

Modesty stems from realisation of God

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

The Quran promotes modest behaviour, its culture being that of modesty, an incomparable virtue. The translation of the relevant verse of the chapter entitled Al-Furqan (The criterion) of the Quran is as follows: "The true servants of the Gracious One are those who walk upon the earth with humility and when they are addressed by the ignorant ones, their response is, 'Peace'" (25:63).

When one discovers God, one discovers at the same time that the only possible way for a man to conduct himself is with modesty. Modesty stems directly from the realisation of God. It is not possible to separate it from belief in God.

In their daily prayers, believers recite the word "*Allah hu akbar*" several hundred times. *Allah hu akbar* means "God is great", but at the same time this implies: God is great and I am not great. This is the genesis of modesty in the religion of Islam.

The above Quranic verse refers to the true, faithful, and loyal slaves of God immersed in deep spirituality, and principally to the early believers or the companions of the Prophet, whose conduct was marked by humility in every department of life. The companions of the Prophet, having followed this principle throughout their lives, became historic models for the rest of the believers for all eternity. According to Quranic teachings, modesty is essential in every aspect of human life — in thinking, speech, behaviour, dealings, when angry, when provoked, during unpleasant experiences, etc. In a situation where retaliation could be expected, instead of retaliating, the believer would say: "Let us go our own way; we have no wish to quarrel with you."

The believer's personality is a modest one in the complete sense of the word. Modesty has twofold benefits: firstly, it makes one a better member of society. Then, secondly, it makes one a successful candidate for paradise.