



“Do Not Meddle in Politics! Politics Is Filthy!”

Some say: “Do not meddle in politics! Politics is filthy!” So we say: Yes, politics is impure and filthy—if it is the politics of lies, betrayal, bribery, theft and subservience; if it is ruling by other than what Allah (swt) has revealed; if it is a means to appease the foreigner, humiliate the Ummah and plunder its wealth; and if politics is practiced by secularists.

However, siyasah (سياسة politics) in Islam is not like that. Instead, politics in Islam is the guardianship of the affairs of the Muslims in accordance with Islam. So which politics do you want us to abandon—the politics of Islam or the politics of secularism? The politics of the Quran and Sunnah, or the politics of man-made laws? The politics of justice and truth or the politics of self-interest and whims?

Here, it must be stated clearly: politics is not an impure word; rather, the impurity lies in the methodology by which it is conducted. Politics, in its essence, is not an insult, nor a crime, nor a forbidden domain for Muslims. The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, «كَانَتْ بَنُو إِسْرَائِيلَ تَسُوسُهُمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءُ، كُلَّمَا هَلَكَ نَبِيٌّ خَلَفَهُ نَبِيٌّ...» **“The Prophets used to govern the politics of Banu Israeel. Whenever a Prophet died, another Prophet succeeded him”** [Agreed upon].

And the meaning of “to govern the politics of Banu Israeel” is they undertook guardianship of their affairs, tended to their concerns, undertook the reform of their condition and judged between them according to what Allah (swt) revealed. So, did the Prophets (as) practice politics? Yes—but it was not the politics of Western democracy, nor the politics of nationalism and patriotism, nor the politics of capitalist interests, nor the politics of parties that give sovereignty to the people in legislation. Instead, it was a politics based on divine revelation. And here the great difference becomes clear: politics in Islam is the guardianship of people’s affairs in accordance with Islam. As for politics that is based on separating religion from governance, makes legislation the domain of humans rather than Allah (swt) and places interest, benefit and whims above revelation—that is not the politics that Islam brought.

There is a lump in the throat when we see within the Ummah of Islam—to whom Allah (swt) sent down the Great Quran and whose Messenger (saw) clarified the path of guidance—some of its own children have come to denounce even the mere mention of governance and politics! What is even more astonishing is to see someone who refuses to speak about Islamic politics, yet rushes headlong into practicing politics according to foreign systems! He refuses to let a Muslim speak about ruling by what Allah (swt) has revealed, yet he sees no problem with elections brought by the modern systems from the disbelieving West! He refuses to speak about establishing the rule of Islam, yet he participates in choosing those who govern by man-made laws! He refuses to ask, “By which Shariah do you rule?” Then, when corruption, theft and collapse occur, he says: “This is politics!!”

What politics is this?! What politics makes a thief a legislator? And what politics forces the Ummah to choose between those who rule it by other than Islam and those who rule it by other than Islam?! And what politics is this, in which the individuals are swapped while the system itself remains the same, the ultimate reference (authority) remains the same and the laws remain the same and then the people are asked to applaud the “change?” And then they tell you: Don’t talk about politics!

If you speak about the Ummah’s wealth, they say: Don’t talk about politics! If you speak about Palestine, they say: Don’t talk about politics! If you speak about governance, they say: Don’t talk about politics! If you speak about the laws that govern the people, they say: Don’t talk about politics! If you speak about relations with the major powers, they say: Don’t talk about politics! If you speak about poverty, corruption and plunder, they say: Don’t talk about politics! **But when you are expected to vote or to endorse or to pledge allegiance to a political project—suddenly, politics becomes a required matter!**

So the problem is not that they reject politics. Instead, the problem is that they want to dictate to you which politics you are permitted to discuss and which you must remain silent about. They want you to talk about the politician after he has assumed power but not to ask about the very foundation of the system by which he rules. They want you to criticize the thief but not to ask about the system that enabled him to steal. They want you to denounce corruption but not to question the intellectual and political framework that gave rise to it.

