

# 12 COMMENT & ANALYSIS

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## Lower your voice before God

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Once, two of the Prophet's companions, Abu Bakr and Umar, raised their voices in the presence of the Prophet. It happened that when a delegation of the Banu Tamim had come to Medinah, Abu Bakr said that Alqaqa should be made their leader, whereas Umar was of the view that Alaqra bin Habis was a better choice.

Both stuck to their opinion, whereupon they began to argue and, in the process, raised their voices. In consequence, a verse of the Quran was revealed: "Believers, do not raise your voices above the voice of the Prophet, and do not speak as loudly when speaking to him as you do when speaking to one another, lest your actions come to nothing without your realising it" (49:2).

After this revelation, Umar changed to a great extent. He always used to speak in a low voice in the presence of the Prophet, so much so that he could hardly be heard, and the Prophet would often have to ask him to repeat what he had said.

This is the way of the faithful. A believer may unknowingly raise his voice above that of God and His messenger, but as soon as he is made aware of it, he immediately lowers it.

This is applicable not only to the period of the Prophet but also to the present day, when it is still required of the faithful that they should not raise their voice.

The only difference is that in the time of the Prophet people received such instructions directly from him, whereas nowadays people must instruct themselves by making reference to the Quran and the Hadith. Even today, when listening to the commands of God and His messenger, one must lower one's voice like the early believers in the early period of Islam.

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