University of Malaya

From the SelectedWorks of ZOHREH SADATMOOSAVI

Winter February 15, 2012

brotherhood Article.pdf

ZOHREH SADATMOOSAVI, University of Malaya

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons CC_BY-NC International License.

Available at: https://works.bepress.com/zohreh-sadatmoosavi2/3/
A COMPARATIVE STUDY:
BROTHERHOOD IN THE BELIEF OF
ABRAHAMIC RELIGIONS

DOI: 10.0002/foo.bar

Zohreh Sadatmoosavi
University of Malaya

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON RESEARCH IN
ISLAMIC STUDIES II (ISRIS II)

15 – 16 February 2012
ABSTRACT

The notion of brotherhood and sisterhood is common among divine and most of non divine religions alike and the holy books of the Abrahamic religions have various references to the same. Divine teachings recognize a deep religious and emotional connection between faithful people, both men and women; who live in a similar attitude. This is in addition to blood relationship that can exist between any two people. Such religious connection symbolizes kindness and unity in communities and populations. Therefore, religions have called the faithful individuals of society brothers, to invite them to unity and found stability of this kindness. Religious brotherhood is not a ceremonial title for a series of political and social purposes, but rather an intellectual and spiritual unity of goals and ideas; without which unity of individuals will not be stable. The holy Quran has called faithful people brothers.  

Based on many Ahadith, prophet Mohammad (SAW) declared brotherhood of each two persons of his entourage, which is known as Moakhatَ مؤاخاة in Islam’s history and sisterhood and brotherhood duties were expressed. The word brotherhood is also commonly used in Jewish teachings and in the Proverbs of the Old Testament of Solomon prophet, which main deals with wisdom and advice. As for the New Testament, Paul in his letter to Corinthians discourages Christians of going to Roman courts with emphasis to perpetuating brotherhood and loving each other as brothers. It has also been said that a faithful man should advise young Christian women like their own sisters, by wisdom. Thus, using terms of sisterhood and brotherhood exist amongst Abrahamic religions.

Key words: Brotherhood, Religions, Teachings, Faithful
**Introduction**

All schools, religions and countries, always are trying to obtain unity and integrity of community in order to provide a foundation of social life with full of sincerity, solidarity and correlation among people, but if a society does not have ideologically and faith driven, cannot reach to a bond of faith and feeling. Divine prophets, for fulfillment of this purpose, have invited people to brotherhood and friendship, which the Abrahamic religion’s books have mentioned it frequently. The Noble Quran has invited all Muslims of every race, tribe and with every language to unity and promoted the level of friendship joint of Muslims which considered it as closest joint among people i.e. brotherhood. And also we have so many ahadith Nabawiah (SWA) that defined the duties of brothers about each others.

**The Concept of Brotherhood**

According to teachings of divine religions, in addition to blood relationship that can exist between any two people (men or women), it can be existed a deep emotional and religious communities among faithful people who are the symbol of correlation between two persons who live in a similar attitude. Therefore, religions have called the faithful individuals of society brothers, to invite them to unity and found stability of this kindness.

The closest relationship and bond between two people who live in the same time is brotherhood connection. Although connection of fathers and sons are stronger and more powerful than brothers bond, this relationship is between two people who do not live in an specific level and they are different in terms of time, conditions, characters and respect’s stages, and even may not be strong as much as bond of faith and even in connection of mothers and children that is most sacred and deepest relationships feeling may be created an ultimate interruption due to existence of weakness and faith connection.

The only relationship which is a perfect pattern of solidarity, interest and strong feeling regardless of gender which is between two people who live in a similar attitude is Sisterhood and brotherhood. This unbroken bond is always the mystery of love and solidarity in populations.

**Brotherhood in Quran’s perspective**

Quran in his call and invitation to unity of Islamic Ummah and the stability of the foundations of love has called the members of faith community as brothers:
People of a faith community, have the most intimate relationship i.e. they are friend (ولي) and brother of each other:

وَالْمُؤْمِناتُ وَالْمُؤْمِنونَ بِغَيْبٍ مِّنْ أَخْوَيْكُمْ وَلِتُرْحَمُنَّ ۖ ۚ اِنَّمَا

"The believers, men and women. Are Auliya (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another"

In fact, the relationship of paternity, brotherhood and other types of relationships are: real or natural and Valid.

Natural brotherhood means having a father or a mother or both, which has some consequences in marriage and inheritance.

Valid Brotherhood (أخوًا استثنائيّة) is a ratio between two people which have social consequences but not effective on marriage and inheritance.

