



In the Name of Allah—the Most Compassionate, Most Merciful

As we face the Election cycle with a level of uncertainty and anxiety, it is our relationship with Allah that must remain constant.

Acknowledge and Validate Concerns

- *In an already difficult year, we are facing an election that is more contentious than usual*
- *There are specific challenges in the 2020 elections – the true results of the election may not be announced for several days or weeks after November 3rd due to the large volume of mail-in votes cast this year because of Covid-19*
- *There are perceptions of intimidation, suppression, and fraud in this election, which can haunt an election's credibility¹*
- *Given the expected delay in the announcement of election results and a climate of disinformation designed to further polarize the country², 71% of all Americans are concerned about violence in the wake of the 2020 election³*
- *Four major risk factors linked to possible electoral violence: groups engaging in winner-take-all competition to promote their own interests societal polarization, rise in hate speech and rhetoric, and weakening institutions⁴*
- *If you are feeling anxious, depressed, or fearful, you are not alone. Such feelings are valid and expected in these circumstances.*

As Muslims, we believe that this life is a test both in good times and bad, so the believer sees in every moment an opportunity to strengthen his/her relationship with Allah and reap blessings and rewards. We are also blessed to find guidance for dealing with turbulent situations in our deen.

Remain Optimistic

- *The United States has successfully held elections throughout our nearly 250 years of history, including pandemics, World Wars, and even the Civil War. We've done it before and we'll do it again, as a country.*

Our faith teaches us that this too will pass, but as we go through this test (*fitnah*) we must seek ways to purify ourselves and to nourish our souls.

Reliance on Allah (Tawakkul)

The Straight Path we seek demands faith, gratitude, and patience on our part—and placing one's trust in Allah. Reliance on Allah, *tawakkul*, is among the greatest acts of worship along this Path and one required of us, "...and upon Allah rely, if you should be believers." Qur'an 5:23.

¹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/30/us/trump-election-poll-watchers.html>

² <https://comprop.oii.ox.ac.uk/research/ira-political-polarization/>

³ <https://democracyforpresident.com/topics/election-violence>

⁴ <https://www.newamerica.org/political-reform/policy-papers/building-us-resilience-political-violence/>

Allah promises to “provide for the believer from where he does not expect. And whoever relies upon Allah, then He is sufficient for him.” Qur’an 65:3.

Scholars divide people into three categories in terms of their approach to *tawakkul*.

The first type of person is one who relies wholly on Allah, without personally asserting any effort toward the end goal himself.

- This is contradictory to *tawakkul* as understood from the Qur’an and Sunnah.
- During the life of the Prophet ﷺ the people of Yemen traveled for Hajj without sufficient provision, claiming to depend solely on Allah to provide for them. When they resorted to begging the people of Medina to take care of them, Allah revealed the verse, “**And take provisions, but indeed, the best provision is fear of Allah.**”

The second type of person takes the means to achieve the desired outcome, while relying solely on those means, and not on Allah.

- Nūḥ (as) could not convince his own son to seek refuge in Allah from the flood, in the safety of the ark. His son defiantly said, “I will take refuge on a mountain to protect me from the water.” [Noah] said, “There is no protector today from the decree of Allah, except for whom He gives mercy.” And the waves came between them, and he was among the drowned. Qur’an 11:43.

The third group of people are those who take the necessary means to achieving the desired outcome *and* place their trust in Allah to grant them success.

- This is the correct understanding of *tawakkul* as taught and practiced by the Prophet ﷺ and every prophet before him.
- *Tawakkul* involves the coming together of both one’s spiritual and material means.

Overcoming Uncertainty

- The real test of uncertainty goes beyond worldly concern and discomfort—to how we choose to respond to it. So, how do we overcome what seems beyond our comprehension and control? How do we overcome anxiety, fear of the unknown, and feeling isolated, while finding purpose and solace?
- We don’t always have the knowledge or the insight to make sense of a situation, such as the pandemic or the upcoming election. We may feel trapped with no end in sight but with *tawakkul*, Allah will guide us into the clear.
- Some things may seem unfair or counterintuitive, but Allah, in His infinite knowledge and wisdom, is steering us to good. It may be beyond our rational minds to comprehend.

Reflect on the Quran

Reflect on the stories in *Surah al-Kahf* and the incidents of other Messengers of Allah.

What comes from Allah is the truth, and that which contains the greatest wisdom and good. This aspect of *tawakkul* gives us the confidence and the ability to accept His decree as the best outcome, no matter how things may appear at the time.

...But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And Allah Knows, while you know not. Qur'an 2:216.

