



The Tale of Two Cities

In London we saw the Mayoral election and subsequently the victory of Sadiq Khan. Over the last a few weeks and days, both mayoral candidates, Sadiq Khan and Zac Goldsmith campaigned by using the fear of Muslims and the Muslim community to win votes, with the only difference being that Zac Goldsmith was more aggressive in this regard.

Sadiq Khan campaigned on the fact that he was a Muslim and was best placed to deal with 'extremism', as well as questioning what was happening in Muslim families since more young girls were wearing the hijab, niqab and jilbab.¹ Khan also failed to correct Prime Minister David Cameron, when Cameron made the comments that Khan shared numerous platforms with Imam Sulaiman Ghani who, Cameron claimed, is an ISIS supporter and extremist.² Rather than correcting the Prime Minister, Khan bragged about how he was at the forefront of dealing with extremism.

Khan's direct competitor was Zac Goldsmith whose campaign focused on how Sadiq Khan shared a platform with extremists, how Khan's relatives were extreme and someone with links to extremism could not be trusted to run London. Goldsmith's campaign was so negative and damaging, that even senior Conservatives³ and his own sister Jemima Khan criticised Goldsmith for running that type of campaign⁴.

While in Aleppo, the Assad regime bombed a hospital⁵, killing 14 people and bombed another 3 clinics, with around 200 people killed⁶ over the same period as the Mayoral election. With the Syrian uprising in its 5th year, no end seems to be in sight as the International Community led by America and countless Geneva Conferences, have yielded little to no results, due to the desire of the Muslims of Syria to hold onto their vision to make Syria a Khilafah (Caliphate).

Each time America wishes to impose a personality or a group as an alternative to the Assad regime, it is rejected whole heartedly by the people of Syria and the voices from Aleppo and other places are clear, they will not allow their revolution to be hijacked by the International Community since their revolution is only for Allah (swt).

The story in both these cities, even though they are hundreds of miles apart, are the same, that Islam and Muslims are being attacked and killed for people's own political ends. In London, it was about who was to become the Mayor and have control over London, so demonising Muslims and Islam was used as an easy path into the corridors of power, whereas in Aleppo and Syria, all efforts are being made to stop sincere Muslims who wish to rule by Islam coming to power, and if that means

¹ <http://www.standard.co.uk/lifestyle/london-life/sadiq-khan-my-daughters-have-rights-here-and-they-can-wear-what-they-like-a3225346.html>

² <http://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/662747/PMQs-David-Cameron-Sadiq-Khan-Labour-Mayor-of-London-extremist-Suliman-Ghani-ISIS>

³ <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/may/07/top-conservatives-condemn-zac-goldsmiths-disgusting-mayoral-campaign>

⁴ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/05/06/even-jemima-khan-criticises-her-brother-zacs-failed-campaign-for/>

⁵ <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/apr/28/deadly-airstrike-on-hospital-aleppo-syria-reports-say>

⁶ <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/04/hospital-syria-hit-air-strike-reports-160429103454466.html>

prolonging the suffering of those in Syria until they accept the solution which the International Community has designed for them, a Secular state, then so be it. For killing Muslims and demonising Islam is a more popular path to gaining positions of power, whether that is be Mayor or be the leader of Syria who listens to America and is her puppet.

In this situation, we Muslims in London and the UK, need to reflect deeply on how our brothers and sisters are fighting for the cause of Islam in Syria. The discussion leading up to the mayoral vote was who was the lesser of the two evils between Sadiq Khan and Zac Goldsmith. In this period while Aleppo was being attacked and people were being killed, there was very little discussion about this issue, rather, we in London, were consumed with the mayoral election.

The London Mayor is responsible for transport, policing, environment, housing and cultural activities, and no doubt that these services are important especially if we are living in London, but are these services really more important than the killing of Muslims in Aleppo and Syria, should this be at the forefront of our minds in London considering what happened in Aleppo in that same period and is continuing to happen in Syria?

