

# Conscience serves as a corrective to ego

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

**According to the Quran,** all human beings, both men and women, are born with two opposite moral constituents. The first is mentioned in the chapter entitled Yusuf (Joseph) as *al nafs al amara* (12:53) and the second is mentioned in the chapter entitled Al-Qiyamah (The Day of Resurrection) as *al nafs al lauwama* (75:2).

What are *al nafs al amara* and *al nafs al lauwama*? In psychological terms, they are the ego and the conscience — with which everyone is born. Almost all human behaviour is affected by these two features.

Negative behaviour is the result of *al nafs al amara* and positive behaviour is the result of *al nafs al lauwama*.

The ego, if left uncontrolled becomes the source of all evil, for it is a highly inflammable part of man. In a normal situation, it remains in a dormant state, but when one's ego is negatively touched, it becomes super ego and the result is breakdown. The best

way to avoid an ego problem is not to provoke it. In the absence of provocation, the ego creates no problems. But provoke the ego and it is like setting a lighted match to a powder keg.

By contrast, the conscience is the source of all kinds of good. The conscience checks you from indulging in any evil practices, and if you do indulge in any kind of misdemeanour, the conscience becomes alive and compels you to repent and amend your behaviour. The conscience in this way serves as a corrective to every human personality.

This means that whenever there is any controversy, the outcome is in your own hands. If you provoke the ego of the opposite party, you are bound to taste the bitter results of your action. Your negative action will be followed by a negative reaction, and you shall have to pay the price for your own uncalled for initiatives.

*www.cpsglobal.org*