

**A Compilation of Maulana Muhammad Ali's
Friday Prayer Sermons**

Volume I

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Friday Prayer Sermons**

Volume I

English translation of the Urdu

Khutbaat-e-Maulana Muhammad Ali

translated by Dr. Mohammad Ahmad

1	November 2, 1914	12	December 24, 1915
2	November 27, 1914	13	January 9, 1916
3	December 11, 1914	14	January 28, 1916
4	December 20, 1914	15	February 4, 1916
5	December 25, 1914	16	February 25, 1916
6	January 8, 1915	17	April 21, 1916
7	February 8, 1915	18	April 28, 1916
8	March 19, 1915	19	May 5, 1916
9	April 9, 1915	20	May 12, 1916
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Publisher's Note

All Praise is due to Allah the Lord of the worlds. We are very happy to present this, the first volume of the collected Friday Khutbas (sermons) of Maulana Muhammad Ali, translated from the original Urdu into English by Dr. Mohammad Ahmad, President of the USA Jamaat.

May Almighty Allah Bless and Reward Dr. Ahmad for this translation which will, inshallah, allow the English speaking public access to this extensive corpus of Maulana Muhammad Ali's sermons. Dr. Ahmad and sister Lubna have paid for this first volume of the Khutba series.

The sermons are a treasure trove of spirituality. In these sermons, extending over a period of more than four decades, Maulana Muhammad Ali shows how the Quranic verses are applicable in a wide variety of situations, thus validating the claim of the Quran that its message will be relevant at all times and in all circumstances. Maulana Muhammad Ali's passion for the spread of the Quran, evident in these sermons, will undoubtedly inspire many readers. For historians, the sermons are a valuable source for the history of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Jamaat, and the utility of the sermons as a resource for preparing Jumma Khutbas is limitless.

We will, inshallah, publish these volumes periodically as Dr. Ahmad proceeds with the translation.

Samina Malik

Director in charge of USA Jamaat publications

Translator's Foreword

Bi-smi-llabi-r Rabmani-r-Rabim

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

Al-hamdu li-llabi Rabbi-l-'alamin

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

It has been a great blessing for me to be a part, although insignificant, of Maulana Muhammad Ali's *mighty striving*. As I read these sermons in Urdu, I felt inspired to open this window of knowledge and light to the rest of the world, and share these blessings. I have translated five volumes of these sermons into the English language. Some of these have been published in our quarterly magazine, *The Light and Islamic Review*, and also sent individually through email. I urge all to study and benefit from the wisdom and knowledge of the Holy Quran that Maulana Muhammad Ali so eloquently conveys in these discourses. They will also always remain a source of guidance and inspiration for members of Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat-i-Islam Lahore. Please pray for the *Protection of Allah* for all who have made this possible.

“O Allah! Exalt Muhammad and the true followers of Muhammad as thou didst exalt Abraham and the true followers of Abraham; surely Thou art Praised Magnified. O Allah! Bless Muhammad and the true followers of Muhammad as Thou didst bless Abraham and the true followers of Abraham; surely Thou art Praised, Magnified.”

Wasalaam,

Mohammad Ahmad

November 11, 2015

Foreword

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

The Friday sermons of our late president and benefactor, Maulana Muhammad Ali delivered at the Ahmadiyya Mosque Ahmadiyya buildings, Lahore were originally published in the Urdu monthly paper *Paigham Sulha*. An English translation of some of these sermons was published in the periodical, *Light*. They were also translated into Arabic and published in the Arabic journals¹ and became very popular. Those who have heard or read these sermons of Maulana Muhammad Ali are familiar with the depth of spiritual knowledge, wisdom, and guidance contained in them. For years, this valuable treasure has laid buried in the files of the *Paigham Sulha* and needs to be exposed to the public.

The purpose of the Friday sermon as expressed in the introductory verses of the Quranic chapter *Al-Jumu'ah* was fulfilled in an excellent manner by these discourses by Maulana Muhammad Ali. They contain spiritual knowledge, wisdom, and abundant guidance for purification of the soul. They also, in a way, narrate the history of the Ahmadiyya Movement. The correct beliefs of the Reformer of the age² and his real mission have also received expression through these sermons. He has created awareness of these beliefs, not only amongst the members of his own organization, but also among those of the Qadian *jammāt* (organization) informing them of the mistakes they have made. Most of these sermons, particularly those delivered in the later years, reflect his great enthusiasm and love for the propagation of Islam

1. Due to the commendable efforts of Sayyid Tassaduq Hussain Qadri of Iraq.

2. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

and the Holy Quran. In one of his sermons, he declares it to be his overwhelming desire that the Holy Quran should reach the four corners of the world. His exhortation before his death was, “Our job is to convey the message of the Holy Quran hence-forth the Quran will do its own work.”

It has been the wish of some of our members that these sermons be compiled in a book format and widely publicized. In this manner, not only the light contained in these sermons can receive wider exposure, but also the knowledge contained in these files of the *Paigham Sulha* can be better preserved. Toward the end of Maulana Muhammad Ali’s life at the behest of some friends, Maulana Aziz Baksh compiled a collection of fourteen of these sermons and published it in book format. This collection included a sermon from December 1947, along with the sermons delivered from January 1948 through April 1948. The honorable Maulana called it, “the first endeavor,” hoping that in the future these sermons would continue to be published in this format.

Regrettably, this work was not undertaken for a long time. It seems that the time has now come for this work to be accomplished. Allah the Most High has bestowed this honor upon the heirs of Maulana Muhammad Ali that they have arranged funds for this purpose and given over this task to the Anjuman.³ Twenty-one of these earliest sermons are being presented to you in book format.

We supplicate before Allah the Most High that for those who read these sermons, they become a source of knowledge, guidance, and purification of the soul. May Allah the Most High give us the opportunity to complete this task without further delay, *ameen thuma ameen* (be it so!), (be it so!)

Saeed Ahmad

Amir *Jamaat* Ahmadiyya Lahore

Dated, June 20, 1982

3. Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat-i-Islam Lahore.

“And they say: Our hearts are repositories. Nay, Allah has cursed them on account of their unbelief; so little it is that they believe.” (2:88)

وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ كِتَابٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ ۖ وَكَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ
يَسْتَفْتِحُونَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ۗ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ مَا عَرَفُوا كَفَرُوا بِهِ ۗ فَلَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ
عَلَى الْكٰفِرِينَ ﴿٨٨﴾

“And when there came to them a Book from Allah verifying that which they have, and aforetime they used to pray for victory against those who disbelieved — but when there came to them that which they recognized, they disbelieved in it; so Allah’s curse is on the disbelievers.” (2:89)

Materialistic Tendency Amongst the Opponents

This section of the Holy Quran discusses motives that led to denial of the Holy Prophet Muhammad by the Jews. Because the Jews were being addressed, reference is made to their accepted principles and scripture. The main reason for their rejection of the Holy Prophet was their excessive love for attractions of the material world. They were so bonded to their low desires that anything that stood in the way, even if it was the command of God, was bound to be rejected.

Hence Allah the Most High says, “And We indeed gave Moses the Book and We sent messengers after him one after another; and We gave Jesus, son of Mary, clear arguments and strengthened him with the Holy Spirit. Is it then that whenever there came to you a messenger with what your souls desired not, you were arrogant? And some you gave the lie to and others you would slay.”

Believers Strengthened with the Holy Spirit

“And We gave Jesus, son of Mary, clear arguments and strengthened him with the Holy Spirit.” Unfortunately Muslims

generally have accepted these words as meaning the Holy Spirit accompanied Jesus at all times, while he had only intermittent contact with other messengers. This is another one of those peculiarities they assign only to Jesus, and note that it is not shared by any other human being. On the contrary, Allah The Blessed, the Most High, states in the Holy Quran regarding the companions of our Holy Prophet, “These are they into whose hearts He has impressed faith, and strengthened them with a Spirit from Himself,” (58:22). This clearly indicates that assistance rendered through the Holy Spirit is not only for prophets but also for ordinary believers. For example, the Holy Prophet while praying for one of his companions, Hasan bin Thabit, said, “And the Holy Spirit be with you.”

Nature of Man in Dealing with Prophets

It is generally in the nature of man that whenever something goes against his will, he dislikes it — and this lack of truthfulness and humility on his part, results in arrogant behavior and rejection. When a prophet comes, those who are lost in the love of material acquisition are unable to alter their lifestyle. They refuse to accept the messages that go against their desires and deny the call of the messenger. This is what led the Jews to reject the message of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

Claim of Hearts Being Repositories

وَقَالُوا قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ ۚ بَلْ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَقَلِيلًا مَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

“And they say: Our hearts are repositories. Nay, Allah has cursed them on account of their unbelief; so little it is that they believe.” (2:88)

In spite of being so deeply ensnared in the web of their own desires, the pride in these people is so overwhelming that they consider themselves to be the only ones who deserve salvation while the rest of humanity is fuel for the fire of hell. If they hear a good word, they claim that their hearts are repositories (of

knowledge) and therefore not impressed by it, they pretentiously ignore it. Allah the Most High states this is not so. The real reason is that as a result of refusing to submit to the command of God and of their slavery to low desires, they have strayed so far away from Him that their hearts are no longer capable of accepting Divine truths. Very little of faith remains.

Condition of Muslim Religious Leaders

The idea that Jews were the only ones deserving salvation was greatly responsible for them not benefitting from the blessings of Islam. The Jewish nation was, in the words of the Holy Quran, made you excel the nations, (2:47) and at another time became such that they, “incurred Allah’s wrath” (2:61). Muslims today are suffering from the same malady. They are incessantly involved in the pursuit of worldly gains and are slaves of their desires but claim to be the only nation deserving salvation, while ignoring the call of truth. Thus, when the Promised Messiah¹ (Hazrat² Mirza Ghulam Ahmad) put forward his claim describing his mission and wrote articles to support Islam, not only did they not read them, but some religious scholars issued edicts prohibiting their reading. Now a group³ has formed amongst the Ahmadiyya community that refuses to pay heed to certain issues out of pride and shreds apart the books containing them. I advise you to always keep your mind open to any word of truth and wisdom and remain prepared to ponder it. If it is based upon truth and is reasonable, accept it; if it is wrong, reject it. It is my belief that such an individual, even if he makes a mistake, will not be held accountable before God.

-
1. For a detailed study on this subject, refer to the book *The Ahmadiyya Movement* by Maulana Muhammad Ali.
 2. Hazrat: Honorific title for a Muslim dignitary or holy person, in Urdu and Persian.
 3. Reference is made to the Qadian section of the Ahmadiyya community, headed by Mirza Mahmud Ahmad.

Meaning of the Curse of Allah

“And invoke the curse of Allah on the liars” (3:61). The curse of Allah means that the hearts affected stray far away from Allah and lean farther toward the temporary attractions of worldly life. “And when there came to them a Book from Allah verifying that which they have, and aforetime they used to pray for victory against those who disbelieved — but when there came to them that which they recognized, they disbelieved in it; so Allah’s curse is on the disbelievers.” (2:89)

Prophecy of Prophet Moses Regarding Holy Prophet Muhammad

Even if there were no prophecies about the Holy Quran in the Torah and the Bible, the teachings of the Holy Quran are in principle so much in accordance with their teachings that a truth-loving nation would not have denied them. There is no righteous teaching that the Holy Quran has not presented. Someone can search and find the best of what is uncovered in previous scriptures, and they will find it in the Holy Quran. As it contains all of these excellent ideas, what could be the reason for its denial? It is nothing except for hatred and the affliction of loving fallacy. In this verse, we are told that not only is the Holy Quran a book revealed by Allah the Most High, references to it are also found in other scriptures. Thus, we find in the Torah: “I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.” (DEUT. 18-20)

Now who amongst the prophets in the Mosaic dispensation right through to Jesus has laid claim to be a prophet like Moses?

There has certainly been no prophet from amongst the children of Israel who has made such a claim. On the other hand, Allah the Most High states in the Holy Quran regarding Holy Prophet Muhammad: "Surely We have sent to you a Messenger, a witness against you, as We sent a messenger to Pharaoh" (73:15). What can be the reason for their denial? This prophecy is so evident and Prophet Moses laid so much stress upon it that there has not been a single prophet, other than the Holy Prophet Muhammad, who has claimed to be the subject of this prophecy. There is no doubt that Jews had recognized the truth of the Holy Prophet's claim as the Holy Quran states:

وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ كِتَابٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ ۖ وَكَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ
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عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

"...But when there came to them that which they recognized, they disbelieved in it; so Allah's curse is on the disbelievers." (2:89)

After clearly identifying him, the Jews still refused to accept him. They saw his spiritual resemblance to Moses, and understood that he was from amongst the brethren of the children of Israel i.e., the progeny of Ishmael from amongst whom there had been no prophet. There remained no doubt in the face of this evidence that Holy Prophet Muhammad was indeed the subject of this prophecy. In addition, they also observed his prophecies being fulfilled. Those who disbelieved after such clear prophetic evidence were deserving of Allah's curse i.e., they became estranged from good. The Jews recognized all these signs but became disbelievers because the Holy Prophet was not from amongst the children of Israel. Their hearts desired that the promised prophet should be from their nation.

Punishment for Denying the Truth

بِئْسَمَا اشْتَرَوْا بِهِ أَنْفُسَهُمْ أَنْ يَكْفُرُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بَغْيًا أَنْ يَنْزَلَ
 اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ۚ فَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ عَلَى غَضَبٍ ۖ
 وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ ①

“Evil is that for which they sell their souls — that they should deny that which Allah has revealed, out of envy that Allah should send down of His grace on whomsoever of His servants He pleases; so they incur wrath upon wrath. And there is an abasing chastisement for the disbelievers.” (2:90)

When a person knowingly denies the truth, it is rebellion. Jews were so overwhelmed by their desires that they rejected the Holy Prophet while knowing he fulfilled all the conditions of earlier prophecy. They rejected the commandments of God in this matter and rebelled against them. Their only objection was that it was revealed to someone belonging to another nation — against their wishes. It was this rebellious attitude that resulted in denial and rejection of the truth. The punishment for a rebel is wrath upon wrath or divine displeasure, to which they were subjected. (The word wrath is repeated twice, because they had already incurred divine displeasure by rejecting Prophet Jesus).

“And there is an abasing chastisement for the disbelievers.” Muslims today are also subject to abasing chastisement for indulging in behavior similar to that of the Jews. It is essential that Muslims ponder their condition and attempt reformation. These events are narrated to serve as a warning for Muslims; they are not mere tales.

“They said: We hear and disobey” (2:93). The Jews did not utter these words with their tongues. What this means is ‘we hear it but deny it in practice’. The condition of Muslims today is analogous. They profess belief in every letter of the Holy Quran but their actions are totally in contradiction to its teachings.

Prayer for Invocation of Death to Prove Truthfulness of a Claim and the Christian Objection in This Matter

قُلْ إِنْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَالِصَةً مِّنْ دُونِ النَّاسِ فَتَمَنَّوْا
المَوْتَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٩٤﴾

“Say: If the abode of the Hereafter with Allah is specially for you to the exclusion of the people, then invoke death if you are truthful.”(2:94)

One of the reasons for rejection of truth amongst various nations has been the erroneous belief that they are the only chosen ones of God, and are deserving of salvation. Jews believed that they were the blessed and chosen ones of God and that hell was forbidden for them. They are mentioned here and their belief that they were certain to go to paradise is challenged. They are asked to invoke death upon themselves so that they can quickly get relief from the sufferings of their worldly existence. This is a somewhat weaker interpretation of these words, because wishing for death is equivalent to committing suicide. The real meaning of this is that if you are beloved of God, then pray against me whom you consider as your enemy so that you gain victory in this great conflict. In this manner, truth and falsehood can be differentiated. In other words they were challenged to a *mubabala*⁴. Christians object here, stating that “our religion is only love and we do not wish death upon anyone”. These are only superficial claims, for we observe that when empowered they do not spare each other. Abu Aamir who

4. Footnote 94a. (English Translation and commentary of the Holy Quran by Maulana Muhammad Ali): According to I'Ab *tamannawu-l-mauta* (lit., desire death) signifies invoke death on the party that lies or is false in its assertion (IJ). A similar challenge, but in fuller words, is contained in 3:61: “Whoever then disputes with thee in this matter after the knowledge that has come to thee, say: ‘Come! let us call our sons and your sons, and our women and your women, and our people and your people, then let us be earnest in prayer and invoke the curse of Allah on the liars.’” This challenge is given to the Christians, and the same challenge in fewer words is given here to the Jews.

was a very famous Christian priest in Madinah made a prediction that the Holy Prophet would be destroyed. What is stated here is that if you are truthful in your claim that is the basis of your rejecting Islam and you consider us liars, then pray on our behalf that the world may be saved from our influence.

وَلَنْ يَسْتَنْوُوهَ أَبَدًا بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٩٥﴾

“And they will never invoke it on account of what their hands have sent on before and Allah knows the wrongdoers” (2:95).

They are aware that their prayers are not accepted; therefore they will abstain. Because of their love of life and worldly desires they do not wish to die. In fact they are certain of chastisement and wish they could live for a thousand years to avoid it, “One of them loves to be granted a life of a thousand years, and his being granted a long life will in no way remove him further off from the chastisement.” (2:96) Living for a long time, however, cannot prevent the coming of chastisement.

November 27, 1914

Three Types of Responses to Invitation to Righteousness

Ibear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah.

After this, I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil.

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

قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِلْجَبْرِئِيلِ فَإِنَّهُ نَزَّلَهُ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٩٦﴾

“Say: Whoever is an enemy to Gabriel — for surely he revealed it to thy heart by Allah’s command, verifying that which is before it and a guidance and glad tidings for the believers.” (2:97)

Three Types of Behavior

People can be classified into three groups based upon their response to an invitation toward righteousness.

1. Those who pay heed to righteous teachings and strive to put them into practice. These are very few in number.
2. Those who listen to these Divine messages and their hearts are temporarily affected by them, but they do not attempt

to benefit from the guidance and their spiritual condition remains unchanged. The majority of people fall within this group.

3. In the third group are those who hear and evaluate these teachings of goodness, but reject them and willingly adopt evil ways.

If we carefully ponder upon this, we will come to the conclusion that these three groups are representative of the general human condition.

The condition of the group belonging to the third category is discussed in this section. In the preceding section, we saw that the Holy Quran has provided proof that the Children of Israel refused to accept Holy Prophet Muhammad although there was clear testimony in their scriptures verifying his advent. This rejection resulted from the worship of their own low desires, pride, and rebellion against the commandments of God.

Enmity Towards the Message of Truth

If after rejecting the Holy Prophet, they had remained neutral, Allah the Most High would not have held them accountable. Their denial was, however, accompanied by severe opposition and extreme enmity. This hostility was not directed toward the person of the Holy Prophet, for he never treated anyone unjustly nor did he unlawfully consume property belonging to others. In fact, the hostility was directed toward the message of truth that he gave the world. Allah the Most High refers to this in the Holy Quran with these words:

“We know indeed that what they say grieves thee, for surely they give not thee the lie, but the wrongdoers give the lie to Allah’s messages.” (6:33)

The Holy Prophet was righteous in his dealings with all and had already spent forty years of his life amongst the jews before

his claim of prophethood. They could not find fault with his character. Their opposition was to Allah's messages.

Addressing them, The Holy Quran says, "Say: If Allah had desired, I would not have recited it to you, nor would He have made it known to you. I have lived among you a lifetime before it. Do you not then understand?" (10:16)

At this stage hostility towards the Holy Prophet by the Jews was in reality against Allah's messages.

Baseless Charge Against Angel Gabriel

Sometimes we observe a peculiar human behavior wherein a person develops hostility within his heart toward a friend. I do not need to go very far to look for an example. We are all anxiously awaiting the arrival of Khawaja Kamal-ud-din from England. He has not ill-treated anyone while there. In fact, he has demonstrated to Muslims what no-one has been able to accomplish in the last thirteen hundred years i.e., carrying the message of Islam to the West. In spite of this monumental accomplishment, some of his friends are turning against him and praying for his malediction. This is the same response that turned a majority of Arabs into sworn enemies of the Holy Prophet. Also, the very same people of the Book who were waiting for his advent and believed in prophecies of his coming were amongst the first disbelievers. Addressing them, the Holy Quran states:

"And believe in that which I have revealed, verifying that which is with you, and be not the first to deny it; neither take a mean price for My messages; and keep your duty to Me, Me alone." (2:41)

This section, as mentioned earlier, discusses the same people. In other words, Allah the Most High is saying, O Prophet, tell them that they are not your enemies. In fact their enmity is directed toward Angel Gabriel for he has brought this revelation, which verifies your scripture. He has brought it to you with Allah's permission. In it there is guidance for you and wonderful

news of great success. Enmity toward Angel Gabriel is enmity toward Allah who is the real source of all this guidance. This means rejection of all angels who are the voice of righteousness to your hearts. By opposing the message brought by Angel Gabriel, you have also become enemies of Angel Michael, whom you regard as your friend (the Jews considered Michael as the angel bringing blessings as their friend). The Holy Quran refers to this in these words:

“Whoever is an enemy to Allah and His angels and His messengers and Gabriel and Michael, then surely Allah is an enemy to disbelievers.” (2:98)

Jews became hostile toward Gabriel because, like some *Shia*, they thought Gabriel made a mistake in bringing revelation to the Holy Prophet Muhammad. They believed this revelation was actually the right of the Children of Israel. Thus, they became the enemies of Allah the Most High, for He is the real source of revelation. Their hostility toward the angels resulted because they were inspiring people’s hearts toward the revealed word. They turned against the prophets because they made prophecies about the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Allah the Most High states that whosoever is enemy to all of them, He is the enemy of such deniers. Allah the Most High is the Lord of the Worlds, the Beneficent, the Merciful, but when disbelievers reach a certain stage in their arrogance and rejection, He becomes their enemy, because they become hostile to the blessings revealed by Allah and meant for their welfare. They do not benefit from these blessings but suffer as a consequence of their rejection. This is the chastisement of Allah.

Repeated Denial of Allah’s Messages and Breaking of the Covenant

“And We indeed have revealed to thee clear messages, and none disbelieve in them except the transgressors.” (2:99)

Allah says that We gave clear messages to all the prophets whom they accept, regarding the advent of a prophet like Moses

from amongst their brethren. In spite of this, they reject the Holy Prophet Muhammad. This rejection amounts to breaking of the covenant. The ones guilty of breaking the covenant were promised abasing chastisement.

They repeatedly manifested this behavior: "Is it that whenever they make a covenant, a party of them cast it aside? Nay, most of them have no faith." (2:100)

The reason underlying this behavior was a lack of faith amongst a majority of them. Now that a prophet arrived fulfilling signs written in their scriptures, they even cast their scriptures aside. They asked John the Baptist if he was that prophet; his denial meant that they were awaiting the advent of such a prophet. But when Holy Prophet Muhammad claimed to be that prophet they denied the veracity of the prophecy itself.

Calumny Against Prophet Solomon

"And they follow what the devils fabricated against the kingdom of Solomon. And Solomon disbelieved not, but the devils disbelieved, teaching men enchantment. And it was not revealed to the two angels in Babel, Harut and Marut. Nor did they teach (it to) anyone, so that they should have said, We are only a trial, so disbelieve not. But they learn from these two (sources) that by which they make a distinction between a man and his wife. And they cannot hurt with it anyone except with Allah's permission. And they learn that which harms them and profits them not. And certainly they know that he who buys it has no share of good in the Hereafter. And surely evil is the price for which they have sold their souls, did they but know!" (2:102)

When a person refuses to accept Divine guidance, he essentially becomes a follower of something else. He advances a step further and adopts the directions given by the devil. This verse tells us that Jews rejected guidance given to them by the

promised prophet and started following fabrications allegedly taught by the devils in Solomon's kingdom. It must be remembered that many lies and fabrications have falsely been attributed to Prophet Solomon. This was not only popular amongst Jews but also amongst Muslims, signs of which remain to this day in the form of fabrications as *Naksh-e-Suleyman* etc. Allah the Most High says that when they started pursuing such fabrications and enchantment, they strayed from the pure guidance brought to them by the prophets of God. They are told that it was not Solomon who disbelieved, as alleged by them, but in fact it was the devils who disbelieved because they were the ones guilty of spreading such fabrications. These verses tell us that these people not only refused to accept the Holy Prophet, but followed falsehood contrary to his teachings. In addition, they formed secret societies that made plans to murder the Holy Prophet.

The Story of Harut and Marut

“...And it was not revealed to the two angels in Babel, Harut and Marut.” The stories about Harut and Marut narrated in our books have been taken from Persian and Jewish sources. No such teachings exist in the Holy Quran. Amongst the Persians there is a prevalent tale about two angels, Harut and Marut who are hanging upside down in a well in Babylon. They teach people sorcery and methods whereby a rift is created between husband and wife. Neither history nor any recent archeological digs in Babylon give any evidence to support the existence of such a well. Whatever is narrated about being revealed to them is also a fabrication. The truth is that amongst Persians there was a king named Cyrus. It is narrated in the Torah that he was a recipient of revelation and that during his reign, Jews regained their lost honor. Hundreds of years prior to his reign, Jerusalem was destroyed by Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar and the Jewish tribes were either imprisoned or fled into exile. Jews remained in a state of bondage for many years, until the Persian King Cyrus destroyed Babylon and rebuilt Jerusalem. Harut and Marut were

two angels who assisted King Cyrus in the destruction of Babylon. Regarding this story of the two angels the Holy Quran states:

“...And it was not revealed to the two angels in Babel, Harut and Marut. Nor did they teach (it to) anyone, so that they should have said, We are only a trial, so disbelieve not. But they learn from these two (sources) that by which they make a distinction between a man and his wife. And they cannot hurt with it anyone except with Allah’s permission. And they learn that which harms them and profits them not.” (2:102)

The Holy Quran discredits the story of Harut and Marut as a fabrication.

Free Mason Societies

The chief characteristic of the religion based on these sources is that it made a distinction between a man and his wife. This is credited with the destruction of Babylon and is a distinguishing characteristic of Free Mason societies. Allah the Most High states that not only did the Jews advance in their disbelief but they also made plans to kill the Holy Prophet following the methods they had employed in destroying Babylon i.e. Through the Free Mason lodges and societies. Allah the Most High warns them: “And they cannot hurt with it anyone except with Allah’s permission” (2:102). Any person, even if he is a prophet, may be subject to hurt but this can happen only with Allah’s permission. In other words, Jews are being told that their plans to harm the Holy Prophet cannot succeed. History is witness to the fact that Jews made many secret plans to harm the Holy Prophet, all of which failed. This is supported by another verse of the Holy Quran:

“Secret counsels are only (the work) of the devil that he may cause to grieve those who believe, and he can hurt them naught except with Allah’s permission...” (58:10)

The distinguishing characteristic of the religion of Harut and Marut, the historical evidence of the Jewish efforts against the

life of the Holy Prophet through the Masonic societies and the support of this interpretation by the Holy Quran prove this to be correct. “And they learn that which harms them and profits them not,” (2:102) meaning these activities will be of no benefit to them. It is indeed well established that in the end, Jews were the ones who suffered on account of these secret counsels.

December 11, 1914

Proper Conduct for Jumu‘ah (Friday) Prayers

Self-Righteousness of The Jews and Christians

Ibear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah.

After this, I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil.

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

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ لَيْسَتِ النَّصْرَىٰ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ ۖ وَوَقَالَتِ النَّصْرَىٰ لَيْسَتِ الْيَهُودُ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ ۚ وَهُمْ يَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ ۗ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ مِثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ ۗ فَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿١١٣﴾

“And the Jews say, The Christians follow nothing (good), and the Christians say, the Jews follow nothing (good), while they recite the (same) Book. Even thus say those who have no knowledge, like what they say. So Allah will judge between them on the day of Resurrection in that wherein they differ.” (2:113)

Proper Conduct for Jumu‘ah Prayers

Before I comment on these verses, I would like to draw your

attention to the proper conduct required for the Jumu'ah prayers. The Holy Quran tells us:

“O you who believe, when the call is sounded for prayer on Friday, hasten to the remembrance of Allah and leave off traffic. That is better for you, if you know.” (62:9)

Upon hearing the call to prayer, believers are enjoined to leave all worldly occupations and devote full attention to the remembrance of Allah; in other words, reserve this time only for Allah's remembrance. In my opinion, we have six days and twenty-two hours that should suffice for our worldly pursuits, therefore:

1. It is our duty, that after the Friday prayer call, all those inside the mosque should be involved in the remembrance of Allah and forego all other conversations.

2. It is essential to recite the specified prayer after every call to prayer, including the one for Jumu'ah prayer.

3. It is very inappropriate to converse when the Jumu'ah sermon is being delivered. Even asking someone to stop talking is considered worthless.

I will now comment on this section.

False Notions of the Opponents and Enmity Toward Islam

Prior to this section, the Holy Quran states that both Jews and Christians claim ownership of the Garden of Paradise. Allah states that both of them are mistaken in this matter. The Garden has been prepared for:

“Nay, whoever submits himself entirely to Allah and he is the doer of good (to others), he has his reward from his Lord, and there is no fear for such nor shall they grieve.”
(2:112)

Individuals who do not possess these qualities do not deserve this reward and their claim is merely based on vain desires. The verses under discussion today also point to a similar matter.

Since Jews preceded Christians, they are mentioned first. When a new prophet or a reformer comes to a people, those who reject him consider the followers of the new prophet as completely devoid of any goodness out of enmity and envy. For example, when Jews went astray and Jesus was sent for their reformation, they said there was no truth amongst the Christians. When Christians also deviated from the right path and the Holy Prophet Muhammad was sent, both Jews and Christians denied the truth of his mission. Contrary to their behavior, Allah told the Holy Prophet to convey this message:

“And believe in that which I have revealed, verifying that which is with you...” or, “And who believe in that which has been revealed to thee and that which was revealed before thee...” (2:41, 2:4)

Thus when a nation abandons truth for falsehood, it denies whatever a giver of good advice or one with sympathy toward them in his heart, has to say. Because of a solitary difference with that person it considers him devoid of all righteousness.

Path of Excessiveness in Opposition to Truth

In my opinion, a sure sign of truthfulness in a group is when purveyors of falsehood consider the group iniquitous because they differ on a particular issue. Additionally, they consider as good, those people whose actions, according to their own accepted views, are unrighteous. Jews and Christians considered the polytheists' practice as evil and had for centuries been trying to dissuade them from idol worship. When, however, these polytheists accepted Islam at the hands of the Holy Prophet, the followers of the Book were not pleased at all. They wished that instead of becoming Muslims they had remained polytheists.

This attitude is described in the Holy Quran in these words:

“Hast thou not seen those to whom a portion of the Book was given? They believe in sorcery and diviners

and say of those who disbelieve: These are better guided in the path than those who believe.” (4:51)

We observed the same attitude amongst those who opposed the Promised Messiah. Our Muslim brothers would at one time say that it would have been better for such and such a person to have accepted Christianity rather than becoming a member of the Ahmadiyya Movement. Now with great sorrow I observe the same attitude in a certain section of the Ahmadiyya Movement by those who choose to follow the path of excessiveness and exaggeration (members of the Qadian jamaat). Regarding us (members of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Society for propagation of Islam) they say it is better to have friendly relations with Jews and Christians than with us. This is not only expressed verbally, but is also published in their community newspapers. They claim to draw inference for their behavior from this verse of the Holy Quran: “And incline not to those who do wrong,” (11:113). Somebody should ask them, now that you prefer members of your community to have friendly relations with Jews and Christians, do you no longer consider this verse as being applicable to them? You no longer consider them as wrongdoers? Wrongdoers in your eyes are only those individuals who are striving hard to propagate the message of Islam.

In short, it is the worshipper of falsehood who initiates inequity. The one who has been persecuted then seeks revenge and becomes iniquitous. There was a time when the Jews had the upper hand and they said the Christians followed nothing good. Then when Christians became powerful, they said the Jews followed nothing good.

It was by the miracle of the example of the Holy Prophet Muhammad that this sort of behavior did not appear amongst the esteemed companions of the Holy Prophet, nor for quite a long time after them. We, however, observe this behavior manifested right in front of our eyes today. There was a time when members of the Ahmadiyya Movement were declared heretics.

The Promised Messiah said ‘I profess belief in the formula of faith (*kalimah*), believe that the Holy Quran is Allah’s word, and believe that salvation is only through Islam’. His opponents did not accept this and insisted on declaring him a heretic. With Allah’s help, gradually it was established that those who had been responsible for these edicts of heresy were in the wrong and a majority of people realized their error. However, right at the time when, from one side there was this lessening in the edicts of heresy, a section of the Ahmadiyya Movement (the Qadiani jamaat), for no reason, began to call other Muslims heretics. The behavior referred to in the Quranic verse: “And the Jews say, The Christians follow nothing (good), and the Christians say, The Jews follow nothing (good),” was replayed. Remember that the Holy Quran admonishes us in this manner so that we can learn a lesson and avoid making the same mistake that Jews and Christians made.

Claims of Being Good Unaccompanied by Deeds are not True

The Holy Quran has also on one occasion addressed Jews and Christians in these words: *Say: O People of the Book, you follow no good*, but how full of wisdom is the Divine word! The complete statement is: “O People of the Book, you follow no good until you observe the Torah and the Gospel and that which is revealed to you from your Lord.” (5:68). This means that you can only claim to be following goodness if you practice what is in the Torah and the Gospel, otherwise your claims are meaningless. Unless a nation puts into practice what it claims, its claims are not genuine. Thus today, we can tell Muslims that unless they put the teachings of the Holy Quran into their practice they are not following the path of righteousness. We can also tell members of the Ahmadiyya Movement that unless they practically manifest that they hold their religion above the worldly concerns, they are not really following the goodness they claim.

To put it succinctly, Allah the Most High has prohibited us from saying that any nation has no good. There is always some good in everyone. It is pointed out that Jews and Christians say that each other has no good, although they both read and believe in the Torah. If they had only considered this common belief, they would agree that both have at least one element of goodness. How much in common do Muslims have? They all believe in One God, one Prophet, and one Book. All regard the Holy Quran as the revealed word of God and they all face in the direction of the Ka'bah when reciting their prayers. With this degree of commonality, it was essential for them not to have spoken ill of each other. It is lamentable that Muslims did not learn this lesson of the Holy Quran, and that now a section from the Ahmadiyya Movement has followed in their (the Jews' and Christians') footsteps.

“Even thus say those who have no knowledge, like what they say” (2:113). Allah the Most High states that saying such things is the way of the ignorant. For those who read the Book and are even called the People of the Book, putting down each other in this manner is certainly not an act of righteousness. “So Allah will judge between them on the day of Resurrection in that wherein they differ” (2:113).

Preventing People from Worshipping in Mosques is Contrary to Religious Teachings

“And who is more unjust than he who prevents (men) from the mosques of Allah, from His name being remembered therein, and strives to ruin them? (As for) these, it was not proper for them to enter them except in fear. For them is disgrace in this world, and theirs is a grievous chastisement in the Hereafter.” (2:114)

All those who prevent people from mosques are addressed in this verse. Jews were subject to the wrath of Allah; hence their power faded very early on. Christians had power so they tried for quite some time to prevent people from going to

mosques. The purpose of the crusades was to prevent Muslims from going to mosques, but all these attempts ended in humiliation. Allah the Most High established Islamic principles, the foremost amongst these being freedom of religion. They have adhered to it with such steadfastness that presently such an example is seldom found amongst Muslims.

“For them is disgrace in this world.” Whoever prevented Muslims from going into mosques was disgraced in the world. Today, no one needs to stop Muslims from going into mosques. They are themselves staying away from mosques. Do not be excited by seeing these huge and magnificent mosques. A mosque can be compared to a body that becomes alive only by remembrance of Allah. Unless congregational prayers are held in mosques five times every day, their mere presence can be of no benefit to Muslims. Those who construct mosques should also make efforts to ensure that they are filled with worshippers of Allah; otherwise all of you will be subject to this warning from Allah.

“And Allah’s is the East and the West, so whither you turn thither is Allah’s purpose. Surely Allah is Ample-giving, Knowing.” (2:115)

Do not think that those who prevent people from Allah’s mosques will be successful. The East and the West belong to Allah. He is the Mighty and is with the Muslims, “so whither you turn thither is Allah’s purpose.” Thus one companion of the Holy Prophet came to Afghanistan and converted all of Afghanistan to Islam. Also, see how mighty empires crumbled before it. This, however, happens only when a group submits completely to Allah, then Allah the Most High is with them in whichever direction they go.

Associating with Allah and the Revolution Brought by Islam

“And they say: Allah has taken to Himself a son — glory be to Him! Rather, whatever is in the heavens and the earth is His. All are obedient to Him.” (2:116)

“Wonderful Originator of the heavens and the earth! And when He decrees an affair, He says to it only, Be, and it is.” (2:117)

Allah is free of all faults. A father's connection with his son is only that he provides for him to a certain degree. The Creator's relation with His creatures are such that He brings them from a state of nonexistence to life, provides all means for their existence and nurturing before their creation, and continues to nurture and sustain them at all times. It is obvious that the Creator's relations with His creatures are far beyond and above the relation that a father has with his son. Allah the Most High tells us that whatever is in the heavens and earth is His and he therefore has no need for a son. A father is in need of a son perhaps because he is more obedient to him than the rest. Allah states that all creations submit to Him. What need does such a Master have of a son when His law binds into submission the tiniest particle to the largest heavenly body? Those who ascribed a son to God (the Christians) were in His knowledge to be the ones to prevent people from entering mosques. At one time, this took the form of crusades, though now there is religious freedom. But the very nation ascribing a son to God is now making a very concerted effort through arguments and by creating doubts in the minds of Muslims to divert them from worship of the One God to that of a weak human being.

“Wonderful Originator of the heavens and the earth!” not only does this refer to the material creation that is indeed wonderful but also the spiritual heaven and earth and the moral change brought about in the lives of those who accept Islam. The condition of Arabia at the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad was such that the people all bowed down before uncut pieces of stone idols. Moral corruption had spread throughout the land. Then, imagine the scene after the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, when he sallied forth as the champion of the One Supreme God, blowing the trumpet of His Unity to the whole world. Also, imagine the moral landscape of

Arabia at the time when wine casks were an essential household item and men, women, boys, and girls all indulged in the consumption of alcohol. The Divine command comes: "O you who believe, intoxicants and games of chance...are only an uncleanness, the devil's work; so shun it that you may succeed." (5:90). Visualize the streets of Madinah flooded with wine spilling over from broken caskets and the frequent drinking orgies being replaced by the prayer call of, *Allah is the Greatest!* And the five daily prayers. Was this not the creation of a new earthly and heavenly spiritual order in Arabia by the command of Allah?

Follow Only the Book of Allah in Order to Seek His Pleasure

"And when He decrees an affair, He says to it only, Be, and it is." It has now been decided that miraculous change will be brought about through the messenger of Allah. The disbelievers ask this question, as stated in the verse below:

"...Why does not Allah speak to us or a sign come to us? Even thus said those before them, the like of what they say. Their hearts are all alike. Indeed We have made the messages clear for a people who are sure." (2:118)

The Holy Prophet is told to respond to them:

"Surely We have sent thee with the Truth as a bearer of good news and as a warner, and thou wilt not be called upon to answer for the companions of the flaming Fire." (2:119)

In the above verse, Allah says that He is ready to communicate with you and He will also chastise you. Allah has sent you a bearer of good news; if you follow him He will speak to you. While the dirt of moral corruptness is not removed from you, how can you be spoken to by Allah? If you choose to remain corrupt and continue to oppose the truth, then the messenger is also a warner for you, and the chastisement that he warns you against will come. Thus both parts of their question are clearly answered.

“And the Jews will not be pleased with thee, nor the Christians, unless thou follow their religion. Say: Surely Allah’s guidance — that is the (perfect) guidance. And if thou follow their desires after the knowledge that has come to thee, thou shalt have from Allah no friend, nor helper.” (2:120)

If you desire that they accept your teachings and remain pleased with you, this is unlikely to happen. If you accept what they say, then they will be pleased with you. But if after the truth has come and you still do not follow the prophet, then the promises that you have been given from Allah of help, friendship, and success in this world and the Hereafter will not be fulfilled.