And here we say: Rather, we will speak... We will speak because Allah (swt) has commanded us to enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. We will speak because injustice does not become lawful merely by being called "politics." We will speak because the wealth of Muslims is not the property of rulers to dispose of as they please. We will speak because the Ummah is commanded to know its reality, to know who rules it, by what they rule it, and to whom sovereignty and legislation belong. Allah (swt) said, ﴿إِنَّ الْحُكْمَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ﴾ **"It is only Allah Who decides"** [TMQ Surah Yusuf: 40]. This is not a verse we recite and then leave its meaning outside it. It is a matter of Aqeedah (doctrine). For if judgement belongs to Allah (swt), then no human has the right to make himself an independent source of legislation. Allah (swt) said, ﴿وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ﴾ **"And those who do not judge by what Allah has revealed are truly the disbelievers"** [TMQ Surah Al-Ma'idah: 44], and said, ﴿وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ﴾ **"And those who do not judge by what Allah has revealed are truly the wrongdoers"** [TMQ Surah Al-Ma'idah: 45], and said, ﴿وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ﴾ **"And those who do not judge by what Allah has revealed are truly the rebellious"** [TMQ Surah Al-Ma'idah: 47].

And the duty here is to understand the texts as the people of knowledge understood them and not to rush into declaring specific individuals as kuffar (disbelievers) without the conditions being met and the impediments being removed. For judging an action is one thing and judging a specific person is another. However, the core issue is clear: judgement and legislation are not a domain in which Islam is to be separated from life.

And is Islam only about individual acts of worship? This is a misconception that is frequently repeated. It is said, "Deen is a relationship between a person and their Lord, while politics, governance and economics are worldly matters." So, we say: "This is a notion that requires proof."

So where do we place the verses on inheritance, the rulings on trade and usury, the rulings on the judiciary, on marriage and divorce, on debts, on Jihad, on treaties, on wealth and on governance, justice and consultation (shuraa)? And where do we place enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong? Are all these merely individual acts of worship? No.

Indeed, Islam came to guide humanity in its worship, morals, transactions, family, society, relations and matters of governance and stewardship.

The disagreement here is not over the existence of religious texts; rather, it is over the extent of Islam's comprehensiveness regarding public affairs. This is a matter to be discussed with evidence, not slogans.

Among the texts most often cited to distance Islam from public, political affairs is the Prophet's (saw) saying, «أَنْتُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِأَمْرِ دُنْيَاكُمْ» **"You know best about your worldly affairs"** [Muslim].

However, where was this hadith revealed? It was in the story of pollinating date palms – i.e., technical expertise in palm fertilization – not in establishing a system of governance, legislating laws, political economy or abolishing divine rulings. Here one must distinguish between two matters: technical expertise in means and legislation that defines the Halal and Haram. The physician knows best about medicine, the engineer about construction, the farmer about agriculture and the military expert about many details of his craft but this does not mean that man becomes a legislator alongside Allah (swt)! The hadith does not say: you know better than Revelation what should be Halal and Haram, nor does it say: you know better than the Messenger of Allah (saw) about the system of governance, nor does it say:

leave economics, judiciary and politics to humans without guidance from Allah (swt). It only speaks about worldly technical expertise in a specific matter. Combining the texts is the correct way to understand them, not isolating a hadith from its context and burdening it with what it cannot bear!

Islam does not fear politics; rather, it regulates it. Islam did not leave politics to whims but established for it a criterion, which is justice. Allah (swt) said, ﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ﴾ **“Indeed, Allah commands justice, grace”** [TMQ Surah An-Nahl: 90].

And consultation (Shuraa), Allah (swt) says, ﴿وَأْمُرْهُمْ شُورَىٰ بَيْنَهُمْ﴾ **“conduct their affairs by mutual consultation”** [TMQ Surah Ash-Shuraa: 38].

And ruling by what Allah (swt) has revealed, Allah (swt) said, ﴿وَأَنِ احْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ﴾ **“And judge between them O Prophet by what Allah has revealed, and do not follow their desires”** [TMQ Surah Al-Ma'idah: 49].

And enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, Allah (swt) said, ﴿وَلْتَكُن مِّنكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ﴾ **“Let there be a group among you who call others to goodness, encourage what is good, and forbid what is evil”** [TMQ Surah Aal-i Imran: 104].

So how, after all this, can it be said, “Do not speak about politics”?! Instead, it is obligatory that we speak but according to the criterion of Islam.

When Western ideas entered the mind of the Ummah, the problem was not only the existence of political systems that contradict Islam though that is the most important issue. The deeper problem is that the Ummah has often lost its intellectual immunity. Instead of looking at ideas through the criterion of Islam, it began looking at Islam through the lens of ideas imported from the disbelieving West. Democracy comes and it is said: It is compatible with Islam. The concept of absolute freedom comes and it is said: How can we accommodate Islam to it? Secularism comes and it is said: Can we make it Islamic? This is an inversion of the criterion. The Muslim does not make Islam subservient to ideas; rather, he makes Islam the criterion against which ideas are judged. Allah (swt) said, ﴿فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ﴾ **“Should you disagree on anything, then refer it to Allah and His Messenger”** [TMQ Surah An-Nisa: 59].

