**December 20, 1914**

**Respect for God’s Word — a Lesson for Muslims**

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.



“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]](#footnote-1)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 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**



“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 John16: 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.

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) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)