

Leniency at all times

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

The Quran invariably preaches leniency in all matters, that being a trait of the divine personality. In the chapter entitled "Ta Ha" of the Quran, there are two relevant verses in which God Almighty commands Moses to go with his brother Aaron to the ruling Pharaoh, and advises him how to speak to him: "Go, both of you to Pharaoh, for he has transgressed all bounds. But speak gently to him; perhaps he may yet take heed or even feel afraid" (20:43-44).

The Pharaoh of Egypt was a despotic king, known for his arrogant behaviour. He even dared to claim that he himself was God. When God Almighty sent the Prophet Moses and his brother Aaron to him, He advised Moses to be very lenient in his speech and to speak with complete modesty and humility, showing no reaction.

In fact, every human being has two sides to him — the ego and the conscience. At the time of controversy, there are two options for you: if you speak with leniency, you will touch the conscience of the other person and he may consider your suggestion and accept what you say. But if you speak in a harsh manner, then the reaction might be different. Harsh talk could hit his ego and it is quite possible that he would respond negatively.

This is true of every human being — king and commoner alike. The above Quranic advice is applicable not only to the Prophet Moses but to humankind in general. It is relevant everywhere — in the family, in society, in national life as well as international life. It is applicable to both religious and secular matters. There is no alternative: everyone must follow this pattern.

This Quranic guidance is absolute, with no exception whatsoever. Both men and women must follow this guidance as such, without any regard for the result.