Some commentators have considered brotherhood in this verse as a metaphor about believers and said:

Alusi has considered the notion of brotherhood as a metaphor. Fakhre Razi quotes from some Arab philologists that using the word of (أخوًا) i.e. blood brothers, instead of (أخوان) i.e. the friends who are like brothers, in this verse is for emphasis.

Tabatabayee considers this phrase of Quran in addition to informative aspect, including predicative aspect, by this meaning that the believers must be as brothers to each other.

In Quran is also emphasized on the role of faith in destroying conflicts and create harmony and friendship and brotherhood:

واَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوِیکُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعْلَّکُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ
Brotherhood in the Bible

The notion of brother and brotherhood in the Holy book frequently is mentioned in the Bible and it is clear that faithful Christians call each other as brother.

In Gospels, Jesus (AS) calls his friends as brother's and even he knows brothers in religion more important than his brothers and sisters:

Someone told him, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you." 48 He replied to him, "Who is my mother, and who my brothers are?" 49 Pointing to his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. 50 For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother." 8

Paul always calls Christians as brothers:

Peace to the brothers, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 9

The duties of religious brothers

John who is one of the apostles, consider love of religious brothers from the most important of duties and consider ignorance of that as the reason of spiritual death.

We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death. 10

Keep on loving each other as brothers. 11

There are phrases in the New Testament that knows brothers’ duties such as, praying and advising for each other and stability in the service: 12

Brothers, pray for us. I myself am convinced, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, complete in knowledge and competent to instruct one another. 13

My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry…The most important apostles Peter invites the brothers to try more: 14

---

8 Matthew 12: 47-50
9 Ephesians 6:23
10 1 John 3:14
11 Hebrews 13:1
12 1Thessalonians 5:25
13 Jacob 1:19
14
Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, 11 and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. 15

Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king. 16

Also, Paul says:

Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. 17

Paul’s letter to the Corinthians (by using the notion of brothers for Christians) prohibits them of going to Roman courts:

I say this to shame you. Is it possible that there is nobody among you wise enough to judge a dispute between believers? 6 But instead, one brother goes to law against another—and this in front of unbelievers! 18

And in missionary he has focused to the observance of chastity in communication of young women:

Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, 2 older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity. 19

Here, it has been said that a faithful man should advise young Christian women like their own sisters. Thus, using terms of sisterhood and brotherhood which exist amongst coreligionists, can express this divine and natural message in which there is a chain of moral and social goals and assignments among faithful people. Moreover, coreligionists, regardless of their sex, should maintain pure and kind connection relative to each other not based on their sexual willingness. In addition to observing chastity, emphasis on sisterhood and brotherhood can be considered as helpful factor for stopping men and women of their sexual desires so that they can maintain the integrity of their society and so generally it can be seen that individuals call each other as brothers and sisters, in different faithful categories.

14 Romans 15:14  
15 2 Peter 1: 10-11  
16 1 Pet. 2:11-17  
17 1 Corinthians 15:58  
18 1 Corinthians 6:5  
19 1 Timothy 5:2
**Conclusion**

Therefore, religions have called the faithful individuals of society brothers, to invite them to unity and found stability of this kindness. Divine teachings recognize a deep religious and emotional connection between faithful people, both men and women; who live in a similar attitude.

The holy Quran has called faithful people brothers. Based on many Ahadith, prophet Mohammad (SAW) declared brotherhood of each two persons of his entourage, which is known as Moakhat «مؤاخة» in Islam’s history and sisterhood and brotherhood duties were expressed. The word brotherhood is also commonly used in Jewish and Christians’ teachings the Old and New Testaments.

**Bibliography**

1-The Old Testament, Published by Oxford University Press, 1984
2-The New Testament, Published by Oxford University Press 1961
سيوطى، جلال الدين، جامع الاحاديث، مركز خدمة السنة والسيرة النبوية، المدينة المنورة، 1413-1992

عبدالواحدين محمد أمدي، غررالحكم و درر الكلم، جاب اعلامي، بيروت 1987/1407 ؛

عسقلاني، ابن حجر فتح البارى، بيروت 1405

فخر رازى، محمد، التفسير الكبير، بيروت: دار الفكر، 1405 هـ ق

طباطبى، محمدحسين، الميزان فى تفسير القرآن، بيروت: مؤسسة الاعلامى للمطبوعات، 1393 هـ ق

مكه، احمد صي و جاب، الصحابة فضائل، ابن حنبل، 1403