“Those to whom We have given the Book follow it as it ought to be followed. These believe in it. And whoever disbelieves in it, these it is that are the losers.” (2:121)

It is essential for the believer that he should completely follow the Book he has been given and not go against it no matter how much it displeases anyone. Those who have been given the Book and do not follow it will experience loss. May Allah protect us from such loss and give us the ability to follow His Book as it ought to be followed. If this displeases some people, let it be so as long as Allah is pleased with us.

December 20, 1914

Respect for God’s Word — a Lesson for Muslims

Ibear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah.

After this, I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil.

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

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقُولُوا رَاعِنَا وَقُولُوا انظُرْنَا وَاسْمَعُوا وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ
الِيمٌ ﴿١٠٤﴾

“O you who believe, say not *Ra’i-na* and say *Unzur-na*, and listen (was-ma’u). And for the disbelievers there is a painful chastisement.” (2:104)

Proper Etiquette of Conversation

In this section of *Al-Baqarah*, transgressions committed by the Children of Israel are mentioned. One indiscretion was that they made fun of God’s word. They twisted the pronunciation of a word in such a way that it would alter its meaning. This was the basis of their spiritual illness; they did not pay attention to such minor misdeeds. The Holy Quran not only identifies unrighteous actions but also shows us the ways and means to avoid such behavior. This can be seen in the following verses:

“Say to the believing men that they lower their gaze and restrain their sexual passions... And say to the believing

women that they lower their gaze and restrain their sexual passions..." (24:30, 31)

Not only is the command given to control sexual passions, but also the way to do so is given i.e., "control your gaze." Similarly, the verse under discussion tells us the proper manner of conversation. It was the habit of the Children of Israel to intentionally twist words in order to alter their meaning. In mentioning their transgressions, Allah the Most High has pointed out the remedy to correct this behavior. Muslims are instructed that if they want to behave in a civilized manner, they must avoid following in the footsteps of the Children of Israel. i.e., avoid the use of words that can have a dual meaning. For example the word *ra 'i-na* which means 'listen' to us, can with a slight change of accent, become *ra 'ina*, which means he is foolish or stupid. The Holy Quran directs us to instead use the word *unzurna*, which cannot be twisted and means wait for us or grant us a little delay. By a simple example, several acts of etiquette in civilized conversation are taught: Keep your speech simple and avoid words that can be hurtful to others. The companions of the Holy Prophet followed these directions in the best manner, however, unfortunately Muslims today are suffering from the same spiritual malady that affected the Children of Israel.

The Arabic word *was-ma'u* used in this verse means 'listen', but also implies 'listen and obey'. Those who prefer the word of the devil to the word of God and His Prophet have disease in their hearts. Do not follow them but listen and follow the command of Allah the Most High, for the Quran warns us: "And for the disbelievers there is a painful chastisement." (2:104)

Further explaining the attitude of disbelievers among the People of the Book and Polytheists is the following description in the Holy Quran:

"Neither those who disbelieve from among the people of the Book, nor the polytheists, like that any good should be sent down to you from your Lord. And Allah chooses

whom He pleases for His Mercy; and Allah is the Lord of mighty grace.” (2:105)

The Door for Allah’s Grace is Wide Open for all

Allah’s Grace is such that it encompasses all and is not limited to a particular nation. Those who have a constrained outlook of religion should beware that Allah the Most High has not confined His Grace only to them. Man is quite incapable of understanding the many paths of God’s Graciousness. At one time, this narrow mindedness had crept into Muslim thought whereby they firmly believed that divine communication cannot occur in this age. This is in spite of the fact that there have been thousands of saintly persons (*auliya-Allah*) amongst the followers of Islam to whom Allah has spoken. Contrary to this, the Ahmadiyya teaching is that none of the attributes of Allah can be suspended and Divine communication, one of His attributes, continues in all ages. Now, from amongst the same Ahmadiyya Community, a group has emerged that limits this Grace of Allah to a single person from amongst the followers of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). If one person can be given prophethood after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, it is feasible that another one can also get it; and it should be so. Remember, however that only the door of revelation through reflection of the Holy Prophet Muhammad is open and real. Complete and permanent prophethood has ended with the person of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). This honor of divine communication through reflection of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (*zilli nabuwwah*)¹ has been given to many amongst the followers of Islam. Assigning a greater task to someone or giving him a higher status than someone else is

1. Shadow of prophethood (*zilli nabuwwah*) the meaning of which is written by the Founder himself, “to receive revelation through the grace of Muhammad and this will remain in existence till the Day of Resurrection so that the door of perfection might not be closed to human beings.” *Haqiqat al-Wahy* p. 28 (*The Ahmadiyyah Movement* by Maulana Muhammad Ali p.130)

entirely at Allah's discretion. Even amongst the prophets we find such distinctions as the Holy Quran tells us: "We have made some of these messengers to excel others. Among them are they to whom Allah spoke, and some of them He exalted by (many) degrees of rank" (2:253). Whoever limits the Grace of Allah goes against the word of the Holy Quran. The laws of Allah are fixed. The more one submits to them, the greater benefit he receives. Those who do not follow them will not benefit and will remain in a deprived state.

Theory of Abrogation and its Refutation

مَا نَنْسَخُ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلَهَا أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٠٦﴾

"Whatever message We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring one better than it (*bi-khairim minha*) or one like it. Knowest thou not that Allah is Possessor of power over all things?" (2:106)

It is our task to abrogate a commandment or cause it to be forgotten. Therefore O! People listen to the commandments of Allah, do not twist and present their meaning, but submit to them.

Allah the Most High has addressed Jews in this verse, stating that it was your desire that nothing should be revealed to your brethren. There are some commandments He revealed to you that were needed for the time and the prevailing conditions in the land. It is now essential to state that some of these are no longer needed and should be abrogated. Some may have been intentionally forgotten. You do not stand to suffer any loss, because instead of those that were abrogated, He has brought forth better ones. He is also giving them commandments similar to those that have been forgotten. It should be remembered that some commandments are common to all religious law (*shariat*). There are others that need to be changed in accordance with the needs of time and replaced by better laws as progress is made.

A perfect law also needs perfection of human faculties. For example, the dress, food, and rules for healthy living vary from childhood to youth. Some remain the same while others are improved. Human faculties reached their perfection in development during the time period of the Holy Prophet Muhammad; therefore guidance also needed to reach completion and perfection. Jesus pointed toward this process of completion in John 16: 12-14: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the spirit of truth, is come, he will you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me." This is also referred to in the Arabic phrase *bi-khairim minha*, "We bring one better than it," quoted in the verse under discussion. The subsequent words, "or one like it," refer to the prophecy of Moses in Deuteronomy: 18:19, "a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee," that "Whosoever will not hearken unto My words which he shall speak in My name, I will require him."

No Verse of the Holy Quran is Abrogated

To take the meaning of this verse, that some of the verses of the Holy Quran are also abrogated, is totally wrong. There is so much difference of opinion in this matter that some consider seven hundred verses as abrogated while others set the limit at five. Does not such a controversy make it difficult for Muslims to understand what status they should give to the remaining six hundred and ninety five verses? What is the reason for this controversy? If one individual could not correlate a certain verse with another, he considered that verse to be abrogated. Amongst all these traditions of abrogation, none can be traced to the Holy Prophet himself, where he is reported to have identified a verse abrogating another one. Until and unless the Messenger who was the recipient of the revelation states that this verse has now been abrogated by God, what right does a third party have to declare a verse as being abrogated? If mere conjecture is

permitted to allow a verse of the Holy Quran to be abrogated, then it allows for discrepancy in the Holy Quran, which is exactly what was done by proponents of this theory. I inform you of a very simple test. If someone presents a tradition, ask him if there is a tradition that states that the Holy Prophet identified a certain verse to be abrogated. If a verse of the Holy Quran cannot be accepted until the Holy Prophet states that it was revealed to him, it cannot be abrogated unless it is confirmed by the Holy Prophet. "Knowest thou not that Allah is Possessor of power over all things?" (2:106). What this implies is that Allah who is the source of all previous revelations is still the Possessor of power over all things.

The Importance of Propagation of Islam

"Rather you wish to put questions to your Messenger, as Moses was questioned before. And whoever adopts disbelief instead of faith he indeed has lost the right direction of the way." (2:108)

"Many of the people of the Book wish that they could turn you back into disbelievers after you have believed, out of envy themselves, after truth has become manifest to them. But pardon and forgive, till Allah bring about His command. Surely Allah is Possessor of power over all things." (2:109)

Do not follow the footsteps of the Children of Israel. There are those amongst the people of the Book who wish to turn you to disbelief after you have become believers. This was not only the condition at that time, but a similar situation exists today. A lot of money is being spent to turn Muslims toward disbelief. Such subtle propaganda is being carried out to turn them into apostates that it is even hard to comprehend. All sorts of doubts are instilled into their hearts. We understand that Islam is an impregnable fort and they cannot weaken it, but of what advantage is the strength of a fort when it does not have any trained soldiers to defend it? It is therefore essential that Muslims get

themselves ready to defend this fort, propagate Islam in the world, and defend it against such attacks.

What is Keeping up of Prayer?

“And keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate. And whatever good you send before for yourselves, you will find it with Allah. Surely Allah is Seer of what you do.” (2:110)

The Holy Quran repeatedly stresses the importance of keeping up prayer. I will also keep repeating this Divine commandment before you. You are very sluggish in the keeping up of prayer. It might have been understandable if you were newly converted to Islam. We could have hoped that you would gradually evolve this habit and not put too much pressure on yourself. You, however, are the offspring of generations of Muslims. The commandment to keep up prayer should be well established in your minds. You also claim to be the leaders of the whole world and draw comparisons with the companions of the Holy Prophet. Unfortunately, very little of the purification of the soul which existed in the noble companions of the Holy Prophet is found in you. You are having difficulties in keeping up prayer that is something ordinary Muslims do.

Congregational Prayers and the Companions of the Holy Prophet

What is the distinction you manifested by becoming members of the Ahmadiyya Movement? What purification of soul did you acquire? A blind companion asked the Holy Prophet about how sometimes a creek comes between him and the mosque. He asked, what should I do to be able to join the congregational prayers? The Holy Prophet said you should try to come. Congregational prayer is therefore an essential part of keeping up prayer. There are many of you who do not pay attention to this. Today there are paved roads, and your homes are close to the mosque, but you are lazy about coming for congregational prayer services. If you are amongst the elders your position is even more

vulnerable. If your role model is poor, you will be a source of leading many astray. Those who live far away and cannot come for congregational prayers should arrange for congregational prayers near their residences. I firmly believe that saying prayers in congregation is part of the commandment to keep up prayer. This was the meaning understood by the Holy Prophet. The noble and pure example of the companions of the Holy Prophet and our own poor spiritual condition in comparison, illustrates the excellence of the example of the Holy Prophet. No doubt the Promised Messiah was a noble purified soul but he was still the slave of Ahmad. Do not give the slave status of the master and vice versa. Try to reform your own spiritual conditions.

Importance of Paying the Poor Rate

Follow the example of the Holy Prophet in paying the poor rate. There are many amongst us for whom paying the poor rate is mandatory. The command is that it is essential to collect the Zakaat fund in a specific location. A lot of your major expenditures can be financed through this fund. Zakaat should be collected by a single body. Just as congregational prayer is an essential part of keeping up the prayer, the Zakaat fund of an organization should be collected in one location. That is why Hazrat Abu Bakr made the statement, "if anyone withholds even a camel's rope from giving into the Zakaat fund, I will fight him for it."

The Garden (Paradise) and how to Enter it

"And they say: None shall enter the Garden except he who is a Jew, or the Christians. These are their vain desires. Say: Bring your proof if you are truthful. Nay, whoever submits himself entirely to Allah and he is the doer of good (to others), he has his reward from his Lord, and there is no fear for such nor shall they grieve." (2:111-112)

This very same illness has affected Muslims. Our brothers in the Ahmadiyya community are consumed by it. Everybody thinks that they have the right to enter the Garden of Paradise.

Addressing Jews and Christians in this verse, Allah the Most High states that verbal acknowledgement amounts to nothing. Calling oneself a Jew or a Christian does not matter. It is their vain desire and if they are truthful, they should bring proof of how they are going to enter the Garden. Allah the Most High then answers this question with the statement: "Nay, whoever submits himself entirely to Allah and he is the doer of good (to others), he has his reward from his Lord." You also will only enter the garden on the basis of your deeds.

Allah the Most High then defines this Garden for us as a state where for those who enter it, "there is no fear for such nor shall they grieve." The actions of such individuals are such that there remains no fear or grief for them. Absence of fear and grief and being in the Garden are similar conditions. Any individual no matter to what faith he belongs, has no right to the Garden unless he fulfills these two conditions. Until he submits entirely to Allah and is the doer of good to His creation, he has no right to enter the Garden. You should also practice righteousness to make yourself eligible for entry into this Garden, otherwise the Quranic words, "these are their vain desires" are also applicable to you.

December 25, 1914

**Faith of Abraham;
Mutual Linkage Exists Between Verses, Sections and
Chapters of the Holy Quran**

Ibear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah.

After this, I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil.

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

وَمَنْ يَّرْعُبْ عَنْ مِلَّةِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِلَّا مَنْ سَفِهَ نَفْسَهُ ۗ وَلَقَدِ اصْطَفَيْنَاهُ
فِي الدُّنْيَا ۗ وَإِنَّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿١٣١﴾

“And who forsakes the religion of Abraham but he who makes a fool of himself. And certainly We made him pure in this world and in the Hereafter he is surely among the righteous.” (2:130)

إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ رَبُّهُ أَسْلِمْ ۖ قَالَ أَسْلَمْتُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٣١﴾

“When his Lord said to him, Submit, he said: I submit myself to the Lord of the worlds” (2:131)

وَوَضَىٰ بِهِمَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ ۗ يَبْنِي ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ لَكُمْ الدِّينَ
فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣١﴾

“And the same did Abraham enjoin on his sons, and (so did) Jacob: O my sons, surely Allah has chosen for you (this) religion, so die not unless you are submitting ones.” (2:132)

أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ الْمَوْتُ ۖ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ
 مِنْ بَعْدِي ۖ قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ إِلَهَكَ وَإِلَهَ آبَائِكَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ
 إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا ۗ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٢﴾

“Or were you witnesses when death visited Jacob, when he said to his sons: What will you serve after me? They said: We shall serve thy God and the God of thy fathers, Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac, one God only, and to Him do we submit.” (2:133)

تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ ۗ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلكُمْ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ ۗ وَلَا تُسْأَلُونَ عَمَّا
 كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

“Those are a people that have passed away; for them is what they earned and for you what you earn; and you will not be asked of what they did.” (2:134)

وَ قَالُوا كُونُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَى تَهْتَدُوا ۗ قُلْ بَلْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا ۗ
 وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٣٤﴾

“And they say: Be Jews or Christians, you will be on the right course. Say: Nay, (we follow) the religion of Abraham, the upright one, and he was not one of the polytheists.” (2:135)

قُولُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ
 وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَمَا أُوتِيَ النَّبِيُّونَ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ ۗ
 لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ ۗ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٥﴾

“Say: We believe in Allah and (in) that which has been revealed to us, and (in) that which was revealed to

Abraham, and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and (in) that which was given to Moses and Jesus, and (in) that which was given to the prophets from their Lord, we do not make any distinction between any of them and to Him do we submit.” (2:136)

فَإِنْ آمَنُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا آمَنْتُمْ بِهِ فَقَدْ اهْتَدَوْا ۗ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا هُمْ فِي شِقَاقٍ ۚ
فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ اللَّهُ ۗ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ۝١٣٦

“So if they believe as you believe, they are indeed on the right course; and if they turn back, then they are only in opposition. But Allah will suffice thee against them; and He is the Hearing, the Knowing” (2:137)

صِبْغَةَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ صِبْغَةً ۗ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ عَابِدُونَ ۝١٣٧

“(We take) Allah’s colour, and who is better than Allah at colouring, and we are His worshippers.” (2:138)

قُلْ أَتَحَاجُّونَنَا فِي اللَّهِ وَهُوَ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمْ ۗ وَ لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ ۗ
وَ نَحْنُ لَهُ مُخْلِصُونَ ۝١٣٨

“Say: Do you dispute with us about Allah, and He is our Lord and your Lord, and for us are our deeds and for you your deeds; and we are sincere to Him?” (2:139)

أَمْ تَقُولُونَ إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطَ كَانُوا يَهُودًا
أَوْ نَصَارَى ۗ قُلْ ءَأَنْتُمْ أَعْلَمُ أَمِ اللَّهُ ۗ وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ كَتَمَ شَهَادَةً
عِنْدَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ۝١٤٠

“Or do you say that Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes were Jews or Christians? Say: Do you know better or Allah? And who is more unjust than he who conceals a testimony that he has from Allah? And Allah is not heedless of what you do” (2:140)

تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ ۗ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَ لَكُمْ مِمَّا كَسَبْتُمْ ۗ وَلَا تُسْأَلُونَ عَمَّا
كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤١﴾

“Those are a people that have passed away; and for them is what they earned and for you what you earn; and you will not be asked of what they did.” (2:141)

This is the last section of the first part of the Holy Quran and section sixteen of the second chapter *Al Baqarah*. Since I have come to Lahore, I recited and commented on one section of the Holy Quran in each Friday sermon. Incidentally, this section is the subject of my sermon (*khutba*) today. A translator of the Holy Quran commented in a footnote to this section stating that the uniqueness of this section is that it discusses the same subject throughout. People’s unfamiliarity with the Holy Quran is indeed very surprising. They think there is no continuity within the rest of the Holy Quran. Remember however, as far as we have pondered this subject we have found a linkage between each verse, each section, and each chapter of the Holy Quran and that there is no room for changing their arrangement. This wonderful characteristic of the Holy Quran becomes evident to anyone who studies it carefully. Before this section, all of *Al Baqarah* contains discussions with the Jews. They were given all sorts of proofs in order to convince them to accept Islam and the Holy Prophet Muhammad. It is pointed out that their denial of the Quranic revelation is because it came to a nation other than their own. They also questioned why their religious law is abrogated. The answer to this question is that the religion brought through the revelation of the Holy Quran is the same that was revealed to the Jewish patriarch, Abraham. Whether you are a Jew or a Christian, you are all from the progeny of Abraham. How can you then deny this religion? The Holy Quran states: “And who forsakes the religion of Abraham but he who makes a fool of himself.” This foolishness and denial affects your own person. By denying him you deprive yourself of his righteous teachings. Regarding Abraham, Allah the most High says:

“And certainly We made him pure in this world and in the Hereafter he is surely among the righteous.”

The Faith of Abraham and Those Following the Path of Excess or Deficiency

The status of Abraham amongst the nations of the world is such that the prayer for the Holy Prophet Muhammad recited by Muslims in their daily services asks Allah to give Muhammad those blessings of acceptance that He gave to Abraham. The question that arises is, what was the faith of Abraham? Regarding this, the Holy Quran informs us: “When his Lord said to him, Submit, he said: I submit myself to the Lord of the worlds.” And also: “Nay, (we follow) the religion of Abraham, the upright (*hanif*) one.” The word upright (*hanif*) has been used in the Holy Quran for Prophet Abraham, the Holy Prophet Muhammad and Muslims. What is meant by being upright? It refers to one who is straightforward in his dealings and not inclined to one side or the other by following the path of excess or deficiency.

“And they say: Be Jews or Christians, you will be on the right course. Say: Nay, (we follow) the religion of Abraham, the upright one...” (2:135)

The Holy Quran disagrees with their contention that one could be on the right course by becoming a Jew or a Christian. It tells them that they have followed the path of either excess or deficiency in their faith, unlike Abraham who was forthright and followed the right course. The Holy Quran also tells us, “Guide us on the right path, the path of those upon whom thou has bestowed favors not those upon whom wrath was brought down nor those who went astray” (1:5-7). The Jews were deficient in their faith because they rejected their prophets, including one of their great prophets, Jesus. “And they incurred Allah’s wrath. This was because they disbelieved in the messages of Allah and would kill the prophets unjustly” (2:61). The path of deficiency is to lower the status of a prophet. In contrast to the Jewish behavior, the Christians followed the path of excessiveness in their belief

by exalting the status of Prophet Jesus from a human being to that of God. We are told to try to stay upright (*banif*), to follow the path of moderation, and to avoid the course of either excess or deficiency in our beliefs.

Excess can Occur in the Matter of Belief

Some, though very few, have also followed the path of excess regarding the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. For example, some people believe that he had knowledge of the unseen. This is incorrect and contrary to Quranic teachings. I firmly believe the Messenger of Allah to be the greatest human being, in fact, one of a kind. This is not because he was physically different from other human beings but because of the moral strength of his purity, his teachings, and his examples, which were all unique and unparalleled by any other human being before or after him. In spite of all this, he was still a human being, for no one but God has knowledge of the unseen. It is therefore not appropriate to follow the path of excess just because of the great respect we have in our hearts for the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Similarly, it is also essential for us to avoid the path of excess or deficiency regarding the status of the Promised Messiah. Those who followed the path of deficiency were the ones who rejected his claims altogether. Those accepting him can fall into the path of excess. One can stumble either way by outright rejection or acceptance with subsequent enhancement of status. There is no such example in history in which those who accepted a guide subsequently diminished his status.

Those who followed the path of excess did however elevate the status of Prophet Jesus to that of God. So you should have the fear of God in your hearts. I am telling you that many difficulties lie in understanding a creed. Leaving aside all else, debate still continues between trinity and unity. Libraries are full of books on this subject and still a decision cannot be made. The discussion on precepts always becomes lengthy. Whether we are

decreasing the status of the Promised Messiah or another group is exaggerating his status, discussions on this matter will continue. I want to point out something easily understood. During the time of Prophet Jesus, there was one group that believed in the Unity of the Divine Being and accepted him as a prophet while another group followed the path of excess in this matter. History bears witness to this that from amongst the followers of a prophet, there have been none who have followed the path of deficiency in this matter and diminished his status. Whenever the followers of a prophet erred, they erred on the side of elevating his status. The Jews denied Prophet Jesus and followed the path of deficiency in rejecting him. His followers however, never denied him, but continued to exaggerate his status. It is always this malady of exaggeration that destroys followers. Those who blame us for decreasing the status of the Promised Messiah should learn a lesson from this. You who call yourself Ahmadis are duty bound to keep your steps from faltering and not be followers of the path that has been the cause of ruin for previous nations.

Holy Prophet Muhammad was the Greatest of all Prophets

You should also become the followers of Abraham, the upright. It is very difficult to maintain this status. We have esteem in our hearts for the Promised Messiah and this respect was such that we left everything for it. There is an even greater reverence in our hearts and that is for the most excellent of all Prophets, the Holy Prophet Muhammad. It was for his sake that we accepted Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. It is about the Holy Prophet that Mirza Sahib states in one of his poetic verses: "I am but a single drop from the sea of excellence of Muhammad." Your holding the Promised Messiah in high esteem is fine but keep his status below that of the Messenger of Allah and do not follow the path of exaggeration in your beliefs. Remember that Hazrat Mirza was also the like of the Messiah. The followers of

the Messiah went so far in exaggerating his status that they elevated him from the status of a prophet to that of God and thus became those who went astray. I hope that you do not follow this destructive course, though it is my belief that the followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad will be saved from such a plight. We have been commanded, “We make no difference between any of His messengers” (2:285). Who are the messengers included in this commandment and why is this part of our faith? Not making any difference among any of His messengers is certainly part of our faith.

A Believer does not Denigrate any Prophet

The consequence of believing in someone is that one does not disparage that individual. Islam enjoys this distinction — that it does not denigrate any prophet. It enjoins belief in all prophets. There are those who, in order to highlight the luminescence of their spiritual lights, want to turn off all other sources of light. Some lights, however have such resplendence that when they are turned on, others pale in comparison. Allah the Most High has compared the guidance and teachings that He bestowed upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad to such a magnificent source of light:

“Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth. A likeness of His light is as a pillar on which is a lamp — the lamp is in a glass, the glass is as it were a brightly shining star — lit from a blessed olive-tree, neither eastern nor western, the oil whereof gives light, though fire touch it not — light upon light. Allah guides to His light whom He pleases. And Allah sets forth parables for men, and Allah is Knower of all things.” (24:35)

Islam is compared to a lamp whose light ignites on its own. One need not turn off another lamp to make its light more visible. Do not reject other sources of light, but the light you have been given is so complete that other people will be attracted to it spontaneously. You do not need to vilify others.

Create excellent morals within yourself and become the doers of good; this is the teaching of Islam.

The Promised Messiah was a *Mujaddid* (Reformer) and not Included Amongst the Class of Prophets

The question now arises as to whether the Promised Messiah is amongst the group referred to in, “We make no difference between any of His messengers” (2:285). The Promised Messiah has included himself amongst the *Mujaddids* (Reformers). I only want to tell you that if all *Mujaddids* can be included in the group mentioned in this verse, then you can include him also. Hazrat Mirza Sahib repeatedly referred to himself as a *Mujaddid*. However, if *Mujaddids* are not included amongst those referred to in this verse, then Hazrat Mirza Sahib cannot have this distinction. The Holy Prophet had prophesied the coming of the Promised Messiah, which does not apply to other *Mujaddids* and is a different matter. However, if he is a *Mujaddid*, then he cannot be separated from others belonging to this category and cannot be included amongst the Prophets referred to in this verse. If other *Mujaddid's* have been included in this category then he can also be included. The Holy Prophet certainly has made a separate pronouncement about *Mujaddids* (in the Hadith) and has called those who deny them as the dying a death of ignorance, but not disbelievers (*kafirs*).

“So if they believe as you believe, they are indeed on the right course; and if they turn back, then they are only in opposition. But Allah will suffice thee against them; and He is the Hearing, the Knowing” (2:137). If they believe then they are on the right course. If they deny, then they are obstinate and their hearts are laden with enmity.

Allah's Color (*sibghatallah*) is God's Warning

We believe even in those prophets who are accepted by the people of the Book. We also accept the teachings of the prophets

they claim to follow. Thus, we have all that they have. Why is it then that they do not accept Islam? The Holy Quran states: “(We take) Allah’s color, and who is better than Allah at coloring, and we are His worshippers.” This belief in all prophets being truthful is God’s color and His Baptism. Moreover, it points out that the ritual of baptism carried out by the Christians in which an attempt is made at cleansing the heart with a few splashes of water, is not correct. The baptism of a nation with goodness at the heart is the recognition of all righteous people — of all nations. It is called baptism because such a degree of belief is an essential part of faith. Just as Christians enter people into their faith by splashing a handful of water, for entry into Islam it is necessary to have this degree and breadth of faith.

“Say: Do you dispute with us about Allah, and He is our Lord and your Lord, and for us are our deeds and for you your deeds; and we are sincere to Him?” (2:139)

You dispute with us about Allah although we did not tell you that He is only our Lord and not yours. He is not only our Lord but also the Lord of all of you. There is no need to dispute information about Him. You will receive the fruit of your deeds and we will receive the fruit of ours. We do not have any quarrel about the results of deeds. Whosoever practices his faith no matter who he is, will be rewarded for his good deeds. Followers of different religions want to deprive others the recompense for their good deeds. Islam has contradicted such behavior in this verse. It is, however stated: “and we are sincere to Him.” You will no doubt get the recompense for your deeds, but since you lack the sincerity we have, you are deprived the benefit of the results that are produced through sincerity in practice. To say that Abraham was a Jew or a Christian is incorrect. He sincerely submitted to whatever command he received from God. You do the same and only then you will deserve to be called the followers of Abraham.

January 8, 1915

**The Meaning of Facing
in the Direction of the Ka'bah
(Purpose of the Ahmadiyya Movement)**

Ibear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah.

After this, I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil.

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

وَلِكُلِّ وِجْهَةٍ هُوَ مُوَلِّيهَا فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ ۗ أَيْنَ مَا تَكُونُوا يَأْتِ بِكُمْ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٤٨﴾

“And everyone has a goal to which he turns (himself), so vie with one another in good works. Wherever you are, Allah will bring you all together. Surely Allah is Possessor of Power over all things.” (2:148)

وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۗ وَإِنَّهُ لِلْحَقِّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ ۗ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٤٩﴾

“And from whatsoever place thou comest forth, turn thy face towards (*shatar*) the Sacred Mosque. And surely it is the truth from thy Lord. And Allah is not heedless of what you do.” (2:149)

وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۗ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا
 وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ ۚ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَيْكُمْ حُجَّةٌ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا
 مِنْهُمْ ۗ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِي ۗ وَلَا تَمَ نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٢١٥﴾

“And from whatsoever place thou comest forth turn thy face towards the Sacred Mosque. And wherever you are turn your faces towards it, so that people may have no plea against you except such of them as are unjust — so fear them not and fear Me — and that I may complete My favour to you and that you may go aright.” (2:150)

كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِيكُمْ رَسُولًا مِنْكُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِنَا وَيُزَكِّيكُمْ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ
 الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢١٦﴾

“Even as We have sent among you a Messenger from among you, who recites to you Our messages and purifies you and teaches you the Book and the Wisdom and teaches you that which you did not know.” (2:151)

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ ﴿٢١٧﴾

“Therefore glorify Me, I will make you eminent, and give thanks to Me and be not ungrateful to Me.” (2:152)

Objection To Facing the Sacred Mosque in Makkah (Ka'bah) While Praying

This subject of facing toward the Sacred Mosque in Makkah (*Ka'bah*) while praying is important. It does not, however, have the significance that people have generally attributed to it. There is one group that states that facing the Sacred Mosque while praying is similar to worship of others besides Allah. This is an objection raised by non Muslims but some Muslims have also accepted it. They respond to it with the explanation that since it is God's commandment, it does not fall under the category of associating with Allah (*shirk*).

Importance Given by Allah and His Messenger to Praying in the Direction of the *Ka'bah* (*Qiblah*)

There is no doubt that Allah and the Holy Prophet have attached great significance to this commandment. Allah the Most High has stressed its importance by dedicating three sections of the Holy Quran to this subject. The commandment, "And from whatsoever place thou comest forth, turn thy face towards the Sacred Mosque," has been repeated not once or twice, but three times. Muslims have thus been commanded that wherever they may be they must pray facing in this direction (*Qiblah*) for it represents unity of purpose amongst them.

The Holy Prophet has stressed its importance in these words: "Do not call those who follow your *Qiblah*¹ (*abl-i- Qiblah*) disbelievers (*kafir*)."

He has further emphasized this by stating that whosoever calls a Muslim a disbeliever, the disbelief reverts back to him. The Holy Prophet does not want a follower of the *Qiblah* i.e., the one praying in the direction of the *Ka'bah*, to be called a disbeliever. It is unbearable for him that any individual from amongst his followers be subject to such name calling. He who calls his Muslim brother a disbeliever has been punished by the disbelief reverting to him. This is indeed a grave admonition and chastisement for those who levy the charge of heresy upon fellow Muslims who follow the *Qiblah*.

What is the Significance of Praying in the Direction of the *Ka'bah*?

Remember that facing toward the *Ka'bah* is just like facing a certain direction while performing any task. The Arabic word *shatar*, which means direction, clearly outlines this meaning. Facing toward the *Ka'bah*, while praying, does not mean that the *Ka'bah* is the object of worship. This is explained by the Quranic

1. *Qiblah* literally means the direction or point toward which one turns his face (LL)

statement: "And everyone has a goal to which he turns (himself)." Every individual faces in a certain direction no matter what he is doing. He certainly is not worshipping in that direction. Allah the Most High says that we have fixed a certain direction for you, to unite you toward one common goal. Remember that facing a certain direction is quite distinct from worship. Worship is done with the intent of seeking the help of the object of worship in order to fulfill one's need. Does one seek the help of the sacred house or ask it for anything? This is certainly not the case. In fact, the name of the sacred house does not come up even once during the prayer. An individual with the excellences of the Holy Prophet was more likely to have become the object of such mis-sives. Thus, if the Muslims were facing in the direction of Madinah where the Holy Prophet is buried, one could say that this was associating someone with Allah in our worship. Madinah was excluded from this discussion altogether although therein is the gravesite of the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet is not buried at Makkah to ascertain that not even the slightest semblance of association with Allah remains behind. This is, however, not the only meaning. A more elaborate meaning is conveyed by the words: "And everyone has a goal to which he turns (himself), so vie with one another in good works" (2:148). By everyone is meant every nation. The direction is the goal that they had before them and strived to accomplish.

The common purpose of the Muslim nation is to strive for goodness that requires a united effort. Thus unlike any other nation of the world, Muslims have this unique goal that has been designated as the direction for them. The word *Qiblah* means direction or a point toward which one turns his face. In this case, the *Ka'bah* was the only symbol of unity of Allah, the Most High. Thus, the purpose of facing toward the *Ka'bah* was a reminder of the real goal, the Unity of the Divine Being. This has been discussed further on and mention is also made of Abraham who is called upright. A Muslim is one who stands firmly on this principle without wavering to one or the other side. Making the house

that Abraham had built for the worship of One God as the direction in which Muslims were to pray, is to remind them that their real purpose in life is to propagate the Unity of the Divine Being.

Our Goal that we are Neglecting

A man was chosen by God who told us that our real objective is the propagation of Islam, which is our common goal. Different societies of Muslims have different goals in front of them. Some strive to increase the literacy rate while others promote trade and commerce. There are those whose sole purpose is to improve the Urdu language, while still others stand for improving social interaction. Some look only after the interests of their own sect and clan, or have political objectives. Distinct from these, is the most excellent goal that Islam has set, and for which the Reformer of this age has taken a firm commitment from us. This goal is the propagation of the Unity of the Divine Being. Think about this, why did Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad say? "The real purpose of my coming is propagation of Islam." Then ponder how far you have fulfilled this commitment? Your condition is like that of a person who is barely awake after seeing a dream. You are still far away from fulfilling this dream. Not only have you forgotten this noble vision but have indeed forgotten yourselves². Before you is the example of a nation that lost sight of its real goal and acted contrary to the teachings of the Messiah Jesus. What happened to them? They strayed far away from the real objective.

I perceive the danger that your movement also may face the plight of the followers of Christ. You might ask me, how is this possible? How can an organization formed by one appointed by God go on the wrong path? I am telling you that the example of the followers of Christ is right there in front of us. Man can learn a lot from previous experiences. You might become

2. The reference here, and in subsequent sentences, is to the Qadian Section, which calls all Muslims who reject Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as non-believers (kaffir).

incapable of performing the task for which you have been called to stand up. The followers of Christ were given the sermon of the Unity of God, which was deemed the very purpose of their existence. Instead of propagating Unity they chose to spread Trinity. Did they succeed in accomplishing their real goal? If they were unsuccessful, how can you then succeed when you start calling the followers of Islam disbelievers? They were assigned the task of spreading the principle of the unity of God. For you there is propagation of Islam. Both have the same meaning. The word Islam was chosen in your case so you would abstain from anything that is destructive to this sacred cause. My heart breaks with sorrow when I see that instead of spreading Islam, arrows are being thrown at it. You³ say ‘what was that Islam, did Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad bring it to the world?’ No! He was in fact a servant of Islam. Do you also not say that with his claim, Muslims have disappeared from the world i.e., those who reject his claims can no longer be called Muslims. What is it now that you call propagation of Islam? The implication of what you say is that the *kalima* (formula of faith, *la ilaha ill- Allah Muhammad-un Rasulu-llab*) the foundation stone of Islam, has lost its validity, for you call those who recite it, disbelievers.

Refrain from Exaggeration in your Beliefs; do not Turn Metaphor into the Reality

If you elevate the status of the Holy Prophet to that of God, then nothing of Islam remains behind. Similarly, if you raise the status of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to that of the Holy Prophet, you have utterly destroyed the Ahmadiyya Movement. For nineteen hundred years, the Christian nation had gone astray, deviated from the right path. Now Allah the Most High has shattered this idol of trinity and opened up a way for the Doctrine of the Unity of the Divine Being and you are trying to shut this door with your own hands. What was the basis of the

3. Maulana Muhammad Ali is addressing the followers of Mirza Mahmud Ahmad here.

Christian belief of calling Jesus 'God'? They took the allegoric and metaphorical language and gave it the literal meaning. They can plead ignorance in this matter with the excuse that they were not informed that the language used in reference to Jesus was figurative and not literal. You do not even have this excuse, for your Messiah has been conveying this to you throughout his writings from the very beginning. See his last statement before his death in supplement to *Haqiqat ul Waby* (PAGE 64): "I have been called prophet of God only by way of metaphor and not by way of reality." He calls himself a prophet in a metaphorical sense while you assign to it its literal meaning.

Parting with a Life of Luxury is the First Step Toward the Completion of any Task

A direction has been fixed for everyone, but to reach and fulfill its real purpose and goal, one has to part with a life of comfort and luxury. Observe any nation or society and you will realize the immensity of hurdles they have crossed in order to reach their desired goal. Those whose objectives are impure, also have to face difficulties to accomplish their goals. Just look at thieves and dacoits. In order to bring their plans to fruition, they also have to forsake their comfort. They have to face difficulties, and experience inclement weather, sleepless days and nights and put in great effort to reach their goal. This is true for all worldly schemes, whether they are good or evil. Notice how those who evolve these plans have to face hardship. Those striving to better their education, the vanguards of political and national leadership and their followers, political parties, all have to go through a period of difficulty and suffering. This is true even for the extremely dangerous group called anarchists who are a threat to peace. If you study their history, you will find out all the dangerous schemes they make and how they forego easy living in order to be successful. You tell me what life of ease and comfort have you given up in order to truly propagate Islam with the vigor and intensity it deserves?

Strength of a Movement Does Not Depend upon Numbers

If you say we are few in numbers, I say that you are many. A movement is always initiated by a single individual. He who wants to accomplish something is alone in the beginning and is unlikely to succeed without hardship and suffering. Hazrat Mirza Sahib has said, "there are many sharp thorns and thorny bushes that lie in the path leading towards me. He who is tender footed should part my company and not venture on to this path." If you feel anxious because of the scarcity of your numbers, then why do you not allow the four hundred million or so Muslims to accomplish this mission? What was the need for you to part their company? Go and see the immensity of sacrifice that people make in order to accomplish even minor tasks. They readily give up and allow their homes to be torched in order to reach a single purpose and goal. Why is it that the great importance of the task and the duty you have undertaken to accomplish does not allow you to bear even minor inconveniences and difficulties?

The Key to Success Lies in the Performance of Deeds

I can only call upon you, for these are matters to be conveyed only to other human beings. I certainly cannot speak in this regard to the trees or leaves in the jungle. I have not been appointed by God, but I feel it is my duty to remind you of your duties. How far have you acted upon the principle of, "And everyone has a goal."? You accomplish this task, then there will be no need for any exhortation. There are older individuals amongst you who know very well the purpose for which Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad came to this world. What was his mission and for what purpose did he form an organization? There are amongst you youth those whose hearts are full of such zeal and enthusiasm that inspires them to undertake the most difficult tasks. Why should I not call upon these young and old and remind them of their duties? Those who depend upon numbers cannot succeed. If you have doubt about this matter look at

events in the past and see how those who did so faltered in accomplishing their goal. Even those who had gathered in support of God's blessed messenger, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, suffered on one occasion when the thought of having a higher numerical strength made them proud. The Holy Quran refers to this in these words: "Certainly Allah helped you in many battlefields, and on the day of Hunain, when your great numbers made you proud" (9:25). Remember a thousand cannot accomplish the task accomplished by a single individual. Why do you feel anxious because you are few and do not strive to fulfill the task of thousands? If you think that the life of this world is forever, then you are entitled to entertain such thoughts. If this is not the case, why do you perform such deeds that instead of being a source of Allah's mercy upon you, result in distancing you from Him? If you do not fully dedicate yourself in accomplishing the task that lies in front of you, future generations will curse you. They will say that you did not put into practice your word of mouth. Remember that there are hundreds and thousands who pass away after spending a limited time in this world and no one knows who they were or where they went. Thousands of ants and insects perish every day and no one is aware of their presence. Of what benefit is an existence that is worse than these lower forms of life? When you pass away, no one remembers you and you leave behind no trace of your existence.

