



Synopsis of Friday Sermon

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IONA
REPENTANCE
REVITALIZATION OF FAITH
RENEWAL OF COVENANT

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

Synopsis of Friday Sermon

Civic Engagement Post-Elections

قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَلِكُ الْمَلِكِ تُؤْتِي الْمَلِكَ مِنْ تَشَاءَ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمَلِكَ مِنْ تَشَاءَ
وَتُعِزُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

“Say: O Lord of all authorities, You give authority to whom You will and take it away from whom You will, (likewise) You honor whom you will and Disgrace whom You will, in Your hand is all good. Indeed, You have power over everything.” [Aal Imran,3:26]

Now that the elections are over, it's essential that we as a community reflect on how we can approach the results with wisdom, faith, and a sense of responsibility to both our community and our nation.

Five key points we should consider moving forward:

First Point: Acceptance of Results with Contentment and Trust in God's Wisdom

First and foremost, it is vital that we accept the results of the election, regardless of whether they align with our personal preferences or not.

Whether you voted for the Democrats, Republicans, or third party, as Muslims, we are reminded in the Qur'an to trust Allah's wisdom in all outcomes. Allah (SWT) says in Surah Aal Imran, *“Say: O Lord of all authorities, You give authority to whom You will and take it away from whom You will, (likewise) You honor whom you will and Disgrace whom You will, in Your hand is all good. Indeed, You have power over everything.” [Aal Imran, 3:26]*

We must trust that Allah's wisdom is perfect and that His plan encompasses what is best, even if we may not understand it immediately.

The election results are part of this Divine decree, and it is our duty to accept it with a heart full of trust in Allah (SWT).

Humanity has witnessed good and just leaders and, unjust and oppressive leaders from Nimrod, Pharaoh, Hitler, to present day unjust rulers in many countries around the world.

How and why Allah allows leaders to rise and fall, including those who may be oppressors?

This can be difficult for many of us to comprehend, especially when we witness injustice or tyranny in our time. But, as believers, we know that Allah's wisdom is perfect, and His plan encompasses reasons that we may not immediately understand. Through the guidance of the Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) we can gain insight into why Allah (SWT) permits even unjust rulers to hold power and what our role as believers is under such circumstances.

Acknowledgment of Allah's Authority Over All Leadership and Sovereignty: We must understand that all power, authority, and leadership ultimately belong to Allah (SWT). He alone grants leadership to whom He wills, and He removes it when He wills. Allah in Surah Al-Imran informs: “Say: O Lord of all authorities, You give authority to whom You will and take it away from whom You will.” [Aal Imran, 3:26]

This ayah tells us that any position of authority, whether held by a just ruler or an oppressor, exists only with Allah's permission. Nothing happens without His decree, and even those who may appear powerful in this world hold no true power except what Allah has allowed.

Allah's Permission for Oppressors to Hold Power: An example of Allah allowing an oppressor to rise in power is the story of Nimrod (Namrud), a tyrant king in ancient times. He was given great power and authority, yet he used it to challenge the truth and oppress people. Nimrod even attempted to challenge Allah's power, arrogantly claiming that he could control life and death. Allah (SWT) recounts his arrogance and the challenge from Prophet Ibrahim (AS) in Surah al-Baqarah, "Have you not considered the one, to whom Allah had given authority, who argued with Ibrahim about his Lord [merely]? When Ibrahim said, 'My Lord is the one who gives life and causes death,' he said, 'I give life and cause death.' Ibrahim said, 'Indeed, Allah brings up the sun from the east, so bring it up from the west.' So the disbeliever was dumbfounded, speechless, and Allah does not guide the unjust and wrongdoing people." [al-Baqarah, 2:258]

Nimrod's arrogance and oppression were allowed by Allah, but ultimately, his power was only temporary. His rule served as a test for the people and as a means for Prophet Ibrahim to demonstrate the truth. This story reminds us that while tyrants may hold power, their power is limited, and their reign is temporary. Allah alone decides when their time will end.

