



Relying on Outcomes versus Relying on Allah

The Netherlands have recently held elections and, as usual, the whole discussion started about whether participating in these elections is allowed or not from an Islamic perspective. This isn't the subject of this article but it is related to the way we see that Muslims living in the west judge their actions. We see that many of the arguments given when advocating the participation in elections within Western society are often based on the merits that certain political parties or politicians could bring to the Muslim community and how not participating would bring no benefit at all.

Living and growing up in the West brings many challenges for Muslims. One of these challenges is being influenced by ideas which are alien to Islam. These ideas are promoted to us through various channels and emanate from the creed that Western societies are based upon. We see that the moral compass of Western societies has been taken over by people who are only concerned about their own needs and desires. This is because the capitalistic view on life tells the individuals, living in these societies, that they are free to seek pleasure and happiness in any way that they themselves see fit. This view on life is also influencing the Muslims living in these societies. A consequence is that we see that actions that are undertaken are often judged upon the outcomes of these actions and that Muslims only undertake certain actions if they will bring them benefit and results. It is also a phenomenon that isn't new to mankind and one that Allah has warned us about in the following verse:

﴿أَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ﴾

“Have you seen the one who takes as his god his own desire...?” [Al Furqan: 43]

This way of thinking, judging actions merely on outcomes is actually a result of viewing actions through a different viewpoint to life than Islam teaches us. And this way of thinking brings many dangers for Muslims in respect to understanding Islam and thus their adherence to Islam.

In the same way that a correct understanding of this concept, of how Muslims need to judge their actions, and thus making Islam their viewpoint to judge everything around them including their actions, has the potential to make the Muslim ummah the best nation produced as Allah has told us.

﴿كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ﴾

“You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah (swt)...” [3: 110]

As Muslims, we must understand that the correct way of judging and deciding whether to undertake an action or not must be decided upon through the view point of whether this action will please the Creator or not, and that their own desires, such as whether the action will bring them benefit in this life, should not be the reason when making this decision. Of course, when choosing between two actions which both are pleasing to Allah, we can then make a choice which is based upon our own pleasure.

This way of thinking and acting makes us such strong individuals, who won't despair when undertaking an action which didn't have the outcome we were hoping for or which doesn't seem to have been beneficial for us. We won't despair because we will realise that we have pleased our Lord with this action and we will realise that this is the only thing which matters. Whether the actions is small, like giving a sister the *salaam* but not receiving it back, it won't influence our behaviour because we undertook this action purely to get the Pleasure of our Lord. It will also not influence our behaviour when declining a good job opportunity because it didn't allow wearing the correct clothing. It will also protect the Muslims from angering Allah when deciding upon the participation in elections when the rules of Allah aren't being implemented. Finally, it will not lead to desperation when standing strong in the face of tyranny as our brothers and sisters do daily in Syria and all over the world because they understand that it is Allah who controls the outcome of everything and that their job is to simply base their actions on His *Hukm* because this is what is pleasing to their Lord.

O Muslims, we need to embrace Islam as a way of thinking and we must be aware of not falling into the mind-set that Western society promotes which is to reshape Islam to suit our whims and desires. We must make Islam the source of our thoughts and actions, whatever difficulties this may bring us. This will enable the Muslims to stand strong knowing that their Lord is pleased with them. Allah (swt) says,

﴿فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا﴾

“But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith, until they make you (O Muhammad SAW) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission.”

[An-Nisa: 65]

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