

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Elections 2015

Message to the Muslim Community: Neither Assimilate nor Isolate, Rather Interact with the Society according to Islamic Values

The 2015 UK elections are upon us. For Muslims, the climate in 2015 is very different to previous elections. Throughout 2014, the British press and political parties aggressively targeted Islamic belief and values on a host of issues, from halal meat to Islamic schools. 2015 started with the CTS Act becoming law, enforcing the 'Prevent' programme that aims to secularise Muslims in the name of 'de-radicalisation'. Now, a new 'counter extremism' policy is on its way that will grant the state even greater powers to target Muslims.

These events have prompted Muslims to ask searching questions: why are the government and media so aggressive? What is the future for my children? Where is this all going? Even Muslims who once felt Britain had happily accommodated Islam are now questioning this view.

This election is therefore being fought at a time when Muslims are asking fundamental questions about their future. Whilst some still eagerly peddle the need to 'vote', their arguments have been debased by the hostility Muslims now suffer at the hands of the policies of all political parties and the failed track record of Muslim MPs.

It was only a matter of time before the Muslim community woke up to the disastrous state of politics in the UK. Political parties have created distrust, apathy, unhappiness and deep disappointment in the wider society. Trust in the political system is at a historic low, and people are deserting the system in their droves.

For the Muslim community – with its distinct belief and values – the political system continues to lose even greater credibility, as does the question of participation. There are now more pressing concerns facing Muslims about upholding Islam in this toxic climate and their future. In light of this, we raise four distinct points:

1. Our Priority: Upholding Islamic Values

Muslims in the UK must continue to 'uphold Islam and become its ambassadors': to understand Islam, practice it, teach it, raise our children on it and – importantly - share it with the wider society. This includes supporting our Ummah and the solution to the devastation in the Muslim lands – Khilafah on the Prophetic method. Whilst this appears difficult in the current climate, it invites the pleasure of Allah (swt) for standing by His message.

Allah (swt) says:

﴿وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِمَّنْ دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَقَالَ إِنَّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ﴾

“And who is better in speech than one who invites to Allah and does righteousness and says, “Indeed, I am of the Muslims.” [Fussilat: 33]

Our path is not to adopt or 'assimilate' into the UK's secular liberal values and beliefs. If Muslims did this, they would go the way of other secularised religious communities and divorce themselves from a part of Islam itself – from its political, societal and economic

aspects - eventually becoming no different from the west and suffering the same consequences: youth problems, family breakdown, sexual and social chaos. This is not an option for Muslims – as it means reneging on Islam and turning against the way of life prescribed by Allah (swt).

Allah (swt) says:

﴿وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا، وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَعْمَى﴾

“And whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed life, and We will gather him on the Day of Resurrection blind.” [Ta-Ha: 124]

‘Upholding Islam’ however cannot be done through isolating ourselves – we must interact with others in the wider society, to present and clarify the Islamic message. So whilst Muslims reject ‘assimilation’, we must also reject ‘isolation’. We embrace ‘interaction’ with others on the Islamic basis, both within and outside our community.

Political participation however will not deliver this vision. In fact it will systematically move Muslims away from this vision into adopting liberal secular values that are at odds with Islam.

2. This Political Process Secularises the Community

The aim of encouraging Muslims to participate in the secular politics of Westminster is to see Muslims endorse and adopt this non-Islamic secular political system, its values and policies.

The consequence of this is, as we have seen, that the more Muslims engage in this secular process, the more they secularise their views until they openly support un-Islamic positions. The policies of political parties include the legalisation of bloodshed and occupation of Muslim lands; oppressive anti-terror and anti-‘extremism’ laws; the permission of *riba* (interest), economic exploitation, gambling, alcohol; and support for the Zionist entity.

Over the years elected Muslim MPs have turned their backs on Islam to support such un-Islamic positions. Supporting these parties by joining, campaigning or voting for them would endorse policies that clearly contradict Islam.

3. The Secular Political Process is Futile

People are increasingly disengaged from politics in the west. Voter numbers are falling. Celebrity voices even encourage this drift. Their argument is simple: voting is futile - it will not change a thing.

This feeling of futility is driven by the realisation that in a capitalist state, the system serves a small elite, not ordinary people. It is big business, lobbyists and their relationships with politicians that decide law and policy. It is – as Lord Hailsham once said - an ‘elected dictatorship’: rule for, by and of the elite. An individual’s vote is irrelevant.

Yet some Muslims stubbornly hold onto the belief that their vote counts. That if Muslims were better coordinated, they would secure Muslim-friendly MPs. This is an act of desperation - it upholds an argument that the west is rejecting. Many, who are becoming exhausted at the failure of their system, are looking for alternatives, yet some Muslims look backwards, to a failed system and one that does not secure Islamic interests.

4. Our Politics, Our Values

Some believe participation in the secular system will deliver benefits for the community or help fight rising ‘Islamophobia’. They are willing to cross a red line and support the manifestos of liberal secular parties that are fundamentally at odds with Islam in the hope that they would achieve some reciprocal benefit.

Not only has this been untrue, it reduces Muslims to a pitiful state as they beg for their rights. More fundamentally, **participating and supporting such parties is not sanctioned by Islam exactly because they spread a call that is at odds with its very Aqeeda.**

Allah (swt) says:

﴿قُلْ إِنِّي نُهِيتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ قُلْ لَا أَتَّبِعُ أَهْوَاءَكُمْ قَدْ ضَلَلْتُ إِذًا وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ﴾

“Say, "Indeed, I have been forbidden to submit to those you invoke besides Allah." Say, "I will not follow your desires, for I would then have gone astray, and I would not be of the [rightly] guided.” [Al-Anaam: 56]

There are numerous case studies in which Muslims have – without participating or engaging in the secular political process – established activities to secure their Islamic interests, based on the principle of self-reliance.

These include establishing alternative media to counter ‘Islamophobia’, undermining intellectual and moral underpinnings of colonial western policies and undermining the local implementation of pernicious government policies and laws that target Muslims. Likewise, Muslims established mosques, schools and the halal food industry without entering the secular political process. Muslims must not be drawn into petty arguments that force them to compromise core Islamic belief for a supposed benefit.

Our community must, as a fundamental priority, ensure that we uphold Islam with confidence in the face of all the negativity about Islam in the media. We can only counter the lies and misconceptions if we keep Islam at the top of our agenda and pursue a political path consistent with its values, rather than trying to curry favour with the corrupt Westminster politicians, who simply court Muslims for their own selfish desire for power.

We call upon the Muslim community to hold fast to Islamic values and follow a political path based upon Islam and the unity of the Muslim community - enjoining the good and forbidding the *munkar* – and resist the false promises of influence in this secular system at the cost of losing our *Deen*. Only Islam gives this community dignity and ‘izzah and if we lose that, no amount of political activity could ever deliver meaningful results.

Allah (swt) says:

﴿وَلَا تَرْكَنُوا إِلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا فَتَمَسَّكُمُ النَّارُ وَمَا لَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ أَوْلِيَاءَ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصَرُونَ﴾

“And do not incline to those who do wrong, or the Fire will seize you; and you have no protectors other than Allah, nor shall you be helped.” [Hud: 113]