Pay Attention to the Propagation of Islam Wherever You Are

"And from whatsoever place thou comest forth turn thy face towards the Sacred Mosque. And wherever you are turn your faces towards it, so that people may have no plea against you except such of them as are unjust — so fear them not and fear Me — and that I may complete My favour to you and that you may go aright." (2:150)

I also enjoin you that wherever you are, you might pursue different occupations or reside in various places in the world. Re-

member always to face the direction of the Sacred Mosque. Always keep in mind the goal that it is your task to propagate the Religion of Islam. Fulfill with enthusiasm and dedication all the tasks connected with spreading the message of the Unity of God, “so that people may have no plea against you except such of them as are unjust.”

The Two Excellent Prayers of Prophet Abraham and Their Results

What was this plea, to which the Holy Quran refers? It was this building of the Sacred Mosque that Prophet Abraham did with Hazrat Ishmael and settled him where the sacred mosque is located, “in a valley unproductive of fruit” (14:37). Now that prophet-hood came amongst the offspring of Hazrat Ishmael and a Prophet with the excellences of the Holy Prophet Muhammad was sent to them, why should they face another direction? Why was another direction not fixed for them? It was to this plea from the people that was to come to pass that Allah the Most High refers to and has appointed the Sacred house at Makkah as the direction toward which Muslims were to face during prayer, referring simultaneously to those who raise unwarranted pleas in the words “except such of them as are unjust — so fear them not and fear Me.” The intent of this Divine decision is expressed in the words — “and that I may complete My favour to you and that you may go aright.”

“Even as (*kama*) We have sent among you a Messenger from among you, who recites to you Our messages and purifies you and teaches you the Book and the Wisdom and teaches you that which you did not know.” (2: 151)

People have had great difficulty in understanding the Arabic word *kama* (even as) mentioned in this verse. It refers to, besides all the other favors that were to be given to this nation, to the very person of the Holy Prophet for whom Prophet Abraham had pleaded in these words: “Our Lord, and raise up in them a Messenger from among them who shall recite to them Thy messages and teach them the Book and the Wisdom, and

purify them. Surely Thou art the Mighty, the Wise” (2:129). Allah says here that He accepted this prayer of Abraham and raised that Prophet.

The other Prayer of Abraham was in these words: “My Lord make this a secure town and provide its people with fruits” (2:126). And “so make the hearts of some people yearn towards them” (14:37). Allah asks the question, why would He not accept this second prayer? That’s why He has appointed the Sacred House as the direction you turn to so that people do not raise the objection.

Three Principles of Success: Teaching of the Quran, Purification of the Soul and Deliberation with Wisdom

“...A Messenger from among you, who recites to you Our messages and purifies you and teaches you the Book and the Wisdom and teaches you that which you did not know.” (2:151)

Now a messenger (the Holy Prophet Muhammad, Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was sent to you with a threefold mission for your spiritual development and purification. It was to recite to you the messages of Allah, purify your souls, and teach you the Book and Wisdom. These are the three things that Prophet Abraham asked Allah for in his prayer. Which one of these teachings is still practiced? Nobody recites the messages of Allah. As for the purification of the soul, you can judge for yourself how much you have achieved. To whom should one teach the Book and Wisdom? The way people give respect to the Holy Quran is by wrapping it up in expensive covers of brocade and putting it on the shelf. It is said that there is an awakening amongst Muslims and they are ready to learn the Quran and are willing to do so in their spare time. This is a wonderful change, but we ourselves have experimented and have failed to perceive it. We teach the Holy Quran every evening. How many are there who show up for these classes? Remember, until each one of you carries the message of the Holy Quran you will not

fulfill the purpose of the *Qiblah* nor will you be putting in the necessary effort to accomplish the mission of the Promised Messiah and be successful.

Remembrance and Gratitude Result in Fulfillment of Allah's Promises

“Therefore glorify Me, I will make you eminent, and give thanks to Me and be not ungrateful to Me” (2:152). If you make the propagation of Islam your goal remember you and all the promises of success will come about by your hands. If, however, you make no effort, then beware those who forget the remembrance of Allah are left in a state of abasement. Allah says: “give thanks to Me and be not ungrateful to Me.” If you manifest gratefulness for the greatest blessing that Allah has given you in the form of Islam and carry its message to others, you will be raised to a position of eminence, otherwise you have to face a severe chastisement. Let us pray to Allah the Most High that we are amongst those who are grateful for His favors. We are not amongst those who reject and are ungrateful for His favors. To shed light on His attributes should be our aim and purpose of life and we work with full determination to accomplish this goal. Our comforts cannot become an impediment to this work and we must make every effort to spread this faith to all corners of the world, by the will of Allah, we are ready to sacrifice all pleasures for its sake. This is the path whereby we can succeed in gaining the pleasure of Allah the Most High.

February 8, 1915

**An Explanation of the Terms Righteousness (*bir*),
Keeping One's Duty (*taqwa*), Retaliation (*qisas*)
and Bequest (*wasiyat*)
and the Mutual Relationship of These Terms**

Ibear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah.

After this, I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil.

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

لَيْسَ الْبِرُّ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ
بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْبَلِغَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ ۚ وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي
الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالسُّكَّانَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ ۖ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ ۗ
وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ ۗ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا ۗ وَالصَّادِقِينَ
فِي الْبُيُوتِ وَالضَّرَائِعِ وَالصَّرَائِعِ ۗ وَالصَّادِقِينَ ۗ وَالصَّادِقِينَ ۗ وَالصَّادِقِينَ ۗ
هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ ۝

“It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East and the West, but righteous is the one who believes in Allah, and the Last Day, and the angels and the

Book and the prophets, and gives away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and to those who ask and to set slaves free and keeps up prayer and pays the poor-rate; and the performers of their promise when they make a promise, and the patient in distress and affliction and in the time of conflict. These are they who are truthful; and these are they who keep their duty.” (2:177)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِصَاصُ فِي الْقَتْلِ ۗ الْحُرُّ بِالْحُرِّ وَالْعَبْدُ
بِالْعَبْدِ وَالْأُنثَىٰ بِالْأُنثَىٰ ۗ فَمَنْ عُفِيَ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءٌ فَاتِّبَاعُهُ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
وَإِدَاءِ إِلَيْهِ بِالْحَسَنِ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ تَخْفِيفٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ ۗ وَرَحْمَةٌ ۗ فَمَنِ اعْتَدَىٰ بَعْدَ
ذَٰلِكَ فَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧٧﴾

“O you who believe, retaliation is prescribed for you in the matter of the slain: the free for the free, and the slave for the slave, and the female for the female. But if remission is made to one by his (aggrieved) brother, prosecution (for blood-money) should be according to usage, and payment to him in a good manner. This is an alleviation from your Lord and a mercy. Whoever exceeds the limit after this, will have a painful chastisement.” (2:178)

وَ لَكُمْ فِي الْقِصَاصِ حَيٰوةٌ يَاۤ اُولِى الۡاَلْبَابِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُوْنَ ﴿١٧٨﴾

“And there is life for you in retaliation, O men of understanding, that you may guard yourselves.” (2:179)

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ إِن تَرَكَ خَيْرًا ۗ الْوَصِيَّةُ لِلْوَالِدَيْنِ
وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٨٠﴾

“It is prescribed for you, when death approaches one of you, if he leaves behind wealth for parents and near relatives, to make a bequest in a kindly manner; it is incumbent upon the dutiful.” (2:180)

فَمَنْ بَدَّلَهُ بَعْدَ مَا سَمِعَهُ فَإِنَّمَا إِثْمُهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يُبَدِّلُونَهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ
عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٨١﴾

“Then whoever changes it after he has heard it, the sin of it is only upon those who change it. Surely Allah is Hearing, Knowing.” (2:181)

فَمَنْ خَافَ مِنْ مُّوْضِعٍ جَنْفًا أَوْ إِشْمًا فَأَصْلَحَ بَيْنَهُمْ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
عَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٨٢﴾

“But if one fears a wrong or a sinful course on the part of the testator, and effects an agreement between the parties, there is no blame on him. Surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.” (2:182)

The Meaning of, “It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East and the West.”

What kind of a person does the Quran want a Muslim to be? In my opinion this subject is discussed in this section. Three or four subjects are outlined.

1. What is righteousness?
2. Who are the dutiful?
3. Retaliation.
4. Bequest.

These four subjects do not seem to be connected but they all relate to the statement, “It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East and the West.” After all, who says that turning one’s face toward the East or West is righteousness? Did Jews or Christians think this was the case? Was this what Muslims thought? Certainly none of these nations had this concept. Why does the Holy Quran then make this statement? This is because in another verse it is stated:

“And Allah’s is the East and the West, so whither you turn thither is Allah’s purpose. Surely Allah is Ample-giving, Knowing.” (2:115)

In whatever direction you turn, Allah will be in that direction for the East and the West belong to Him. It does not belong to anybody else. Wherever you go will become yours. I have observed that wherever in the Holy Quran the words, “to Allah belongs what is in the heavens and earth,” (2:284) and “Allah’s is the East and West” are used, promises of future victories are given to the Muslim nation. East and West together represent the whole world. The same terminology is even used today. What is implied is that Allah has seen what is in your hearts. You have firmly committed to belief in One God and have sacrificed all other thoughts, desires, and emotions for this purpose. Since East and West all belong to Allah, you will be successful in whichever direction you turn.

Do not, however, start thinking that turning eastwards or westwards defines all that righteousness and keeping of duty is, and the conquest of lands thus becomes your goal. This is something temporary, which Allah gives to some and takes away from others. “Righteous is the one who believes in Allah,” and this should be your real goal.

Why is Belief in Allah, The Last Day, Angels, The Books, and The Prophets Necessary?

Create the moral characteristics of Allah within you. Do not consider that all your deeds are for this life only. A day will certainly come when the consequences of your actions will be fully manifested. Bear in mind while doing anything that on the last day (*al-yaum-al-akbira*) the results of your actions will become apparent. It is also essential to have belief in the angels. When your heart is inspired to perform a good deed and you act immediately upon the thought of giving up evil, all of this is part of belief in Angels. Besides these three, belief in The Book is also enjoined. All that is best for you is collected in it. You could claim that we believe in Allah, but where do we find knowledge about accountability for our actions and the guidance of what is right and wrong? This knowledge is given by the Book. If you

believe in it, you will be able to distinguish between good and evil and also know the significance of reward and punishment.

Man is also in need of a role model to confirm the truth of these beliefs. To see someone perform these deeds and witness the recompense for their good deeds is essential. That is why it is stated, “and the prophets.” Belief in the prophets is necessary in order to benefit from their role model.

Service of Humanity and Excellence in Morals Enjoined with Belief

These five components of belief have an order and arrangement. It is a misconception that belief in them is randomly prescribed. The arrangement is excellent with innate beauty and logic and makes us aware of the real purpose underlying belief. Mere verbal acknowledgement of belief is not enough. With it, stress is laid upon the characteristic of the believer as the one who “gives away wealth out of love for Him.” He who does not sacrifice his wealth for the love of Allah, his belief is deficient. Christian critics raise the objection that, in the Holy Quran, love of Allah has not been identified as the source of good deeds. On the contrary, the Holy Quran has repeatedly stressed the love of Allah, the Most High and has identified it as the source of all goodness.

“Say: If you love Allah, follow me: Allah will love you, and grant you protection from your sins. And Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.” (3:31)

“And they give food, out of love for Him, to the poor and the orphan and the captive.” (76:8)

Close family are also a part of this giving. Objection is frequently raised that since they are also earning, why should we be supporting them? Allah the Most High tells us to give to them also. “And (also give to the orphans) for the orphans are frequently ignored.” A poor orphan is quite often looked down upon as somebody inferior. You may have observed the orphans

belonging to the *Anjuman Himayat-i-Islam* passing by and a similar thought might have occurred to you. Great emphasis has been made in the Holy Quran to give to orphans, the needy, and the wayfarer. They may also be facing great adversity and are not usually treated well. Observe how much stress the Holy Quran has laid upon treating them with kindness. In fact, anyone who asks for help should be helped if you have the means to help them.

Islam Practically Elevated the Status of Slaves

“And to set slaves free (*wa fil-riqab*),” the Arabic word *riqab* means *neck*. It was customary in Arabia that prisoners of war were kept as slaves in homes. Muslims followed the same custom since there was no war department whose duty would be to house prisoners of war. Islam commands that prisoners of war be treated with exemplary kindness. Nowhere else does one find an example of such gracious treatment toward an enemy. It is enjoined to ‘feed them out of what you eat and clothe them with what you wear’. Christians claim that their religion teaches treating an enemy with love. Their claim was put into practice by Islam. It pointed out how to love one’s enemy. The Holy Quran tells us that, if you love Allah the Most High, you should spend your money to set free prisoners of war who are in your possession. In the eyes of Allah the captor and the captive are closely related for they are both His creation. In spite of the enmity between you and them, you can provide proof of oneness of humanity by spending your money for the sake of their freedom. This is the way in which Islam has taught us to love our enemies. It shows the manner whereby this injunction can be followed completely. If it were enough to command loving the enemy, this was already enjoined in the teachings of the Gospel. Islam goes a step further and shows how to put this ordinance into practice. On the one hand, those who were given charge of these prisoners are enjoined to treat them in the best manner. In addition, money was allocated in the amount of one

eighth of the Zakaat fund from the national exchequer of the Muslim nation for this purpose. This demonstrates a practical and wholesome approach to the principle of loving your enemy, which exceeds all human perception. These injunctions are followed by the command: “Keeps up prayer and pays the poor-rate” (2:177) This short sentence in my opinion is a comprehensive expression of all Divine and human rights.

Humility and Submissiveness is the True Spirit of Prayer

I have repeatedly stressed that your prayer should be kept up and that you should keep it from falling down. Keeping up prayers means they should be performed with a spirit of humility and complete submission. This reflects the condition of your heart and can only be acquired by Allah’s grace. Physical posture, however, also has its significance. I am not saying that if you have the urge to scratch, you should avoid it or be at a complete standstill. People, however, do such absurd actions during prayer, not appropriate for one standing before Allah. Hadith tells us that goodness is that one should worship Allah as if he is seeing Him. If this is not possible, one should at least have the feeling in the heart that The Glorious God is seeing him.

I have observed people who hurriedly go through the different prayer postures. This is not the proper way to pray. Somebody said his prayer hurriedly before the Holy Prophet. When he was ready to leave, the Holy Prophet told him that he had not prayed properly and taught him how to pray in the appropriate manner. The different postures should be performed completely and deliberately. No one is chastising you while you stand in front of Allah. Some people have come with the excuse that a lot of distracting thoughts come to mind while praying; hence the prayer should be finished hurriedly to get rid of such thoughts. These are wrong concepts and absurd actions that must be avoided. One should completely follow the actions of the *Imam* (leader of the prayer) and not utter words or perform a posture before he does. When someone is praying, loud

conversation is to be avoided for it can be a source of distraction. One should not cross in front of someone praying, because this can also be distracting. These are some of the rules about keeping up prayer. More details can be found in hadith reports.

Believers are Performers of Their Promise When They Make a Promise, and Patient in Distress and Affliction

Payment of Zakaat (poor rate) is made mandatory for believers in order to fulfill obligations of human rights. The believers are also performers of their promise when they make a promise. The greatest quality of a person is that he keeps his promise. Historically, nations that hold on to this principle, indeed achieve great success. When they make a promise with someone, they do not break it even if their lives are threatened. You have also made a commitment at the hands of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to keep your religion above the world. Fulfill this promise and your name will go down in history. Another hallmark of the character of believers is that they are, “Patient in distress and affliction and in time of conflict.” Distress is what comes from outside, such as hunger, while afflictions are illnesses that arise from within the human body.

Believers are enjoined to be patient under all of these circumstances, including difficulties arising, “in time of conflict.” To manifest patience when in conflict with an enemy is the hardest. The Arabic word *basa* means conflict. What is the lesson in this for us? Neither you nor I have to go and fight. You have to talk to people, which can sometimes lead to conflict. It is on such occasions that this injunction applies to you. You have to show patience under these circumstances. While in conflict with an enemy, it is human nature to sometimes stoop to very low and despicable behavior. The believer is a role model of patience under these conditions. To remain silent while facing criticism and not losing self-control is the real manifestation of patience in times of conflict. It is only then that you can uphold the Quranic standard of: “These are they who are truthful; and these are they who keep their duty.” (2:177)

Retaliation is Prescribed Only in the Matter of the Slain

Now another problem is mentioned, “And there is life for you in retaliation, O men of understanding, that you may guard yourselves.” At this time in their history the need had arisen for Muslims to engage in warfare. Reference is made in this verse toward such circumstance. The enemy was bent upon complete annihilation of Muslims. If they did not now stand up to face them, they would be totally destroyed. Retaliation against your enemies is therefore prescribed for you so that you can defend yourself against them. The ordinance for retaliation is mentioned in the form of a general law, but in my opinion there is a reference in this toward the impending situation of war and the words, “And there is life for you in retaliation,” bear witness to this. People have also gravely misunderstood the words, “the free for the free, and the slave for the slave, and the female for the female.” Their understanding is to retaliate against a free man if a free man has been murdered, a slave in case of murder of a slave, and a woman if a woman has been killed. The Pre-Islamic Arabs had a custom whereby they discriminated amongst the high and the low in their society. If a free man of a tribe was murdered by a slave of another tribe, they retaliated only against the free men of that tribe instead of the slave. Similarly, if a woman murdered a woman of another tribe, they would instead retaliate against a man of that tribe who would be of the same status as the woman. The Holy Quran has challenged this custom and has prescribed retaliation only against the murderer, “the free for the free, and the slave for the slave, and the female for the female” (2:178).

Remission in the Form of Blood Money for Murder Allowed under Special Circumstances

Retaliation is not prescribed randomly but only against those who commit murder. “But if remission is made to one by his (aggrieved) brother, prosecution (for blood-money) should be according to usage and payment to him in a good manner.” It is

then stated, "This is an alleviation from your Lord and a mercy." There may be circumstances that alleviate the guilt. In such cases, the murderer may be made to pay a fine to the relatives of the murdered person. Such money is called *diyāt* or blood-money. The reference to the alleviation of the guilt is plainly contained in the concluding words of the verse: "This is an alleviation from your Lord." A comparison with 4:92 makes it clear that when homicide is not intentional, blood money may be paid.

Such circumstances can occur even today. For example, an employee of our friend Sheikh Rehmatullah was run over with a horse by an Englishman and died from the injuries. If this crime was unintentional, then the wife and children of the deceased should be given some compensation.

There is no commandment in Islam that is defective. All aspects of the problem are considered and a decision is rendered. A way was needed to provide maintenance for the dependents of the murdered individual; therefore arrangement was made for this. For those who exceed the limit, warning is added: "Whoever exceeds the limit after this, will have a painful chastisement."

"And there is life for you in retaliation, O men of understanding, that you may guard yourselves." This is a further reference toward the impending warfare in which it was essential for Muslims to engage the enemy in order to survive. As a general principle also if the murderer is not punished with the death penalty, the peace of a society is demolished. People have experimented with alternative punishments for the crime of murder. This leads to a dangerous rise in the rate of murder.

Bequest for a Charitable or a Religious Purpose

"It is prescribed for you, when death approaches one of you, if he leaves behind wealth for parents and near relatives, to make a bequest in a kindly manner; it is incumbent upon the dutiful." (2:180)

There has been much debate regarding this verse, which

is abrogated. Even those who consider only five verses to be abrogated have included this verse amongst those five verses. In my opinion, this is incorrect for the bequest mentioned here is for charitable or religious purposes. Researchers have understood the Arabic word *khair* to mean abundant wealth. Evidence for bequests made under the direction of this verse was either for charitable or religious purposes. I have three pieces of evidence in support of this contention.

In an hadith related by Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas: "The Messenger of Allah used to visit me at Makkah, in the year of the Farewell Pilgrimage, on account of my illness which had become very severe. So I said: 'My illness has become very severe and I have much wealth, and there is none to inherit from me but a daughter; shall I then bequeath two-thirds of my property as a charity?' He said, 'No'. I said, 'Half?' He said, 'No'. Then he said: 'bequeath one-third, and one-third is much, for if thou leave thy heirs free from want, it is better than that thou leave them in want, begging from people; and thou dost not spend anything seeking thereby the pleasure of Allah but thou art rewarded for it, even for that which thou puttest into the mouth of thy wife'" (B. 23:36). The mention of the year of the Farewell Pilgrimage shows clearly that the incident relates to the last year of the Prophet's life, to a time when both the verse under discussion and 4:11 had long been revealed. Hence, the making of a bequest was not contrary to 4:11, and this verse really speaks of bequests made for charitable purposes and not of bequests to heirs. It should be further noted that the making of a bequest is necessary only if a person leaves behind *khair*, which means abundant, or considerable, wealth.

There are two other incidents of a still later date that make it clear that the companions of the Prophet did not consider this verse to be abrogated. A man who intended to make a bequest came to 'A'ishah. She asked him how much property he had, and being told that he had 3000 Dirhems and four heirs, told him not to make a bequest and to leave the amount to his heirs, and

recited the words *in taraka khaira* occurring in this verse, indicating that the leaving behind of a large property was a condition for a bequest. A similar incident is reported in connection with 'Ali, the fourth Caliph. He had freed a man possessing 700 Dirhems and he expressed a desire to make a bequest. 'Ali told him not to do so, reciting the same words in *taraka khaira* in support of his contention. Both these incidents happening after the death of the Prophet, show conclusively: (1) that v. 180 was not regarded as abrogated, because people still made bequests under it; and (2) that the bequests spoken of in this verse were never meant for those who would inherit under 4:11, but for charitable purposes, or for those relatives who could not inherit under 4:11.

This Type of Bequest is also Needed Today

I am also drawing your attention to this commandment of the Holy Quran, that it is not abrogated. It is essential for us even today to act upon it. You give a due portion to your relatives but those of you who possess abundant wealth according to prevailing standards should also set aside a portion for charitable purposes. Allah says that bequest is prescribed for you. So if you give some to your parents and relatives, then also bequeath a portion for charitable and religious purposes so that it may serve these causes. "Then whoever changes it after he has heard it, the sin of it is only upon those who change it. Surely Allah is Hearing, Knowing." "But if one fears a wrong or a sinful course on the part of the testator, and effects an agreement between the parties, there is no blame on him. Surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful." (2:181-182)

Proper advice may be tendered to the testator, not to show undue favor to anyone or not to exceed the limits of the law to the detriment of legal heirs. This was what the Prophet himself, and 'A'ishah and 'Ali did in the three cases cited in the above hadith.

March 19, 1915

Dangerous Doctrine of Continuity of Prophethood

Explanation Regarding: Fleeing from the Homes (*bijrab*) and Striving (*jihad*) in the Way of Allah, Prohibition of Intoxicants and Gambling, Spending in the Way of Allah and Marriage with the Idolaters.

I bear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah.

After this, I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil.

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

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَوَلَئِكَ يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَةَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٧﴾

“Those who believed and those who fled (their homes) and strove hard in Allah’s way — these surely hope for the mercy of Allah. And Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.” (2:218)

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنْفَعَةٌ لِلنَّاسِ وَإِثْمُهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِنْ نَفْعِهِمَا وَالَّذِينَ يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلِ الْعَفْوَ كَذَلِكَ

يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١٩﴾

“They ask thee about intoxicants and games of chance. Say: In both of them is a great sin and (some) advantage for men, and their sin is greater than their advantage. And they ask thee as to what they should spend. Say: What you can spare. Thus does Allah make clear to you the messages that you may ponder,” (2:219)

فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ۗ وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْيَتَامَىٰ ۗ قُلْ إِصْلَاحٌ لَّهُمْ خَيْرٌ ۗ وَإِنْ تُخَالِطُوهُمْ فَآخْوَانُكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِ ۗ وَكَوْشَاءِ اللَّهِ لَاعْتَنَّاكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٢٠﴾

“On this world and the Hereafter. And they ask thee concerning the orphans. Say: To set right their (affairs) is good; and if you mix with them, they are your brethren. And Allah knows him who makes mischief from him who sets right. And if Allah pleased, He would have made matters difficult for you. Surely Allah is Mighty, Wise.” (2:220)

وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكَةَ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنَ ۗ وَكَأَمَةٌ مُّؤْمِنَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكَةٍ ۚ وَكَوْ
عَجَبْتُمْ ۚ وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنُوا ۗ وَكَعَبْدٌ مُّؤْمِنٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ
مُّشْرِكٍ ۚ وَكَوْ عَجَبِكُمْ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى التَّارِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى الجَنَّةِ
وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ بِإِذْنِهِ ۚ وَيُبَيِّنُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٢١﴾

“And marry not the idolatresses until they believe; and certainly a believing maid is better than an idolatress even though she please you. Nor give (believing women) in marriage to idolaters until they believe, and certainly a believing slave is better than an idolater, even though he please you. These invite to the Fire and Allah invites to the Garden and to forgiveness by His will and He makes clear His messages to men that they may be mindful.” (2:221)

Distinguishing Feature of the Holy Quran: It provides Proof of Fulfillment of Divine Promises and Consequences of Unheeded Warnings

In the Holy Quran, we find prophetic references toward fulfillment of Divine promises and consequences of unheeded warnings. It is a unique feature of this Book that none of these have been left without proof. In the first verse of this section Allah the Most High states:

“Those who believed and those who fled (their homes) and strove hard in Allah’s way — these surely hope for the mercy of Allah. And Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”

Which one of you does not hope for Allah’s mercy? Allah says that those of you who believe, who fled their homes (*Hijrah*) and strove in His way can hope for His Mercy. This hope in fact is a guarantee of their efforts coming to fruition. Like the word of an emperor when he tells someone “you can hope for my mercy,” is in fact a proof that this will certainly happen. When Allah the Most High states: “These surely hope for the mercy of Allah,” in fact this statement is positive proof of it happening. Allah’s giving hope of something is equivalent to its actual occurrence. When an ordinary person is pleased with someone, it might give him hope of a certain reward in the future. After a period of time, however, his opinion might change or he may not be able to fulfill his promise because of the development of ill feelings toward the person. Allah the Most High’s glory is above all this. His giving hope of mercy to someone means that it has already happened. When Allah the Most High gives hope to someone, it is never wasted. See how those who believed, who fled their homes, and who strived in His way were bestowed with all kinds of favors and showered with His mercy.

Importance of Belief, Fleeing the Homes (*bijrah*), and Striving in Allah’s Way (*jihad*)

Three conditions have been mentioned here.

1. Belief.
2. Fleeing from one's home in order to uphold the truth.
3. Striving in the way of Allah.

Belief is following the right path. For those who go in the wrong direction, the consequences of their actions are devoid of blessings. Fleeing from one's home in order to uphold the truth (*bijrah*) is also very essential. Some of the companions of the Holy Prophet had to leave their homes while others did not have to face these circumstances. This is the reason for the Hadith statement: "A *Mubajir* (one who flees his home for Allah) is the one who flees away from what Allah has prohibited." This is a form of fleeing that a believer can undertake at any time; i.e., he can give up evil. He stops whenever an evil thought comes to mind and abstains from the commission of wrongdoing. A step above and beyond this is striving (*jihad*) in the way of Allah. Just abstaining from evil does not lead to spiritual advancement unless accompanied by good deeds. Striving in the doing of good deeds is very essential, for without it man cannot reach perfection. Thus there are three paths leading to the mercy of Allah, namely belief, fleeing from one's home (or evil) in order to uphold the truth, and striving in the way of Allah. He who abandons any of these cannot be hopeful for the mercy of Allah.

Forty Days of Prayer for Purification of the Soul and Divine Guidance

I want to say something about this announcement made by Mian Mahmud Ahmad Sahib from Qadian calling for forty days of prayer for purification of the soul and Divine guidance. I do not want to discuss controversial matters in this sermon, but sometimes a statement is needed. The guidance provided by the Holy Quran is sufficient and we can learn excellent lessons and points of profound knowledge from it. This Holy Book is more than enough for the purification of our soul, which should be our real objective. It has also been announced that those who have not taken the pledge at the hand of Mian Mahmud Ahmad

fall under two categories. Some are mischief makers while others are termed good natured. The first group is described as having no belief in God, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, or Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. These are the miscreants, bent upon making mischief. Those who are termed good-natured ones believe that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a prophet.

If anybody amongst you is a mischief maker, then I am the first one to deserve this title, for he who initiates something holds the responsibility for all who follow him. I have certainly taken this initiative and you have followed me. Those who have been called the good natured ones have been advised to pray together for forty days so that God should guide their hearts toward righteousness. This is good advice. I myself pray that God may turn the community away from following the wrong course. If I am on the wrong path, may He bring me to the right course and if Mian Mahmud Ahmad Sahib is in error, then may he be shown the right path.

You should also pray that Allah the Most High Himself pull this community away from the wrong course. Allah enjoins us not only to pray but has said "follow the right path that leads to Me." Correct your beliefs. Weigh the arguments on both sides and make a careful decision after much deliberation as to who is on the right course, then follow the path that is good. You have a heart, put it to use. Use your intellect and understanding. Do not accept something because I am telling you to do so if it is in fact the wrong direction. I do not resent the fact that he has called for supplication in this matter. This is a very noble deed. It is possible that Allah may resolve this matter through these prayers. Do not give up your support for his beliefs because of me. Examine them carefully and ponder and study them. Also, carefully scrutinize and ponder upon the arguments we offer. Also, pray at the same time. If God then guides you to believe that Mian Mahmud Ahmad Sahib is correct, then you can certainly join him and it will give me no grief. You should certainly follow the path that appears to be correct and is based upon firm arguments.

The Dangerous Doctrine of Continuity of Prophethood

I firmly believe that calling Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad a prophet is not only uprooting Islam but also gravely jeopardizing what Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad stood for. In my opinion, if you do not accept that the door of prophethood is closed after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, you are embarking on a very dangerous course and making a serious mistake. If some amongst you hold this belief just because Mian Mahmud Ahmad Sahib is your mentor and he holds this belief, then your spiritual condition is in even graver jeopardy, for you are not openly professing your true beliefs.

Abundance of Revelation and Prophethood

In his book, *Haqqiqat al nubuwwat* (Truth about Prophethood), Mian Mahmud Ahmad Sahib made a strange pronouncement. He stated that being given abundant knowledge of the unseen is prophethood. What this means is that if God speaks to you a few times (*ilham*), then you qualify as a *wali* (saint) and if you have these experiences more frequently, then you become a prophet. The question that now arises is, what number qualifies for meaning frequent and what would be labeled as few? After all, God the Most High must have set a standard for this. Let us assume that Allah the Most High considers a hundred such revelatory experiences as the qualification for becoming a prophet and fewer than these as the standard for sainthood (*wilayat*). There would be two consequences of this. Firstly, based upon this line of argument, a prophet is not a prophet in the beginning, but becomes one when he reaches the mark of a hundred such experiences. Although we know that a prophet is a prophet from day one when he is chosen by Allah the Most High for this office. Secondly, no one can become a *wali* (saint) by these criteria for he is only called a saint as a result of such revelatory experiences. As these revelations have to progressively go on, increasing in number, what is he to be called in the interim period? He should at least be told when, for example, his spoken messages from God reach the number ninety-nine as to

what way is left open for him. Either the door for such revelatory experiences must be shut upon him at this point or he is called back by Allah the Most High in order to still remain a *wali* (saint). Now that you have called abundance of these revelatory experiences as prophethood, you should also set a limit for the saints (*waliullah*) a limit, which they cannot exceed, at which time the door for further revelatory experiences would be shut upon them. If they continue to have such experiences, the difficulty arises that you have to also call them prophets and if this is not possible, then Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib cannot remain a prophet either.

Mian Mahmud Ahmad Sahib's Claim to Abundance of Revelatory Experiences

Let us leave aside these hypothetical limitations and for a moment consider only the words 'abundance of revelatory experiences' to be a sufficient qualification to become a prophet. By these criteria, even Mian Mahmud Ahmad Sahib has already become a prophet, for in the June 11, 1914 issue of the newspaper *Al-Fazl* published from Qadian he is quoted as saying, "I am given abundant knowledge of the unseen." In the March 5, 1915 issue of the same paper however, he contradicts himself. In a *Jumma* *Khutba* (Friday Sermon) attributed to him he says, "I have also had a few visions and have been spoken to by God a few times." Now by his own criteria he no longer remains a prophet. If the words abundance and few convey the same meaning, then Ha-keem Marham-e-Isa Sahib should not be the object of his displeasure. If however, there is a numerical difference between these two words, we would like to know what it is. Which one of these two contradictory statements is correct and why was Mian Mahmud Ahmad Sahib not a prophet on June 11, 1914?

Work of the Messenger is to Convey all the Messages he Receives from God to the People

In brief, any claim that is based upon falsehood, the deeper you dig into it, its ill effects and hidden filth become more

apparent. I want to offer you a basic principle whereby you can reach a decision in this matter. At this time, the proofs provided by one side in this argument are progressively becoming more cogent while those of the other party become weaker by the day. I am your *Amir* and they claim that I have been given the same powers as their *Khalifa* (i.e.: you are duty bound to accept what I say). I am telling you frankly not to accept what I am saying. You should read the books written by Mian Mahmud Ahmad Sahib and if you consider him truthful, you should accept him.

According to the Holy Quran, the task assigned to the Messenger of Allah is this: "O Messenger, deliver that which has been revealed to thee from thy Lord" (5:67). There has been no prophet in this world who has kept his revelations a secret. Mian Mahmud Ahmad Sahib however, claims in his book *Truth about Prophethood* that there are thousands of revelations of the Promised Messiah that have not yet been published. This disclosure by him still does not qualify the Promised Messiah to be a prophet for if he were a prophet he would have publicly broadcast all his revelations and presented them as part of his teachings. It seems strange that he only publishes two or three hundred of his revelations and withholds several thousand of them. This once again proves that he was not given the office of prophethood.

I am not directing you to read a certain book or poster and abstain from reading another. Read all of them and read them with full concentration and after doing so do not present excuses for not accepting the truth. I had to digress from the subject of this sermon to provide corroborative evidence on this subject. Now I will return to the verses under discussion.

Compared to other Nations, Muslims are less likely to use Alcohol or Gamble

"They ask thee about intoxicants and games of chance. Say: In both of them is a great sin and (some) advantage for men, and their sin is greater than their advantage."
(2:219)

Muslims consider the use of both alcohol and gambling as evil. Observe the breadth of the mind to which these words were revealed. When he is asked about intoxicants and games of chance, in spite of considering them to be great evils, he admits that they have some benefits but their ill effects are far more; therefore they should be given up. We are taught a basic principle here that there are many things in this life that have both beneficial and harmful effects. You should abstain from those that cause more harm than good. This also illustrates the spiritual strength of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. As a result of its influence even in this day and age we find fewer Muslims indulging in these habits in comparison with followers of other religions. Some people argue that drinking generates fine thinking. Alas! If they were to study the life history of the Holy Prophet they would discover how pure and fine were the thoughts generated by his mind. The Holy Prophet never even tasted a drop of wine and always held great dislike for it. This is also a unique distinction of the Holy Prophet that he kept away from drinking while living amongst a people who were overwhelmingly dependent upon the use of alcohol. They indulged in this habit at all times of the day. The Holy Prophet Muhammad is born and raised amongst these people and abstains totally from all their practices. Observe the elegance and purity of his thought process.

Spend What is More Than Your Needs in the Way of Truth

“And they ask thee as to what they should spend. Say: What you can spare.” People these days come up with the excuse that their own needs are not being fulfilled so they are unable to spend for the cause of religion. This verse in fact commands sacrificing everything, including wealth and life in the way of Allah. How rich were those who received this commandment and how much was left over beyond their needs? They abandoned their homes and their properties and accepted a life of extreme poverty for the sake of truth. They would go out and do tasks of

manual labor during the day and after meeting their bare necessities would give over the rest of their earnings to the Holy Prophet. These were the people who laid the foundations of Islam and sacrificed their lives for this purpose. You are not being asked to sacrifice your lives. If only there were amongst you those who had spent the fruits of their labor in Allah's way, Islam would not be facing such perilous times. "Thus does Allah make clear to you the messages that you may ponder, on this world and the Hereafter." It is better for you in this world and in the Hereafter that you give your wealth and dedicate your lives for the sake of your religion.

Taking Care of the Orphans

"And they ask thee concerning the orphans. Say: To set right their (affairs) is good; and if you mix with them, they are your brethren." There is no harm if you were to include them as partners in your trading. You should certainly not be hateful toward them for they are your brethren. The nation that does not look after its orphans can never succeed and is ultimately destroyed. In this day and age there exists the absence of a system amongst Muslims to look after the needs of orphans. Their orphans are being given up into the hands of others; this is a matter of great loss and a source of obstruction in the path toward success. You should look after orphans. Do not treat them with any malice and work to improve and reform their lives and make them a part of your daily lives and occupations.

"...And Allah knows him who makes mischief from him who sets right. And if Allah pleased, He would have made matters difficult for you. Surely Allah is Mighty, Wise."
(2:220)

Marriage to a Slave Maiden Preferred Over an Idolatress

"And marry not the idolatresses until they believe; and certainly a believing maid is better than an idolatress even though she please you..." (2:221)

Allah the Most High wants to take you toward a very high level of spiritual development. People argue over that which is prohibited and that which is allowed. They wonder what happens if we consume a food that is prohibited. Allah the Most High wants to take you the farthest away from associating others with Him (*shirk*). No trace of association with Allah should be found in what you consume or in your marital relationships. “Nor give (believing women) in marriage to idolaters until they believe, and certainly a believing slave is better than an idolater, even though he please you.”

Causes of Decline of the Turkish Nation

What are the disadvantages of marital relations with foreign nationals? Those who are aware of the consequences of such liaisons are well aware of these. You can observe the condition of the Turks at this time. They took in marriage women from Greece, France, Germany, and Austria who, when they became the homemakers in these households, exerted the influence of their own culture and faith upon the offspring. As a consequence of these influences, the feeling and caring for Islam was lost. I readily admit that Islam has allowed marriage with people of the Book, but sometimes the need and the condition of the nation is against this and such marriages result in great loss to the nation.

“These invite to the Fire,” See how they have led Muslims into the fire. “And Allah invites to the Garden and to forgiveness by His will.” “And He makes clear His messages to men that they may be mindful.” (2:221)

April 9, 1915

**The Holy Quran Enjoins Exemplary Treatment of
Divorced and Widowed Women**

Ibear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah.

After this, I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil.