Allah (swt) warns us again and again, not to be tempted or distracted by the material wealth of this life,

﴿اعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهُوَ زِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ﴾

“Know that the life of this world is only play and amusement, pomp and mutual boasting among you, and rivalry in respect of wealth and children.” [57: 20]

﴿لَا تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ﴾

“Let not your wealth or you children divert you from the remembrance of Allah.” [63: 9]

Ultimately we want the Mayor of London to improve our worldly life, for the role of the Mayor of London it not to get us into Jannah, thus we have allowed this circus to distract us from what is happening to our Ummah in Aleppo and the wider region.

Allah (swt) tells us that we are one Ummah,

﴿إِنَّ هَذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُونِ﴾

“Truly, this, your Ummah is one, and I am your Lord, therefore worship Me.” [21: 91]

The Prophet (saw) reminds us that Muslims feel the pain of other Muslims,

﴿الْمُسْلِمُونَ كَرَجُلٍ وَاحِدٍ إِنْ اشْتَكَى عَيْنُهُ اشْتَكَى كُلُّهُ وَإِنْ اشْتَكَى رَأْسُهُ اشْتَكَى كُلُّهُ﴾

“The Muslims are like one man, if his eyes complains then the whole of him complains, and if his head complains then the whole of him complains.” (Muslim)

He (saw) also informs us that the blood of a Muslim is more holy than the Ka'ba itself,

رأيت رسول الله ﷺ يطوف بالكعبة ويقول: «ما أطيبك وما أطيب ريحك ما أعظمك وما أعظم حرمتك والذي نفس محمد بيده لحرمة المؤمن عند الله أعظم من حرمتك ماله ودمه»

“I saw the Messenger of Allah (saw) performing *tawaf* around the Holy Ka`ba saying to it: ‘**how pure and good you are! How pure and good your fragrance is! How great and exalted you are! And how great and exalted your sanctity is! But by Him in Whose hand is Muhammad’s soul, the sanctity of a believer’s blood and property in the sight of Allah is greater than your sanctity!**’” (Ibn Majah)

And finally that when a Muslim asks our help we must help them,

﴿وَإِنِ اسْتَنْصَرُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ فَعَلَيْكُمُ النَّصْرُ﴾

“**And if they seek your help in religion, it is your duty to help them...**” [8: 72]

All the above requires that we concentrate upon the issues which really affect our Ummah, making their cause for establishing Islam our cause, and not be distracted by small matters in comparison to the struggle to re-establish the **Khilafah (Caliphate) upon the method of the Prophethood.**

Some may argue that Sadiq Khan becoming the Mayor of London is a positive step as it shows Muslims in a positive image and Khan will assist Muslims to fight against the negative image of Islam. Putting aside the fact that Khan himself used Muslims and Islam to gain votes, as well as criticised Muslim figures and supported and voted for policies which have led to the situation in Syria and the wider region, for the so-called positive image of a ‘Muslim’ Mayor of London will do absolutely nothing to assist the Muslims of Aleppo and Syria, as they are not connected.

In London we must raise our voices with the Muslims of Aleppo and Syria, that we will accept nothing less than the Khilafah for Syria and we must put pressure upon those of influence within our lands to assist the Muslims of Syria, for in the same manner Muslims around the world follow who is the new Mayor of London, they will also follow and hear what solutions the Muslims of London are calling for in Syria and by the Mercy of Allah (swt) that message will follow upon ears who hear and a heart which responds.

In the summer of 2016, the British public will cast their votes regarding the European Referendum and this will occupy the media channels and will be made to be the most important issue for everyone in the UK. During that time we must learn from our past mistakes and not be distracted by the circus of the EU debate and be consumed by it. Rather we must think to ourselves about what is the most important issue facing us as an Ummah and stay focused upon that issue with resolve. Our masjids should be filled with discussion about the affairs of our Ummah and how we can solve them, not side shows about small matters which our Deen considers meaningless.

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