their degrees of elevation (in the presence of the Prophet) and also this proves how their love to him and their readiness, in obeying him. If he did not invite those consulted, of course, this is a form of insult to them.

B. Discussions need to be held because it could have occurred in the mind of someone's opinion containing the benefit and without thoughts by the ruler. Al-Ḥasan al-Ḥasani- al-Ṭāhir said “Any people who consulted, will undoubtedly be guided so that it is able to carry out the best decision in their problems”. (Ibn Abī Shaibah, 1999)

C. Al-Ḥasan and Sufiān ibnʿUyainah said, “Verily the Prophet ordered to be consulted so that it can be used as an example for others and to be sunnah to his people”. (Ibn Abī Shaibah, 1999)

1.5.4 Shūra in Political Life

Everyone has the rights and Shūra to participate in deciding who will be their rulers and representatives by Shūra, and the elected public bodies must reach their decisions by Shūra (Abdi, 2010)

The majority can make mistakes, but making mistakes is human and humans are only required to make serious efforts to determine what is right and to avoid mistakes, making use of accumulated human knowledge and experience about the discussed matter. Such requirements can be met far better in a majority decision. Many precedents can be found in the life of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) and the early caliphs about decisions made according to the majority even if they differed from the ruler’s view.

Islam teaches that an individual must adhere to the society or community and the majority can only be identified in such a case. A Prophet’s tradition urges one to follow the most overwhelming majority in case of a serious split. (Murad, 1997)

1.5.5 Differences between Shūra and Political Advice

From the definition of Shūras mentioned above, it is considered as a process and a discussion which is mentioned by Allah in the Qurʾān which has been used during the time of Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) and should be implemented in the current society.

Moving on to the word advice, it is an act of kindness which should be fulfilled as how Islam has taught. Giving advice is also an act of which it will not only benefit ourselves but also the people around us. This is an act that does not only apply to us, normal people but also to the people with power and status. At the same time, it also helps us to prevent from vices but also allowing us to make good deeds and also making us practise the Islamic way of life. (Al-Awa, 1989)

As it has been mentioned above, we can see that there are differences between Shūra and advice. The followings give a better explanation and image of the differences:

1. Shūra can only be collectively done in groups as a way to discuss problems and coming to a solution based on the Qurʾān and Sunnah before announcing the decision to the citizens. While, on the other hand, advice is a process which can be done individually, or in groups to give opinions and suggestions on something that was seen as an act that can be improved or turning it into a better one. (ʿAtr, 1999)

2. Shūra consist of terms and conditions that have to be gone through in order to be part of the discussion such as qualifications and status. For advice, it does not take any conditions and it simply can be given by anyone from anywhere. People have the rights to give advice to anyone who are committing wrong doings or those who need improvements or those who are seen as an embarrassment. There are two parts of advice firstly, those who advise on something that will benefit others, and secondly those who will advise on something that will become worst or that will only lead to astray. (ʿAtr, 1999)

3. Every problem that have been discussed in the Shūra council which led to the decisions that have been made are compulsory for the people to agree and fulfil them, while an advice can be accepted or not depending on individuals, especially the rulers, who
should listen to the opinions that have been voiced out by the citizens and not rejecting them but rather think over the opinions and make a decision depending on how much benefit they can bring to the society. (‘Atr, 1999)

On this occasion we may conclude that giving advice is a very important element of the process of Shīrā with a generality and specification connection between the two terms.

1.6 Relevance of Political Advice

Advice is considered as a part of faith in Islam. It is also recommended in Islam as it does not only bring benefits to others but also gives us a chance to remind ourselves of our acts. As we can see here, the act of giving advice is not only relevant to be practised in our times but also long time ago, even during the time of our prophet Muḥammad (PBUH). The act of giving advice needs to be practised according to suitable time and ways so it can be implemented according to the Islamic laws. Here, the researchers will point out evidence from the Ḥadīth and the words of the scholars which will explain how important an advice can be.

Ibn Ṭaymiyyah said, “It’s obvious that the way to enjoin good is by doing well and in a decent manner while forbidding wrong is not by doing bad things.” (Ibn Al-Ruḥail, 1998)

From Ṭānim Ibn Aus, from Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) said, “Religion is advice.” He said it three times. Then we asked, "O Messenger of Allah to whom?" He said, "To sincerely worship to Allah, faithful to his Book, obey his Messenger, give advice to the leaders of the Muslims as well as advice for ordinary people (the people) among them" (Alkhattab, 1997)

Imam Ibn Al-Salah said, “Advice for rules of the Muslims is to assist them in truth, keeping them in it, reminded them of the truth, giving warning to them gently, away from the insurgency to them, pray for them, and help encourage others (community) to also be the case.” (Ibn Rajab, 2001)