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

وَإِذَا طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلِّغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ أَنْ يَنْكِحْنَ أَزْوَاجَهُنَّ
إِذَا تَرَاضُوا بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ يُوعَظُ بِهِ مَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ
وَاليَوْمِ الآخِرِ ۗ ذَٰلِكُمْ أَذْكَى لَكُمْ وَأَطْهَرُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

“And when you divorce women and they end their term, prevent them not from marrying their husbands if they agree among themselves in a lawful manner. With this is admonished he among you who believes in Allah and the Last Day. This is more profitable for you and purer. And Allah knows while you know not.” (2:232)

وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضَعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلِينَ كَامِلِينَ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُنْتَمَ
الرِّضَاعَةَ ۗ وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ لَا تُكَلِّفُ نَفْسٌ
إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۗ لِأَبَائِكُمْ وَلِأُمَّهَاتِكُمْ أَهْلٌ مِمَّا يَكُونُ لَكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ لِلَّذِينَ أَوْلُواكُمْ ۗ وَعَلَى الْوَارِثِ

مِثْلُ ذَلِكَ ۚ فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا ۗ
وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمُ أَنْ تَسْتَرْضِعُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا سَأَلْتُم مَّا آتَيْتُم
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٣٠﴾

“And mothers shall suckle their children for two whole years, for him who desires to complete the time of suckling. And their maintenance and their clothing must be borne by the father according to usage. No soul shall be burdened beyond its capacity. Neither shall a mother be made to suffer harm on account of her child, nor a father on account of his child; and a similar duty (devolves) on the (father’s) heir. But if both desire weaning by mutual consent and counsel, there is no blame on them. And if you wish to engage a wet-nurse for your children, there is no blame on you so long as you pay what you promised according to usage. And keep your duty to Allah and know that Allah is Seer of what you do.” (2:233)

وَالَّذِينَ يَتُوفُونَ مِنْكُمْ وَ يَدْرُونَ أَرْوَاجًا يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةَ
أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا ۗ فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا فَعَلْنَ
فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿٣١﴾

“And (as for) those of you who die and leave wives behind, such women should keep themselves in waiting for four months and ten days; when they reach their term, there is no blame on you for what they do for themselves in a lawful manner. And Allah is Aware of what you do.” (2:234)

وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا عَرَّضْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ خِطْبَةِ النِّسَاءِ أَوْ أَكْنَنْتُمْ فِي
أَنْفُسِكُمْ ۗ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ سَتَذْكُرُونَهُنَّ وَلَكِنْ لَا تُوَاعِدُوهُنَّ سِرًّا إِلَّا أَنْ
تَقُولُوا قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا ۗ وَلَا تَعْزِمُوا عُقْدَةَ النِّكَاحِ حَتَّى يَبْلُغَ الْكِتَابُ أَجَلَهُ

وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوا وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَفُورٌ

حَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٣٥﴾

“And there is no blame on you respecting that which you speak indirectly in the asking of (such) women in marriage or keep (the proposal) concealed within your minds. Allah knows that you will have them in your minds, but give them not a promise in secret unless you speak in a lawful manner. And confirm not the marriage tie until the prescribed period reaches its end. And know that Allah knows what is in your minds, so beware of Him; and know that Allah is Forgiving, Forbearing.” (2:235)

The Path of Extremism in Relationships Between Men and Women

This is the third section of the Holy Quran. It discusses the subject of divorce. There is one more section after this one as well as further injunctions in another section. There is a small chapter of the Holy Quran dealing with the subject and to some extent it has been discussed in the chapter, “The Women.” Allah the Most High has given special importance to this subject because the marital relationship between man and woman is fundamental to the well-being of society. Basic lessons for social intercourse begin at this point. Social intercourse means the ability to live together with other human beings. The relationship between a husband and wife is the first step in this direction. In pre-Islamic Arabia, before the advent of the Holy Prophet, there was prevalence of extreme behaviors in the matter of divorce. There were those who took the position that the marriage contract was unbreakable while others were ready to divorce upon the slightest provocation.

The Well Being of Society is Dependent upon Good Relations Between Husband and Wife

All worldly relations have their foundation based upon the

relationship between husband and wife. This is the reason why it has been given such importance. The Holy Prophet said: “The best of you is he who treats his wife well.” This relationship serves as an example for other relations. Those who cannot treat members of their household in a good manner are not capable of treating those outside the family circle equitably. Islam has thus laid down the basic principles from which many lessons can be learned. For example, it is enjoined not to serve anyone besides Allah. With this, however, obedience to parents is made mandatory, because parents are responsible for nurturing their children to a large extent. As I have mentioned, it is essential to serve any person to the extent they provide for us. This is why a man’s treatment of his wife has been set up as the standard for his dealings outside. Besides other moral deficiencies, a very prevalent one amongst Muslim men is being short-tempered in dealing with their spouses. Those who cannot control their temper at home have difficulty in their dealings outside.

Domestic relations thus serve as a standard for outside behavior. Many practical moral lessons are learned in one’s dealings with their wives. If you want to manifest goodness in character, then be a good example at home. In this way, you can also serve as a good example for your children. Islam has aimed at social uplifting by enjoining excellence in one’s domestic relationship. This is the key to the success or failure of a civil society.

It is stated: “And when you divorce women and they end their term, prevent them not from marrying their husbands if they agree among themselves in a lawful manner.”

Islam Considers Temporary Marriage (*balalab*) an Immoral, Abhorrent, and Accursed Custom

Amongst pre-Islamic Arabs, it was considered dishonorable to marry divorced women, while other religions have declared it altogether illegal. The Holy Quran rejected this old custom. A person reacting in anger may say something and afterward

regret it and change his opinion. Under such circumstances, he should be given the benefit of doubt and if both parties are agreeable allowed to remarry. Some Muslims have come up with temporary marriage, which is an accursed and abhorrent custom. The Holy Quran does not enjoin any form of temporary marriage.

“...This is more profitable for you and purer. And Allah knows while you know not.” (2:232)

Divorce and the Infant Child

Another difficulty is encountered when a divorce is given and there is an infant child. What should be done with him? The Holy Quran tells us: “And mothers shall suckle their children for two whole years, for him who desires to complete the time of suckling.” This is for those who want to complete the period of suckling but the mother should be compensated for her services: “And their maintenance and their clothing must be borne by the father according to usage.” Usage is according to the means of the father. If he is a rich person, food and clothing should be in accordance with his level of income and if his means are limited he should provide support accordingly. This is to ensure that: “No soul shall be burdened beyond its capacity. Neither shall a mother be made to suffer harm on account of her child, nor a father on account of his child.” The mother should not be held back and mistreated on account of her child nor should the father be burdened beyond his means. ‘And a similar duty (devolves) on the (father’s) heir.’ In other words, if the father of the child dies, then his heir has to fulfill the maintenance commitment.

“...But if both desire weaning by mutual consent and counsel, there is no blame on them.

“And if you wish to engage a wet-nurse for your children, there is no blame on you so long as you pay what you promised according to usage. And keep your duty to Allah and know that Allah is Seer of what you do.” (2:233)

Kind Treatment of Divorced Women

A waiting period is recommended after divorce and also in the case of women who become widowed. In the latter case, it is stated:

“And (as for) those of you who die and leave wives behind, such women should keep themselves in waiting for four months and ten days; when they reach their term, there is no blame on you for what they do for themselves in a lawful manner. And Allah is Aware of what you do.”

“And there is no blame on you respecting that which you speak indirectly in the asking of (such) women in marriage or keep (the proposal) concealed within your minds. Allah knows that you will have them in your minds, but give them not a promise in secret unless you speak in a lawful manner. And confirm not the marriage tie until the prescribed period reaches its end. And know that Allah knows what is in your minds, so beware of Him; and know that Allah is Forgiving, Forbearing.” (2:234-235)

The Purpose of the Waiting Period

Why is there a waiting period? The reason for this is that if the woman is pregnant, her pregnancy should become manifest. In the early stages of pregnancy, such a determination cannot be made readily and if the woman gets married at this stage, the paternity of the child would become doubtful. This is the reason why a waiting period of four months and ten days has been recommended. If the pregnancy becomes certain at this stage, then the waiting period can be extended until the child is born, otherwise she can marry another person.

A Few Rules for Resolving Differences Within the Ahmadiyya Movement

I have briefly mentioned to you the problems related to divorced and widowed women and solutions provided by the

Holy Quran in these matters so that by firmly standing upon these principles you can benefit in your worldly matters. I am also drawing your attention to have an understanding and a firm grasp on certain basic principles. At this juncture, there is a matter of great dissension amongst members of the Ahmadiyya Movement. Seeing all this debate, people get so perplexed that they say, we do not know who is truthful. I will tell you the principle by which you can gauge the truth. If you say that the length of arguments is the standard by which to judge the truth, you should look at the philosophy of trinity. You will observe that large volumes of books have been written on this matter and many brilliant minds have wasted their time and monetary resources in this quest. Differences will always remain, as the Holy Quran tells us:

“And if thy Lord had pleased, he would have made people a single nation. And they cease not to differ.” (11:118)

It usually happens that true beliefs are endangered and errant beliefs initially attain great popularity. Remember a belief cannot be accepted as correct just because the majority of people are accepting it. If this is a valid argument, then presently those who believe in trinity are in the majority and many are still accepting this philosophy. Every time a census is carried out in India, we find their numbers to have increased substantially. Superiority in numbers therefore does not count for anything. In order to decide between truth and falsehood, the main principle should be understood and accepted. The rest of the differences will be decided spontaneously. I am saying this also because at this time Islam needs your services. If you spend all your energies in internal strife, your defenses will become weaker against outside attacks. It is essential that you first stand firm on a principle. Do not consume your energies in extremely complicated matters for you will not have any strength left to stand up to other religions.

The greatest internal difference we have is non-Ahmadi should be regarded as Muslim or non-Muslim. This also settles the matter of prophethood of the Promised Messiah. I will relate

to you an incident that is easy to understand and will help you to decide regarding this matter. Somebody sought Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's opinion as to whether it was appropriate to say the funeral prayer for a person who is not a member of the Ahmadiyya Movement. If he had given the reply that since he was a prophet and one who does not accept a prophet becomes a disbeliever, and those who do not believe in him are disbelievers and it is not permissible to participate in their funeral, we would not have had any objection to accept this. His reply, however, has been documented in the publication, "Edicts of Ahmadiyya" (*Fatawa-e-Ahmadiyya vol.i.p.118. statement made on April 18, 1902 and printed in Al-bakm newspaper April 30, 1902*).

In this Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad clearly states: "If the deceased did not call us *kafir* (disbeliever) and a liar, his funeral prayers may be said. There is nothing wrong with that, for only God knows hidden matters." It is a great inequity to put such a clear statement in the realm of allegorical. What may I ask then is a decisive statement?

A Disclosure that was not Even Made to the Promised Messiah

Mir Hamid Shah Sahib has written a lengthy discourse in which he makes this statement: "What has been disclosed in the book *Truth about Prophethood*¹ and at which point the prophethood of Hazrat Mirza Sahib, who has returned to Allah, has been proven, if someone's heart still does not accept it, it is shameful." Unfortunately, this disclosure was not made to the Promised Messiah during his lifetime and neither to Mir Hamid Shah Sahib to this point in time. Moreover, he boldly asserts, "father misses, son completes," in other words: 'what the Promised Messiah (Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad) could not do, was accomplished by the son (Mian Mahmud Ahmad)'. And what is

1. Book written by Mian Mahmud Ahmad

that accomplishment? It is the complete contradiction of the *fatwa* given by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad states clearly that it is permissible to say the funeral prayer for the deceased who is not a member of the Ahmadiyya Movement, "If the deceased did not call us *kafir* (disbeliever) and a liar." According to Mian Mahmud Ahmad Sahib however, it is not permissible to say the funeral prayer for anybody who is not an Ahmadi. The following conversation attributed to him is worth noting.

A certain individual asked him, what do you command in the case where the wife of an Ahmadi passes away, and the concern is that non-Ahmadis won't say her funeral prayer. All members of the household are Ahmadi but the deceased wife has not taken the pledge. He replied, "The one whose faith has not reached completion what can be the command for her funeral prayer?" (*AL-FAZL* APRIL 24, 1915)

The Dangerous Precept of Calling Those who do not Follow the Ahmadiyya Movement, Disbelievers

Thus, according to Mian Mahmud Ahmad Sahib, the faith of this lady has not yet reached completion; therefore funeral prayer for her is not permissible. This is his verdict about the funeral prayer. It has not yet been decided if her burial rites should be performed in the Islamic tradition. In view of this opinion, there is no need for performing the funeral rites in the Islamic tradition and facing the grave in the direction of the Ka'bah. Why not just dig a hole and bury her? Another question also comes up in this context. There is a generally accepted Hadith, "a believer cannot be the inheritor of a disbeliever, nor a disbeliever of a believer." Therefore, if a father is an Ahmadi and the son a non-Ahmadi the latter cannot inherit from the former. Similarly, a son who is an Ahmadi cannot inherit from a father who is a non-Ahmadi. Those Ahmadi children who have inherited from their non-Ahmadi parents have taken that inheritance

against Sharia law. Those who have taken these prohibited funds should return them and abstain from spending their illegal gains for the benefit of their children. They are disobeying the principles of Sharia by consuming the property of disbelievers. Is it not the duty of those who issue such edicts that they should make arrangements for returning all the property of non-Ahmadis that has been inherited by their Ahmadi children? Is it not an essential component of faith to consume only what is lawful and good?

This is indeed a very dangerous precept. It is said that without following these precepts, relationships within the community are affected. I do understand that close ties of kinship are essential for national progress. If, however, your ties of relationship are strengthened by calling others disbelievers, then the very basis of this is laid upon commission of a great wrong. Remember the words of the Holy Quran: "And help one another in righteousness and piety, and help not one another in sin and aggression" (5:2). Lay the foundation of your kinship on the basis of truth, for a foundation laid on falsehood cannot sustain itself for long.

Do Not Term What is Decisive as Allegorical

I have given you a brief explanation. If anyone has any proof to the contrary, they should present it. If you relegate the clear statements and edicts of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to the realm of allegory and what has no proof behind it you term as a decisive opinion, then no tranquility and peace will remain. A Christian can very well say that all the arguments you present fall in the category of allegorical statements and the decisive position is three is one and one is three. This is of course an invalid argument; so for God's sake abstain from such baseless issues. A person should not commit the same mistakes over and over again. Do the idolaters not present numerous arguments in a philosophical manner in support of idol worship? They will say that they do not worship idols; in fact they worship the One

Supreme God and the idols are merely visible symbols to enhance this concept. Their argument is not valid because it goes against the established principle of the person and attributes of God. Do not abandon principle in this matter also. You cannot come to a decision by relegating your claim to the realm of allegory. By doing so, you are abandoning the very principle that is the foundation for all the rest. I am also telling you that by following an individual who is clearly going down the wrong path, you are intentionally doing something that goes against your intelligence and belief. A form of idol worship and association with Allah occurs when one starts following someone due to fear of malediction by that individual. Fear of such imprecations is cowardice and a form of association with Allah. You should abandon such thoughts, use your mind and intellect, take a stand on principles, and not falter in this matter.

April 15 1915

**Honor the Pledge of Keeping Religion
Above the World**

*(The purpose of family relations, equitable treatment,
and charitable spending is to guard against evil)*

Ibear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah.

After this, I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil.

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

لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ مَا لَمْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ أَوْ تَفْرِضُوا لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً ۗ
وَمَتَّعُوهُنَّ عَلَى الْمَوْسِعِ قَدَرًا وَعَلَى الْمُقْتَرِ قَدَرًا ۗ مَتَاعًا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ حَقًّا
عَلَى الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

“There is no blame on you if you divorce women while yet you have not touched them, nor appointed for them a portion. And provide for them, the wealthy according to his means and the straitened according to his means, a provision according to usage. (This is) a duty on the doers of good.” (2:236)

وَإِنْ طَلَّقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ وَقَدْ فَرَضْتُمْ لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً فَرْصَفْ
مَا فَرَضْتُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ يَعْفُونَ أَوْ يَعْفُوا الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ عَقْدَةُ الزَّكَاحِ ۗ وَأَنْ
تَعْفُوا أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَى ۗ وَلَا تَنْسُوا الْفَضْلَ بَيْنَكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ
بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٣٧﴾

“And if you divorce them before you have touched them and you have appointed for them a portion, (pay) half of what you have appointed unless they forgo or he forgoes in whose hand is the marriage tie. And it is nearer to dutifulness that you forgo. Nor neglect the giving of free gifts between you. Surely Allah is Seer of what you do.” (2:237)

حِفْظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوَسْطَىٰ ۗ وَكُلُّوا لِلَّهِ قَنِينًا ﴿٢٣٨﴾

“Guard the prayers and the most excellent prayer, and stand up truly obedient to Allah.” (2:238)

فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرِجَالًا أَوْ رُكْبَانًا ۖ فَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ فَأَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُمْ مِمَّا لَمْ
تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٣٩﴾

“But if you are in danger (say your prayers) on foot or on horseback. And when you are secure, remember Allah as He has taught you what you knew not.” (2:239)

وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا ۖ وَصِيَّةً لِأَزْوَاجِهِمْ مِمَّا عَرَسُوا
الْحَوْلَ غَيْرِ إِخْرَاجٍ ۚ فَإِنْ خَرَجْنَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا فَعَلْنَ
فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ مِنْ مَّعْرُوفٍ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٤٠﴾

“And those of you who die and leave wives behind, should make a bequest in favour of their wives of maintenance for a year without turning (them) out. Then if they themselves go away, there is no blame on you for what they do of lawful deeds concerning themselves. And Allah is Mighty, Wise.” (2:240)

وَالْمُطَلَّقاتِ مَتاعًا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ط حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٢٤١﴾

“And for the divorced women, provision (must be made) in kindness. This is incumbent on those who have regard for duty.” (2:241)

كَذَلِكَ يَبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٢٤٢﴾

“Allah thus makes clear to you His messages that you may understand.” (2:242)

This section of the Holy Quran continues a discussion on the same subject referred to in the previous section. The first reference discusses situations when a divorce occurs before the consummation of marriage and the dowry has not been decided. Under these circumstances the Holy Quran states:

“There is no blame on you if you divorce women while yet you have not touched them, nor appointed for them a portion. And provide for them, the wealthy according to his means and the straitened according to his means, a provision according to usage. (This is) a duty on the doers of good.”

If the Dowry has been Fixed and Consummation has not Occurred

“And if you divorce them before you have touched them and you have appointed for them a portion, (pay) half of what you have appointed unless they forgo or he forgoes in whose hand is the marriage tie. And it is nearer to dutifulness that you forgo. Nor neglect the giving of free gifts between you. Surely Allah is Seer of what you do.”

The Holy Quran also says: “Men are the maintainers of women with what Allah has made some of them excel others and with what they spend out of their wealth...” (4:34)

These two circumstances of divorce are described here. The words used relative to divorce are: “And provide for them, the wealthy according to his means and the straitened according to

his means, a provision according to usage. (This is) a duty on the doers of good.”

The doing of good under these circumstances is a great challenge because with divorce, all ties of the relationship are cut off. The marital bond excels by its very nature. A bond is established with an outsider in lieu of relations with parents and other relatives. In spite of this degree and intensity of relationship, with a divorce taking place, a complete severance of ties occurs. Even after a divorce, relations with other relatives are maintained to some degree, but this does not happen to be the case between the divorced couple. Even under these circumstances, the doing of good is emphasized. This is a situation in which a marriage contract was made but no relationship was established and consummation of the marriage did not occur. Even under these exceptional circumstances, when the relationship has not even been fully established, the Holy Quran advises:

“...And provide for them, the wealthy according to his means and the straitened according to his means, a provision according to usage. (This is) a duty on the doers of good.” (2:236)

This shows how much the Holy Quran stresses the doing of good upon Muslims. Discussing the very same subject of divorce, the Holy Quran states: “Let him who has abundance spend out of his abundance, and whoever has his means of subsistence straitened to him, let him spend out of that which Allah has given him”. (65:7)

Why was the doing of good stressed? What is the purpose behind this? Is the purpose of the Holy Quran only that your life at home should be facilitated? The real goal in itself is not this. These matters of divorce, this making and breaking of covenants, all this has another objective. The real purpose of the Holy Quran is to stress the importance of doing one’s duty and abstaining from evil. This is why repeatedly we are reminded of

this real purpose: that Allah the Most High wants you to be those who keep their duty.

Spending in the Way of Allah

In this section, and further on, the subject for which this section has been put here is elaborated. Its purpose is to teach Muslims to spend in the way of Allah. In order to develop this spirit, it is essential to comply with these injunctions. This is the reason why, after mentioning these injunctions, the lesson given is:

“Nor neglect the giving of free gifts between you.”

By learning these minor details, acquire the greater knowledge and wisdom that is intended. The Holy Quran tells you to spend even on the woman whose relation with you has been completely severed. I am asking you, isn't your connection with Islam even at the level of this divorced woman, with whom you are told to deal with goodness in spite of the severance of relationship? It is my observation that when a call is put forth to spend for the cause of religion, the standard reply is that we do not have enough to meet our own needs. Alas! Islam tells you to spend even on the divorced woman and you refuse to give, for this very same religion that you claim to be your most valuable asset. The Holy Quran has given you many excellent lessons of knowledge and wisdom. Is this not its great beneficence? It enjoins us to spend even for causes that do not have a direct connection with us. In spite of having such an important bond with Islam, if you say, “wherefrom should we spend?” then I am telling you that you have not understood Islam.

The Example of the Companions of the Holy Prophet

Look at the condition of those people who joined the Holy Prophet. How much wealth did they have and what were the means to fulfill their needs? One of them would go and perform manual labor all day. With the meager wages he would earn, after keeping the bare minimum for his sustenance, he would

give the rest to the Holy Prophet. These were the same people who supported Islam under very difficult circumstances and brought it to us. If instead of them, there were people like us who make tall claims but practically do nothing, Islam would not have spread in the world. See the strength of other religions and the great difficulties and dangers Islam is facing. People of other faiths work very hard and are fully devoted to the propagation of their religions. Compare the number of Muslims who have undertaken this responsibility.

There are also significant numbers who are abandoning Islam in favor of other religions. All of you are prepared to accumulate worldly benefits and wealth and each one of you is in pursuit of some material benefit. How many, I ask, are ready for the cause of Islam? In which corner of the world are Islamic missionaries working and preparing to spread the knowledge of Islam? People spend in the hundreds to safeguard their assets. If someone breaks into their property, they take elaborate measures to protect it. Islam is being shattered by numerous break-ins and thousands of precious jewels (people) have been lost from its treasury. How many are there whose hearts grieve for this loss and who unconditionally come to its aid? In these verses, Allah has enjoined you to come to the aid of Islam. If you want to do good, then sacrifice your needs and give priority to your concern for Islam.

Finding Excuses not to Spend in the Way of Allah

Some people have come up with the excuse that no one has come to them asking for help. They should ponder upon the example of a woman who has to cook for the household. Is she concerned about discharging her responsibility or does she wait to cook only if someone asks her to do so? Your dependency on being asked by someone to give indicates that your hearts are devoid of the passion and the feeling to give spontaneously. Is it not your own responsibility to come to the aid of Islam without being asked to do so? Why then do you need to wait for

someone to come and ask you to make your donations? Some people promise large sums for donations and promise to give monthly contributions but thereafter come up with the excuse that no one has come to ask them to fulfill their pledges. Is this the feeling and sympathy they hold in their hearts for Islam? Is this helping Islam or a mere show of giving.

If your giving is such that it needs asking, then I am telling you it does not make any difference whether you give or you do not give. Pretentious giving never bears any fruit. Just a few days ago, a friend made an appeal that some members should purchase the footnotes of the Holy Quran in larger quantities and distribute them free. I was concerned that if people accept or promise a donation for this purpose because of my presence, it may be regarded as pretentious behavior. In order to save them from this predicament, I promised to distribute a hundred copies myself. When you have to give and it is for God, then let it be only for Him. Do not bring people into this equation. This will make you deserving of real rewards.

The Significance of the Verse of the Most Excellent Prayer

The Holy Quran then states: “Guard the prayers and the most excellent prayer, and stand up truly obedient to Allah.” People have had great difficulty explaining the connection of this verse with the rest of the subject matter. Some consider this injunction redundant to the rest of the discussion. This position however, is incorrect. Careful examination reveals that it highlights the real purpose and objective that is only hinted at in the previous verse. There is no doubt that the Holy Quran is not a book in which each subject is classified into separate chapters and sections where the subject matter of one section does not fall into the next. This sort of arrangement would be expected in a book whose purpose is to prepare you to learn about different subjects. The purpose of the Holy Quran is for you to develop a perfect relationship with Allah the Most High. That is the reason

why during the discussion of a specific subject, constant reminders are given to guard against the accountability of Allah. The same message is given here in these words: "Guard the prayers and the most excellent prayer, and stand up truly obedient to Allah." What is the purpose of prayer? If you look carefully, you will come to the conclusion that prayer is the root of all progress and success. How well the truthful messenger, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, has expressed this by calling prayer the *mehraj* or spiritual ascension of the believer.

Before the advent of Islam, every nation had the seventh day of the week dedicated to prayer when all worldly connections were forbidden. Islam, however, commands us to keep our mind focused on the attributes of Allah the Most High throughout our daily occupations. Islam taught us the practical lesson of having our hands tied in our worldly pursuits, but our heart should be always bonded in friendship with Allah. If the purpose of religion is to form a bond with Allah, then there is no other means of doing this besides prayer. There is no timing of obligatory prayers when one is not busy either doing something or resting. Under all circumstances, whether one is involved in some activity or on break, the priceless practical means to sacrifice all of this for a strong relationship with Allah has been taught by Islam through the institution of prayer.

The Prayerful Derided as Evildoers

Some people are of the opinion that those who pray are usually the evildoers; hence one should be on guard against them. There is no doubt that some have made ill use of their prayers to accomplish illegitimate tasks, but you should not forget the truth. If someone says his prayer and then commits evil, it does not prove that his evil deed is the result of his prayer. It is his own devious mind that he has used in a sinister manner to commit the evil deed. You know the true purpose of prayers and should set an excellent example by practicing your prayers through righteousness.

Observe how many occupations have been unable to stop people from misusing them in an unwholesome manner. Take for example the legal profession. Many lawyers undertake this profession and set a very bad example by using their legal expertise for illegal gain. How many people are there who stop from becoming lawyers when they witness these bad examples? It is quite obvious that no one even considers this. A truly noble soul is the one who ignores the bad example of others and performs a task in an excellent manner and sets a good example. Thus, we observe both types of people: those who perform a task and manifest a good example, while there are others who misuse the same task for illegitimate gain. Does this mean that by seeing their evil example we should give up the thought of doing and accomplishing good?

By bringing the subject of prayer into the discussion of divorce, the Holy Quran has shown us that a deep relationship exists between the two. The matter of divorce is a very important and sensitive subject. The pleasure of Allah should particularly be sought under these circumstances by praying with humility so that any action that might affect the perfect bond with Allah and provoke His displeasure should be avoided. In order to maintain the higher bond between man and God, one has to manifest caution in severing the lesser tie of marriage while safeguarding the rights of others.

What Kind of Prayer is Enjoined

Prayer does not mean fulfilling a few rituals, for the Holy Quran enjoins: “stand up truly obedient to Allah.” Stand up in your prayer with true obedience to Allah and avoid actions evident of disobedience. Manifest complete submission and guard your prayers in a manner that does not falter under any circumstances. If there were to be a circumstance in which prayer was not mandatory, then it would have been when one is in a state of fear. This is not so. In fact the Quran tells us: “But if you are in danger (say your prayers) on foot or on horseback.” How pure are these teachings

of the Holy Quran and what a remarkable distinction they hold in comparison with other scriptures. Jesus prayed for the daily bread and Christians still follow this tradition. Even during the recent war, a constant supply of food and beverages was maintained. You might have heard of this or seen pictures of it in the news where food and tea was being served while the troops were on the march. This shows the degree of concern they have about physical sustenance. Compare this with the excellence of the Islamic teachings. Man always is concerned about his next meal; therefore no mention is made of it. It was essential even under these conditions, to maintain a relationship with Allah, thus showing the wisdom behind the injunction to keep up prayers while in danger, on foot or on horseback. This is what clearly distinguishes Islam from other religions. While others lay great stress on physical rituals, Islam caters to the higher teachings of spirituality even in trivial matters and does not part with this superior motive even within the framework of social and cultural interactions of man. Islam teaches a Muslim to ask "guide us on the right path," while other religions teach, "Lord give us our daily bread."

Keep your Pledge with Allah to, "Hold Religion Above the World"

I ask you again, why do you seek worldly gain? You should embrace the teachings of your mentor. There are those who strive for the world and become of it. Is it not possible for you to practically uphold your religion above the world? The Holy Quran enjoins this not only in a state of fear and danger but also when there is peace: "And when you are secure, remember Allah as He has taught you what you knew not." Under these circumstances, you should resume your normal prayer schedule. Therefore I am telling you that you should fully safeguard your prayers whether you are in a state of fear or at peace. I acquit my duty by telling you that your organization will only make progress through prayer and only prayer will be the source of your well being.

"And those of you who die and leave wives behind,

should make a bequest in favour of their wives of maintenance for a year without turning (them) out..." (2:240)

This injunction is not mandatory nor does it abrogate any other commandment. "Without turning them out," means you should not turn them out if there is a bequest to maintain them for a year. "Then if they themselves go away, there is no blame on you for what they do of lawful deeds concerning themselves." This refers to circumstances when they choose to leave and get married.

Toward this end, once more we are told: "And for the divorced women, provision (must be made) in kindness. This is incumbent on those who have regard for duty."

Again keeping of one's duty, recognition of the rights of others, and fear of the accountability to Allah is stressed once more.

"Allah thus makes clear to you His messages that you may understand." (2:242)

Prayer for the Progress of Islam

It is said that prayers find great acceptance on the day of *Jumuah* (Friday). Keeping this in mind, I will recite a prayer and all of you say Amen with me.

"O Allah help those who help the religion of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and make me of them and disappoint those who disgrace the religion of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and do not make us of those."

After this, Maulana Muhammad Ali repeatedly recited this prayer along with other supplications. He concluded the sermon with:

May Allah accept all of these prayers and give me, members of my organization, and all Muslims the capability to follow this pure guidance so that the world can see clearly the genuine and blessed face of Islam. Amen

July 9, 1915

**Fasting During the Month of *Ramadhan*:
An Excellent Means of Spiritual Progress**

I bear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah.

After this, I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil.

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

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٧١﴾

“O you who believe, fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may guard against evil.” (2:183)

أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ ۖ فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۗ
وَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ۗ فَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ
لَّهُ ۗ وَأَن تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٧٢﴾

“For a certain number of days. But whoever among you is sick or on a journey, (he shall fast) a (like) number of other days. And those who find it extremely hard may effect redemption by feeding a poor man. So whoever does

good spontaneously, it is better for him; and that you fast is better for you if you know.” (2:184)

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ
وَالْفُرْقَانِ ۗ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ۗ وَ مَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ
سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۗ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ
وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٨٥﴾

“The month of *Ramadan* is that in which the Quran was revealed, a guidance to men and clear proofs of the guidance and the Criterion. So whoever of you is present in the month, he shall fast therein, and whoever is sick or on a journey, (he shall fast) a (like) number of other days. Allah desires ease for you, and He desires not hardship for you, and (He desires) that you should complete the number and that you should exalt the greatness of Allah for having guided you and that you may give thanks.” (2:185)

وَ إِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۗ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۗ
فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ ﴿١٨٦﴾

“And when My servants ask thee concerning Me, surely I am nigh. I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on Me, so they should hear My call and believe in Me that they may walk in the right way.” (2:186)

Spiritual Sustenance for the Month of *Ramadhan*

The month of *Ramadhan* is about to begin; therefore, I feel it is essential to provide some information about it. These matters have been repeatedly related to you, but just as man needs to eat and drink frequently for his physical well being, the same is true regarding spiritual sustenance. It needs to be offered frequently. Just as physical requirements are an essential part of our being, it is also necessary that we receive periodic reminders of

matters that are spiritually beneficial to us. By nature, man tends to forget previous reminders and with the passage of time their effect wears off. Even the companions of the Holy Prophet used to say: "O Messenger of Allah when we are in your presence the state of our mind is different than when we depart from your company." The companions of the Holy Prophet, may Allah be pleased with them, realized this. Every person is in need of someone to counsel him or her; the human mind is in want of repeated stimulation.

Sighting of the Moon

The month of Ramadhan has either twenty-nine or thirty days, although nowadays people do not allow thirty days to be completed. Only Allah knows if the month is actually of twenty-nine days but people take false oaths of having witnessed the new moon. Nevertheless, this has been my experience. In any case, someone who has completed twenty-nine days of fasting should not find it hard to fast for another day.

Timings for Beginning and Ending the Fast

Early in the morning, there is a period called the tint or break of dawn. This period extends from approximately one hour and twenty-two minutes to one hour thirty minutes before sunrise. The fast is to be kept beginning at this time, until sunset. Some people consume their morning meal very early. One should take advantage of the permission given by the Holy Quran and also follow the Holy Prophet who would wait until this time to consume his meal. Currently, one could get up at approximately two o'clock at night, pray for half an hour, spend one and a half hours to take care of other needs and consume his meal around four a.m. And quit eating as soon as the morning is fully established. Some people quit eating when they hear the call for the morning prayer. There is no harm in confirming this, for sometimes if the prayer call is made earlier, it is better to wait until the break of dawn.

The fast ends at sunset. The Holy Prophet used to have his meal prepared before hand to break the fast at sunset. In our country, people sometimes wait until it is dark before they break their fast. The fast should however be broken at sunset; the redness of the evening sky has no relation to sunset.

Prohibitions During Fasting

It is prohibited to eat and drink during the time of fasting and also conjugal relationship is restricted during this time. There are other minor matters that are of lesser importance.

What is the Purpose of Fasting?

There is no commandment in Islam that does not have a purpose and an underlying goal. It is certainly not a religion that goes against this philosophy. If a command is given and the purpose is not defined, one can falter and fail to fulfill the true intent of the injunction. If the purpose, however, is well defined alongside the commandment and it is not fulfilled, then doing the task or not doing it is the same. Allah the Most High states:

“O you who believe, fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may guard against evil.” (2:183)

This tells us that the real intent and underlying purpose of fasting is to guard against evil. Therefore, if a person stays hungry and thirsty and does not stay away from doing evil, he has failed to accomplish the command. For example, if a person is delegated to collect land revenue and he collects it but fails to deposit it in the state treasury, he has failed to do his duty and is likely to be apprehended by the authorities.

Wisdom Behind Every Injunction

All the commandments of Islam, with an apparent physical prohibition, also have an underlying spiritual truth. In connection with the sacrificial animals, the Holy Quran states: “Not

their flesh, nor their blood, reaches Allah, but to Him is acceptable observance of duty on your part.” The purpose of all forms of sacrifice is to guide you toward righteousness. In *Ramadhan* you are commanded to give up or sacrifice what is otherwise lawful for a limited period of time. Consider this situation for a moment. Out of your legal and wholesome earnings, you have prepared a glass of cold water or a sweetened drink and you are extremely thirsty. At the same time, you are hungry. There is food on the table and you are in a room by yourself, where there is no one to see you. Why would you avoid eating and drinking under these circumstances? It is because you are aware of what God has commanded. Guarding against evil and following the path of righteousness is the purpose of fasting. You can keep your duty and acquire these qualities by fasting. These thirty days require an effort and striving on your part. Man remains unaware of God’s presence because of his many worldly pursuits. For a month, Allah the Most High wants to develop and strengthen your spiritual faculties and by subjecting you to some degree of hunger, wants you to humbly turn toward Him.

Special Acceptance of Prayer during *Ramadhan*

The Holy Quran states:

“And when My servants ask thee concerning Me, surely I am nigh. I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on Me, so they should hear My call and believe in Me that they may walk in the right way” (2:186)

Having this verse next to other verses about *Ramadhan* indicates that it has a special connection with the subject of fasting. If someone desires acceptance of his prayers, he should take advantage of this privilege. How many people are dependent upon others praying for them? God has shown you the way, “so let him who please believe and let him who please disbelieve” (18:29).

Those who fast but do not understand the real purpose of fasting, remain in a vulnerable state.

Confinement in the Mosque During the Last Ten Days of *Ramadhan*

“...And touch them not while you keep to the mosques...” (2:187)¹

In the last ten days of *Ramadhan*, if Allah the Most High gives someone the ability to do so, one may give up his worldly pursuits and confine himself to the mosque. I wish someone would take up this practice in our mosque this year. Striving is to be done within the limitations of one’s physical faculties. The faculties of a person who is ill become weak; that is why the supplications of one suffering from an illness are readily accepted. This is the reason why *I’tikaf* is prescribed after twenty days of fasting for, as a result fasting, the physical faculties (basic desires) are weakened and it is therefore an opportune time for prayer and supplication.

The Affluent Need to Strive Harder

Jesus said that it is easier for a camel or a cow to pass through the eye of a needle than it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God. The Hadith also says that the poor will enter Paradise five hundred years ahead of the affluent. The love of wealth prevents the rich from coming near goodness.

Charitable Spending Should be Greatly Increased During *Ramadhan*

Fasting during the month of *Ramadhan* has a special relation with the worship of Allah the Most High. For those who cannot fast, it is said: “And those who find it extremely hard may effect redemption by feeding a poor man.” About the Holy Prophet, it is said that he was the most charitable of all people, but during the month of *Ramadhan* he was even more charitable. Do give

1. This verse refers to the voluntary practice of confining oneself to the mosque for the last ten days and nights of *Ramadhan*. The practice is known as *I’tikaf*.

in charity during the month of fasting. The most in need of your giving at this time is Islam; therefore also give for the cause of your religion.

Standing up for Prayer during *Ramadhan*

Listen to the Holy Quran in the early part of the night and pray also before the break of dawn. This is a time of great receptiveness of supplications and worship and the process is much enhanced during the month of fasting. So prepare yourself and control your tongues. Seek forgiveness and protection from sin, exalt Muhammad, and the true followers of Muhammad (*As-salan-Nabiyy*), and abstain from useless talk.

December 24, 1915

**Worship of Others Besides Allah and the Straightforward
Islamic Path to Resolve Religious Differences**

Ibear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah.

After this, I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil.

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

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ
وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا
فَقُولُوا الشُّهُدُؤُا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٣٧﴾

“Say: O People of the Book, come to an equitable word between us and you, that we shall serve none but Allah and that we shall not associate aught with Him, and that some of us shall not take others for lords besides Allah. But if they turn away, then say: Bear witness, we are Muslims.” (3:64)

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَحَاجُّونَ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمَا أُنزِلَتِ التَّوْرَةُ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ إِلَّا
مِنْ بَعْدِهِ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٥٠﴾

“O People of the Book, why do you dispute about Abraham, when the Torah and the Gospel were not revealed till after him? Do you not understand?” (3:65)

هَآنْتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ حَآجَجْتُمْ فِيمَا لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلِمَ تُحَآجُّونَ فِيمَا لَيْسَ
لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

“Behold! You are they who disputed about that of which you had knowledge; why then do you dispute about that of which you have no knowledge? And Allah knows while you know not.” (3:66)

مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَلَكِنْ كَانَ حَنِيفًا مُّسْلِمًا وَمَا كَانَ
مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾

“Abraham was not a Jew nor a Christian, but he was (an) upright (man), a Muslim; and he was not one of the polytheists.” (3:67)

إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِإِبْرَاهِيمَ لَكَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ وَهَذَا النَّبِيُّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَاللَّهُ
وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾

“The nearest of people to Abraham are surely those who follow him and this Prophet and those who believe. And Allah is the Friend of the believers.” (3:68)

وَدَّتْ طَّآئِفَةٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَوْ يُضِلُّوكُمْ ۗ وَمَا يُضِلُّونَ إِلَّا أَنفُسَهُمْ وَمَا
يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

“A party of the People of the Book desire that they should lead you astray; and they lead not astray but themselves, and they perceive not.” (3:69)

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَأَنْتُمْ تَشْهَدُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

“O People of the Book, why do you disbelieve in the messages of Allah while you witness (their truth)?” (3:70)

يَاهَلَّ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَلْبِسُونَ الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَ تَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَ أَنْتُمْ
تَعْلَمُونَ ۝

“O People of the Book, why do you confound the truth with falsehood, and hide the truth while you know?”
(3:71)

The Extent of Polytheism During the Holy Prophet's time and his Compassion to Deliver Humanity from it

These verses of the Holy Quran reflect the great compassion the Holy Prophet had for people to accept and stand firm upon the principle of Unity of the Divine Being. It also becomes apparent that in fact all the effort the Holy Quran has put into refuting the various offshoots of polytheism was not the result of the Holy Prophet's own desires. Before him was a society steeped in various forms of idol worship. The sun, trees, stones, sticks and straws, air, water, and fire were all worshipped and this was the prevalent form of polytheism. This form of association with God has, however, not received as much attention in the Holy Quran as that which is referred to in the words “and that some of us shall not take others for lords besides Allah.” This type of association with Allah has been refuted in the Holy Quran with strong arguments well illustrated by the debate with the Christian delegation of *Najran*. Ultimately, when these arguments failed to convince them, the Holy Prophet invited them to pray earnestly that the curse of Allah might overtake the party that insisted on falsehood. It seems that the Holy Prophet was given this knowledge. In fact, the great damage caused by this form of association and the extent of its spread in the future on a much wider scale than the prevalent form of polytheism was in the knowledge of Allah the Most High. The Holy Quran describes it in these words:

“The heavens may almost be rent thereat, and the earth cleave asunder, and the mountains fall down in pieces, that they ascribe a son to the Beneficent!” (19:90-91)

The magnificence of these words and the awe they inspire indicate that those who “ascribe a son to the Beneficent,” will become predominant to such a degree that they will be the cause of destruction of God’s creation. Observe that although the Holy Prophet spent thirteen years in Makkah condemning all forms of idol worship with cogent arguments, he was never commanded to extend this challenge:

“Whoever then disputes with thee in this matter after the knowledge that has come to thee, say: Come! Let us call our sons and your sons and our women and your women and our people and your people, then let us be earnest in prayer, and invoke the curse of Allah on the liars.” (3:61)

This was because the form of polytheism prevalent in Arabia was soon to disappear.

