

Fast 26: The doctrine of “abrogation” — 5

- A most dangerous and damaging consequence of the doctrine of abrogation is that those verses of the Quran which teach Muslims tolerance and to have harmonious relations with non-Muslims, and verses which show Islam to be a peaceful religion, are declared by many Muslim religious scholars as “abrogated”. This is how the concept of a violent Jihad arose among Muslims.
- In this connection we may take as an example the English translation of the Quran officially published by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, entitled *The Noble Quran* by Drs. Al-Hilali and Muhsin Khan. The Quran contains the verse:

<p>“Many of the people of the Book wish that they could turn you back into disbelievers after you have believed, out of envy from themselves, after truth has become clear to them. But pardon and forgive, till Allah bring about His command. Surely Allah is Powerful over all things.” — ch. 2, v. 109</p>	<p>وَدَّ كَثِيرٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَوْ يَرُدُّونَكُمْ مِن بَعْدِ إِيمَانِكُمْ كُفَّارًا ۗ حَسَدًا مِّنْ عِندِ أَنفُسِهِمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ ۖ فَاعْفُوا وَاصْفَحُوا حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٠٩﴾</p>
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In their translation they have added a footnote under this verse saying: “The provision of this verse has been abrogated by 9:29.” The verse 9:29 relates to Muslims fighting with the People of the Book, revealed near the end of the Holy Prophet’s life. It is thought, wrongly, that the words “till Allah bring about His command” in ch. 2, v. 109 mean that “pardon and forgive” is meant only till a certain time.

- Before showing the error of that view, we would like to point out that while this verse speaks of “the People of the Book”, i.e., Jews and Christians, it applies to the idolaters as well. This is quite obvious since the idolaters also wanted to turn Muslims back into disbelievers; in fact, they wanted it even more because Muslims would then again join them to be idol-worshippers like them. Also, just before this, in v. 105, idolaters are mentioned alongside People of the Book in having bad wishes for the Muslims:
 - “Neither those who disbelieve from among the people of the Book, *nor the idolaters*, like that any good should be sent down to you from your Lord.”
- There is a hadith in Bukhari in its book on Commentary on the Quran (hadith 4566) which mentions the above verse, ch. 2, v. 109. Alongside it, it mentions the following verse about the People of the Book and the idolaters:

<p>“You will certainly be tried in your property and your persons. And you will certainly hear from those who have been given the</p>	<p>تَتَّبَلُونَ فِيْ أَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنفُسِكُمْ ۖ وَلَتَسْمَعَنَّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ</p>
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<p>Book before you and from the idolaters much abuse. And if you are patient and keep your duty, surely this is an affair of great resolution.” — ch. 3, v. 186</p>	<p>أَشْرَكُوا أَدَى كَثِيرًا ۖ وَإِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ</p>
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This hadith says in this connection: “The Messenger of Allah and his Companions used to forgive the idolaters and the followers of previous books, as Allah had commanded them, and they used to show patience on hearing hurtful words.”

- That hadith then goes on to say:
 - “The Prophet used to adhere to forgiveness as Allah had commanded him to do, until Allah gave permission [to fight] regarding them. So the Messenger of Allah fought them at Badr, and through him Allah killed the leaders of the disbelieving Quraish...”

This does not, and cannot, mean that the command to forgive was cancelled when permission was given to Muslims to fight the enemies, which led to the battle of Badr. After being victorious in that battle, the Muslims took no revenge on the Quraish prisoners whom they had captured, and in fact treated them very well. One of those captured was Suhail ibn Amr, a leading opponent of the Holy Prophet who had a talent for making speeches and he had employed this talent in making speeches against the Holy Prophet. Hazrat Umar suggested to the Holy Prophet that Suhail’s teeth should be pulled out “so that he would never be able to exercise his oratory against you.” The Holy Prophet rejected this without hesitation and said: “Certainly not. I will not mutilate anyone, for God would mutilate me even though I am His Prophet.” (See *Sirat Rasul-ullah*, translated by A. Guillaume, p. 553.)

- As is well-known, later on when the Holy Prophet and his followers conquered Makkah and held their enemies in their power, he forgave his bitterest personal enemies and the enemies of Islam. Even a most hostile critic of Islam like Sir William Muir writes:
 - “The magnanimity with which Mohammad treated a people who had so long hated and rejected him is worthy of all admiration. It was indeed for his own interest to forgive the past, and cast into oblivion its slights and injuries. But this did not the less require a large and generous heart. Mohammad is said to have compared himself in his treatment of Mecca to Joseph forgiving the injuries of his brethren.” (*Life of Mohammad*, p. 411)

This completely refutes the idea that the forgiving and pardoning of v. 109 of ch. 2 was only meant temporarily until the command came from Allah permitting Muslims

to fight their enemies — that command to fight came first in regard to the idolaters in ch. 2, v. 190 and then in regard to the People of the Book in ch. 9, v. 29.

- So what is the meaning of the words: “But pardon and forgive, *till Allah bring about His command*”? It means that when, by the command of Allah, Islam is triumphant in the land, the desire of the opponents of Islam to “turn you back into disbelievers after you have believed” will cease to exist. So many people will have embraced Islam, including former opponents who used to try to make Muslims leave Islam, that there will be no one left trying to turn Muslims back into unbelievers. And if any such opponent did still remain, his efforts should not bother Muslims at all in view of the triumph of Islam. As the Quran says elsewhere:

<p>“So when Allah’s command comes, judgment is given with truth, and those who treat (it) as a lie are lost.” — ch. 40, v. 78</p>	<p>فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ فُضِيَ بِالْحَقِّ وَخَيْرَ هُنَاكَ الْمُبْطِلُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾</p>
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- The command to “pardon and forgive” the People of the Book for their bad wishes towards Muslims is a permanent command. It is a different matter if Allah brings about a situation where their bad wishes are no longer a matter of concern and worry for Muslims.