Allah's Wisdom in Allowing Oppressors to Rule: Why does Allah allow oppressors to gain and hold power? There are several wisdoms behind this:

- a) A Test for Believers: The presence of an unjust ruler is often a test for the believers. Allah uses such situations to distinguish those who remain steadfast in their faith from those who turn away. The Qur'an tells us that Allah tests people through trials and difficulties:

"Do the people think that they will be left to say, 'We believe' and they will not be tested? We have indeed tested those who came before them in order it becomes clear to Allah those who are truthful and know the liars." [al-Ankabut, 29:2,3]

This means that living under oppression or witnessing injustice can be a trial for the believers to see if they remain patient, steadfast, and committed to righteousness.

- b) A Means to Increase Faith and Patience

Times of difficulty and oppression often bring people closer to Allah (SWT). When people suffer or see injustice, they turn to Allah for support, increase in prayer, and seek His guidance more sincerely. This, in turn, strengthens their faith. The Prophet (SAW) taught us that hardships expiate sins and bring the believer closer to Allah (SWT). He (SAW) said, "No fatigue, nor disease, nor sorrow, nor sadness, nor hurt, nor distress befalls a Muslim, even if it were the prick he receives from a thorn, but that Allah expiates some of his sins for that." (al-Bukhari, Muslim)

Thus, Allah allows oppression as a means of purification and strengthening the faith of the believers.

- c) To Teach People to Appreciate Justice

Sometimes, people do not value justice and peace until they experience oppression. Allah (SWT) may allow an oppressor to rise so that people understand the importance of justice, mercy, and humility. This understanding can lead to sincere repentance, renewed dedication to justice, and greater collective efforts toward righteousness.

Oppression Awakens the Heart (the Silent Conscience): Often, people who may be distant from their faith or preoccupied with their own lives find themselves spiritually awakened when they see the level of injustice inflicted upon others. Especially now in Gaza and Lebanon. This is because human suffering speaks to our innate sense of justice and mercy, which Allah (SWT) has placed in our hearts.

When oppression occurs, the suffering of our brothers and sisters should feel like our own pain. It stirs our conscience, calling us to *not* remain indifferent. Through this empathy, oppression has the power to transform our hearts, reminding us of our purpose and the responsibilities we have as Muslims and as human beings.

The Role of Believers Under Oppressive Rule: As believers, our role in times of oppression is guided by the Qur'an and Sunnah. We are encouraged to remain patient, engage in prayer, and work for justice in ways that align with our faith. Three things we may do,

- a) Stand for Truth and Justice: Allah (SWT) commands us in the Qur'an to stand up for justice, even if it is against our own interests. He says, *“O you who believe, stand out firmly for justice as witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives.”* [al-Nisa', 4:135]

While we may not always have the means to remove an oppressor, we are still required to speak the truth, promote justice, and support those who are wronged. The Prophet (SAW) said, “The best (form of) jihad is to speak a word of truth before a tyrant ruler.” (al-Nisai’)

- b) Patience and Steadfastness: The Prophet (SAW) emphasized patience during times of hardship. He (SAW) said, “The one who mixes with the people and endures their harm with patience is better than the one who does not mix with the people and does not endure their harm.” (Ibn Majah)

Patience does not mean passivity; it means that we endure hardships while continuing to worship Allah, work for justice, and maintain hope in His mercy.

- c) Pray for Guidance and Wisdom: In challenging times, believers should turn to Allah (SWT) in prayer, asking for guidance, wisdom, and patience. We should pray for the guidance of our leaders and the well-being of our society, while placing our ultimate trust in Allah's plan.

The Promise of Allah's Justice: We must remember that while an oppressor may rule for a time, Allah's justice is inevitable. No injustice will go unpunished, and every oppressor will ultimately face the consequences of their actions. Allah (SWT) says, *“And do not think Allah is unaware of what the wrongdoers do. He only delays them for a Day when eyes will stare (in horror).”* [Ibrahim, 14:42]

This promise assures us that every act of oppression will be accounted for, and Allah's justice will prevail. Our role is to remain patient, committed to justice, and confident in Allah's ultimate wisdom.

Let us remember that every leader, every ruler, every situation—good or bad—is part of Allah's decree. Whether we experience times of ease or hardship, Allah (SWT) is in control, and His wisdom is beyond our comprehension. Let us place our trust in Him, remain patient, and fulfill our duties as believers by standing for truth and justice.

May Allah (SWT) grant us patience, wisdom, and steadfastness in times of trial. May He keep our hearts firm in faith and make us agents of justice and mercy in our communities. Ameen.