Invitation for a Deprecatory Prayer Duel (*Mubalahah*¹) for the Worst Form of Polytheism

This decisive challenge was presented to the Christian delegation of *Najran* visiting Madinah only after presenting them with incontrovertible proofs regarding falsity of their beliefs. The birth of Jesus, his childhood, youth, and eventual death were all mentioned by the Holy Prophet in his discussion with the *Najran* delegation in order to prove that he did not possess any attributes that made him divine. Having undergone all the physical changes humans go through, he could certainly not have been God. After presenting all these arguments, when it was realized that they were unwilling to accept the truth, the Holy Prophet was commanded to tell them:

“Whoever then disputes with thee in this matter after the knowledge that has come to thee, say: Come! Let us call our sons and your sons and our women and your women

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1. A *mubalahah* invokes Divine decisions through prayer after argumentation has failed. Both parties pray to God that whichever of them intentionally rejects the truth may be visited with heavenly calamity to serve as a warning to others.

and our people and your people, then let us be earnest in prayer, and invoke the curse of Allah on the liars.” (3:61)

The Result of the Deprecatory Prayer Duel (*Mubahalab*)

This was the battlefield for a spiritual altercation or contest. Had they consented to it, they would have been wiped out by visitation of a heavenly calamity. They chose to abstain and were given a pledge whereby they were free to practice their religion. Their co-religionists however, had to bear the consequences in a physical sense later on in history when they waged aggressive warfare against Muslims and were utterly defeated. They participated in the crusades with great zeal and fervor and even their women and sons accompanied them. It is narrated that a twelve-year-old instigated other youngsters with his preaching and a whole army of boys joined him. When they worried about how they would cross the sea, they were told to hit the wooden staff they had in their possession against the sea shore and the sea would part for them. In short, they abstained from the spiritual encounter to which they were invited. Instead, they chose to do battle with Muslims to deprive them of the land that was spoken of as a sign of truth in the prophetic words of the Holy Quran:

“And certainly We wrote in the Book after the reminder that My righteous servants will inherit the land.” (21:105)

The combined forces of the European crusaders were met single-handedly and defeated by Salah-ud-din Ayubi. This happened because they made an attempt to destroy a sign of truth and capture the Holy Land in order to prove that they were more capable. The spiritual challenge in the form of the deprecatory prayer duel (*mubahalab*) was put forth by Allah the Most High to demonstrate that if they had accepted it, they would have been vanquished in a spiritual sense also.

Another Means of Reaching a Decision

Another way of coming to a decision is now pointed out. The Holy Quran states:

“Say: O People of the Book, come to an equitable word between us and you.”

This equitable word is that you search your Holy Scriptures and we search ours and agree upon what we find in common. There could still be some matters of difference, but we could still accept and follow those we have agreed upon.

It seems that this was the last weapon with which falsehood was destroyed. If we study the history of comparative religion, it becomes clear that this is a simple way of reaching a decision that Islam has shown. This is indeed an excellent method. By following this, one can immediately conclude that Islam is in principle the only truthful religion. Today, Europe has recognized that the principles of Islam are based upon truth. I have observed that when we take all the religions of the world, sort out the common ground, and establish it as a core principle, what remains behind are the contentious and peripheral issues. If these are set aside, it is proven with certainty that the Islamic principle of Unity of the Divine Being is the correct one. This is how I have studied religions. If you look at this very example, you will find it in The Torah. And Jesus also says, “The Lord our God is one Lord” (MARK 12:28-34).

Unity of the Divine Being in Principle and not in Practice

People, however accepted the Unity of the Divine Being in principle but not in practice. Jews, for example, pointed out this verse of the Holy Quran: “They take their doctors of law and their monks for lords besides Allah,” (9:31) and asked the Holy Prophet how this applies to them. The Holy Prophet replied, “Do you not accept what your rabbis and doctors of law call lawful (*balal*) as lawful and what they call unlawful

(*haram*) as unlawful?” They replied in the affirmative. This, he said, is proof for taking lords besides Allah.

God created you as human beings and gave you intellect and discretion but you do not use your intelligence. After all, who are your doctors of law and monks? They are human beings just like you. They use their intellect while you do not. God has created man to use his intellect and discretion.

Islam Put the Principle of Unity of the Divine Being into Practice

The doctors of law and monks of the Jews were the same as your spiritual mentors (*pirs*), and who are they? They were humans like you and me who perhaps read a few more books and on this basis claim spiritual leadership. You fail to use your intellectual faculties in this direction nor do you deliberate or ponder, but instead you choose to follow them blindly and what they say becomes law. It should not have been so. Amongst you, should be those who are prepared to correct them when they follow the wrong path. Where can we find people who have the moral fabric of the Holy Prophet’s companions? A woman of Madinah stands up and corrects a person of Hazrat Umar’s standing by challenging his stance regarding the marriage dowry and quotes this verse of the Holy Quran: “And you have given one of them a heap of gold, take nothing from it” (4:20). This was the level of their understanding and following of the Holy Quran. When the condition of the nation becomes such that they no longer have knowledge of Islamic law, those who possess a little knowledge become their spiritual mentors and people follow them blindly. A nation can advance only when upon seeing someone act contrary to the teachings of the Holy Quran, every individual amongst them is ready to forcefully condemn and correct his actions.

Seek Knowledge of the Holy Quran and Hadith and Act with Prudence

Your condition should be such that you know what the Holy Quran says and you are aware of what the teachings of the Holy Prophet are. Dedicate an hour, or at least some time during the day, to study the Holy Quran. Study the Hadith and have the acumen and knowledge to grasp mistakes others are making in this matter. The problem is you have stopped deliberating. People are busy in other worldly tasks and do not reflect upon the Holy Quran. If you ask them about having a Quran in their possession, they will have many and perhaps some very expensive volumes, but they are unaware of what is written in them.

By extending the invitation in these words: "Come to an equitable word between us and you," Islam has settled all the contentious issues. This statement is living proof of the truth of Islam. There are people who raise objections against Hadith and consider them to be incorrect. Some go to the extent of using abusive language against Imam Bukhari (may Allah be pleased with him). The other day, a certain individual said, right in front of me, that Imam Bukhari has just collected a pile of useless paper. In fact, just this verse of the Holy Quran answers all their objections. It is part of the letter written by the Holy Prophet Muhammad to Heraclius, Emperor of Rome, copies of which exist in the books of Hadith. The original letter has now been discovered and each letter of it exactly matches the text in the Hadith, which has the Holy Prophet's stamp on it.

Abraham was a Believer in the Absolute Unity of the Divine Being

"O People of the Book, why do you dispute about Abraham?" Abraham stands for the equitable word amongst nations of the world. The people of the Book are invited to the equitable word, the worship of one God, the common ground between us and them. Abraham is accepted as the revered patriarch and prophet

amongst Muslims, Jews, and Christians. It is now demonstrated practically what the equitable word is. It is the religion of Abraham. Abraham was not a follower of the teachings of the Torah or the Gospel for, “The Torah and the Gospel were not revealed till after him.” Even today Christians say that Prophet Abraham and Moses believed in the vicarious sacrifice. The Holy Quran points out that both the Torah and the Gospel were revealed after Abraham and then asks the logical question, “Do you not understand?”

“Behold! You are they who disputed about that of which you had knowledge; why then do you dispute about that of which you have no knowledge? And Allah knows while you know not.” (3:66)

“Abraham was not a Jew nor a Christian, but he was (an) upright (*hanif*) (man), a Muslim; and he was not one of the polytheists.” (3:67)

The word upright (*hanif*) refers to one who avoids the path of excess or deficiency and follows the course of moderation.

The Holy Prophet and Muslims Follow the Religion of Abraham

What is the religion of Abraham? The Holy Quran now tells us: “The nearest of people to Abraham are surely those who follow him and this Prophet and those who believe. And Allah is the Friend of the believers.” (3:68)

Following the religion of Abraham, which is shirking all forms of polytheism, brings us closest to him.

There was a manifest sign related to Prophet Abraham and that was the promise made with him by Allah the Most High. “And I will give unto thee, and thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan¹, for an

1. Canaan was a Semitic-speaking region in the Ancient Near East, roughly corresponding to the Levant, i.e. modern-day Lebanon, Israel, Palestinian territories, the western part of Jordan and southwestern Syria.

everlasting possession; and I will be their God” (GEN. 17:8). Remember that this promise is to be fulfilled by those who are in outward possession of this Holy land, otherwise Jews and Christians will have to accept that their books are in error regarding this matter. As long as the People of the Book followed the religion of Abraham and fulfilled the covenants they made with Allah the Most High, they remained in possession of the land of Canaan and were the nearest of people to Abraham. Now that they have discarded the religion of Abraham, the true verifiers and proof of this covenant are, “this Prophet and those who believe” and this land will remain in their possession. The words, “and those who believe,” clearly show that the true owners will be those who believe in the Holy Prophet. The chain of physical sons remains no longer, for it was terminated with the children of Israel and now only the spiritual inheritance remains. This is the truth that is fully exposed in the verse: “Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the prophets. And Allah is ever Knower of all things” (33:40).

January 9, 1916

**Covenant Through the Prophets Refers Only to
the Holy Prophet Muhammad**

Ibear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah.

After this, I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil.

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

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ لَمَا آتَيْتُكُمْ مِنْ كِتَابٍ وَحِكْمَةٍ ثُمَّ جَاءَكُمْ
رَسُولٌ مُمَدِّقٌ لِمَا مَعَكُمْ لَتُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهِ وَ لَتَنْصُرُنَّهُ ۗ قَالَ أَأَقْرَرْتُمْ
وَ أَخَذْتُمْ عَلَىٰ ذٰلِكُمْ ۗ اٰصْرِي ۗ قَالُوْا اٰقْرَرْنَا ۗ قَالَ فَاَشْهَدُوْا ۗ وَاَنَا مَعَكُمْ
مِّنَ الشَّاهِدِيْنَ ﴿٣١﴾

“And when Allah made a covenant through the prophets: Certainly what I have given you of Book and Wisdom — then a Messenger comes to you verifying that which is with you, you shall believe in him, and you shall aid him. He said: Do you affirm and accept My compact in this (matter)? They said: We do affirm. He said: Then bear witness, and I (too) am of the bearers of witness with you.”
(3:81)

فَمَنْ تَوَلَّى بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

“Whoever then turns back after this, these are the transgressors.” (3:82)

أَفَغَيْرَ دِينِ اللَّهِ يَبْعُونَ وَلَهُ أَسْلَمَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا
وَإِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

“Seek they then other than Allah’s religion? And to Him submits whoever is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, and to Him they will be returned.” (3:83)

قُلْ أَمَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْحَاقَ
وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْإِسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَالنَّبِيُّونَ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ
لَا نَفَرِقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ ۗ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

“Say: We believe in Allah and that which is revealed to us, and that which was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and that which was given to Moses and Jesus and to the prophets from their Lord; we make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we submit.” (3:84)

وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ ۗ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ
مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

“And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will not be accepted from him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers.” (3:85)

كَيْفَ يَهْدِي اللَّهُ قَوْمًا كَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِيمَانِهِمْ وَشَهِدُوا أَنَّ الرَّسُولَ حَقٌّ
وَجَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٤١﴾

“How shall Allah guide a people who disbelieved after their believing, and (after) they had borne witness that the Messenger was true, and clear arguments had come to them? And Allah guides not the unjust people.” (3:86)

أُولَئِكَ جَزَاءُهُمْ أَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾

“As for these, their reward is that on them is the curse of Allah and the angels and of men, all together —” (3:87)

خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا لَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

“Abiding therein. Their chastisement shall not be lightened, nor shall they be respited—” (3:88)

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٨٩﴾

“Except those who repent after that and amend, for surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.” (3:89)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِيمَانِهِمْ ثُمَّ أَزَادُوا كُفْرًا لَنْ تُقْبَلَ تَوْبَتُهُمْ ۚ
وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الضَّالُّونَ ﴿٩٠﴾

“Those who disbelieve after their believing, then increase in disbelief, their repentance is not accepted, and these are they that go astray.” (3:90)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمْ مِلءُ الْأَرْضِ
ذَهَبًا وَكَوْافَتَدَى بِهِ ۗ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۖ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ ﴿٩١﴾

“Those who disbelieve and die while they are disbelievers, the earth full of gold will not be accepted from one of them, though he should offer it as ransom. These it is for whom is a painful chastisement, and they shall have no helpers.” (3:91)

Misinterpretation of the Holy Quran

People have adopted a way of interpreting the Quranic word whereby, in order to elevate the status of an individual, they try to apply different verses of the Holy Quran to support them. Similarly, when they want to denigrate and vilify someone, they attempt to derive support for their contention from every word and letter of the Holy Quran. Those who have read the

commentaries of the *Shia* (sect) are well aware of how the Quranic word is used to elevate the status of Hazrat Ali and Imam Hussein and malign Hazrat Abu Bakr. Our brethren¹ have gone even a step farther. The *Shia* could be considered somewhat handicapped in this matter because they have deduced their interpretations from some words that are very complicated and they do not place the burden of proof for their comments upon a decisive verse of the Holy Quran. Instead they (our brethren) take those verses of the Holy Quran that clearly refer to the Holy Prophet Muhammad and apply them to Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib. This is an extremely dangerous path they have adopted and it is our duty to call it faulty and defective.

When we do not shirk from pointing out even minor defects of others' arguments, it behooves us to point out what is defective within a faction of our own community and is liable to lead in a very wrong direction. For example, if a *Shia* interprets the *huruf-i-muqatta'at* (abbreviated words) *kaf ha ya ain sad* (19:1) as *kaf* for *karbala*, *ha* for the *halaqat* (killing) of the *able beit ya* for *yazid* etc., although this interpretation may be incorrect, nevertheless it relates to abbreviations where there may be some limitations regarding their meaning. If someone tries to prove by using the same methodology that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a prophet, it may also to some degree, be regarded as a similar handicap. On the other hand, if one takes a decisive verse that clearly applies to the Holy Prophet Muhammad and tries to use it to prove that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a prophet, then it is clearly making a mockery of the Holy Quran and denigrating the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

The Covenant Through the Prophets

“And when Allah made a covenant through the prophets...”

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1. This refers to followers of Mian Mahmud Ahmad after the split in the Ahmadiyya Movement in 1914.

What is meant by ‘covenant through the prophets’ in this verse? The next verse tells us it means that they are taking a covenant from their followers, for the prophets themselves would not be alive when the time came to honor this pledge. For this reason, the prophets took a pledge from their nations; and Allah the Most High calls it the covenant through the prophets. The Holy Quran tells us what the covenant was:

“Certainly what I have given you of Book and Wisdom — then a Messenger comes to you verifying that which is with you, you shall believe in him, and you shall aid him. He said: Do you affirm and accept My compact in this (matter)? They said: We do affirm. He said: Then bear witness, and I (too) am of the bearers of witness with you.”
(3:81)

A Voice of Vilification Arises from Hyderabad Deccan

Who is this prophet about whom this pledge was taken? It is quite obvious that this covenant refers to the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Now an individual² from Hyderabad Deccan made the statement in one of his sermons that the words, “then a Messenger comes to you verifying that which is with you,” refer not to the Holy Prophet Muhammad but to Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. This statement clearly disparages the Holy Prophet Muhammad. It was our hope that it would be strongly condemned. Recently, a translation and commentary of the first part of the Holy Quran was published by Mian Mahmud Ahmad, and quite contrary to our expectations, it supports this interpretation. In it, the verse “Of the Hereafter (*al-akhira*) they are sure,” (2:4) *al-akhira* has been interpreted as referring to the revelation of Hazrat Mirza Sahib and the verse about the covenant of the prophets is presented as proof for this interpretation. This is clear mockery and a derision of the Holy Prophet.

2. Mir Muhammad Saeed of Hyderabad Deccan, a follower of Mian Mahmud Ahmad.

Sometimes people make a statement about the Holy Quran that is in subservience to their own thought process. It becomes the duty of others to reject this. In this case, to the contrary, it is receiving support. I am also an Ahmadi and believe that this is a lie and a false accusation against Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. The writings of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad are spread over eight thousand pages. I challenge any individual to show anywhere in his writings where he has supported this interpretation. The newspapers of *Al-Hakam* and *Al-Badr* are full of Hazrat Mirza Sahib's diaries. Can anyone provide proof from these where he interpreted this verse as referring to himself? There is certainly not a single word in these writings and speeches where even a remote hint of such meaning is found. If they have any fear in their hearts of Allah and His messenger, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, they should desist from such willful libel and vilification of the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet.

Who is the Prophet who Confirmed the Prophet-hood of all Previous Prophets?

This statement is quite simple and easy to understand, “— then a Messenger comes to you verifying that which is with you” (3:81). Go and search the historical record in all corners of the world. Who is the Prophet who came into this world and for the first time confirmed all the prophets before him? You will find none other than the Holy Prophet Muhammad who fulfills this prophecy. This is confirmed by the verse that follows:

“Say: We believe in Allah and that which is revealed to us, and that which was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and that which was given to Moses and Jesus and to the prophets from their Lord; we make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we submit.” (3:84)

This is the verification of all the prophets before him; this was done by the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

Prophecies about the Holy Prophet Muhammad in the Books of Previous Prophets

The prophets who came into this world before the Holy Prophet Muhammad made prophecies about his advent. We can find and read these references in the books of these prophets.

Thus, through Moses, Almighty God had warned the Israelites, after promising them “a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee,” that “Whosoever will not hearken unto My words which he shall speak in My name, I will require of him” (DEUT. 18:19).

David’s psalms (*Zabur*) clearly sing praises of the Holy Prophet Muhammad and Jesus was equally emphatic when prophesying the advent of the Comforter he added: “He will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak” (JOHN 16:13). Similarly, other scriptures also mention the Holy Prophet Muhammad. All this clearly identifies who the Messenger is as referred to in, “— then a Messenger comes to you,” about whom a covenant was made through the prophets. On the one hand, all these prophets confirmed the truthfulness of the Holy Prophet Muhammad and Holy Prophet Muhammad confirmed the truth of all these prophets in these words, “verifying that which is with you.”

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib is Dependent upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad for his Own Confirmation

Go and search the world over. Who is the first person who in accordance with the Quranic statement, “verifying that which is with you,” confirmed the truthfulness of all the prophets before him? Besides the Holy Prophet Muhammad, you will find no one else fulfilling this prophecy. The name of the one who was the first one to do this verification is not there today; his place was given to Hazrat Mirza Sahib. You do not even realize that Hazrat Mirza Sahib is himself dependent upon the Holy Quran for confirmation of his own truthfulness. We consider Hazrat Mirza

Sahib as truthful only because his truth is confirmed by the Quran and Hadith. The revelation of Hazrat Mirza Sahib is not acceptable until confirmed by the Holy Quran and Hadith. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib himself made the Quran and Hadith the standard whereby he verified what was revealed to him.

How can someone who is dependent upon others for his verification be the one, “verifying that which is with you.” Come! Refrain from this great inequity and do not give the slave status of the master. You apply the prophecies about the Holy Prophet Muhammad to Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. This is a very dangerous path and you should desist from it. Remember, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib is not the one who verifies the Holy Quran but relies upon the Holy Quran for verification of his own truthfulness. He never said that you should believe in the Holy Quran because my revelation verifies it to be the truth. On the contrary, he said you should believe in me because the Holy Quran confirms my truthfulness. He repeatedly gave evidence from the Holy Quran to prove the truthfulness of his revelations and never sought direct confirmation and acceptance for them.

Nor did he state that I have come to verify the Holy Quran. Decide this question first. Did Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib come to verify the Holy Quran or was he dependent upon the Holy Quran for his own verification? Just randomly making a statement that he was the subject of this prophecy is the greatest inequity. This is the action that the Holy Quran describes in these words, “Whoever then turns back after this, these are the transgressors” (3:82). For the last two years, they have been calling us transgressors, while according to this verse those who turn back from this prophecy are called transgressors. We don’t know who they are. They can decide for themselves who is guilty of transgression according to these words of the Holy Quran.

“Seek they then other than Allah’s religion? And to Him submits whoever is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, and to Him they will be returned.”

(3:83)

The Verse of, “Covenant through the Prophets,” Does Not Apply to Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad

“Say: We believe in Allah and that which is revealed to us.” In conjunction with this the Holy Prophet confirms,

“...that which was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and that which was given to Moses and Jesus and to the prophets from their Lord; we make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we submit.” (3:84)

Just naming a few of the prophets does not complete the list; therefore the Holy Quran tells us, “and (We sent) messengers We have mentioned to thee before and messengers We have not mentioned to thee” (4:164)

This is why after mentioning a few names, the Holy Quran states: “And to the prophets from their Lord.” This is the verification made by the Holy Prophet Muhammad of all the prophets before him. Did Mirza Sahib first make this confirmation or was the Holy Prophet the first one to do so?

“...We make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we submit.” (3:84)

“And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will not be accepted from him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers.” (3:85)

Islam Means Complete Submission

What is Islam? Complete submission to Allah is Islam. Regarding anyone who does not submit completely and has some other goals, the Holy Quran states, “It will not be accepted from him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers.” You should also search your souls. Those of you who stay away from Islam will also be losers. Every individual should recognize that the part of his life that is not in submission to the will and pleasure of Allah, is not Islam and will be the source of difficulty for him. Do not consider Islam as the mere possession of a copy of the

Holy Quran, and recitation of the formula of faith, “none deserves to be worshipped besides Allah and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah.” In fact, any of your deeds that do not seek the pleasure of Allah and are against His will are, “other than Islam,” and will undoubtedly be of no benefit. Once again, I remind you to search your souls to find out what is other than Islam that lies within you or is part of your deeds. Extricate this from your souls and submit fully to Allah the Most High.

“As for these, their reward is that on them is the curse of Allah and the angels and of men, all together —Abiding therein. Their chastisement shall not be lightened, nor shall they be respited.” (3:87-88)

Consequences of Abandoning Islam is Becoming Remote from it (Curse of Allah)

This is a very strong edict, for there can be no greater hell than becoming remote from Allah the Most High, from whom flows the fountainhead of all purity. One also becomes remote from the angels who inspire goodness and can therefore not benefit from their inspiration. Neither can one benefit from the righteousness of the pious and pure in the world because of the widening gulf of separation. This is the real hell that arises as a consequence of distancing oneself from all the sources of goodness, giving up the good deeds and wishing for, “other than Islam.”

“Except those who repent after that and amend, for surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful” (3:89). God is not so unjust as to forgive those who repent, but repentance must be accompanied with reformation and performance of good deeds.

Seek Repentance, for the Door of Repentance is Wide Open

Allah’s forgiveness encompasses all. Whenever someone knocks at His door, He is ready to open it. The Holy Quran states in other verses,

“...And despair not of Allah’s mercy. Surely none despairs of Allah’s mercy except the disbelieving people.” (12:87)
 “Say: O My servants who have been prodigal regarding their souls, despair not of the mercy of Allah; surely Allah forgives sins altogether. He is indeed the Forgiving, the Merciful.” (39:53)

Indeed it is a very wide door, ready to admit anyone when he seeks entry into it. Do not put this off for the Holy Quran warns, “Those who disbelieve after their believing, then increase in disbelief, their repentance is not accepted, and these are they that go astray.” A time comes when a person has advanced so far in disbelief that even if he wants to give up evil, he cannot and repentance is of no avail.

Abstain From Evil for Every Evil Deed Leads to Disbelief

Disbelief does not only mean disbelief in the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Whatever kind of evil deed is done, the corresponding kind of disbelief evolves in a person’s soul. You may reach the stage in which you cannot get rid of evil even though you so desire. Refrain from it now and prevent it from growing. We have observed people who continue to smoke the *hookah* while nearby the prayer service is going on. It is not that they are hostile toward Islam. In fact, if you listen to them, they seem to be enthusiastic admirers. Their practical condition is however such that in spite of being aware of the prayer service they do not care and never participate. Every individual should be concerned about himself for if he delays the doing of good for another day, he is nurturing a seed that will become firmly rooted and hard to get rid of.

“Those who disbelieve and die while they are disbelievers, the earth full of gold will not be accepted from one of them, though he should offer it as ransom” (3:91). What do you gain if you abandon Islam? Why do you give up piety? Is it for the sake of monetary gain? If so, how much will you gain? You certainly

do not get the earth full of gold. In fact you do not even get half or one third. A time will come when even the earth full of gold will be of no benefit to you. Nothing can save you from death; therefore be concerned. If you have huge tracts of farmland or have large sums of money or personal property, none of these can save you from death.

Death is for Certain; be Prepared Ahead of Time

It is very surprising that although death is the most certain event in our life, and we see our friends departing every day, nevertheless we are still oblivious to our mortality. Even on our death beds, we hope to live longer. Be cognizant of this eventuality. All this material wealth will be of no benefit to you when you die. Try to reform yourself whether you are a male, a female, adult or child. Everyone should be concerned that their condition may not reach a stage when it would be difficult to get rid of evil. Stay away from evil.

May Allah the Most High protect our hearts and our faculties in such a manner that they do not get inclined toward evil deeds or wrong beliefs. Wrong beliefs and misdeeds are at par. In fact, belief is like a seed: If the seed is defective, the plant that arises from it will also be unhealthy. Therefore, correct both: your beliefs and your deeds.

January 28, 1916

**Holy Prophet Muhammad Manifested Simple Living
Even as a King; The Objective of Warfare in Islam and
the Unique Example of the Companions of the
Holy Prophet in the Battle of Uhud**

Ibear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah.

After this, I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil.

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

وَ إِذْ غَدَوْتَ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ تُبَوِّئُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مَقَاعِدَ لِلْقِتَالِ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ
عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٢١﴾

“And when thou didst go forth early in the morning from thy family, to assign to the believers their positions for the battle. And Allah is Hearing, Knowing.” (3:121)

إِذْ هَمَّتْ طَّائِفَتٌ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ تَفْشَلُوا وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّهُمَا ط وَاللَّهُ فَالْتَوَكَّلْ
الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾

“When two parties from among you thought of showing cowardice, and Allah was the Guardian of them both. And in Allah should the believers trust.” (3:122)

وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ بِبَدْرٍ وَأَنْتُمْ أَذِلَّةٌ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

“And Allah certainly helped you at Badr when you were weak. So keep your duty to Allah that you may give thanks.” (3:123)

إِذْ تَقُولُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَلَنْ يَكْفِيَكُمْ أَنْ يُبَدِّلَ اللَّهُ رُبُّكُمْ بِثَلَاثَةِ أَلْفٍ
مِّنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُنزَلِينَ ﴿١٢٤﴾

“When thou didst say to the believers: Does it not suffice you that your Lord should help you with three thousand angels sent down?” (3:124)

The Perfect Example of Striving in the Way of Allah

“And when thou didst go forth early in the morning from thy family, to assign to the believers their positions for the battle. And Allah is Hearing, Knowing.” (3:121)

Some people, when they hear or see these and similar verses in the Holy Quran, wonder what kind of prophet goes forth in battle and assigns combat duties to people. Preparations must have been made in advance for this battle, along with planning and mutual consultations. Swords and bows would have been readied and repaired for the purpose. If a Sufi of our time was to witness this scene, he would think this is some other nation, not the one to which he pledges allegiance. There are Sufis who have not even slaughtered a chicken in their entire life, unlike the Holy Prophet who sacrificed a hundred camels when the occasion demanded. It is quite hard to slaughter a camel for it has to be first injured and brought down to the ground with a spear and then slaughtered with great difficulty.

Holy Prophet Muhammad also had to take part in battles. The Christian critics have raised objections that the Holy Prophet did good work in Makkah but in Madinah worldly concerns became his priority. The type of kingship that the Holy Prophet acquired was, however, quite distinct and unique from all other kings of

the world. He combined virtues of kingship and humility in his dealings with the rest of humanity. In name he was a king, but his spartan living was reflected by the provisions in his house, which included a few dates, a handful of barley, a pitcher of water, and a mat so coarse in texture that it left impressions on his body when he rested on it. Whatever cash there was, met the needs of the people.

What was the condition at the time of his death? Did the Holy Prophet, like the king Mahmud Ghaznavi, display his wealth or look at it with regret? Those who have had the opportunity to study the life of the Holy Prophet know that there was not a single penny in the house at the time of his death. This was his kingship! Would anybody be willing to acquire this kind of kingdom and face the numerous difficulties he had to face? The king whose monetary condition is such that there is not a penny in his house at the time of his death. Even if we assume that his objective in life was to acquire kingship, such kingship would still certainly be a source of mercy for the world.

Unique Example of Following the Messenger of Allah

Those who kept his company and inherited his kingdom displayed the same characteristics of caring, compassion and simple living. Observe the behavior of Hazrat Abu Bakr and Hazrat Umar. The Kingdom of Hazrat Umar was not small. It had expanded to include Egypt and Persia. Here we have the example of a person who is the ruler of an empire, while his living is so simple and frugal that he wears a patched cloak. This demonstrates that he became the king not for any personal gain. The state treasury under him had greatly expanded to the point that it could accommodate camel loads of goods. Herds of camels were also under its stewardship. His concern for safekeeping of the public trust was also exemplary as illustrated by the following incident.

On an extremely hot summer day, when venturing outside could have been perilous, to escape the stifling heat, a few of

the companions had taken shelter in a house. They observed a man driving a camel and wondered who was the person willing to risk his life under such foul weather conditions? Lo and behold it was none other than the Caliph Umar. Upon their inquiry as to why he had gone out on such a hot day, his answer was that a camel belonging to the state treasury had gone loose and he had decided to go out and get it. The state treasury, at that time, was not only in possession of just a single camel, it possessed many. And there was not a dearth of treasures. In spite of all these resources at his disposal, he could not bear the thought of even a minor loss to the public treasury and put his own life at risk in order to protect it.

He would also go from door to door and ask the people of Madinah if they needed any provisions, so that he could bring it to them from the marketplace. He would then personally deliver the bags containing these provisions. On one occasion, he observed a woman stirring a pot over a fire. He asked her what she was cooking. She replied she did not have anything in the house to cook. In order to pacify her children who were crying with hunger, she had lighted the fire and was pretending to cook something so that they would perhaps get tired of waiting and go to sleep. Upon hearing this, he told her to wait. He went to the market to personally get and deliver a sack of flour and some other provisions to meet her needs. This was the kind of spiritual revival the Holy Prophet had generated amongst his companions. Neither he, nor his companions, had any desire for power or kingdom. It is the desire for a life of ease and comfort that motivates the wish for kingdom and power. They remained penniless while the state treasury was full.

The Purpose of Warfare in Islam

What was the purpose of the battles fought in the early history of Islam? This has been the subject of much debate. The truth in this matter can be easily concluded on the basis of a few simple facts. The battlefield of Badr, where the first

confrontation took place, was located only three days journey from Madinah and nine days from Makkah. The second battle was at Uhud, which was only one days journey from Madinah and an eleven day journey from Makkah. The third battle of Ahzab occurred in the surroundings of Madinah. This clearly shows that the Holy Prophet was not the one who attacked the enemy but was invariably attacked by the enemy first. This also shows that enemies were bent upon destruction of the Muslims and therefore repeatedly attacked them. The Holy Prophet fought purely in self defense and for the protection of Muslims and Islam and not to fulfill some personal motive.

Various Incidents Related to the Battle of Uhud

In the battle of Uhud, the enemy attacked with a force three thousand strong. It was the Holy Prophet's habit to consult with his companions on all occasions. He sought counsel from his companions to decide whether it would be appropriate to confront the enemy while remaining within the confines of Madinah or to meet them in battle outside. A majority of the companions, who were extremely valiant said, "O prophet of Allah, if we remain in Madinah and do not go forth to confront the enemy, they would get the signal that Muslims are fearful." It was the Holy Prophet's opinion that the battle should be conducted while remaining in Madinah. In a dream he saw that he had put his hand into a strong coat of mail and also saw a cow being slaughtered. He interpreted the slaughtering of the cow to indicate martyrdom of the Muslims and the strong coat of mail as staying within the confines of Madinah. Some of the companions were of the same opinion that Muslims should remain within Madinah and face the enemy. Abdullah bin Ubayy who was the leader of the hypocrites¹ also held the same opinion.

1. These were people who outwardly professed Islam, but secretly worked against it and sided with the enemies of Islam. No action was ever taken against them, and eventually most of them became sincere Muslims.

Holy Prophet Muhammad Followed the Consensus of Opinion

People say that although the commandment is for consensus, after obtaining a mutual consensus, do as you please. Observe what the Holy Prophet did. Although his personal opinion was to stay within the confines of Madinah, he put that aside in favor of the majority opinion and decided to go outside Madinah to engage the enemy.

Various Duties Performed by the Holy Prophet

This is expressed in the Quranic words:

“And when thou didst go forth early in the morning from thy family, to assign to the believers their positions for the battle.” (3:121)

Observe also, all the different qualities manifested, and the duties performed by the Holy Prophet. He is the leader of the prayer service, delivers Friday sermons, resolves legal disputes as a judge, is the exemplar and religious teacher for his followers and at the same time he is engaged in religious debate with some nations while others have to be engaged with the sword. He is also the general leading his companions into battle and assigns believers to battle positions. There has never been a person in the world with so many different capabilities, nor is one expected in the future. The enormous spiritual strength of a solitary individual, fulfilling tasks of such great responsibility, is found only in the person of the Holy Prophet.

The Mischief of Abdullah Ibn Ubayy

“When two parties from among you thought of showing cowardice and Allah was the Guardian of them both...” (3:122)

When the Holy Prophet left Madinah, he was accompanied by one thousand men. A short while later, Abdullah Ibn Ubayy, who was the leader of the hypocrites, was able to persuade three

hundred men to accompany him by telling them that the Holy Prophet and those with him were going forth to get killed and they would be better off staying with him in Madinah. The Holy Prophet paid no attention to their departure and stuck with the decision already made. He led the remaining seven hundred men to the site of Uhud. The two tribes of Banu *Salimah*, and Banu *Harithab*, upon witnessing the departure of three hundred men, also entertained the idea of deserting the Muslim army on account of superior enemy forces, but did not actually desert. Allah strengthened their hearts and they stood firm to face the enemy. The Holy Quran enjoins, “And in Allah should the believers trust.” The believers do not put their trust in their strength, their numbers, or their armament but rely only upon the help of Allah. If the help of Allah is not there, all else is of no benefit.

Muslims Reminded of the Battle of Badr and Advised to Remain Tranquil

“And Allah certainly helped you at Badr when you were weak. So keep your duty to Allah that you may give thanks.” (3:123)

The Muslims are told not to become anxious and are reminded of the battle of Badr when Allah’s help was clearly manifested. In the battle of Badr, the Muslims had no resources. Those who had migrated from Makkah to Madinah (the *muhajireen*) had left all their property behind. They neither had wealth nor weapons. The Muslims of Madinah, the Helpers (*ansar*), were farmers and were neither wealthy nor did they have any experience with combat. Victory at Badr was therefore a complete manifestation of the help of Allah the Most High. Allah reminds Muslims not to be fearful for they had received His help previously at Badr where their numbers were even fewer. They were told to be thankful for the help of Allah on that occasion so that His help may be with them once again.

The Help of Angels

“When thou didst say to the believers: Does it not suffice you that your Lord should help you with three thousand angels sent down?” (3:124)

What is this help that is rendered through the angels, and how is this assistance provided? A following verse provides the answer: “And Allah made it only as good news for you, and that your hearts might be at ease thereby” (3:126). The help of the angels was a form of good news to give solace and tranquility to their hearts. People have made an error in understanding this. They think that an army of angels joined the Muslims to fight the disbelievers. Allah stated that its purpose was, “so that your hearts might be at ease thereby.” The connection of the angels is with the hearts of men and not with their bodies. It is the hearts that gain solace through their support. In battle, it is not numerical strength that matters, for if the hearts are firm, even a few can be victorious over many. In the context of Badr also it is said, “And Allah gave it only as good news, and that your hearts might be at ease thereby” (8:10). A thousand angels were sent on that occasion because the strength of the enemy was a thousand. Whereas they strengthened the hearts of the believers, they cast terror into the hearts of the disbelievers (8:12). The strength of the enemy at Uhud was three thousand hence three thousand angels are mentioned. It seems that angels are sent in proportion to the strength of the enemies.

Khaled bin Waleed

The three thousand seasoned warriors who were part of the enemy force also included Khaled bin Waleed, whose wartime exploits became legendary after his conversion to Islam. With a few men, he would attack thousands and emerge victorious. On this occasion however, when he was fighting against Islam and the Muslims, his bravery and effort was of no avail and he ran away.

Who was defeated?

It is erroneously propagated that Muslims were defeated in this battle. The Holy Quran says, "That He may cut off a part of those who disbelieve or abase them so that they should return in failure" (3:127). The words, "so that they should return in failure," clearly indicate that the enemy did not succeed in achieving its objective. Careful perusal of details of this battle show that the enemy failed and returned back to Makkah from the battlefield. If they were victorious, why did they turn back? How many Muslims did they take as prisoners? They returned to Makkah empty handed, without a single prisoner in their captivity. This clearly shows that they were the party who were defeated and not the Muslims. If the Muslims were the defeated party, they certainly remained on the battlefield, while those assumed to be victorious were retreating back to Makkah. If the enemy had been genuinely victorious, the Muslims would be the ones running with the disbelievers in pursuit.

Details of the Battle Elaborated

The truth of the matter is that the Holy Prophet had placed fifty archers at a critical location on the battlefield with specific instructions not to abandon their post no matter which way the tide of battle turned. When they saw the enemy running, they made the erroneous decision to abandon their post and pursue the enemy to partake of the war booty. Their leader tried to convince them by reminding them of the Holy Prophet's instructions, but they did not pay heed and left their position. When the enemy noticed this critical position to be empty, they turned back and attacked the Muslims from the rear causing dispersal in the Muslim ranks. As a result of their action many Muslims were martyred. Considering this as a good opportunity for withdrawal, the enemy retreated. In spite of this, the Muslims remained on the battlefield and the following day the Holy Prophet gathered his followers and pursued the enemy, but they had retreated a great distance by then. In fact, they had already

been intimidated by their initial confrontation with the Muslims. They considered this a valuable opportunity to show the Muslims that they were not fearful of them. If indeed they were victorious, then why did they retreat and not pursue the Muslims? Why did they not take any war booty or prisoners with them? The following day, when they were pursued by the Holy Prophet, they were nowhere to be found. It was obvious that they had hastened in their retreat for fear of pursuit by the Muslims. They considered it good fortune that they had escaped what might have been a dangerous loss.

How the Disbelievers were Dealt With by Allah the Most High

Allah the Most High says, regarding these disbelievers, “Thou hast no concern in the matter whether He turns to them (mercifully) or chastises them; surely they are wrongdoers” (3:128)

There exists a certain relationship between the Creator and His creation. This verse emphasizes that since they are Allah’s creation, He may choose to deal with them mercifully or chastise them. People have related this verse to the incident that occurred four months after the battle of Uhud in which leaders of certain tribes visited the Holy Prophet and asked for religious teachers to be sent with them. Seventy teachers who had committed the Holy Quran to memory were sent with them and were treacherously murdered. The murder of seventy men at such a critical time when Muslims were already small in number, particularly those who had committed the Holy Quran to memory, came as a great shock to the Holy Prophet. Ibn Umar says that he heard the messenger of Allah saying, when he raised his head after *ruku* in the last *rak’ah* of the morning-prayer: “O Allah curse such and such people...” So Allah revealed to him, “thou hast no concern in the matter whether He turns to them (mercifully) or chastises them; surely they are wrongdoers” (B. 64:22).