Imam Al-Hasan ibn‘Abbās al-Barbahārī said, “When you see someone hoping (wishing or making du‘ā’) the worst for the ruler, you should know that he is following his own desire of lust and innovation (bid‘ah). But if you hear someone hoping the best for the ruler, you should know that he is someone who follows the Sunnah”. (al-Barbahārī, 1993)

Imam al-Nawawi explains the hadith mentioned above saying that, “Advice for the rulers of the Muslims is to assist them in truth, obeying them and order them in truth, giving reminders and advices in a kind and gentle way. Informing them on things they were ignorant of and not rebelling against them, and to unite the hearts of Muslims in order to continue obeying them.” (al-Nawawi, 1972)

Ibn‘Abbās was asked regarding how to enjoin good and forbid wrongdoings towards the rulers, he answered: “If you are able to enjoin goods and forbid wrongdoings, let that be done secretly between you two” (Ibn Rajab, 2001)

The last saying of Ibn ʻAbbās confirms that the conditions mentioned above are required for giving advice, the qualifications of the person who gives advice are very important in addition to the use of the best method, selection of the best time and suitable persons for performing this task. These are some of many examples which can provide and tell us about the importance of advising and obeying rulers by using the best possible and acceptable ways which are governed by the principles of illustrated above about al-amr bi al-ma‘rīf wa al-nahī ‘an al-munkar (to enjoin good and forbid wrong) and shīrā.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

1- Political advice means all efforts made in order to advise Muslims in political matters. This concept has its roots in Islam although it is not clearly mentioned in its textual sources. It should be practiced in Islam as any other action that needs sincerity and observing public interest in both religious and worldly affairs.

2- The origin of the concept of political advice can be found in the Qur'an and Hadith and scholars’ works by exploring the two Islamic principles of - al-amr bi al-ma‘rīf wa al-nahī ‘an al-munkar, and al-Shīrā.

3- Historical investigations show the existence of political advice during the prophet's time and his companions. The prophet (p.b.u.h) practiced political advice and trained his companions on doing so. Examples from the battles of Badr, Uhud, al-Khandaq, the issue of al-IkJ (slandering), treatment of hypocrites are used as evidence on this. This supports the present research in proving the existence and practice of such an action and highlights its status and importance in Islam.

4- Practical applications of political can be found in the Qur'an and Hadith. In which we find rulers give
advice to people. This was by seeking and making what seemed to be the right decision that brings public benefits and stops any kind of harm. The political advice was practiced by people who were giving advice in order to reach the benefit of the whole ummah (Muslim nation) and prevent all kinds of harm.

5- Al-amr bi al-ma‘rūf wa al-nahī ‘an al-munkar, and al-Shūra have a very close relationship with political advice, the researchers have also clarified the differences between Shūra and advice. Their conditions and standards are required for political advice, this is in terms of qualifications and steps, however, advice can be sought and given individually and without any official position to be held by the person who is giving advice.

6- Advice is considered as a part of faith in Islam. It is also recommended in Islam as it does not only bring benefits to others but also give us a chance to remind ourselves of our acts. It proves the peaceful nature of Islam and can be considered as a means of fighting extremist trends. This would guarantee the good relationships between all members of society and guarantee the stability of life and prevent any kind of political disorder.

7- As advice is considered the core of religion in Islam, Muslims should pay a great deal of attention to applying it in all aspects of their life, especially in political domains. This by seeking and giving it in the light of the conditions of Islamic principle and rules.

8- The researchers recommend others to conduct more researches on modern ways of applying political advice in Muslims’ life.

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مكانة النصيحة السياسية وأهميتها في الإسلام في ضوء القرآن والسنة

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ملخص

يقدم هذا البحث تعريفا بالنصيحة السياسية، وأهميتها ومكانتها في الإسلام في ضوء الكتاب والسنة، بحيث يتم توضيح التعريف والمفهوم والأول الذي يقسم عليه هذا المصطلح، وبيان العلاقة بينه وبين الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر والشريعة، مع ملاحظة من السنة النبوية وحياة الصحابة لتحقيق هذا المفهوم في الحياة العملية، ويدعم البحث عرضا لهذه المسألة وأهميتها في حياة المسلمين لهذا تمت هذه الدراسة تدريبا لما يمكن أن يكون محل مشكلة معاصرة والمساعدة في التصدي للتطبيع والتأكيد على رسالة الإسلام التي تقسم بالسلام والسلام.

الكلمات الدالة: النصيحة السياسية، السنة النبوية، القرآن الكريم، الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر، الشريعة.

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