

Ignore them politely

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

Life is a series of different kinds of experiences, both good and bad. When we have a good experience, that suits us perfectly well, but what to do when we have some bad experience? The Quran gives us a very simple answer: Avoid any unpleasantness by remaining non-committal. This principle is set forth in the chapter entitled Al-Muzzammil (The Wrapped One) of the Quran. When the Prophet of Islam started his mission in Mecca in 610 AD, the situation was highly unfavourable. Often he faced unwanted situations, and at that juncture this verse was revealed in the Quran: "Bear patiently with what they say, and ignore them politely" (73:10).

In such a predicament, patience is not a passive attitude; it demonstrates great wisdom. When you keep your patience, you are saving your time and energy. Being patient in a difficult situation means

that if you sense that the other party is not in a responsive mood, you should adopt the principle of avoidance, give him an evasive reply and then proceed with your own affairs. It is only if you see that the other party is listening to you in earnest that you should present your point of view to him. This principle is very important in social life. Society is a combination of different kinds of people and the way we live our lives in society is very often determined not by our own choices but by the will of others. If you try to convince all the members of society of your wish to prevail, you will seldom succeed, so practise the art of doing what is possible and leaving what is impossible.

This is a sign of maturity. The mature person remains even-tempered in situations which it is impossible for him to change.

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