Allah wanted the Holy Prophet to be such an example of mercy that it was desirable in Allah's wisdom for not even such a thought to enter the heart of the Holy Prophet. It is then stated: "And to Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. He forgives whom He pleases and chastises whom He pleases. And Allah is Forgiving, Merciful" (3:129). It is the forgiveness of Allah that is all encompassing; therefore His mercy and forgiveness are always to be hoped for.

The Second Khutba

Need of the Times

Every age has its specific needs. Amongst other needs, fighting in self defense was essential for the Holy Prophet to undertake (in Madinah). That is why he was, "to assign to the believers their positions (*maqaid*) for the battle." In this day and age, it is the battle of conclusive evidence and arguments; hence people who are being prepared by us for this purpose should be taught those methods whereby they can defend against propaganda of the critics of Islam and break their strength. Our students, who are being prepared for the propagation of Islam, should be aware of those techniques and the conclusive proofs whereby hostile criticism can be countered. Also, other members should be ready to meet this challenge. If they cannot spare much time for this, they should dedicate one hour daily for the study of the Holy Quran. If they become familiar with the Quran, they can propagate Islam while they are involved in their businesses. After all, how did Islam spread to the African continent? Who were the preachers sent over there? They were traders who carried the message of Islam along with their merchandise.

The people who went from India to England did not set a good example. That is why people there became hostile toward Islam. Otherwise the Quran says, "Is the reward of goodness aught but goodness?" (55:60). If they had learned worldly

knowledge from them and given them knowledge of the religion, Islam would have spread there by now. If our youth, to whom taking out time for this task appears very difficult, spend half an hour every day to learn the Quran, their abilities will improve greatly. An elephant is not aware of its strength. They have all these strengths and capabilities within them. They need to be aware of them. When you acquire the knowledge of the Holy Quran, you will become cognizant of your strengths and develop the zeal to propagate the message of Islam.

February 4, 1916

**Islam Eliminated all Forms of Institutionalized
Exploitation Including Usury**

Ibear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah.

After this, I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil.

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

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا الرِّبَا أَضْعَافًا مُضَاعَفَةً ۖ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

“O you who believe, devour not usury, doubling and redoubling, and keep your duty to Allah, that you may be successful.” (3:130)

وَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

“And guard yourselves against the fire which has been prepared for the disbelievers.” (3:131)

وَاطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

“And obey Allah and the Messenger, that you may be shown mercy.” (3:132)

وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ
لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

“And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden, as wide as the heavens and the earth; it is prepared for those who keep their duty.” (3:133)

الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالصَّرَّاءِ وَالْكُظُمِينَ الْغِيظَ وَالْعَافِينَ
عَنِ النَّاسِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣٤﴾

“Those who spend in ease as well as in adversity and those who restrain (their) anger and pardon men. And Allah loves the doers of good (to others).” (3:134)

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا
لِدُنُوبِهِمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يَعْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ۗ وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا وَهُمْ
يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣٥﴾

“And those who, when they commit an indecency or wrong their souls, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their sins. And who forgives sins but Allah? And they persist not knowingly in what they do.” (3:135)

أُولَٰئِكَ جَزَاؤُهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَجَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ
فِيهَا ۗ وَنَعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَمِلِينَ ﴿١٣٦﴾

“Their reward is protection from their Lord, and Gardens wherein flow rivers, to abide in them. And excellent is the reward of the workers!” (3:136)

قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ سُنَنٌ ۖ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ
الْمُكذِّبِينَ ﴿١٣٧﴾

“Indeed there have been examples before you; so travel in the earth and see what was the end of the deniers.” (3:137)

هَذَا بَيِّنٌ لِّلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٣٨﴾

“This is a clear statement for men, and a guidance and an admonition to those who would keep their duty.” (3:138)

وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمُ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣٩﴾

“And be not weak-hearted, nor grieve, and you will have the upper hand if you are believers.” (3:139)

إِنْ يَمْسَسْكُمْ قَرْحٌ فَقَدْ مَسَّ الْقَوْمَ قَرْحٌ مِّثْلُهُ ۗ وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا
بَيْنَ النَّاسِ ۗ وَ لِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنْكُمْ شُهَدَاءَ ۗ وَاللَّهُ
لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٤٠﴾

“If a wound has afflicted you, a wound like it has also afflicted the (disbelieving) people. And We bring these days to men by turns, that Allah may know those who believe and take witnesses from among you. And Allah loves not the wrongdoers,” (3:140)

وَلِيُخَيِّصَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَيَمْحَقَ الْكٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٤١﴾

“And that He may purge those who believe and deprive the disbelievers of blessings.” (3:141)

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تُدْخَلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا مِنْكُمْ وَيَعْلَمَ
الضَّالِّينَ ﴿١٤٢﴾

“Do you think that you will enter the Garden while Allah has not yet known those from among you who strive hard (nor) known the steadfast?” (3:142)

وَالَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ تَمَنَّوْنَ الْمَوْتَ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَلْقَوْهُ ۖ فَقَدْ رَآيْتُمُوهُ وَ أَنْتُمْ
تَنْظُرُونَ ﴿١٤٣﴾

“And certainly you desired death before you met it. So indeed you have seen it now while you look (at it).” (3:143)

Holy Quran is a Complete Book

The Holy Quran is an amazing Book, a single chapter of which covers an immense variety of subjects. Before this section, the discussion was with the Christians and strong arguments were presented to refute the divinity of Jesus. After these, were prophecies that God will make Muslims the best of nations, and that it was their duty now to guide people towards righteousness and forbid evil. This was followed by events related to war, and now a different subject is addressed. All of this provides evidence that the Holy Quran is a complete Book. The question of arrangement is a different topic and calls for a separate discussion. The Quranic objective for discussing such a variety of topics is to strengthen all of man's spiritual faculties.

Islam is the Essence of all Faiths

Mankind has been endowed with various faculties and is a minor universe unto himself, containing the essence of all creation. Similarly, any good that is found in other religions exists in Islam in its most complete and developed form. On one hand it openly and actively carries on a debate with other religions, and at the same time it incorporates principles of monasticism. What is the lesson we learn from our daily prayers? They present a picture of monastic life, but in this case, rather than retreating into the jungle, one spares time from his daily occupation to pray five times a day. Monasticism is a onetime sacrifice, while keeping up prayers calls for sacrifice on a daily basis. So if another religion has called monasticism a preferred way of life, its best and most highly developed form is found in Islam. If it is a noble deed to pray in seclusion, then Islam also enjoins us to get up in the middle of the night when nobody sees or hears us and supplicate before the Lord. If open expression is commendable, then Allah the Most High has commanded the five daily obligatory prayers preferably in congregation. Similarly, fighting in self defense in a most sacred manner is also endorsed by the teachings of Islam.

Essential Clarifications Regarding Warfare

People think of war as a barbarism. Those who have not studied the life history of the Holy Prophet or his companions immediately accuse them of war mongering. What they do not ask is the valid question, 'is war under all circumstances a faulty undertaking?' War waged to inflict injury or rob someone is indeed the work of bandits. However, the person who wishes to eliminate all form of warfare and its tools is also trying to accomplish the impossible and goes against the very nature of man. There have always been differences between men, and there will always continue to be, therefore war is a necessary outcome. Today, our own government has to face war. In this conflict we praise those who leave their homes and, without caring for their own safety, bravely go out to fight the enemy.

War for the Sake of Religious Freedom and Preservation of Human Rights is Commendable

If war is commendable today under the present circumstances, then under similar circumstances in the past, it was also a laudable undertaking. Here, from a household of eight people, one is drafted for war. In defensive battles fought by the Holy Prophet and his companions, every member of the family had to participate. Before the Battle of Badr two youths came to the Holy Prophet seeking his permission to take part in the battle. The Holy Prophet gave permission to the one who appeared to be stronger. The other one became tearful and begged the Holy Prophet to allow him to wrestle with the one who had been given the permission to participate in the upcoming fight. He was successful in the wrestling bout which followed and was permitted to participate. A few older men also came to the Holy Prophet with the plea that they were close to their graves anyway and would prefer to die as martyrs in the battlefield. Thus, if fighting in defense of one's nation and country is a praiseworthy act, then Islam permits it. I have mentioned that Islam is the essence of all faiths. Monasticism cannot be pursued by all.

Some religions have insisted upon a monastic way of life, but if we study their history we discover that they also had to participate in war.

Lord Krishna, while explaining the philosophy of war to Arjun, deemed it necessary to eliminate evil from the world. Similarly, the children of Israel had to take part in wars and Moses encouraged his followers to participate in battle.

Islam Enjoins the full Usage and Growth of Human Faculties

Islam has attempted to evolve all the good qualities in man and to fully nurture his faculties. In order for all human faculties to be nurtured, we find the teachings of the Holy Quran addresses one subject followed by the next.

“O you who believe, devour not usury, doubling and re-doubling, and keep your duty to Allah, that you may be successful.” (3:130)

What could be the reason to prohibit Muslims from usury at this juncture when they were not in possession of any wealth? Those who emigrated with the Holy Prophet from Makkah were traders who left behind all their belongings. The Helpers (*ansar*) who accepted Islam in Madinah were simple farmers, and therefore not wealthy. Under these circumstances they are taught not to take usury so that their hearts develop contempt for the practice at a very early stage of development. This was to prepare them for the future when they were to acquire wealth and power. Some things from which a person is disparaged at a very early stage become ingrained in his nature and he is better able to resist them later. A sudden transition on the other hand is difficult to make and maintain.

The Muslim Nation and Usury

Later on when Muslims gained power their conduct was indeed amazing. They became affluent during the period of Caliph

Umar. Single individuals came in possession of hundreds of thousands of dinar. Arabs at the time could not count beyond a thousand and did not have a number beyond *alaf* which stands for a thousand. In spite of having so much wealth, they completely abstained from usury. Today, we find that it is very difficult for nations to survive without usury. Trading in this day and age is not possible without usury, but they traded without participating in usurious transactions. This was because their hearts were not imbued with the love of wealth. Whatever wealth they earned was for their religion.

Staying away from Usury is the key to Success

Usury was completely prohibited so, “that you may be successful.” It is then stated, “And guard yourselves against the fire which has been prepared for the disbelievers.” Fire stands for every kind of abasement and grief. A person who takes usury is demeaned in the eyes of the world and also subjects himself to hardship. The wealth he accumulates through usurious dealings does not even enhance his own comfort. On the other hand, those who obey Allah and His Messenger are invited to, “hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden, as wide as the heavens and the earth; it is prepared for those who keep their duty.” The garden and the forgiveness are prepared for those who keep their duty. How can you then choose to take yourself to the fire? When the protection (*maghfirat*) of Allah, the Most High accompanies a person, he is saved from evil deeds. He also finds refuge from the fire which accompanies all evil deeds.

What is the Garden?

Regarding the garden it is stated: “and a Garden, as wide as the heavens.” In other words its limits are dependant only upon the degree of one’s efforts.

Spending in the Way of Allah

One facet of this effort is spending in the way of Allah, described as: “Those who spend in ease as well as in adversity.” In this day and age many Muslims have taken up beggary as a profession. Allah, the Most High describes a characteristic of those who guard against evil that they spend both in a state of ease and when conditions are adverse. The one whose circumstances are strained certainly deserves our help. It is, however, spending for the cause of religion that should be undertaken by all. Allah has made binding, spending in His way in times of scarcity and affluence. This excuse that people come up with — not being able to afford to spend — is put forward only when they are asked to spend for the cause of religion. They do not present this excuse when it comes to worldly expenditures. If it is necessary to spend in a state of adversity then it becomes even more essential when there is plenty. This is the reason why the Arabic word *sirra* for state of adversity has been used first. If those who are better off do not spend then the shortcoming is even greater. Islam has taught us many excellent principles. In previous Quranic lessons we commented on the following incident. Prophet Moses went to seek knowledge from an individual. When they reached a certain village, the villagers refused to offer them food or shelter. In the same village they came across a wall which was falling down and proceeded to repair it. The reason for this act of giving is narrated in these words in the Holy Quran:

“And as for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the city, and there was beneath it a treasure belonging to them, and their father had been a righteous man. So thy Lord intended that they should attain their maturity and take out their treasure — a mercy from thy Lord...” (18:82)

How very excellent a principle of beneficence is taught in this narrative! Although spurned by the villagers and hungry, Moses and his companion proceeded with an act of giving without asking for anything in return.

Helplessness of Islam and the Insensitivity of the Wealthy

In this age, we witness the helplessness of Islam. How many attacks of hostile propaganda are levied against it, but people do not give any attention to its defense and propagation. On the other hand, go and observe the condition of these hereditary spiritual endowments. How much wealth is wasted to support them? Rich and poor flock to these establishments and do not hesitate to give away their wealth. They fail to make any sacrifice of wealth for the sake of Islam, which is being attacked on all sides. When asked to sacrifice their wealth in order to respond to these attacks, they come up with all kinds of excuses and try to create various kinds of obstructions in the way of such giving. I have a simple project, the publication of the English translation and commentary of the Holy Quran. When contributions are solicited for this purpose, the response is that it is not in accordance with our beliefs. Is there anyone in the whole world who can translate in accordance with the beliefs of every sect? Every sect can come up with a similar objection against the translation rendered by the other. Thus, there seems to be no way out.

The Mission of Khawaja Kamal-ud-din

I also observe that the mission started by Khawaja Sahib is also underfunded. It would have been best if he were allowed to work with complete peace of mind and his needs were spontaneously fulfilled from here. This is, however, not the case and he has to make arrangements himself, much of his time being spent in this way. He also has to make financial arrangements for the English and Urdu magazines he is publishing. What is the total number being published? The English magazine has approximately two thousand paid subscriptions while the total amount published is five thousand. In the Urdu language its publication has not reached two thousand yet.

The need for Publication of Islamic Literature

We get many requests for literature in Islam. How can we provide them with these books? People belonging to other faiths have written books on Islam and the life and character of the Holy Prophet. There are at least ten such publications of which I am aware. This is primarily the duty of the Muslims, but we see the opposite happening. Whose heart will Allah, the Most High motivate to take up this task? The time has gone when the Muslims were rulers and there were Royal subsidies available for promotion of religious literature. In this day and age nations that are spiritually alive do not hold back spending for propagation of knowledge. I have with me an Arabic English dictionary that was written by an Englishman who stayed in Egypt for many years and completed his work with the help of Egyptian scholars. All the expenses of his project were borne by an English Lord. Nations that want to stay alive have within their folds such dedicated individuals who are willing to help in the publication and spread of knowledge.

February 25, 1916

**The Secret to Progress of Muslims Lies in Service of
Humanity and Benevolence Toward All**

I bear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah.

After this, I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil.

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

ثُمَّ أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْغَمِّ أَمْنَةً نُبَإً يُغَشِي طَائِفَةً مِنْكُمْ ۗ
وَطَائِفَةٌ قَدْ أَهَمَّتْهُمْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ يَظُنُّونَ بِاللَّهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ ظَنَّ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ ۗ
يَقُولُونَ هَلْ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۗ قُلْ إِنَّ الْأَمْرَ كُلَّهُ لِلَّهِ ۗ
يُخْفُونَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ مَا لَا يُبْدُونَ لَكَ ۗ يَقُولُونَ لَوْ كَانِ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ ۗ
مَا قَتَلْنَا هُنَا قُلْ لَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بَيِّوتِكُمْ لَكَبَّرْتُمُ الَّذِينَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَتْلُ
إِلَىٰ مَضَاجِعِهِمْ ۗ وَلِيَبْتَلِيَ اللَّهُ مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ وَلِيُبَصِّصَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ ۗ
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿٥٥﴾

“Then after grief He sent down security on you, slumber overcoming a party of you, while (there was) another party whom their own souls had rendered anxious — they entertained about Allah thoughts of ignorance quite

unjustly. They said: Have we any hand in the affair? Say: The affair is wholly (in the hands) of Allah. They hide within their souls that which they would not reveal to thee. They say: Had we any hand in the affair, we would not have been slain here. Say: Had you remained in your houses, those for whom slaughter was ordained would have gone forth to the places where they would be slain. And (this happened) that Allah might test what was in your breasts and that He might purge what was in your hearts. And Allah is Knower of what is in the breasts.” (3:154)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا مِنْكُمْ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى الْجَمْعَيْنِ إِنَّمَا اسْتَزَلَّهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ بِبَعْضِ مَا كَسَبُوا ۗ وَقَدْ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ۝٤

“Those of you who turned back on the day when the two armies met, only the devil sought to cause them to make a slip on account of some deeds they had done, and certainly Allah has pardoned them. Surely Allah is Forgiving, Forbearing.” (3:155)

Hypocrites Set Apart in the Battle of Uhud

The battle of Uhud clearly defines the hypocrites. Abdullah-ibn-Ubayy separated himself along with three hundred of his companions before the battle, while there were some others who started complaining after the battle of Uhud.

The Companions Who were More Concerned for the Holy Prophet than for their own Lives

Muslims had to face many hardships during this battle. Many of the companions were martyred and those remaining behind suffered great losses. All of this was a source of great sorrow and pain for the Muslims. The Holy Quran mentions some of them who put aside all their worries and became more concerned about the welfare of the Holy Prophet. In contrast to this, the

attitude of another group is mentioned in these words, “They say: Had we any hand in the affair, we would not have been slain here.” To this, Allah the Most High responds, “Say: Had you remained in your houses, those for whom slaughter was ordained would have gone forth to the places where they would be slain. And (this happened) that Allah might test what was in your breasts and that He might purge what was in your hearts.”

The Difference Between the Hypocrites and the Companions

What is the difference between these and the rest of the companions? Both groups went into battle and fought, and both of them suffered. Why were they called hypocrites? It was because, unlike those who demonstrated sincerity, put aside their suffering, and were more concerned about the Holy Prophet, they recounted their own suffering and loss and were more concerned about their own selfish interests.

The Difference between those Hypocrites and Muslims Today

Muslims today sit contentedly in their homes and do not venture out to propagate their religion. The group referred to in these verses accompanied the Holy Prophet in battle. Afterward, they only complained about their personal loss and did not care about the Holy Prophet’s suffering. They were called hypocrites because of their behavior. Now compare your own condition with theirs and ponder upon the lesson being taught in relating these circumstances. If, even if you serve and complain subsequently, your behavior is not acceptable, then in your case, your not serving at all is even more unacceptable. Both behaviors are unacceptable, but the second one in which even no attempt is made to help is worse

What is the Objective of the Holy Quran?

Why is there such profound displeasure expressed regarding these complaints? Because the word of Allah desires such love, passion, and sincerity in your hearts for itself and the Holy Prophet Muhammad that you put aside all other worries for their sake. A true lover bears all suffering and tribulations, stumbles and falls, but never complains. He has no other concern but to pursue his passion. Islam wants you to serve and not breathe a word of complaint. Until you manifest such a state of submission, your service does not reflect true love and sincerity of purpose. It was their complaining that made this group blameworthy; otherwise like the other Muslims, they left their homes to participate in battle. You should serve Allah and readily accept any grief that you may suffer in this quest.

Different Manifestations of Human Love and Passion

Every human being in the world has some sort of passion that controls him. There are some who only care about their own desires and remain subservient to them at all times. Above these are those who sacrifice everything for their nation and country and do not care for their own lives and properties. The desire for their country and nation to make progress and be ahead of everyone else remains foremost in their minds at all times.

What Passion does Islam Want Us to Have?

Islam has attempted to generate another kind of passion in humans. It wants man not to hold his own self, his country, or his nation as his purpose in life but to have all his desires and thoughts be subservient to Allah. This is why the Holy Prophet said: "No one amongst you is a believer until he loves me more than his mother, his father, and all the other people." Why is this so? This is because man can only reach perfection when all his desires and passions become subservient to the love of Allah and

His messenger. Every human being holds a passion for something in his heart and love for someone is part of his nature. Islam has fulfilled this natural desire in such a manner that in the heart of the believer, love of Islam is held foremost under all circumstances. This is what differentiates a Muslim from other people.

The Intensity of this Love and Passion

The truth is that the focus of our love overwhelms our mind and we become subservient to it. Islam wants the love of Allah the Most High to be predominant over all our thoughts and for us to become a practicing example of one whose, “heart is with the beloved (Allah) while the hand is at work.”

The Secret of the Rise and Fall of Nations

If you study the history of the world, you will discover that only those nations made progress and advanced ahead of others that remained aware of their national interest at all times. They remain ever ready to sacrifice personal interests for the sake of the nation. The competition that you see amongst European nations is a result of this passion for their national interest. It is not for the sake of anyone’s personal interest. We accept that one nation is fighting to become a world power while other nations are fighting for preservation of civic values and truth. The former is iniquitous, while the latter is standing for justice. Nevertheless, this is a war of nations, with individuals belonging to each nation looking after their own national self-preservation and progress.

Islam Guides Towards Perfection

Instead of inculcating the love of nation and country in your heart, Islam wants to guide you toward another kind of love — a love that excels all of these; and that is the love of Allah and His religion. Your nature has the priceless element of love within it. If you use this element of love for the purpose for which it

has been created, that is the love of Allah and His religion, you will reach true perfection. This is the real purpose of the creation of mankind.

Revered Companions of the Holy Prophet and Muslims of the Present Age

What is the difference between us and the companions of the Holy Prophet? Did they not conduct business activities or have families and concerns about earning and making a living? They had all these concerns, but also had one concern above all — a concern we either do not have, or have to an insufficient degree — and that is the concern to serve religion. Some hypocrites also participate with them in this service. Hypocrites perform the same service but the results are different for them because of their complaints and selfish motives.

The Rise and Fall of Man

Man is definitely successful in fulfilling the passion that rules his mind. The more excellent this passion is, the greater is the height of excellence achieved. If, however, this passion fades away from the heart and mind, the resultant decline is in proportion to the ascent.

Why is the Spirit of Sacrifice Lacking Amongst Muslims?

Why do Muslims today lack even the spirit of sacrifice that is ordinarily found amongst people for their country and national interests? The fact is that they were taught the love of Allah the Most High and to sacrifice all else in His way. Their hearts were imbued with the love that is above all. This was not a minor goal they had before them. When they turned away from Allah, and broke their relationship with Him, there was no step in between whereupon they could stand and avoid the steep decline. They had been taught to appreciate the perfect form of love. There was no other idol that had been put in front of them to worship,

so how could they, in their state of decline, love anything else beyond their own selfish interests? What they had been taught was of such excellence that in its presence there was no need for drawing their attention toward minor goals. When decline overtook them it was such that there was nothing to stop their rapid descent.

Their rapid ascent was due to the fact that the Glorification of Allah, the most high completely imbued their thoughts and actions. This enabled them to quickly overcome all obstacles which stood in their way to reaching the pinnacle of perfection. Their decline occurred only when their hearts and minds were bereft of this thought. There was no other passion that had been inculcated into their minds. All other emotions were subservient to this lofty goal. The color of Allah's love was dominant in their actions and when it disappeared, there was no other reason for them to make sacrifices and they fell precipitously, becoming the lowest of the low.

Now, when they rise again, it will be in the same manner as before and they will reach the same goal of perfection. It will be these same Muslims with the same faces and occupations. What is inside the hearts and minds needs to be bright, for this outward glow and glitter is a fleeting matter. Do not for a moment entertain the thought that they will be some other kind of people, for there is no difference. Nor is there any difficulty that prevents this, other than accepting the idea of making oneself subservient to the love of God.

The Promised Messiah and His Sense of Honor for the Religion

What a great accomplishment was made by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in this age! He used to say that if the sense of honor that he holds for Islam is put on one side of the scale and that of other Muslims on the other side, his side would definitely carry more weight. It was his habit that no matter how grievous

a personal attack was hurled upon him, he would not care, but an attack against the Holy Prophet would enrage him and he would fervently respond to such slander. Being so passionate in defending the truth is not a sign of weakness.

Those Who Benefitted from his Benevolence

We observe that those who followed his way and benefitted from his benevolence also held this sense of honor for their religion far above those who rejected him. A spark from his fire of passion was also ignited in their hearts. Try not to stifle this spark from your hearts. Try to maintain it, so that your deeds should also move the world like those of your imam and guide.

The Example of Khawaja Kamal-ud-din

Observe what was accomplished by Khawaja Kamal-ud-din. He was like many others, just a pleader before the chief court. By imbuing his heart with the passion for the love of Allah, see what he accomplished! If you also make your hearts subservient to the love of Allah, all the rest of this worldly life becomes insignificant. It is the same emotion but is acquired in a different manner. If you try to adopt the wrong path in its acquisition, the results are going to be the opposite.

These words that came out of the mouths of the hypocrites, "Have we any hand in the affair? Or, had they been with us, they would not have died, or been slain" (2:154). These words show lack of courage and weakness of character. Allah has attributed them to hypocrisy and categorized those who uttered them as hypocrites.

This was Not the Holy Prophet's Intent

It is now said that although it was the Holy Prophet's opinion to stay within the confines of Madinah and fight, instead, he followed the advice of the companions to show them that the losses at the battle of Uhud were sustained by acting upon their

recommendations.¹ The Holy Quran, on the other hand, uses these words when referring to the hypocrites, “had we any hand in the affair, we would not have been slain here.” In other words, if we had not left Madinah, we would not have suffered these losses. It was also the opinion of Abdullah Ibn Ubayy to stay in Madinah and fight.

In addition, there is this Quranic statement, “Had they been with us, they would not have died or been slain” (3:156), meaning if these people had stayed with us (the hypocrites) in Madinah, they would not have died or been slain. Thus, if Allah the Most High attributes these statements to the hypocrites, those who attribute this to the Holy Prophet are flagrant liars. It is very strange indeed that what the Quran attributes to the hypocrites is being called the intention of the Holy Prophet.

The Real Reason for the Losses at Uhud

The losses at Uhud occurred because a group of archers disobeyed instructions of the Holy Prophet to stay at their station under all circumstances. To attribute these losses to the Holy Prophet’s companions’ decision (to meet the enemy outside of Madinah) was the position taken by the hypocrites. To relate this position of the hypocrites to the Holy Prophet is derogatory. Moreover, these verses are followed by the statement, “And consult them in (important) matters” (3:159). If the loss was a result of following the advice of the companions, then what is the meaning of consulting them?

A Brief Translation and Commentary on the Verses

“Then after grief He sent down security on you, slumber overcoming a party of you.” After this grief, Allah the Most High sent down security upon the hearts of those who were upset because of the suffering of the Holy Prophet. A feeling of

1. Ref. *Al-Fazal* (publication of Qadian section) newspaper February 12, page 5, column 2.

security was engendered in their hearts or sleep overcame them, which is also a means of diminishing grief.

“...While (there was) another party whom their own souls had rendered anxious — they entertained about Allah thoughts of ignorance quite unjustly...” What are these thoughts of ignorance? This is reflected in the words, ...“They said: Have we any hand in the affair?...” to which the reply is given, “...Say: The affair is wholly (in the hands) of Allah...” (3:154)

Another Distinguishing Characteristic of the Hypocrites

“They hide within their souls that which they would not reveal to thee.” These words describe another distinguishing characteristic of the hypocrites that they do not show or express what is inside their hearts. They say: “Had we any hand in the affair, we would not have been slain here.”

To which the Holy Quran responds, “Say: Had you remained in your houses, those for whom slaughter was ordained would have gone forth to the places where they would be slain.”

Remaining in the houses signifies meeting the enemy while remaining in Madinah. By those for whom slaughter was ordained are meant the martyrs of Uhud. The murmurings of the hypocrites are met with the reply that even if the Muslims had defended themselves by remaining in Madinah, those who laid down their lives in the field of Uhud would have laid them down in Madinah as well. Death was moreover a thing ordained.

“...And (this happened) that Allah might test what was in your breasts and that He might purge what was in your hearts.” (3:154)

This explains Allah’s testing of what is in their hearts. He knows it, and His testing it means making it manifest to others. The attitude of the hypocrites was made manifest by the fighting in Uhud. It would have remained hidden if the battle had been fought in Madinah.

“And Allah is Knower of what is in the breasts.” (3:154)

A Word About Those Who Left the Battleground

Another event in connection with the battle of Uhud is now related. “Those of you who turned back on the day when the two armies met, only the devil sought to cause them to make a slip on account of some deeds they had done.”

This happened in the battle of Uhud after the archers abandoned their position. The fleeing Makkan forces turned back and destabilized the arrangement of Muslim forces. The persons spoken of here are those who were unable to join the main Muslim army and who fled to Madinah, or in some other direction. However pressed they may have been, it was not right on their part to leave the field of battle. Here it is spoken of as a slip on their part; it did not amount to intentional disobedience. God granted them a free pardon as expressed by the words, “and certainly Allah has pardoned them. Surely Allah is Forgiving, Forbearing.” It is written that when these companions returned, the Holy Prophet did not even hint at questioning their behavior. Some people have the habit of finding fault with others and point out that Hazrat Uthman was amongst the ones who had left the battlefield. Later on when the *Khawarij* made a similar statement, they were rebuked by Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Abbas, who challenged their authority to question when Allah the Most High had Himself granted them a pardon.

Summary of Discussion and Prayer

The attention of Muslims has been drawn in these verses to the lofty goal that they should always have in sight. It is about a firm belief in Allah, readiness to bear all suffering in service of His religion, and not to breathe a word of complaint while undertaking this striving. May Allah the Most High give us the ability to put these teachings of the Holy Quran into practice. Ameen!

April 21, 1916

The Persistent Striving and Preservation of Civil Rights and Responsibilities Guarantees the Survival of a Nation.

Ibear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah.

After this, I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil.

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

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا
زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ
وَالْأَرْحَامَ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ۝

“O people, keep your duty to your Lord, Who created you from a single being and created its mate of the same (kind), and spread from these two many men and women. And keep your duty to Allah, by Whom you demand one of another (your rights), and (to) the ties of relationship. Surely Allah is ever a Watcher over you.” (4:1)

This chapter is called *Al-Nisa*, which means ‘The Women’. The reason for this name is that it discusses the rights and responsibilities of women and informs us of the rights and responsibilities of men and women toward each other. This chapter discusses

social intercourse. Preceding this in *Al-Baqarab* and *Al-Imran* different aspects of how to preserve a nation's existence were explained. Social intercourse and its different facets are now discussed. We are told how we can coexist and maintain mutual relationships. This subject is expanded upon in the next chapter, which discusses broader aspects of civil intercourse. In this manner, these four chapters bring this subject to completion.

Response to Those who are Critical of the Arrangement of the Holy Quran

People object that the Holy Quran is just a collection of chapters randomly put together. Some Muslims may also hold this view, but it is a very flawed concept. There is such an excellent arrangement in the verses of the Holy Quran that the more we consider it, the more we become aware of the profound knowledge and wisdom involved. The chapter, *Al-Baqarab* is at the very beginning, preceded only by the *Al-Fatibab*, the essence of the Holy Quran. In *Al-Fatibab*, guidance toward the right path is sought, while the first section of *Al-Baqarab* outlines that path of success for us.

The Beginning and End of a Chapter

Another wonderful aspect of this arrangement is that the subject matter at the beginning of a chapter is also discussed toward the end. For example, in *Al-Baqarab*, success and final triumph of the believers was discussed in the beginning of the chapter and the closing words relate to the same subject in the form of a prayer: "so grant us victory over the disbelieving people." Similarly, in the chapter *Al-Imran*, the introduction deals with the topic of Christianity and the chapter concludes with the same. This chapter called *Al-Nisa* (The Women) begins with a discussion of women's rights and concludes with the words, "If a man dies and he has no son and he has a sister" again referring to the subject of women's rights. The purpose of my discussion is to point out the wonderful manner whereby every

chapter of the Holy Quran begins with a certain subject, discusses its various ramifications in detail, and concludes with a summary of the same topic.

The Important Subject of Life and Death of Nations

Another amazing aspect is the mutual connectivity and arrangement that exists among the various chapters of the Holy Quran. The most relevant question before a nation is whether it lives on or it dies. There is extensive debate on this subject today about what needs to be prioritized in this matter. Allah the Most High has told us by putting *Al-Baqarab* in the beginning of the Holy Quran that the subject of life and death of nations is of prime importance. The whole of *Al-Baqarab* discusses how dead nations are brought to life and cites in a very elegant manner the example of the children of Israel.

The Life and Death of the Children of Israel

In *Al-Baqarab*, the Holy Quran states,

الْمُ تَرَىٰ إِلَىٰ الَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا مِن دِيَارِهِمْ وَهُمْ أُلُوفٌ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ ۖ فَقَالَ لَهُمْ
 اللَّهُ مُوتُوا ۖ ثُمَّ أَحْيَاهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ
 النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

“Hast thou not considered those who went (*kharaju*) forth from their homes, and they were thousands, for fear of death. Then Allah said to them, die. Then He gave them life. Surely Allah is Gracious to people, but most people are not grateful.” (2:243)

The use of the Arabic word *kharaju* (exodus) in this context clearly refers to the nation that is mentioned in the book of exodus in the Bible. *i.e.* The children of Israel. They escaped the tyranny of the pharaoh with Prophet Moses, and then wandered for forty years in the wilderness. This was their state of death, from which they were brought back to life and given ownership

of the Holy Land. The life and death of a nation and the factors influencing it are therefore a question of prime importance.

The Cause of Muslim Downfall

A major cause for the downfall of the Muslims, is their neglect of this very important duty and the fact that they did not make an effort to increase their numerical strength. Allah the Most High had shown them the way in these words of the Holy Quran:

“And from among you there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. And these are they who are successful.” (3:104)

This was the golden principle for revival of the nation. Alas! Muslims neglected the task of propagation of their religion and wasted their strength. Nothing can remain in a static condition. It either makes progress or deteriorates in strength. If I have strength in my arms, I should use them so that they can become stronger and help me make further progress. If I do not use them, they will lose strength and become useless. This verse tells us that in order to sustain the life of our nation, we cannot remain stationary and must move forward. If you quit making any effort, you will start moving backward and death will rapidly come to you. Any faculty that you have been given can remain and develop only if put to use. If left idle, it will go to waste. A tree that does not absorb nutrients from the earth by means of its roots will fail to thrive and soon dry out and wither away. Similarly a nation that continues to nurture itself by bringing in fresh nutrients will stay alive and its strength will be maintained. If it neglects this duty and abstains from inviting and including others within its folds, it will spontaneously lose its strength. This is the firm law of Allah the Most High, which is established in the universe. Strength can only increase if it is used in the proper manner; otherwise it is wasted. The laws of God do not undergo change as stated in the Holy Quran: “Thou seest no incongruity in the creation of the Beneficent” (67:3).

The Early Period of Islam

Why and how did the Muslims terminate what was their life-line? This termination happened when they neglected the duty of inviting outsiders into their faith. In the beginning, a child requires only a small amount of nourishment to sustain its growth. During this early period of the Muslim nation's growth, noble companions of the Holy Prophet strived hard against overwhelming odds and carried the message of Islam to all corners of the world. When the development of the Islamic nation reached its prime, it was deprived of this nurturing sustenance, although more nutrition is needed in the youthful years of growth. In *Al-Baqarab* and *Al-Imran*, Allah the Most High informed us that you can only be given spiritual life when you strive for the propagation of Islam and invite others into your faith. Nothing remains static; change is inevitable. That which does not progress cannot remain in a stationary state. It necessarily goes into a state of decline.

Social Intercourse Ordained by Allah

After relating the need to make an effort for national rejuvenation through propagation, the Holy Quran now draws our attention toward social intercourse in these words:

“O people, keep your duty to your Lord, Who created you from a single being and created its mate of the same (kind), and spread from these two many men and women. And keep your duty to Allah, by Whom you demand one of another (your rights), and (to) the ties of relationship. Surely Allah is ever a Watcher over you.” (4:1)

Was this excellent arrangement the work of Abu Bakr or Zaid bin Thabit? In fact the Holy Quran states:

“Surely on Us rests the collecting of it and the reciting of it So when We recite it, follow its recitation.” (75:17-18)

This shows that its arrangement was the work of Allah and not of Abu Bakr or Zaid bin Thabit. The principles of social and civil interaction evolve from family relationships.

Women's Rights and the Marital Relationship Between a Husband and Wife

The relationship between a husband and a wife is the basis from which evolves family life. It eventually affects the broader spectrum of national and civil intercourse. It is therefore essential that the mutual relations between men and women should be improved. The Holy Prophet has made a wonderful statement in this regard: "The best of you is he who is good to his wife." This is the truth, for he who does not treat his wife well cannot be expected to treat outsiders with goodness. There is another very lengthy Hadith in which Hazrat Umar states, "During the days of ignorance we did not give any importance to our women. With the revelation of the Holy Quran and its stress upon the rights of women, women became more aware of their rights and started to stand up for them. My wife also challenged my decision in some matter, to which I retorted, 'who are you to speak up to me in this manner?' She told me to go and observe my own daughter and see how she argues with the Messenger of Allah." Umar then visited Hazrat Hafsa (his daughter and wife of the Holy Prophet) and told her that he had come to know of her argumentative behavior toward the Holy Prophet and advised her to refrain, for displeasing the Holy Prophet would not be right. Being his daughter, she remained respectfully silent. Hazrat Umar then visited Hazrat Um-e-Salamah, another wife of the Holy Prophet, and gave her the same advice. She answered back by saying, "Umar who are you to interfere in our family matters?" Upon hearing this, Hazrat Umar turned back.

These incidents illustrate that the Holy Quran established the rights of women in a society where prior to its revelation they were nonexistent. How could Islam ignore the rights of half of the human race and leave them in a state of subjugation? That is why it gave them their lawful rights. In this chapter, *Al-Nisa*, these rights, along with those of orphans are clearly delineated.

Establishment of the Rights of Women and Children

Arabs proverbially believed that the right of inheritance belonged only to the one who could wield the spear. They gave no right of inheritance to women, who generally remained at home and did not participate in battles. Even today, in many countries, women's and children's rights of inheritance are not acknowledged. Islam considered this unacceptable and gave women and children equal right of inheritance along with men. This chapter discusses these topics, as well as a reference to some of the battles. These battles had to be undertaken to defend the rights of helpless women and children who were facing the tyranny of disbelievers. This is expressed in the following words of the Holy Quran:

“And what reason have you not to fight in the way of Allah, and of the weak among the men and the women and the children, who say: Our Lord, take us out of this town, whose people are oppressors, and grant us from Thee a friend, and grant us from Thee a helper!” (4:75)

Responsibilities of Women with Acquisition of Rights

Islam is, however, not a religion with a unidirectional focus. While it outlines the rights of women and men, it also delineates their responsibilities. The Holy Quran states, “And women have rights similar to those against them in a just manner” (2:228). A fault of human nature is that everyone wants recognition for their own rights but they fail to recognize their responsibilities in this regard. This includes both men and women. It is essential to appreciate that those who fail to accept their responsibilities cannot get their rights. Every individual must first fulfill his responsibilities and then demand his rights. That is why this chapter begins with the words, “O people, keep your duty to your Lord.”

The Meaning of *Taqwa* (Keeping Your Duty)

Someone may point out that the commandment is to keep

your duty. What does that have to do with the giving of rights and responsibilities? Remember that the word *Taqwa* means protection and safeguarding and a *muttaqi* is one who safeguards and protects the rights given to him by Allah the Most High. *Muttaqi* is also the one who safeguards against questionable practices. This is explained in a Hadith of the Prophet: “What is lawful is manifest and what is unlawful is manifest and between these two are doubtful things which many people do not know. So whoever guards himself against the doubtful things, he keeps his religion and his honor unsullied, and whoever falls into doubtful things is like the herdsman who grazes his cattle on the borders of a reserve — he is likely to enter it. Know that every king has a reserve and know that the reserve of Allah in His land is what He has forbidden” (B. 2:38). *Muttaqi* is the one who fulfills all rights and responsibilities assigned to him by Allah the Most High. This encompasses the rights of his family members, relatives, and those not related to him. It is essential to discharge all of these under all circumstances. This is called *Taqwa* or keeping one’s duty.