So, if an idea is presented to us, we do not first ask: Does the East or West accept it? Instead, we ask: What is Allah’s ruling regarding it? This is the Islamic identity that the Ummah must restore.

The problem is not that we learn from others but that we make them our reference point. Islam does not prevent Muslims from benefiting from the experiences of other nations or from their sciences. The Messenger (saw) adopted material means and expertise in battlefields and other matters and Muslims benefited from the sciences of other nations in various eras. However, there is a great difference between benefiting from human expertise in means and importing creeds, concepts and systems that contradict Islam and making them the reference for life. The first is expertise; the second is intellectual and legislative authority. Here, the Ummah must restore its confidence in Islam, so that the Ummah carrying the greatest message in history is not shy of its Shariah, constantly seeking a certificate of approval from others!

For this reason, separating Islam from governance is not a neutral matter as some portray it. Instead, it is an idea with its own roots, premises and consequences.

If a Muslim believes that Allah (swt) has revealed a complete Shariah, the natural question is: why do we believe in part of it and abandon another part? Allah (swt) says,

﴿أَفْتُمْنُونَ بَعْضَ الْكِتَابِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ بِبَعْضٍ﴾ **“So do you believe in part of the Scripture and disbelieve in part?”** [TMQ Surah Al-Baqarah: 85].

Therefore, we must return to Islam with a conscious return, not an emotional one. And we must understand it as it came, not as contemporary intellectual systems wish it to be.

So what is the solution? The solution is not to flee from politics or to say, “Let the rulers do as they please,” nor is it to surrender our minds to intellectual frameworks that originated in philosophical and historical environments different from the Aqeedah of Islam. Nor is it chaos, violence, injustice or wrongful takfir.

The solution is to return to Islam with a complete, conscious return, to make revelation the reference point of the Ummah in governance, legislation and stewardship; for the Ummah to restore its Islamic identity, to learn its Deen, to understand its reality, to know the ideas of its enemies, to discuss opposing ideas with Islam, to reject intellectual and political subservience and to work towards establishing a just Islamic system of governance whose mission is to manage people’s affairs according to Islam, protecting their blood, wealth, honor, safeguarding the Ummah’s resources and sanctities, establishing justice, holding the ruler accountable, and making sovereignty belong to the Shariah.

Here, speaking about the Khilafah Rashidah (Rightly-Guided Caliphate) upon the Method of the Prophethood becomes relevant, as it is, in the Islamic conception, the system of governance based on Islam and managing the affairs of Muslims through it—not merely an emotional slogan. The Ummah does not need to search for an Islamic version of Western systems; rather, it needs to reclaim Islam from its source and build its reality upon its foundation. So do not say: “Do not speak about politics!” Instead, say, “Do not speak of corrupt politics.” Yes, do not speak of lies, betrayal, subservience, bribery, injustice, or theft. Do not make the Deen a mount for worldly interests, and do not make politics a market for trading in the Deen.

However, to tell a Muslim: “Do not speak about Shariah ruling governance, nor about the Ummah’s wealth, nor about injustice, nor about Palestine, nor about the country’s laws, nor about state relations, nor about the future of Muslims...”—this is not from Islam.

Indeed, an Ummah that does not speak about its own affairs will have others speak about its affairs. An Ummah that does not carry its own project will have others carry their projects to it. And an Ummah that does not make Islam its criterion will have the ideas of others become its criterion.

So, O sons of Islam: do not make Islam subservient to your time; rather, make your time subservient to the criterion of Islam. And do not ask how to make Islam compatible with everything that comes from the West; rather, ask how to bring our lives back to Islam.

How greatly does the Ummah today need to restore its awareness, its confidence in its Deen, its identity and its unity, and to make Islam its reference in confronting injustice, subservience, tyranny, plunder, and Westernization.

Allah (swt) says, ﴿وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ﴾ **“Whoever seeks a way other than Islam, it will never be accepted from them, and in the Hereafter they will be among the losers”** [TMQ Surah Aal-i Imran: 85].

O Allah (swt), return the Ummah to Your Deen in a beautiful return, grant it deep understanding of its Deen, insight into its reality, steadfastness upon the truth, establish justice within it, unite its word upon Islam and make it an Ummah that carries the message of Islam to the worlds.

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