Second Point: Recognizing Differences Without Division

As believers who have a diverse political views, we must recognize differences without division. It is natural for members of any community, including our own, to hold diverse political views. Some within our community may have voted for one party, while others may have supported a different candidate or even a third party. Such differences in opinion are acceptable, as long as they do not lead to discord or division among us.

Unfortunately, there have been instances where political differences have led to tensions, and in some cases, even violence, simply because someone supported a particular party that others did not favor. This behavior is entirely unacceptable. We must remember that, ultimately, it is Allah's will that determines who holds authority. If the outcome of the election has favored one side, we should accept it without letting it cause strife or fitnah within our community.

One may ask: Are you with the Republicans, the Democrats, or with Muhammad (SAW)? No Muslim would deny that they are with Muhammad (SAW), and if we truly align ourselves with him, then let us reflect on the guidance of the Qur'an in this matter, *“Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and those who are with him are firm against the disbelievers and merciful among themselves.”* [al-Fath, 48:29]

This ayah reminds us that our loyalty and unity should be grounded in our faith, not in political parties. We are meant to be compassionate and supportive of each other, regardless of our differences. Let us prioritize the bonds of faith, treating one another with respect and mercy. This is the example of the Prophet and his companions, and it is this unity that strengthens our community, allowing us to serve Allah and each (SAW) other more effectively.

The Prophet (SAW) reminded us of the importance of unity in many hadiths. In one such narration, he said, “A believer to another believer is like a (brick) structure, whose different parts support each other.” (al-Bukhari)

Our strength as a community lies in our unity, not in uniformity of thought. We should embrace our diversity

while remaining united in our higher purpose to serve Allah and contribute positively to society. Let us ensure that our political differences do not divide our hearts or weaken our bond as a community.

Third Point: Continuing Voter Registration and Civic Engagement Efforts

Now that the elections are over, our work is not done. We must continue to encourage eligible community members to register to vote. Voting is not just about the presidential elections; our participation in local elections, such as those for city councils and school boards, is even more impactful and can directly benefit our community.

The Prophet (SAW) taught us the importance of making a difference through action. He said, “The best of people are those who are most beneficial to people.” (Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat – al-Tabarani)

By encouraging voter registration, we empower our community to exercise its voice and contribute to policies that affect us all. This is a form of beneficial engagement that aligns with our faith's emphasis on justice and active involvement in society.

Fourth Point: Civic Engagement Beyond Voting: Volunteering and Serving the Greater Good

Civic engagement extends beyond voting. It's about being active participants in our communities, working for the common good, and contributing to positive change. This could involve volunteering, joining community organizations, or supporting local initiatives that align with Islamic values, such as feeding the hungry, promoting education, and assisting those in need.

The Qur'an instructs us, “*And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression.*” [al-Ma'idah, 5:2]

By participating in civic duties and volunteering, we live out this command by actively contributing to the welfare of our neighbors and society. Serving our communities is part of our duty as Muslims, and it reinforces our role as stewards of justice and mercy in the world.

Final Point: Revitalizing Faith and Strengthening Our Trust in Allah's Plan

Lastly, let us use this time post-elections to revitalize our own faith and strengthen our trust in Allah's plan. Allah (SWT) has given us a purpose on this earth i.e. to uphold justice, mercy, and compassion in all that we do. Engaging in civic responsibilities, whether through voting, volunteering, or supporting community initiatives, is part of fulfilling our duties.

The Prophet (SAW) taught us to rely on Allah while taking action, “If you rely upon Allah with due reliance, He will provide for you as He provides for the birds. They go out in the morning with empty stomachs and return full.” (Ibn Majah)

Trusting in Allah (SWT) does not mean being passive. Rather, it means taking action with conviction and leaving the outcome to Him. Let us fulfill our civic responsibilities and place our trust in Allah for the results.

In conclusion, as we move forward from these elections, let us remain committed to our core values. Accept the results with patience, maintain unity, and continue to engage in civic duties for the greater good. Let us be examples of integrity, wisdom, and active service, for that is the true spirit of Islam.

May Allah (SWT) guide us and grant us the strength to be a positive force in our society. May He keep us united, strengthen our faith, and make us agents of positive change. Ameen.

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