Who is the Perfect Believer?

One should fulfill all human rights in the same manner as he wants his rights to be fulfilled. That is why the Hadith states, “A person from amongst you is not a believer until he likes for his brother what he likes for himself.” Everyone is quite aware of his own rights, but shortchanges those of others. Perfection in belief cannot be reached until the receiving and giving of rights strikes a just balance. The major reason for all conflicts in the world is a lack of awareness of this truth amongst people. Safeguarding human rights is the basis of resolving all these contentious matters irrespective of the human condition. If those who are being ruled continue to demand only their rights and do not fulfill their responsibilities, society cannot function. The golden principle that can work for all types of social relationships is that man should be fully cognizant of his responsibilities

and give the rights of others just as he wishes no one to curtail his own.

The Meaning of *TaqwAllah* (Keep Your Duty to Allah)

There is a relationship between Allah and every human being, which does not involve any intermediaries. The words, "Keep your duty to your Lord," are to emphasize that this matter is between man and his *Rabb* (nurturer unto perfection) and that he should therefore fully understand and fulfill his duty. If I do some good deed with the intent that it should benefit a certain friend, or if I commit evil to harm my enemy, it goes contrary to the relationship between man and his *Rabb* (nurturer unto perfection). In fact, before doing anything we should keep our accountability to Allah the Most High in our mind, not forget our relationship with our *Rabb* (nurturer unto perfection) and fulfill the responsibilities assigned to us according to the command of Allah.

There is no Intermediary Between the Creator and His Creation

"And certainly you have come to Us one by one as We created you at first, and you have left behind your backs what We gave you. And We see not with you your intercessors about whom you asserted that they were (Allah's) associates in respect to you. Certainly the ties between you are now cut off and that which you asserted has failed you." (6:94)

In the end, every man is answerable to Allah, at which time there are no intermediaries or intercessors. Therefore, always remember that you are going to die. Being aware of your mortality is a reminder of the relationship between you and God. Thus, one should be aware of his responsibilities and strive to fulfill them. This is what is meant by keeping, "Your duty to your Lord." He is your *Rabb*, your nurturer unto perfection. You can evolve spiritually only by being aware of your accountability to

the One who nurtures you unto perfection. Now another relationship is pointed out in the words, “Who created you from a single being.” Since all of mankind is the offspring of a single being, the whole of humanity is bonded in the tie of universal brotherhood.

The Broader Concept of Universal Brotherhood

“And created its mate of the same (kind), and spread from these two, many men and women.” These words of the Holy Quran give us the broadest concept of universal brotherhood. Our relationships with each other should be on the basis of understanding this concept. It is further stated, “And keep your duty to Allah, by Whom you demand one of another (your rights), and (to) the ties of relationship.” By guarding the ties of *arham* (wombs) is meant the rights of relationships that result from the female side. Our Holy Prophet held a very broad concept of these ties of relationships. This is evident from his statement to his followers: “When you go to Egypt, treat the Egyptians kindly because our mother (Hazrat Hajira the wife of Prophet Abraham) came from Egypt.” This is the breadth of the teachings of the prophets. No nation can survive in the world by being intolerant. The condition of Muslims is such, however, that they even try to exclude Muslims from their religion. Strangely enough, though verbally, when they declare them as disbelievers¹ their practice goes against it.

***Assalaamu-Alaikum* and the Funeral Prayer for the Disbeliever**

Why do they offer the salutation of *assalaamu-alaikum* to them? How far is it permissible to offer *assalaamu-alaikum* to the disbeliever? If it is considered a distinctive mark of a Muslim, then why should it be applied to a disbeliever? Furthermore

1. This was the general attitude of the followers of Mian Mahmud Ahmad after the split in the Ahmadiyya Movement.

a command is issued that funeral prayer should not be said for one who is not a member of the Ahmadiyya community, but the followers disregard the wishes of their mentor² and continue the practice. A principle should be proclaimed only when it can be put into practice, for otherwise it is not likely to succeed. The Holy Quran states: "And say not to anyone who offers you salutation, Thou art not a believer" (4:94). In other words, it is only permissible to offer this salutation to a Muslim and not to a disbeliever. Why do you consider offering them salutation as permissible when you do not consider them Muslims? I advise you that numerical strength or weakness does not matter. You should see if the principles that are being proclaimed are practical or not. What cannot be practiced should not at all be accepted no matter who the proponent is, for a principle that cannot be put into practice becomes useless.

If Muslims Become Categorized as Disbelievers, then the Coming of the Promised Messiah Cannot be a Sign of Mercy

This is a strange doctrine being promoted, that, with the advent of the Promised Messiah, a one year old child who is totally innocent becomes a disbeliever as does a hundred year old man who has followed the commandments of God throughout his life. In fact, Muslims all over the world, whether they are in China, Kandahar, Turkistan, remote areas of Russia, the jungles of Africa, or the desert of Arabia where people do not even know the name of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, all become disbelievers and outside the pale of Islam by virtue of this doctrine. Those appointed by God always bring the Mercy of God with them. What kind of tribulation is this that the whole world has been afflicted by it and has been put at a distance from the Mercy of God? Fear God and the accountability toward your Lord (*Rabb*).

2. The mentor, in this case, was Mian Mahmud Ahmad who was issuing these edicts to his followers.

Do Not Become Accomplices

If you deem all this to be a lie then why do you become accomplices in this, in deference to some individual? These worldly relationships carry no meaning. You have to be accountable to God one day. Being a spiritual mentor (*pir*) or his follower is not going to be of any benefit to you on the Day of Judgment. Use your reasoning in matters of your religion and if you find somebody promoting what is wrong, throw it back in his face. Only fearing the accountability of Allah will be of some benefit to you and no other tie in a relationship. The Holy Quran states, “And no soul earns (evil) but against itself. Nor does a bearer of burden (*wizr*) bear another’s burden” (6:164). Christians have been deceived to believe that the Messiah can bear the burden of their sins. The Arabic word *wizr* indicates that he himself is bearing the burden of his responsibilities. How can he bear someone else’s burden? Whether it is a spiritual leader or his follower, a king or mendicant, all are equal before God. All will be held accountable. Therefore, “O people, keep your duty to your Lord.” Understand your responsibilities and fear the accountability of your Lord.

The Second Sermon

A Very Important Exhortation

I have stated earlier that human effort can only work effectively if exerted in a certain direction. I therefore advise you to spend your energy toward the achievement of a higher goal. Indulging in useless talk and answering abuse with abuse is useless and distracts you from your real goal. You should leave these matters aside and manifest a high moral character. This is a matter of prime importance. You should not neglect it to the best of your ability. I am not saying that you should not show firmness where it is needed and is morally correct. This also needs to be done, particularly by those who are assigned the task of answering the

objections and criticism of the opponents of Islam. This should, however, be done to the extent that it is not detrimental to good morals. It should not be so that you waste all your time and energy in these matters, while the real task remains unaccomplished. If you spend all your energy on this task you will lose your high moral ground. There was a time when there was great controversy amongst the Christians as to whether God and man could together be one. Great debates were held on this subject. Today a similar effort is being made to raise a recipient of non-prophetic revelation and follower of Holy Prophet Muhammad, to a prophet.

In the Christian world, at the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, there was one sect that combined humanity and divinity into one being while the other opposed it. The famous library of Alexandria was full of discourses on this matter. It is erroneously alleged that this library was burned down by Muslims during the time of Hazrat Umar, who used its contents to warm the baths of Alexandria for a period of six months. Galen, a famous historian, however, confirms that this burning of the library at Alexandria occurred much before the time of Hazrat Umar. Even if it is accepted as true, there was perhaps no better use for these books than to use them as fuel for warming the baths. It is moving in the wrong direction to waste one's strength in such useless arguments. These newspapers that are full of such arguments may please a few followers today, but a time will come when people will give them no more importance than paper trash. You should strive to develop your morals and abstain from activities that affect them adversely.

The Responsibilities of a Muslim Toward a Fellow Muslim

It must be remembered that a Muslim has certain responsibilities toward other fellow Muslims. For example, offering the salutation *assalaamu-alaikum*, visiting the sick, attending the funeral prayer, burial of the dead body etc. The condition today

is such that people will travel miles to attend a party but cannot spare time to attend a funeral. Always respect the dead, in particular those related to you. If someone from amongst your brothers passes away, be sure to attend their funeral. This is a very important matter for all of you to follow.

April 28, 1916

**Giving of Thanks and Expression of Joy
Upon Completion of the English Translation
of the Holy Quran**

Ibear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah.

After this I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil.

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۝ لَمْ يَلِدْ ۝ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ۝

اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ۝ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ۝

1. Say: He, Allah, is One.
2. Allah is He on Whom all depend.
3. He begets not, nor is He begotten;
4. And none is like Him. (CH.112)

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَاقِقِ ۝
وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ ۝
وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ ۝
وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ ۝

1. Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of the dawn,

2. From the evil of that which He has created,
 3. And from the evil of intense darkness, when it comes,
 4. And from the evil of those who cast (evil suggestions) in firm resolutions,
 5. And from the evil of the envier when he envies.
- (CH.113)

مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ ۝	قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ ۝
الَّذِي يُوسِّسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ ۝	مَلِكِ النَّاسِ ۝
مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ ۝	إِلَهِ النَّاسِ ۝

1. Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of men,
2. The King of men,
3. The God of men,
4. From the evil of the whisperings of the slinking (devil),
5. Who whispers into the hearts of men,
6. From amongst the jinn and the men. (CH.114)

Maulana Muhammad Ali states after reciting the chapters *Al-Ikblas*, *Al-Falaq* and *Al-Nas*:

“I have recited a little from the beginning and the end of the Holy Quran.” The Holy Quran begins: “In the name of Allah the Beneficent the Merciful.” Toward the end, these words appear: “Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of men.” Refuge is thus sought with Allah in the beginning and toward the end, reminding us that man can begin and complete a task only with Allah’s help. Whenever you commence a task, always seek the help of Allah and when it is completed your ultimate goal should be to seek refuge in Him. There can be no better commentary of the Holy Quran than the life of the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet says “He seeks the protection of Allah (*istighfar*) seventy times during the course of a day.”

What is the Meaning of Seeking the Protection of Allah (*istighfar*)?

The Arabic term *istighfar* means seeking the protection of Allah. Man is created weak and cannot complete a task with only his own effort or with the help of others unless he has the help of Allah with him. *Istighfar* means asking for the help of Allah the Most High. The beginning and the end of the Holy Quran bears testimony to this, that man should begin every task in the name of Allah the most High and his end goal should also be to seek the protection of Allah, for no task can be accomplished without it.

Every individual should himself seek Allah's help. It is not that Allah is far away; in fact, He is very close by and whosoever seeks refuge in Him and asks for His help receives it. Along with this, it is also very essential to make an effort and work hard. He will then make our exertions bear results. Similarly, the spiritual help given by Allah the Most High is not meant only for certain individuals. It can be bestowed upon anyone who supplicates before Allah the Most High. Today, unlike my ordinary routine, I have not recited a complete section of the Holy Quran. I have chosen to recite from the beginning and the last few chapters of the Holy Quran.

A Day of Happiness for Me

This is because it is a day of great happiness for me today. For many years, I have been occupied with translating the Holy Quran into the English language. Today with the grace of Allah I have completed it. This feeling of joy is not like that of a student who has finished an exam and is looking forward to a few days of respite. The reason I am so happy is that for all the time I was occupied with this task, I wondered that life was tenuous and I may not be given the opportunity to complete this work. There is no doubt that with Allah there is no shortage of men. It was His task and it would have somehow reached completion. If He

gave somebody as insignificant as me the determination to do this work, He could have certainly chosen someone else to do it. It is however, a matter of great satisfaction and happiness for a person that he completes a task that he has undertaken in his lifetime. One frequently has the apprehension that he may not live long enough to complete his work. People have enthusiastically and with keen interest, undertaken great projects in their lives but were unable to bring them to fruition.

An Englishman spent twelve years in Egypt to collect material for an Arabic dictionary he had undertaken to compose. With extreme diligence and effort, he started to write this and provided us with a lot of useful information. When he reached as far as the letter Qaf he passed away. The book was published as it was and remains a sad reminder in its incomplete state. Similarly, if someone's work is incomplete and he leaves this world, it generates a lot of regret and sorrow and sometimes becomes a source of chastisement for the individual.

The Unparalleled Success of the Holy Prophet

Allah the most High took away the Holy Prophet from this world at a time when he had been given exemplary success and the work that he had started reached completion. Before his advent, the land of Arabia was steeped in darkness and ignorance and in a state of extreme moral depravity and savageness without the rule of law or a ruler. What was its condition when the Holy Prophet left this world? Not only was he the ruler of all Arabia, but his companions had reached a state of excellence and honor, both in this world and the hereafter. His happiness would have known no bounds when he received the good news about his companions in these words of the Holy Quran: "Allah is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him" (9:100). Deceitful are those who claim that the companions of the Holy Prophet did not fully submit to the will of Allah. Was God's word, and we seek His protection from saying so, false when it gave them this certificate that they were pleased with

Him and He was pleased with them? Is this not an attack on the Holy Prophet? Allah the Most High ordained him to be the seal of the prophets, but none of his companions could reach the state of excellence called complete submission in order to verify the truth of the finality of prophethood.

A Disrespectful Group

Remember he who says that the companions of the Holy Prophet did not manifest complete submission is a liar. This is derogatory to Islam, the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet Muhammad. A disrespectful group has, however, arisen in this world and wants to find fault with the ones who completely submitted, in order to make a new prophet for themselves besides the Holy Prophet Muhammad. This is similar to what the Christians did. They made a prophet into a god and in order to do this slandered all the other prophets by calling them sinful.

Today a group of those who exaggerate their expression of love have followed the same path. They have declared spiritually deficient, the companions of the Holy Prophet, those who followed them (*Tabayin*) and their followers (*Taba-Tabayin*), the Reformers (*Muhaddaths* and the *Mujaddids*), the saintly persons (*auliya-Allah*) and the righteous, all of whom together numbering in the hundreds of thousands. This is done in order to elevate the status of a single individual¹. They do not ponder this action as derogatory to Islam, that from amongst all of its followers who have passed away, none achieved the spiritual status of those who submit completely to the will of Allah the Most High. As a consequence, no one remains a Muslim (in their opinion) except a few of these who follow this path of exaggeration.

Is this the type of Islam that they will proudly present to those who are not Muslims? The Holy Prophet was proud of his

1. In 1914 the followers of Mian Mahmud Ahmad elevated the status of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad from a *Mujaddid/Muhaddath* to that of a prophet.

companions who manifested such excellent and unique examples of complete submission that were unparalleled in the world before. These people now blame them for not submitting fully to the will of Allah! The happiness of the Holy Prophet would have known no bounds were he to witness his followers treading the path and fulfilling the purpose for which he had been sent by Allah. Is there a higher bliss of paradise than this? For the Holy Prophet, the fulfillment of the purpose for which he had been sent by Allah the Most High was indeed the pinnacle of heavenly delight.

Only the Holy Prophet Achieved Complete Success in His Lifetime

There have been many prophets in the world, but none of them succeeded in achieving complete success like the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Even a prophet of high standing like Moses, who liberated his followers from the tyranny of Pharaoh, did not witness this. He did not live to see his followers rise to the high spiritual status they had been promised. For forty years, the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness. Moses passed away from amongst them. Compare the condition of these prophets with the Holy Prophet Muhammad and observe the excellence of his achievements. He achieved incomparable success in completing the mission entrusted to him by Allah the Most High. His success was unique for all time. At the time of his death, the only words on his lips were: "In companionship of the Most High, in companionship of the Most High!" His only desire was to meet with Allah the Most High. All his other wishes were fully filled.

It is indeed a great achievement that man completes the work he has undertaken. I also am pleased to complete this task. I do not say this with a spirit of arrogance that this task was accomplished at my hands. This is an insignificant offering to His Majesty. If He accepts this small offering, it is only through His Grace and Mercy that He accepts it. Today Allah has allowed

me to witness this day of happiness and contentment. It is only with His help that I have been able to finish this task and even now I must seek His protection.

The Wisdom Underlying *Surah Al-Falaq* and *Al-Naas* Being at the End of the Holy Quran

These two chapters of the Holy Quran, which I have recited, show us the path for seeking the refuge of Allah. Their placement at the end of the Holy Quran indicates that the ultimate goal of every task man undertakes is to seek refuge in God. The first chapter is called *Al-Falaq*. The Arabic word *Falaq* means splitting open. This is applied to the splitting open of the seed or bringing forth of the light from darkness. The Holy Quran states: "Say I seek refuge in the Lord of the dawn" *i.e.*, the Nurturer unto perfection, who brings forth light from darkness. Remember that this chapter belongs to the Makkan period and the tale about sorcery related to it is said to have occurred at Madinah. Not a single word of the Holy Quran supports this. In fact, it goes against the Holy Quran.

The Spiritual Message of the Chapter (*Surah*) *Al-Falaq*

These two chapters, *Al-Falaq* and *Al-Naas* teach us how man seeks the refuge of Allah in his daily tasks. The words, "I seek refuge in the Lord of the dawn (*Rabb-il-Falaq*)" indicate seeking the refuge of the Nurturer unto perfection, the One who splits open a tiny seed making it grow into a mighty tree and brings forth daylight from darkness to guide mankind from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge. "And from the evil of intense darkness, when it comes," intense darkness signifies the darkness of a cloudy sky. The first requirement for a person when he initiates a task, is that the darkness of difficulties that shrouds the path toward its success is illuminated by the light of Allah's Mercy and Protection.

The Way of Success through Difficulties

Whenever a task is initiated, the situation is such that there are many difficulties in the way and it is hard to see the way clearly, just as it is on a dark and cloudy night. Some of these difficulties are related to those whose behavior is characterized in this way: “And from the evil of those who cast (evil suggestions) in firm resolutions.” By raising doubts they attempt to undermine the resolve of the worker. One should be aware of these attempts and take preventive measures. At first it is the darkness that is dispersed and one comes into the light of day. Now what’s needed is a firm determination to overcome these difficulties. This is the second stage of accomplishing the task. The third obstruction that the Holy Quran warns against is, “And from the evil of the envier when he envies.” When a man meets with success in his work, there are those who become envious of his accomplishment and are consumed in their envy toward that person. It is also essential to be aware of these in order to safeguard against them. It is necessary to traverse these three paths in order to successfully complete any task. For a person to succeed, he should emerge from darkness into light, overcome doubts created by others, and safeguard against the envy of the envious.

The Wisdom of Chapter (*Surah*) *Al-Naas*

Further caution is added on in these words of the chapter *Al-Naas*,

“Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of men,
The King of men,
The God of men,
From the evil of the whisperings of the slinking
(*khannaas*) (devil).” (CH. 114)

There are those difficulties that are quite obvious and it is easy to overcome them. There are however some impediments that arise, but their presence is unknown beforehand. It is very hard to avoid the evil consequences of these. The Arabic word

(*khannaas*) means the one who hides his presence and is not perceived readily. He creates apprehensions in the hearts of men when they are successful; the way to stop these is not readily apparent. To seek refuge from these apprehensions with Allah the Most High is the lesson given by the Holy Quran. Those causing these apprehensions can be from amongst ordinary people or from amongst the elite as identified by the words:

“Who whispers into the hearts of men,
From amongst the jinn and the men.”

I have recited these two chapters for Allah the Most High, through His Grace has carried me through these stages. He Himself dispersed all darkness and made sure that those causing obstructions did not succeed. He is even now my refuge and shelter.

The Need to Spend in the Way of Allah

Now that this work has been accomplished, much expenditure is needed to propagate it. Some people have paid attention to it. There are many who have not given it any thought. I am calling upon all of you so that you can also participate in this noble task of serving the Holy Quran. Every individual spends on his personal needs throughout his life. If we start counting this sum, even the poorest amongst us has perhaps spent in the thousands. If we consider this, that we spend our money some way or another, and determine to spend it in service of the Holy Quran, it can be a matter of great recompense.

In order to accomplish anything in this world we need to provide some means for it. It is therefore essential to identify those means. As far as my effort is concerned, I put my all into it and now I am handing this over to you. I pray that Allah the Most High moves and opens up your hearts for it. This needs a lot of sacrifice, but I understand this to be insignificant in one way. You spend large sums of money for various things every day. This is all sacrifice but you need to broaden your horizons

regarding this matter. There are some rights that God has over you; try to fulfill these obligations.

Progress Cannot be Made Without Sacrifice

You see no work can reach completion unless workers sacrifice enough to make it reach fruition. There was a time of affluence in Islam at which time such works were easily accomplished. Now we need a little more effort for it. Do not give with the intent that you may perhaps be rewarded for it in this world. It is not right to serve your religion for the sake of some compensation. Try to render this service as a call of duty. At this time, Islam is in a state such that there is no one to look after it. If a worldly task is put forward, thousands of Rupees are easily raised for it. But no one pays attention to a religious cause. This task is now in front of you. The complete manuscript has been sent to the printers. In fact, I have received proofs of eight of its chapters. Very soon we will have to worry about the expense of publishing it. This is not the only work. There are many other tasks that we have yet to accomplish, but handle this one first. This is a service of your religion. In fact I should say that this is purely the service of the Holy Quran. Show concern for it and provide the means for it. May Allah the Most High give you the ability to do so, Amen.

May 5, 1916

**The Rights of Orphans and Women — Specifically in
Relation to Safeguarding the Wealth of Orphans and the
Wisdom Behind the Practice of Polygamy**

Ibear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah.

After this, I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil.

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

وَ اٰتُوا الْيَتٰمٰى اَمْوَالَهُمْ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوْا الْخَبِيْثَ بِالطَّيِّبِ ۚ وَلَا تَاْكُلُوْا اَمْوَالَهُمْ
اِلٰى اَمْوَالِكُمْ ۗ اِنَّهٗ كَانَ حُوْبًا كَبِيْرًا ﴿٤﴾

“And give to the orphans their property, and substitute not worthless (things) for (their) good (ones), and devour not their property (adding) to your own property. This is surely a great sin.” (4:2)

وَ اِنْ خِفْتُمْ اَلَّا تَقْسُطُوْا فِي الْيَتٰمٰى فَانكِحُوْا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِّنَ النِّسَاءِ مِمَّنِّي
وَ ثَلٰثٌ وَّرُبْعٌ ۗ فَاِنْ خِفْتُمْ اَلَّا تَعْدِلُوْا فَوَاحِدَةٌ اَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ اَيْمَانُكُمْ ۗ ذٰلِكَ
اَدْنٰى اَلَّا تَعْوَلُوْا ۗ ﴿٥﴾

“And if you fear that you cannot do justice to orphans, marry such women as seem good to you, two, or three,

or four; but if you fear that you will not do justice, then (marry) only one or that which your right hands possess. This is more proper that you may not do injustice.” (4:3)

وَآتُوا النِّسَاءَ صَدُقَاتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً ۗ فَإِن طِبْنَ لَكُمْ عَن شَيْءٍ مِّنْهُ نَفْسًا فَكُلُوهُ هَدِيَّةً مَّرِيَّةً ۝

“And give women their dowries as a free gift. But if they of themselves be pleased to give you a portion thereof, consume it with enjoyment and pleasure.” (4:4)

وَلَا تُؤْتُوا السُّفَهَاءَ أَمْوَالَكُمُ الَّتِي جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ قِيَامًا وَارْزُقُوهُمْ فِيهَا وَاكْسُوهُمْ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا ۝

“And make not over your property, which Allah has made a (means of) support for you, to the weak of understanding, and maintain them out of it, and clothe them and give them a good education.” (4:5)

وَابْتَلُوا الْيَتَامَىٰ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغُوا النِّكَاحَ ۗ فَإِن آنَسْتُمْ مِنُّهُمْ رُشْدًا فَادْفَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ ۗ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوهَا إِسْرَافًا وَبِدَارًا أَن يَكْبَرُوا ۗ وَمَن كَانَ غَنِيًّا فَلْيَسْتَعْفِفْ ۗ وَمَن كَانَ فَقِيرًا فَلْيَأْكُلْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ فَإِذَا دَفَعْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فَأَشْهَدُوا عَلَيْهِمْ ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ حَسِيبًا ۝

“And test the orphans until they reach the age of marriage. Then if you find in them maturity of intellect, make over to them their property, and consume it not extravagantly and hastily against their growing up. And whoever is rich, let him abstain, and whoever is poor let him consume reasonably. And when you make over to them their property, call witnesses in their presence. And Allah is enough as a Reckoner.” (4:6)

لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ ۚ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ أَوْ كَثُرَ ۗ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا ۝

“For men is a share of what the parents and the near relatives leave, and for women a share of what the parents and the near relatives leave, whether it be little or much — an appointed share.” (4:7)

وَإِذَا حَضَرَ الْقِسْمَةَ أُولُو الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالسَّكِينِ فَارْزُقُوهُمْ مِنْهُ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا ۝

“And when relatives and the orphans and the needy are present at the division, give them out of it and speak to them kind words.” (4:8)

وَلْيَخْشَ الَّذِينَ لَوْ تَرَكَوْا مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّةً ضِعْفًا خَافُوا عَلَيْهِمْ فَلْيَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْيَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ۝

“And let those fear who, should they leave behind them weakly offspring, would fear on their account; so let them observe their duty to Allah and let them speak right words.” (4:9)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ الْيَتَامَىٰ ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا ۖ وَسَيَصْلُونَ سَعِيرًا ۝

“Those who swallow the property of the orphans unjustly, they swallow only fire into their bellies. And they will burn in blazing fire.” (4:10)

Sympathy with Orphans and the Needy is the Basis of Islam

The very foundation of Islamic teachings, as far as human rights are concerned, is based upon compassion toward orphans and the needy. Even before the call of prophethood, the Holy Prophet was very benevolent toward orphans and those in need. Whatever he had in his possession was spent on them. This is supported by testimony given by Hazrat Khadija at the time when the Holy Prophet received the divine call. These are

the words with which she comforted the Holy Prophet. “Nay, by Allah, Allah will never bring thee to grief; surely you do good to your relatives (*li tasil-r-rehm*), and bear the burden of the weak, and earn for others that which they have not got, and are hospitable to guests and give help when there is real distress” (Bu. 1:1). She mentioned some other things but these four show us the character of the Holy Prophet. The Arabic phrase, “*li tasil-r-rehm*,” refers to protecting the rights of those who are blood relations. This includes those who are directly related and those with whom a relationship is established through mothers and wives. These were the ties of relationship safeguarded by the Holy Prophet. “And you earn for him who is unable to earn for himself, bear the burden of one who is unable to bear his own, and help others who are in distress.” Such were the noble traits of the Holy Prophet’s character witnessed to by Hazrat Khadija, his wife and closest companion.

Perfect Example of Mercy and Compassion

Hazrat Khadija spent fifteen years of married life with the Holy Prophet before he received the Divine call. The Holy Prophet was not wealthy. Through his marriage with Hazrat Khadija, who was quite rich, he acquired some wealth. Where did he spend all this wealth? He certainly did not spend it on his personal comfort; rather he used it to help orphans, the needy, slaves, and all those whom he came across who were facing difficulties. His profound passion for caring and compassion for those in need was a hallmark of his character from his earliest years. The result of this overwhelming compassion was the revelation of these verses that heavily stressed the rights of orphans and the needy.

The Greater Goal of a Muslim

Study the earlier revelations of the Holy Quran. What is the great goal for a Muslim to strive for mentioned in these chapters? It is the helping of orphans and the needy described in these words:

“And pointed out to him the two conspicuous ways? But he attempts not the uphill road; And what will make thee comprehend what the uphill road is? (It is) to free a slave, Or to feed in a day of hunger. An orphan nearly related.” (90:10-15)

We also find, “Nay, but you honor not the orphan, nor do you urge one another to feed the poor.” (89:17-18)

These words of the Holy Quran describe the attitude of disbelievers toward orphans and the poor. Practicing Islam is treating orphans with respect and exhorting one another to feed the poor.

The Condition of Orphans in this Age

Muslims, instead of treating their orphans with dignity, have either abandoned their care, leaving it in the hands of Christians, or have left them wandering around in a forsaken and distressed state. Honoring the needs of orphans was amongst the earliest messages of Islam, but regrettably Muslims today have abandoned their duty toward them. In another verse, the Holy Quran states, “Hast thou seen him who belies religion? That is the one who is rough to the orphan and urges not the feeding of the needy” (107:1-3). He who rejects the orphan and does not urge the feeding of the poor is said to be belying religion or disbelieving in the Day of Judgment. By his behavior, he questions being held accountable for his actions.

The Reason for Urging Care of Orphans

Why has so much stress been laid upon empathy toward orphans? It is because the real progress of a nation cannot be gauged by the progress made by a few individuals, while others remain in poverty. Advancement of all members in society and not a few individuals truly reflects the development of a nation. Until all parts of the body are nurtured, it cannot be in a healthy state. In fact, the part of the body that exhibits uninhibited

growth in comparison with the rest becomes cancerous and may need to be surgically excised. Thus, when all members of a nation are not given the opportunity to make progress, the nation fails to acquire a position of respect. Wealth concentrated in the hands of a few individuals can be harmful. This is the reason why Islam has, starting with the earliest revelations, stressed the importance of taking care of orphans.

Guarding the Property of Orphans

These verses of chapter *Al-Nisa*, which I have recited, also stress the rights of orphans. It is stated: "And give to the orphans their property, and substitute not worthless (things) for (their) good (ones)." This enjoins that you have to take care not only of those orphans who are dependent upon you, but you also have to look after those who may own property. In this section specifically, those orphans who have property are mentioned. You are enjoined not to consume their property but to return it to them and not substitute their good things for worthless ones. "And devour not their property (adding) to your own property. This is surely a great sin." The injunction does not prohibit partnership but what is prohibited is partnership with the intent to consume their property.

Polygamy and Muslims

"And if you fear that you cannot do justice to orphans, marry such women as seem good to you, two, or three, or four; but if you fear that you will not do justice, then (marry) only one or that which your right hands possess. This is more proper that you may not do injustice." (4:3)

Muslims have spent a lot of effort on this verse of the Holy Quran. If you observe the attitude of Muslim kings, they had several hundred women in their harems. As a result of this excess, those who were in a leadership position wasted their energies, which could have been spent in service of religion and humanity. The whole nation suffered the adverse consequences of this

behavior. On the other hand, before the advent of Islam there was no limit amongst Arabs to the number of wives an individual could have.

Why was Polygamy Allowed?

Islam has allowed polygamy, with specific terms, and only under certain conditions. This permission was given in consideration of circumstances that can be quite detrimental for the welfare of a nation, if relief is not provided by allowing limited polygamy. During the battle of Uhud, seventy out of a total of seven hundred Muslims were martyred and the proportion of women increased greatly in the society. If polygamy were not allowed, care of the widows would have been neglected. An orphan is not only a child whose father has passed away. The Arabic word *Yatim* means one who is left alone; and therefore the term can also be applied to a woman whose husband has passed away.

The Holy Quran tells us that if you cannot do justice to these women, you should marry them. The real occasion for polygamy therefore arose as a consequence of battles after which the number of widows in the society increased. Under these circumstances the moral condition of the society could not have been maintained without permitting polygamy. Nevertheless, this does not mean that polygamy cannot be practiced in any other situation. An individual can be faced with certain other conditions in which he is compelled to practice polygamy. This is why permission for polygamy is granted. When Islam permits something under special circumstances, the breadth of such circumstances can be widened with greatest care.

Polygamy Without a Genuine Need is Unlawful

This however, does not mean that permission is granted without the need being there. Those who indulge in such behavior do not follow the Holy Quran. In fact, they follow their own low

desires. Some religions have completely prohibited more than one marriage. This is also incorrect. Islam does not include such an oppressive law; but on the other hand, has legalized polygamy under special circumstances. Sometimes under ordinary circumstances, the need arises to contract more than one marriage. Islam has also given permission to have more than one wife under such circumstances. Those who practice polygamy unnecessarily, merely to satisfy their carnal desires, are committing what is unlawful. Observe that Islam has also permitted divorce, although the Holy Prophet has said, "Out of that which is lawful, divorce is the most displeasing to Allah." This does not mean that divorce is not allowed under any circumstances. This is like a medicine only to be used when it is necessary. Similarly, according to the Islamic *Shariah*, more than one marriage is not lawful unless it is necessary.

The Reasons for Polygamy have not been Specified

Different needs arise under different circumstances; therefore the reasons for permitting the lawful practice of polygamy have not been enumerated. This is similar to divorce in which the conditions permitted are not specified. It has been left up to the circumstances of time and conditions of a nation or country. Today in Europe, even though they practice the same religion, different nations have established different set of restrictions in the matter of divorce. In the United States each state has separate legislation dealing with divorce. Since Islam was to be an international religion and is meant for all ages, it did not limit the reasons under which divorce can be granted. It has left it discretionary, depending on the condition of humanity.

Similarly, the reasons for polygamy have not been specified or limited, for different conditions can arise in different ages. For example, in major wars, the number of men can be greatly reduced because of participation in combat. In some countries, men are naturally less in numbers than women. Sympathy for the human race is the basis for allowing polygamy under these circumstances.

Some of these circumstances, for example not having any children, apply only specifically to certain individuals.

Polygamy is a Permission and not a Command

Nowhere in the Holy Quran is it stated that you are allowed to divorce. Just as divorce is permitted when the need arises, similarly polygamy is permitted under exceptional circumstances and is not a general command. If having more than one wife was an essential need deserving reward, the words of the Holy Quran quoted above should have commenced with four (*rubha*) instead of two (*mathna*), for the former would be deserving of greater reward. Four would then be followed by three, two, and one, in that order.

To Make Polygamy Binding Upon all is Contrary to Normal Conditions Existing in the World

Conditions prevailing in the world should be carefully observed. They are not such that women are twice, thrice, or four times the number of men. In fact, the ratio of men to women is about equal. The Holy Quran does not give any command that is contrary to the facts. Polygamy is a remedial measure for exceptional circumstances and is a mere permission, not a command. This is clearly expressed by the words that follow: "But if you fear that you will not do justice, then (marry) only one or that which your right hands possess. This is more proper that you may not do injustice." (4:3) Islam has given this permission only subject to certain conditions, without which it is unlawful.

The Real Purpose of Polygamy

The real intent in allowing polygamy under exceptional circumstances has been expressed in the words of the Holy Quran: "This is more proper that you may not do injustice (*al la ta'ditū*)."

The real purpose is for a man to improve his moral condition. If having more than one wife leads to deterioration of the moral

condition, then monogamy is the preferred course. Imam Shafi has taken the Arabic word “*ta’dilū*” to mean *increasing the number of children*. The verse would then mean that if you do not have the resources and you keep on having more children through multiple marriages, then the purpose of permitting polygamy is defeated.

Payment of Marriage Dowry is Essential

“And give women their dowries as a free gift (*nihlab*). But if they of themselves be pleased to give you a portion thereof, consume it with enjoyment and pleasure.” (4:4)

It has become customary these days to fix the amount of dowry without the intention of paying it. It is not permissible to promise exorbitant amounts of dowry without paying. Even the verse that allows a large amount of dowry to be given states:

“And if you wish to have (one) wife in the place of another and you have given one of them a heap of gold, take nothing from it. Would you take it by slandering (her) and (doing her) manifest wrong?” (4:20)

This verse clearly indicates that even a heap of gold, when promised, is to be given; and this is a free gift (*nihlab*) without expecting any return on the part of the husband.

The Moral Lesson in the Giving of Dowry

Life evolves with the establishment of social relationships. Many lessons need to be learned in this respect. The first lesson taught for this purpose is to make a sacrifice, so that one is ready to spend for even higher causes. If spending for the sake of a spouse is advised, why is it not necessary to spend on even higher causes? Islam aims at progressive strengthening of your moral faculties. By mandating sacrifice for your wives in the form of a marriage dowry, the intent of the Holy Quran is to indicate the priority that needs to be given to spending in the way of Allah who is above all the rulers of the world.

Property not to be Entrusted to the Weak of Understanding

“And make not over your property, which Allah has made a (means of) support for you, to the weak of understanding (*sofabā*), and maintain them out of it (*fī hā*), and clothe them and give them a good education.” (4:5)

The Arabic word *sofabā* means those who are weak in understanding — those who cannot properly safeguard their property. The Holy Quran tells us not to assign property to those who do not understand its proper use. Property has been assigned to us by Allah the Most High as a means of sustenance. If you give it to the weak of understanding they will destroy it. Regarding children, or those, who because of physical or mental handicaps, are not capable of maintaining their property, the command is not to turn over property to them. Maintain them out of it, and clothe them and give them a good education. The Arabic word *fī hā* indicates that they should be maintained out of this property. It may be used for trade etc. And those to whom the property belongs should be maintained out of its earnings in order to keep the capital from going to waste.

Teach Orphans to Safeguard their Property

“And give them a good education.” Giving them a good education enables them to become capable of handling their finances and spending wisely. The real intent is to turn over the property of the orphan to his custody so that he can benefit from it. That is why it is stated, “And test the orphans until they reach the age of marriage.” Imam Abu Hanifa has set the age of marriage, or maturity, at eighteen. In the language of the Arabs, the age of marriage is synonymous with the age of maturity. That is the reason why it is stated that when they reach the age of marriage, “Then if you find in them maturity of intellect, make over to them their property.”

The guardian of an orphan may resort to wasteful spending

under the apprehension that his ward will take over the property as soon as they reach maturity. To prevent such wasteful spending it is further added:

“And consume it not extravagantly and hastily against their growing up. And whoever is rich, let him abstain, and whoever is poor let him consume reasonably. And when you make over to them their property, call witnesses in their presence. And Allah is enough as a Reckoner.” (4:6)

Law of Inheritance in Islam is Inclusive of Both Men and Women

“For men is a share of what the parents and the near relatives leave, and for women a share of what the parents and the near relatives leave, whether it be little or much — an appointed share.” (4:7)

The Holy Quran apportions both men and women a share in the inheritance while the Arabs traditionally excluded women from inheriting property. Proverbially, only he who was able to use a spear could inherit property. Islam put an end to this practice. The Holy Quran condemns this custom and states that both men and women are entitled to a fixed portion of the inheritance whether it is a small or a large amount.

“And let those fear who, should they leave behind them weakly offspring, would fear on their account; so let them observe their duty to Allah” (4:9). These words of the Holy Quran tell us to treat orphans and needy mercifully for one could die and similarly leave behind small children who are in a pitiful state.

“And let them speak right words” (4:10). Speaking the right words refers to advising them gently that it was inappropriate to resort to beggary. Those who are in possession of the property of orphans should, however, not let them go empty handed but rather give them sufficient to meet their needs.

Penalty for Illegally Consuming the Property of the Orphan

The admonition against illegal consumption of the orphan's property is repeated again with the warning: "Those who swallow the property of orphans unjustly, they swallow only fire into their bellies. And they will burn in blazing fire" (4:10)

The Second Sermon

Special Address to the Women, Encouragement to Pay *Zakaat*

Some women, because of lack of religious knowledge, are unaware of the etiquette of the Friday sermon. One of these requirements is to be quiet while the sermon is being delivered. Sometimes, because of children crying, they are unable to hear. I therefore want to specially remind them that Allah the Most High has frequently made us aware of safeguarding the rights of orphans. The orphan, is that extremely helpless individual, who has no one to look after his interests. There is a special message for us in this. Observe that this chapter (*Al-Nisa*) begins with the words, "O people, keep your duty to your Lord." This was followed by the injunction to safeguard the property of the orphan. This means that you are commanded to safeguard the rights of the weakest members of society. It should serve as a reminder of how essential it is to fulfill our rights and obligations toward the Almighty who is the All Seeing, Hearing. This is something that we need to heed.

