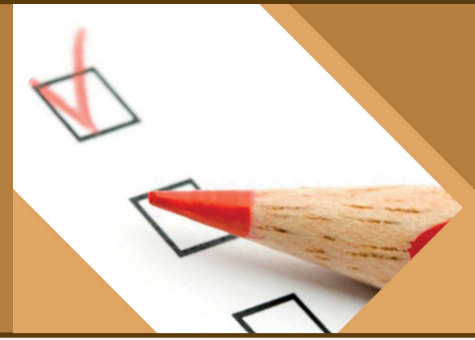


Three Electoral Commitments Every Muslim Should Make

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Reaping the Benefits of Progress

Allāh ﷻ has placed the desire for progress, and the spirit of mutual competitiveness that accompanies it, into the very nature of man. It is natural for individuals and communities to strive to better themselves and achieve progress. As Muslims, we should open the pages of history to discover those factors which make a nation progressive and prosperous and adopt them, as long as they are consistent with the teachings of our Dīn. As a result, we too will reap the benefits of progress, inshā'allāh.

Our study should commence with trying to ascertain the secret behind the success of the noble Ṣaḥābah ؓ, for they are the ideal role models of a community that attracted success in its every endeavour. A thoughtful investigation will reveal three prominent qualities which can be attributed to their success. In this election season, every Muslim should commit him/herself to observing these three principles, regardless of their preferred party, in order to secure success and achievement, both on a personal and communal level.

Taqwā

Abstention from sins is the essence of taqwā and through it Allāh ﷻ has promised relief from every difficulty. The Ṣaḥābah ؓ shunned all disobedience to Allāh ﷻ; they neither had a habit of sinning nor were they inclined towards sins.

In dealing with the election issue, we must not say or do anything that displeases Allāh ﷻ. Of all the sins to beware of, backbiting and slander are major sins which are a particular threat at such times. One inclined towards a particular party should not backbite or slander a supporter of another party, for in doing so the requirements of taqwā will be compromised; and Divine assistance and blessings cannot be expected in the absence of taqwā.

Ikhlaṣ

Every decision taken by the Ṣaḥābah ؓ was only for the Pleasure of Allāh ﷻ. Whether standing for election, supporting a party or voting, a Muslim must be pure in his intentions. This intention should be to elect the candidate who will best serve humanity in general, including the Muslim community. If a Muslim has sincerity then his vote will go to the right candidate, for he will expend his energies in finding out who is the best candidate.

Unity

Unity is a key factor for the success of any nation; a truly united community can withstand any competition. Individuals should have the courtesy of mutual respect despite their political rivalries. Sadly, the Muslim community is a divided one. Every individual has the right to his own opinion and his own preference, within Dīnī boundaries; but our mutual differences often transform into malice and enmity

towards each other. We go to extremes: if we like something in a particular person, we praise him to the extreme, whereas if we disagree with someone on one issue, we become blind to all the good qualities he possesses. Our dealings are but a faint shadow of the Islamic concept of brotherhood, taught to us by our Beloved Nabī ﷺ. True brotherhood demands that whatever our political stripe, we should be able to sit at a table and sacrifice our political allegiances for the sake of Allāh ﷻ and agree to support the candidate who is best for not only the Muslims, but all communities in general. All that is needed to achieve unity is a little sacrifice and the willingness to swallow one's pride. We should be willing to marginalise our differences in order to progress in a common direction.

It may be a good idea for the Muslims of each constituency to unite on a single platform and form a committee which is responsible for recommending the best candidate to Muslim voters. In this way, political parties will try to persuade such committees and as a result, seriously consider the needs of the Muslim community.

May Allāh ﷻ grant us all the longing to strive for taqwā, ikhlaṣ and unity. Āmīn.

Important Points

Every Muslim should keep the following points in mind:

1. In all circumstances hold fast to taqwā, ikhlaṣ and unity.
2. The vote is very important. It is a means of electing the person most beneficial for the community and our country.
3. Voting is a big responsibility. Not voting or voting incorrectly will give authority to the wrong person.
4. The best candidate deserves our vote.
5. We should become politically aware.
6. We should read every party's manifesto.
7. We should study party policies and also refer to sincere people in our communities, who possess political acumen.
8. We should find out which party offers us the best in all spheres of life: education, housing, health, social issues, foreign policy etc. Deciding on a party by just looking at one issue does not constitute farsightedness.
9. We should think rationally and not make judgements based on emotions.
10. Finally, we should make du'ā to Allāh ﷻ, asking Him to enable us to make the right choice and that He grants success to those who will serve the country and its citizens without any prejudice or wrong.

May Allāh ﷻ grant us all success and progress with khayr and barakah. Āmīn.

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