To Know Allah Is To Trust Him

- Reflect over the names and attributes of Allah.
- He is Eternal (*al-Ḥayy*).
- He is the Sustainer of all that exists (*al-Qayyūm*).
- His knowledge is All-Encompassing (*al-'Alīm*).
- He is the Most Powerful (*al-Qadīr*).
- He is the One who is most Noble and Generous (*al-Karīm*).

Allah is our Guardian (*al-Wakīl*): "To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And sufficient is Allah as Disposer of affairs." Qur'an 4:171.

We remain optimistic in Allah, the All-Merciful (*al-Raḥmān*) Eternal Refuge (*al-Ṣamad*) who never lets us down, and brings us out of darkness into light, time and time again.

Doing our part – the Second Part of Tawakkul

When faced with the imminent danger of migrating to Medina (*hijrah*), the Prophet ﷺ placed his complete trust in Allah to guide him to safety. He then meticulously carried out protective measures to achieve it.

Before and during the election:

- In the instance of this election, doing our part means **every eligible voter casts their vote. You must ensure that you and your family vote.** Encourage and remind others to vote. Make sure you have done your utmost for a positive outcome for your community and country.
- Volunteer to assist others by offering to drive them to the polls or to drop off their ballots (while following CDC guidelines for Covid-19)
- Fight voter suppression by helping people have a better polling experience and enabling them to stay in voting lines. Volunteer or partner with masajid or other organizations providing water, chairs, snacks, masks, and hand sanitizer to voters waiting in long lines to cast their votes. Remember to follow CDC guidelines for Covid-19.

And cooperate [assist one another] in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression. Qur'an 5:2.

After the election:

- **Highlight unifying identities**
 - *Irrespective of election results, a large part of the population of the country will be disappointed with the outcome because of the loss of their preferred candidate*
 - *Focus on shared identities among Americans. For example, 86% of Americans cite their family role as the most important aspect of their identity, 3 of 4 say their American identity is important to them, and 68% are exhausted by the*

*division in our country and see pitting Americans against each other as a threat to our democracy*⁵

- *The vast majority of Americans reject the use of violence*
- *Highlight our shared duty to protect our democracy and republic*
- *Americans agree that voting is a common obligation*⁶

- **Educate and fight disinformation**

- In the absence of immediate results, unverified information and rumors will have an opportunity to take hold through Facebook groups, WhatsApp messages etc. Disinformation, intentionally misleading information, and misinformation will fill social media. Encourage people to verify before sharing information, and actively seek to correct harmful rumors and conspiracy theories
- Refrain from sharing unverified information. Steer discussion of voter fraud and other politicized issues away from “right” and “wrong”. Assure people that there are trusted election officials and established mechanisms to guard against fraud.
- There is a process. Any mistakes and irregularities can be challenged in the courts.

- **Promote peace and positivity**

- Set positive norms, e.g. “violence is not an acceptable way to resolve any issue”
- Reinforce how we all want to make this country better, how there are solutions to the concerns about the election, and how this is an opportunity for us to move forward as a community
- Encourage people to channel their anxiety into civic engagement

Spiritual Checklist

Key reminders and practices one can use to nurture one’s *tawakkul* on a daily basis.

- **The five daily prayers**

Allah gives us the opportunity to converse with Him and strengthen *tawakkul*.

- **Du‘ā’**

Man is not weary of supplication for good [things], but if evil touches him, he is hopeless and despairing. Qur’an 41:49.

- Develop a meaningful connection with Allah, asking Him sincerely and with an understanding of the supplications in the Qur’an and Sunnah, along with your own heartfelt words.
- Internalize your *du‘ā’* the way you may have internalized your anxiety and fear, and trust that Allah will turn your *du‘ā’* into a means of relief and comfort.
- **Gratitude**
- Be grateful! It helps one develop and maintain self-control and to not complain or indulge in negative self-talk that might lead to one giving up.
- Gratitude can flourish and manifest from within when one places complete trust in Allah and has reliance on Him that He has blessed us and answered our call.
- **Patience**
- *Tawakkul* helps one to remain patient, and to stay persistent, consistent, and engaged in action.

⁵ <https://democracyforpresident.com/topics/communication-2020-election-results>

⁶ www.cartercenter.org/vote

- **Daily Adhkar**

The Prophet ﷺ has taught us a number of *du'ā's* to make at prescribed times throughout a twenty-four-hour period as well as on specific occasions.

As difficult as it is to balance between staying informed of the current state of affairs and staying productive in trying times, when the news cycle is perpetual and distressful, *Tawakkul* in Allah is the greatest of gifts which reassures us and reminds us of exactly how to stay the course until we reach our ultimate destination.

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