Safeguard also the Rights of Allah

For this reason, I want to draw the attention of all men and women toward this important matter. The Holy Quran has not appointed any specific month for giving obligatory charity

(*Zakaat*). People generally have fixed the month of Rajab (Islamic calendar) to pay their *Zakaat* dues. I am therefore drawing your attention to this: that God also has some rights. Allah the Most High has kept the commandment of *Zakaat* along with the commandments for prayer. This is specifically God's right, which you consume. God states in the Holy Quran:

“And those who hoard up gold and silver and spend it not in Allah's way — announce to them a painful chastisement, On the day when it will be heated in the Fire of hell, then their foreheads and their sides and their backs will be branded with it: This is what you hoarded up for yourselves, so taste what you used to hoard” (9:34-35).

Precepts of *Zakaat*

Zakaat is due from the accumulated wealth of men and women at a rate of two and a half percent. It should be collected in a central treasury. It is inappropriate to spend it according to one's wishes. There are different categories of spending for *Zakaat*; therefore, it should be collected in one location before being disbursed into various categories. Muslims are generally very giving for charitable purposes, but if this charity is employed for a permissible expenditure, it can serve a very useful purpose. It is very essential to pay attention to the rights of God. Life is a temporary affair. No one takes away any portion of his wealth with him. Just as we come into this world empty handed, we leave it without any possessions. Wealth keeps on changing hands. Today it may be in the hands of one individual while tomorrow someone else will have it. Those who do not care for the rights of God and have a greater love for wealth, also have to part with it in the end. The love of God cannot enter the heart imbued with the love of wealth. Islam has therefore set some principles for spending in the way of Allah and from amongst them *Zakaat* has been made compulsory. Those who cannot pay this because they have a greater love in their hearts for wealth than for the love of Allah are acting against Islamic principles.

The Real Purpose for the Coming of Prophets

The purpose of a prophet's coming is to create love of the true God in the hearts of men while turning them away from the love of wealth and the temporary material comforts of this world. This is why prophets do not like to leave behind any wealth as inheritance. At the time of his death, the Holy Prophet gave away in charity the last *dirham* (penny) left in his house. Everyone cannot go to this extent; therefore ordinary people have been given some specific facilitations in this matter. I have conveyed the message to you and have relieved myself of my duty in this matter. Those who are willing to listen need to pay attention. I have conveyed to you that you should be fearful of God and fulfill His rights without delay. Every individual after his death will be held accountable for his own deeds. If someone consumes the rights of God and leaves behind thousands of rupees in inheritance, his inheritors will not be held accountable on his behalf. Every man and woman should therefore understand their responsibilities and fulfill them. Try to lead exemplary lives. Become familiar with your responsibilities in this matter and act upon them. Also, explain this to others and serve as a practical example.

May 12, 1916

**Islamic Law of Inheritance is Based Upon Principles of
Human Equality and Social Justice**

Ibear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah.

After this, I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil.

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

يُوصِيكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي أَوْلَادِكُمْ لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ الْأُنثِيَّيْنَ ۚ فَإِنْ كُنَّ نِسَاءً
فَوقَ اثْنَتَيْنِ فَالْهُنَّ ثُلُثًا مِمَّا تَرَكَ ۚ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ وَاحِدَةً فَلَهَا النِّصْفُ ۗ وَلَا يُورِثُ
الْكَفْلَ وَاحِدٌ مِنْهُمَا السُّدُسَ مِمَّا تَرَكَ إِنْ كَانَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ ۚ وَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ وَلَدٌ
وَوَرِثَتْهُ أَبَوَاهُ فَلِلْمِثْلِ الثُّلُثُ ۚ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَهُ إِخْوَةٌ فَلِلْمِثْلِ السُّدُسُ مِنْ بَعْدِ
وَصِيَّةِ يُوْصَىٰ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ ۗ وَأَبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ لَا تَدْرُونَ أَيُّهُمُ أَقْرَبُ لَكُمْ
نَفْعًا ۗ فَرِيضَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ ۗ إِنْ اللَّهُ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ۝

“Allah enjoins you concerning your children: for the male is the equal of the portion of two females; but if there be more than two females, two-thirds of what the deceased leaves is theirs; and if there be one, for her is the half. And as for his parents, for each of them is the sixth of

what he leaves, if he has a child; but if he has no child and (only) his two parents inherit him, for his mother is the third; but if he has brothers, for his mother is the sixth, after (payment of) a bequest he may have bequeathed or a debt. Your parents and your children, you know not which of them is the nearer to you in benefit. This is an ordinance from Allah. Allah is surely ever Knowing, Wise.” (4:11)

وَ لَكُمْ نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ أَزْوَاجُكُمْ إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَكُنَّ وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَهُنَّ وَلَدٌ فَلَكُمْ الرُّبْعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّتِ يُوْصِيْنَ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ ۗ وَ لَهُنَّ الرُّبْعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَاهُنَّ الشُّهُنُ مِمَّا تَرَكَتُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّتِ تُوْصَوْنَ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ ۗ وَإِنْ كَانَ رَجُلٌ يُورِثُ كَلَّةً أَوْ امْرَأَةً وَ لَهُ أَخٌ أَوْ أُخْتٌ فَلِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ ۚ فَإِنْ كَانُوا أَكْثَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ فِي الثُّلُثِ مِنْ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّتِ يُوْصَىٰ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ ۗ غَيْرَ مُضَارٍّ ۚ وَصِيَّةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَلِيمٌ ۝

“And yours is half of what your wives leave if they have no child; but if they have a child, your share is a fourth of what they leave after (payment of) any bequest they may have bequeathed or a debt; and theirs is the fourth of what you leave if you have no child, but if you have a child, their share is the eighth of what you leave after (payment of) a bequest you may have bequeathed or a debt. And if a man or a woman, having no children, leaves property to be inherited and he (or she) has a brother or a sister, then for each of them is the sixth; but if they are more than that, they shall be sharers in the third after (payment of) a bequest that may have been bequeathed or a debt not injuring (others). This is an ordinance from Allah: and Allah is Knowing, Forbearing.” (4:12)

تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ ۗ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا
الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۗ وَذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿١٣﴾

“These are Allah’s limits. And whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, He will admit him to Gardens wherein flow rivers, to abide in them. And this is the great achievement.” (4:13)

وَمَنْ يُعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ نَارًا خَالِدًا فِيهَا ۗ وَلَهُ
عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ ﴿١٤﴾

“And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger and goes beyond His limits, He will make him enter fire to abide in it, and for him is an abasing chastisement.” (4:14)

The Holy Quran is a Complete Collection of Laws

The Holy Quran is a complete and comprehensive guide for all of mankind. It provides guidance in all matters with which they have to deal. This includes marital relations, inheritance, social relations, war etc.

The Comprehensiveness of the Holy Quran Bears Witness to its Divine Origin

Think about this: Arabian society at the advent of the Holy Prophet had no repository or tradition of knowledge. He himself did not know how to read or write. What was the source that put all these thoughts in his mind and gave him the understanding and direction to gather all these laws in one comprehensive book and present it to the world? There were no laws in Arabia at the time, and certainly no tradition existed to put them in writing. Nor was there any familiarity with laws that existed in other countries. The Holy Prophet could not read and even if he did, where in the world could he find such a comprehensive book that had a collection of all these laws? Nowhere in the

world does such a unique and comprehensive work exist — even today. There may be books directed toward specific subjects, but the Holy Quran is unique in amassing all the laws and at the same time giving guidance regarding their implementation. It gives guidance in all matters related to the Creator, while at the same time, discusses in detail and gives guidance on matters relating to human relationships and interaction. This was certainly not the undertaking of the Holy Prophet Muhammad — to have compiled such a comprehensive book. It is the work of the God who is the Creator of mankind and is aware of all his needs and knows well the sources and means that are necessary for his development.

The Problem of Inheritance and the Revolutionary Changes Brought about by Islam

These verses discuss the making of a will regarding one's children. All the shares to be inherited by individuals in the property of a person have been identified. In Arabia, there existed the tradition that the right of inheritance belonged only to individuals who were wage earners and could use the spear. Small children and women who, at that time, stayed in the house, were excluded from inheriting property. It also happened that the eldest son inherited all the property while the other children were left out. The Holy Prophet Muhammad brought about a revolutionary change amongst them. All near relatives, which included parents, spouses, male and female offspring, were apportioned a share in the inheritance.

Reply to an Objection

The argument has arisen that Islam is mandating division of inherited property, which has led to its dismemberment into smaller pieces, thereby reducing its utility. This has been debated widely. It is argued that if one person inherited all the property it could better served him. The first thing to remember in this regard, is that the laws of inheritance promulgated by Islam have

the principle of equality of the human race as their basis. All near relatives are given consideration in this matter, whether they are males or females. The only difference between the two is that the male relative gets twice the amount of inheritance as the female. Amongst the Arabs, prior to Islam, women were given no share at all. In fact, Islam is the only religion that has mandated this entitlement for women. Men have been given twice the share because they are the wage earners in most circumstances. Women have been apportioned half the share because they are not usually the wage earners and are more frequently dependent upon men for their support. They have both been, however, included in this inheritance.

The question still arises whether it is beneficial to keep the property as a whole or divide it into smaller pieces, the smaller pieces thereby being rendered less useful. Islam has, however, taught us that all humans are endowed with similar faculties. Every individual can put his faculties to use and does not have to be dependent upon the earnings of another. This is the greatest distinction of the religion of Islam — that it has heavily stressed the principle of the equality within the human race. If a certain individual uses his faculties and works hard to build up property, why is it then, that those who inherit a portion of his property must be totally dependent upon what they receive? They can likewise make an effort and make the property more productive.

We frequently observe people advancing from a state of poverty to affluence by making full use of their faculties. Similarly, a rich person can become greatly impoverished due to a lack of effort. The truth is that Allah the Most High has endowed us with strengths and faculties. Man benefits from the proper use of these endowments. There also are states of dependency. A person, who is limited in the use of his faculties, becomes dependent on others to the extent of his limitations. For example, a child is dependent upon his parents until he reaches maturity.

Islamic Way of Life and the Law of Nature

The truth is that Allah the Most High, who is the Creator of all, has created such means through His beneficence and has endowed man with strengths and faculties that together they can provide a means for his living. Allah tells us that he has made the sun, the moon, and the earth subservient to us. Since these forces of nature have been made subservient to man, he can benefit from them whenever he wants to do so. He should strive to use these faculties and not expect return without making an effort. The law of inheritance in Islam is not based upon the circumstance that if someone has not been endowed with these faculties he should be given all of the inheritance. To make the best use of inheritance, it has also been apportioned amongst near relatives so that one individual does not become totally dependent upon it. He is encouraged to use his faculties and earn for himself. By using their faculties, they can all benefit from it and simultaneously use their own effort to make further gains.

A Spiritual Lesson

This division also holds a spiritual lesson for us. Just as we have been given the encouragement, through this division of property, to use our faculties and earn a living with our own effort, similarly in order to get closer to God, we should exert our own spiritual faculties and not rely upon others for our spiritual growth and progress. Just as He has not made us physically dependent upon others, Allah has not appointed mentors and priests over us and made them responsible for our spiritual development. The Holy Quran states: "We have truly shown him the way; he may be thankful or unthankful" (76:3). By using his faculties, man becomes deserving of reward, while neglect and refusal to accept guidance make him subject to punitive measures.

In Islam Spiritual Mentors are not Responsible for our Salvation

Just as we can benefit from using our physical faculties, we can also use our spiritual endowments to make progress. Allah has appointed the same type of law for both. In many religions, you will see that on special occasions they cannot do without the presence of a priest or a pundit. For example, in Christianity if a padre is not there at the time of death to give baptism, salvation is not possible.

For a Muslim, salvation is dependent upon one's individual effort and not upon baptism by a priest. There is an Imam appointed to lead prayers, but if the need arises, there is no harm in allowing others to lead prayers. It is not the case that without the appointed Imam there would be no prayer service.

The Reason Why Prophets are Sent

From my discussion, it should not be inferred that I do not believe in prophets. Prophets come to guide in the ways of Allah the Most High. Man, by his very nature, is in need of a role model to follow. In order to even use our physical faculties, we need an example before us. There exists a similar need for guidance of our spiritual faculties in the right direction and when the messenger clearly identifies the path toward God, it becomes our duty to follow it. Prophets and messengers are sent so that they can explain and guide humanity in the ways that invoke Allah's pleasure.

In short, Islam has set laws based upon equality of the human race and democratic principles. Both physical, and spiritual laws, follow the same pattern. Laws of inheritance encourage division of property amongst near relatives so that individuals can learn to use their faculties and benefit from the inheritance apportioned to them. They are thus given the opportunity to make more out of less. A person who cannot benefit from limited resources is liable to waste it if he is given more.

Laws of Inheritance and Local Customs

That is why Islam has apportioned shares for both men and women in the inheritance. Here (in British India) there are customs and traditions that people choose to follow and this is much in vogue in the villages. Based on these traditions and customs, they refuse to give shares to daughters. The government prefers that people follow the laws that they choose for themselves. When Muslims were asked whether they want to follow the law of the Quran or their local customs, they gave preference to their local traditions. These are the difficulties that Muslims face as a consequence of being fettered in their traditional customs. It is a great inequity that almost half of the human race has had its rights usurped as a result of this behavior. People think that by giving inheritance to women, their property goes to those outside the family. They do not realize that if a share goes outside, it also comes in when marriage ties are established outside the family. In the end, a balance is established; but they refuse to pay attention to the Holy Quran.

A Point to Ponder in the Use of Arabic Words Pertaining to the Laws of Inheritance

Wherever inheritance is mentioned in the Holy Quran, the Arabic words, *mima tarak*, meaning *what they leave behind*, are used. For what they carry forward the words, *mima kasab*, meaning *what they earn*, are used. Usually every individual leaves behind something that is distributed amongst his children.

Prophets do not Leave Behind Inheritance

People ask the question why prophets do not have inheritance and why it should not be distributed according to the laws laid down in these verses. Prophets do not come into this world with the objective of accumulating and leaving behind wealth when they pass away. It goes against the sanctity of their mission to leave behind anything. They do not leave behind anything

that they do not carry forward with them. They do not have a liking for things that are left behind as inheritance. This is the reason for the Holy Prophet's statement, "We who belong to the group of prophets, do not inherit or leave behind inheritance." When Hazrat Fatima presented her case before Hazrat Abu Bakr regarding some property belonging to the Holy Prophet, he quoted the very same words of the Holy Prophet, "We who belong to the group of prophets, do not inherit or leave behind inheritance." All the companions including Hazrat Ali remained silent at that moment and the case was dismissed.

The truth is that leaving behind inheritance is contrary to the dignity of prophethood. At the time of his death, the Holy Prophet specifically asked if there was anything left in the house. He called for the last penny left in the house and gave it away in charity. Hazrat Abu Bakr made a decision based upon a well known saying of the Holy Prophet and no one at the time questioned his judgment. It would have been quite appropriate to challenge his decision if there was any proof contrary to the saying of the Holy Prophet. This did not happen and all remained silent. People say that when the Holy Quran states, "Allah enjoins you concerning your children," how, they ask, could the Holy Prophet go against this verse? They do not realize that this verse is meant for those who leave behind something. As prophets do not leave any inheritance behind, this verse does not apply to them.

The Companions would not have Remained Silent in Order to Support an Erroneous Decision

A consensus of opinion (*ijmah*) of the companions supports the authenticity of this hadith. None from amongst the companions spoke against it. Unlike Muslims today, the companions of the Holy Prophet did not consider Hazrat Abu Bakr such a spiritual mentor, before whom they were afraid to express their opinion. Even the lowest in rank amongst them was not afraid to speak his mind when he felt an incorrect statement was made.

Observe the example of Hazrat Umar. The governors of provinces under his administration felt that Umar had one hand on their upper and the other hand on their lower jaw. They were afraid that if they showed the least discordance with the rules, he would take stern actions against them. People were, however, not afraid to challenge his opinion if they felt it went against the precepts of the faith.

During the Caliphate of Hazrat Umar, Muslims had become quite affluent and were giving large amounts in dowries. Hazrat Umar, who led a very simple life, noticed this, gathered together the people of Madinah, and gave a sermon advising restraint in spending on dowries. An old woman of Madinah stood up and addressed him thus, "O Son of Khattab, who are you to set limits on the dowry when the Quran states: 'and you have given one of them a heap of gold, take nothing from it'" (4:20). Hazrat Umar, realizing his error, immediately recanted his opinion and remarked, "The women of Madinah are wiser than Umar." The companions were thus very outspoken, and not afraid to express their opinion if they even noticed the slightest hint of error. They were not like people today who act as if they cannot speak and like dumb animals follow any direction in which they are led. They were not afraid to challenge the greatest of men regarding religious precepts. The silence of all the companions when Hazrat Abu Bakr gave judgment in the case of Hazrat Fatima indicates that they all supported his opinion.

To Abandon the Consensus of Opinion of the Companions is an Insult to their Integrity

The most revered amongst Muslim *ummah*, the companions of the Holy Prophet, have reached a consensus of opinion that prophets neither take nor give inheritance. Abandoning their consensus is an insult upon their integrity and akin to calling them (we seek Allah's refuge) liars. If the Holy Prophet had not made the statement that Hazrat Abu Bakr quoted, then why did the companions not say that he was wrong? Why did Ali not

challenge and why did Fatima not oppose it? The fact that all of them accepted it proves that they considered this hadith to be correct. They should have otherwise contradicted it. A lie cannot be attributed to the companions of the Holy Prophet. Any hadith that is traced to a companion of the Holy Prophet has not been called false, particularly one whose authenticity is supported by their consensus of opinion.

What is the Inheritance of the Prophets?

The wealth of this world is left behind. The Prophets (peace be upon them) do not leave it behind but take it with them. They spend all they have in the way of Allah and thus prepare for the life hereafter. They do not leave it behind as inheritance. The knowledge that they receive from God certainly stays behind but even that is not meant for here and goes with them in the form of their practice and example. Only those who benefit from it, inherit their knowledge. Their spiritual sons are thus their inheritors.

The Duty of Making a Bequest

In this section, portions have been fixed for sons, daughters, sisters, and brothers. I do not want to go into the details of this. I do however want to draw your attention toward an important matter. It has been stated: "You leave after (payment of) a bequest you may have bequeathed." This shows that for those who leave behind wealth, Islam also requires the making of bequests as necessary. This is clearly supported by another verse of the Holy Quran.

"It is prescribed for you when death approaches one of you, if he leaves behind wealth for parents and near relatives, to make a bequest in a kindly manner, it is incumbent upon the dutiful." (2:180)

The example of the companions of the Holy Prophet also supports the making of bequests. Almost every companion

made bequests out of whatever wealth he had in his possession. It is also important that you make some amount of bequest from your possessions. What were these bequests made for? From a study of the history of the companions of the Holy Prophet, we find these bequests were made in the way of Allah, for the upkeep of orphans, the needy, and for the propagation of Islam. They would separate a portion from their wealth for this purpose that was not considered as part of their inheritance.

What Should be the Amount of Bequest?

An incident is narrated about a companion of the Holy Prophet who was sick. The Holy Prophet visited him to inquire about his health. He related to the Holy Prophet that he had a significant amount of wealth and only one daughter. Should he make a bequest to give all of it away? The Holy Prophet said, "No." "Should it be two thirds," he asked? To this, the Holy Prophet again said, "No." He then asked for half and the Holy Prophet advised him to make a bequest of one third of his holdings. The Holy Prophet also said that it was better that he make a bequest of one third and it was better that he leave his inheritors well taken care of rather than in a state of dependence. This is the path of moderation that Islam prescribes for its adherents!

Take Some of Your Assets with You

Those of you who own property and have abundance of wealth should make a bequest for the service of your religion besides leaving it for your inheritors. What you leave behind for your inheritors stays here and will not go with you in the hereafter. Your bequest to Islam is what you take with you for the hereafter when you leave this world. What you leave behind may not necessarily remain preserved. We are witness to the fact that people left behind large amounts of properties that were needlessly wasted by those who inherited them. You have no knowledge of what will happen to your properties when you pass away.

Follow the Path of Contentment Rather Than Regret

If an individual, who leaves behind substantial holdings when he dies, were to find out how they were wasted, he would certainly have a feeling of great regret. In view of this uncertainty, would he not prefer to take a small portion with him so that it may be of some benefit to him in the life hereafter? His hope is that the inheritance he leaves behind will benefit his children and they live comfortable lives. The reality on the ground is contrary to this. We have observed large holdings wasted by those who inherit them.

Nothing Goes to Waste with Allah

Allah the Most High states: “What is with you passes away and what is with Allah is enduring” (16:96).

So give something while you are alive and make bequests so that they serve to propagate Islam. In this way, it won't be what you leave behind (*mima tarak*) but what you earn (*mima kasab*) and take with you.

The Chastisement for Disobeying the Laws of Inheritance

The Holy Quran states:

“And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger and goes beyond His limits, He will make him enter fire to abide in it, and for him is an abasing chastisement.” (4:14)

Those who prefer customs over the commandments of the Holy Quran should be fearful of this message. Why should the Quran and God be concerned whether women get their share or not and warn of abasing chastisement to those who disobey? It is to your benefit that men and women have equal rights and equal opportunities to make progress. Daughters are deprived of their right to inheritance with the excuse of substantial spending in arranging their marriages although such expenditures are

common for the son's marriage also. The shares of both sons and daughters in the inheritance should therefore be safeguarded. The rights to good education and teaching of excellent morals to daughters should also be recognized.

The Holy Prophet woke up one night and remarked, "How many evils descended upon the earth on this night?" "Wake up! Those ones residing in the apartments (reference to his wives). Any who are covered in this world will be exposed in the hereafter."

Much attention is given these days to material comfort but no one worries about adornment and serenity of the spirit. Much attention is paid to the external adornment of daughters, but little effort is put into nurturing inner qualities of goodness in them. The daughters cannot be blamed for this, for much of the blame lies with parents. It is the duty of parents to make their children so capable that they are not held responsible for them. Provide them with such garments that they are not the ones exposed in the hereafter and have a place of honor and covering. Those who desire to seek the pleasure of Allah should study the Holy Quran and encourage others to do so. In this way, they can avoid being held responsible for providing cover for their daughters in this world but being negligent in exposing them in the hereafter.

May 26, 1916

**Forbidden Marital Ties, Duty of Getting Married and
Prohibition of Extramarital Affairs**

Ibear witness that none deserves to be served besides Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah.

After this, I seek the protection of Allah from the accursed devil.

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

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أُمَّهَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُكُمْ وَأَخَوَاتُكُمْ وَعُمَّتُكُمْ وَخَالَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُ
الْأَخِ وَبَنَاتُ الْأَخْتِ وَأُمَّهَاتُكُمُ اللَّاتِي أَرْضَعْنَكُمْ وَأَخَوَاتُكُم مِّنَ الرَّضَاعَةِ
وَأُمَّهَاتُ نِسَائِكُمْ وَرَبَائِبُكُمُ اللَّاتِي فِي حُجُورِكُمْ مِّن نِّسَائِكُمُ اللَّاتِي دَخَلْتُم
بِهِنَّ وَإِن لَّمْ تَكُونُوا دَخَلْتُم بِهِنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ ۗ وَحَلَائِلُ أَبْنَائِكُمُ
الَّذِينَ مِن أَصْلَابِكُمْ ۗ وَأَن تَجْمَعُوا بَيْنَ الْأُخْتَيْنِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
كَانَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ۝

“Forbidden to you are your mothers, and your daughters, and your sisters, and your paternal aunts, and your maternal aunts, and brother’s daughters and sister’s daughters, and your mothers that have suckled you, and your foster-sisters, and mothers of your wives, and your stepdaughters who are in your guardianship (born) of your wives

to whom you have gone in — but if you have not gone in to them, there is no blame on you — and the wives of your sons who are of your own loins; and that you should have two sisters together, except what has already passed. Surely Allah is ever Forgiving, Merciful,” (4:23)

وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ۚ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ ۚ
وَأَحْلَلَ لَكُمْ مَا وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ مُحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ مُسْفِحِينَ ۗ
فَمَا اسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْهُنَّ فَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً ۗ وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا
تَرْضَيْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْفَرِيضَةِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿٢٤﴾

“And all married women except those whom your right hands possess (are forbidden); (this is) Allah’s ordinance to you. And lawful for you are (all women) besides those, provided that you seek (them) with your property, taking (them) in marriage, not committing fornication. Then as to those whom you profit by (by marrying), give them their dowries as appointed. And there is no blame on you about what you mutually agree after what is appointed (of dowry). Surely Allah is ever Knowing, Wise.” (4:24)

وَمَنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ مِنْكُمْ طَوْلًا أَنْ يَنْكِحَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ فَمِنْ مِمَّا مَلَكَتْ
أَيْمَانُكُمْ ۖ مِنْ فَتْيَتِكُمْ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِأَيْمَانِكُمْ ۗ بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ ۚ
فَأَنْكِحُوهُنَّ بِأَدْنِ أَهْلِهِنَّ وَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ مُحْصَنَاتٍ
غَيْرِ مُسْفِحَاتٍ وَلَا مَخْذُولَاتٍ أُخْدَانٍ ۚ فَإِذَا أَحْصَيْتُمْ فَإِنَّ أَيْمَانَكُمْ بِفَاحِشَةٍ
فَعَلَيْهِنَّ نِصْفُ مَا عَلَى الْمُحْصَنَاتِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ ۗ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ الْعَنَتَ
مِنْكُمْ ۗ وَأَنْ تَصْبِرُوا خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٢٥﴾

“And whoever among you cannot afford to marry free believing women, (let him marry) such of your believing maidens as your right hands possess. And Allah knows best your faith — you are (sprung) the one from the

other. So marry them with the permission of their masters, and give them their dowries justly, they being chaste, not fornicating, nor receiving paramours; then if they are guilty of adultery when they are taken in marriage, they shall suffer half the punishment for free married women. This is for him among you who fears falling into evil. And that you abstain is better for you. And Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.” (4:25)

The precepts pertaining to marriage have been completed in this section by indicating those with whom marriage is prohibited. This includes relatives from the mother’s side or otherwise, with whom marital relations are prohibited. The Holy Quran addresses a wide variety of commandments and prohibitions. It sheds light upon every precept as far as the need exists. The Holy Quran does not just give moral guidance. It aims for the believer not to be isolated from the affairs of the world but wants to educate and guide him to the maximum use of his faculties in accordance with needs and circumstance. The Holy Quran has laid special stress upon marriage. A hadith quotes the Holy Prophet thus: “Marriage is my *sunnah*, whosoever abstains from my *sunnah* is not of me.” The Holy Quran also states:

“And marry those among you who are single, and those who are fit among your male slaves and your female slaves...” (24:32)

It also gives guidance for specific situations; for example, for when someone cannot afford to get married although the general law is that marriage is essential. Without the institution of marriage, the human race would cease to exist. This institution therefore exists in the laws of every nation. Whether a nation follows the law of God or its own, there have to be legal guidelines regarding marriage. If such laws do not exist in the revealed scripture of a nation, they have to be enacted. It is a great beneficence of Allah that He has given all these precepts for Muslims where needed. The Holy Quran has also shed light on the precepts found amongst other religions. These nations have

had to legislate in this matter. Manmade laws, however, cannot be at par with guidance given by God. This is the reason why they become progressively more complicated and need frequent overhauls. Even religions that lack direction in this matter have enacted laws to serve this purpose.

Arab's have Received these Laws as a Munificence of Allah the Most High

Different laws about various relationships are thus recorded in the Book of Allah. There are laws about the relationship with God, with near relatives, and those that encompass interactions with outsiders. Laws regarding interactions with the governing authority have also been laid out. An attempt has thus been made to give complete and comprehensive guidance to mankind. This was done amongst a people who had no concept of legislation. It could not have, therefore, been the work of an Arab native. It was the work of the All Knowing and Aware God who is cognizant of future needs and the condition of humanity. The Holy Prophet Muhammad had no knowledge of conditions that would arise in the future. Even at that time, followers of Islam were not at peace and a state of fear had not yet dispersed from amongst them. Warfare was a daily occurrence. The recent battle of Uhud had inflicted heavy losses upon the Muslims and they had to face an even greater conflict in the Battle of the Allies (*abzaab*). The enemy this time attacked with a force of ten thousand. The Jews of Madinah were flaming the conflict from inside while this strong force was arrayed on the outskirts of the city. The Holy Prophet commanded a trench to be dug around Madinah to prevent the enemy assault from entering the city. Under such circumstances, and at such a critical juncture for the Muslims, we observe that the teachings of Islam are simultaneously geared toward the establishment of a peaceful society. Facing similar circumstances, many a great nation have been known to put aside their legislative activity. Even if a special law is needed, it is put off until the cessation of hostilities. Seldom are

laws being enacted for the post war period as was true in the case of the Muslims.

Women of Arabia could not have even Imagined the Rights Given to them by the Holy Quran

As far as the rights of women are concerned, in Arabia at the time, there was no one to raise a voice for any such legislation. Women themselves were unaware of their role in society. How could they have demanded their rights? They could in fact not even imagine that they had rights. When their self esteem was so low, how could they consider themselves to be deserving of certain rights or demand that they be given? These laws were not enacted upon some demand in the society. All laws given in the Holy Quran are given to us because the attributes of Allah the Most High make it mandatory that such legislation be dispensed. There is no other force or movement behind the establishment of such laws. Study the laws of marriage in Islam. You will find them related to Allah's attributes. A similar relationship exists in laws pertaining to trade, social and civil matters. They are all related to the attributes of Allah the Most High, which mandate their enactment.

It is a different matter that Muslims have not benefitted from such legislation. There are many commandments in the Quran that elicit a severe response from Muslim society. If transgressed, religious edicts are issued against the perpetrators and they are socially isolated. There are, however, other laws of the Holy Quran that are publicly violated and nobody seems to care. The Holy Quran tells us to give women a share in inheritance, but no one questions those who break this law. Why is there such a discrepancy in the response to violation of commandments? Some are strictly responded to, while others are totally ignored. Why is there such a difference when all the commandments are from Allah and are the basis of our salvation? Such discrimination is not permissible. Intentional violation of one or many laws is liable to severe chastisement. Unintentional violation due to

unawareness or error, is a different matter. Accountability is nevertheless required for all commandments of God.

Read the Holy Quran and Think About it

People have given up meditating upon the Holy Quran. There are few who regard such contemplation as being meaningful. They assume the Holy Quran contains a few moral precepts, such as forbidding stealing, lying, cheating and other such despicable actions, or that it has teachings regarding prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, etc. Anybody who has not studied the Holy Quran thinks this is what should be in the Holy Quran. It is not enough to know this. If you want to know all the commandments and prohibitions in the Holy Quran, you need to read the whole text. Meditating upon the word of the Holy Quran makes one aware of knowledge that is very beneficial. Currently we come across many educated people who have no knowledge of the Holy Quran. If they come across any matter related to government, they immediately try to become familiar with the laws pertaining to it. For example, people who have had to face multiple legal actions remember different laws with such clarity that their memory is sometimes better than that of actual legal practitioners. They can immediately tell you where such and such a law or governmental order may be applicable.

There is, however, a dearth of knowledge regarding proper application of the injunctions of the Holy Quran. Most people are totally ignorant of the Holy Quran and consider it very difficult to acquire this knowledge. Your *jamaat* (organization) has a distinction above others in this matter, but if you do not study the Holy Quran, you are no different from the rest. Believing in some person is not going to be of any benefit to you unless you practice the teachings of the Holy Quran as he has directed you. Remember that just acknowledging someone as a great spiritual leader has not helped anyone. Those who think so should well understand that Islam does not condone such a principle of atonement of sins.

Faith without Practice is Rejected

If mere acceptance of someone in this manner were sufficient, then no one is more deserving of this than the Holy Prophet Muhammad. By merely declaring belief in him, one could absolve oneself of all the practice and the rigors accompanying this declaration. However, The Holy Quran repeatedly reminds us: “those who believe and do good deeds,” and has made practice an essential part of faith. Thus, individual study of the Holy Quran and putting its teachings into practice — not mere verbal acknowledgement of belief — can be of benefit to us. There are many who waste their time in useless pursuits and do not have time to participate in lessons where the Holy Quran is recited and explained. No doubt there are those who are handicapped for some reason and cannot participate on a daily basis. If however, they miss a day they feel ashamed to show up on another day. This is not right, for if a person cannot participate every day he should make an effort to attend sometimes. While he may not be able to appreciate the fine points and become familiar with the depth of Quranic knowledge he will at least get to hear the meaning of the Quranic text and become aware of what it says.

I am advising you that if you study and hear the word of the Holy Quran you should also endeavor to put it into practice. Sluggishness in practice eventually leads to hypocrisy. What was the reason that some were called hypocrites during the time of the Holy Prophet? It was because their practice was weak and slothful. They were afraid of *Jihad* (striving) in the way of Allah and preferred to remain in their homes. It is stated in the hadith that the *fajr* (morning) and *Isba* (evening) prayers are very hard to participate in for the hypocrite. Because of apathy in practice, they do not want their sleep to be disturbed. Those who have this habit should bring about a change in their practice. They should manifest the truth of their belief by practicing it and thus become a source of guidance for others.

Today I read a letter from Maulvi Sadr-ud-din Sahib. Six ladies have accepted Islam at his hands. They have so much enthusiasm for propagation of their faith that one of them has influenced eight others to convert to Islam. And another one has influenced three or four others. These people raise objections and call others atheists. But I am saying that those atheists are much better than the Muslims. Calling yourselves Muslims you could not accomplish what they have done. We are observing that those who convert to Islam have fervor in their hearts for their faith and those who come in contact with them are similarly influenced. This is proof that blame levied against those who are working are baseless. If they had set a poor example it could not have generated such enthusiasm.

Recently, you presented this as proof of the truth of the Promised Messiah, and you inquired of others, "Who has created such enthusiasm for the service of Islam in the hearts of these followers?" Why do you not believe in the validity of this argument today when you see the accomplishments of this mission in England?¹ Abstain from spreading mistrust. If each of the hundreds and thousands of Muslims who have gone to England, had influenced even one person to convert to Islam, Muslims would have numbered in the thousands there today. This, however, required an example. If they had carried the conviction of the truth of Islam in their hearts, it would not have been difficult to bring people toward Islam. Islam is such a religion that if anyone manifests even a slight practical example of it, it readily attracts people. If we desire to propagate Islam, we should set an example for others by practicing it. People can only be influenced if they are treated with goodness. The obligatory prayers and the late night supplications (*Tahajjud*) that you offer reflect your relationship with God. Only God knows the condition of your heart. No one knows the level of your relation with God. Therefore, unless the manner of your dealings with others is excellent, and

1. Working Muslim Mission established by Khawaja Kamal-ud-din.

you manifest righteousness in your actions, mere talk can be of no benefit.

Commandments and Prohibitions Regarding Marriage

This section of the Holy Quran deals with essential commandments and prohibitions regarding marriage. First, those relations are mentioned with whom marital ties are forbidden: “Forbidden to you are your mothers, and your daughters, and your sisters, and your paternal aunts, and your maternal aunts, and brother’s daughters and sister’s daughters, and your mothers that have suckled you, and your foster-sisters, and mothers of your wives, and your stepdaughters who are in your guardianship (born) of your wives to whom you have gone in — but if you have not gone in to them, there is no blame on you — and the wives of your sons who are of your own loins; and that you should have two sisters together, except what has already passed.” (4:23)

This verse has thirteen prohibitions regarding marriage and, including the one in the verse before this, the total comes to fourteen. Other than these limited prohibitions, it is permissible to get married from where ever the opportunity is available.

What is Meant by Those Whom Your Right Hands Possess?

“And all married women except those whom your right hands possess (are forbidden)...” (4:24)

All married women including those belonging to any other faith whether they are Christians or Hindus fall into this category. One of the impure ideas becoming popular amongst Muslims is that this prohibition only applies to Muslim married women while married Christian and Hindu women are excluded. This is incorrect for the statement, “All married women,” includes married women irrespective of who they are married to. Marriage with all of them is prohibited. Because married women are mentioned here one could entertain the thought

that this also applies to their own wives. That is why the statement is added, “except those whom your right hands possess,” meaning that all the women to whom you are already married are excluded from this prohibition.

Limitations of Marriage

“...And lawful for you are (all women) besides those, provided that you seek (them) with your property, taking (them) in marriage, not committing fornication...” (4:24)

It has been deemed essential that property should be given to women. That is the reason why, in Islam, giving of the marital dowry (*mahr*) is made binding upon the husband. These days, some people do not fulfill this obligation in spite of the fact that payment of marriage dowry is essential upon establishment of marital ties. They publicly commit large sums of money in this regard. Since they do not have any intention to fulfill their promise, it is done to become esteemed in the eyes of others. This is not right. It is true that *mahr* is connected with elevating the status of women in society, but it is also meant to be given and not to be withheld. This duty should be fulfilled as soon as possible. It is like an unpaid loan, which if not paid during the lifetime of the individual, is to be paid from his residual property before it is apportioned amongst inheritors.

The Practice of Temporary Marriage or *Mutab* Declared Unlawful

“Then as to those whom you profit by (by marrying), give them their dowries as appointed.” People have had difficulty in understanding this verse. They say that this allows temporary marriage or *mutab*, and some amongst the *Shia* accept this argument. They try to justify the contracting of temporary marriages (*mutab*) based upon the words *fa’ mastamta*, although this means, “as to those whom you profit.” This is just like the use of similar terminology in the Quranic verse: “Our Lord, some of us profited (*istamta’a*) by others” (6:128). Nowhere in the

Holy Quran are such temporary marriages justified. The marriage contract is meant to be life long and not for a temporary period. The Holy Quran states, “And whoever among you cannot afford to marry free believing women, (let him marry) such of your believing maidens as your right hands possess.” The Arabic word, “*Azواج*” cannot be applied to temporary marriages for both these categories of women have been given rights of inheritance while no such rights for those taken into temporary marriages are mentioned in the Holy Quran. It is said that at one time *mutab* was allowed by The Holy Prophet; however, we have several *sahih (lit. sound)* hadith that state that afterwards *mutab* was prohibited forever².

Payment of Dowry is Necessary

“...And there is no blame on you about what you mutually agree after what is appointed (of dowry).” By mutual agreement between husband and wife, the amount of the marriage dowry can be increased or decreased “Surely Allah is ever-Knowing, Wise.” (4:24)

“And whoever among you cannot afford to marry free believing women, (let him marry) such of your believing maidens as your right hands possess. And Allah knows best your faith — you are (sprung) the one from the other. So marry them with the permission of their masters, and give them their dowries justly, they being chaste, not fornicating, nor receiving paramours...” (4:25)

Women who were prisoners of war, having converted to Islam, could no longer remain married to their idolatrous husbands. Their status was considered the same as that of a divorced woman. Those who could not afford to marry from amongst the free women were permitted to get married to these women after getting permission from their guardians.

2. For a detailed discussion of disallowing *Mutab* or temporary marriage, see sec.2, Legal Disabilities, under heading ‘Marriage’ in *Religion of Islam* by Maulana Muhammad Ali.

Commandment to Marry Slave Girls

“They being chaste, not fornicating, nor receiving paramours.” These words of the Holy Quran indicate that marriage with a slave girl is essential, while illicit and secret relations are disallowed. It is further stated, “Then if they are guilty of adultery when they are taken in marriage, they shall suffer half the punishment for free married women” (4:25). The responsibility put on them is thus in proportion to the rights given. “This is for him among you who fears falling into evil. And that you abstain is better for you. And Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”

The Second Sermon

“O Allah! Help the followers of Muhammad and make us of those, O Allah disappoint those who disappoint the religion of Allah and do not make us of those.” We recite this prayer several times during the day and night. Being Muslims, and frequently reciting these prayers, if you do not help the religion of Muhammad, you are in fact a source of disappointment. It would indeed be a matter of great loss for some of you, if the second portion of your prayer reflects your condition. You manifest the same behavior that distinguishes those who are a source of disappointment for the religion of Muhammad. Therefore, improve your condition so that you do not become one of those with whom Allah is disappointed.