

Shun aggression

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

According to Quranic teachings, aggression is completely prohibited in Islam. No circumstance whatsoever permits believers to indulge in any act of aggression.

Chapter Al-Tawbah (Repentance) makes this quite clear. The translation of the relevant verse is as follows: "As long as they act straight with you, act straight with them. God loves those who are righteous" (9:7).

This verse in the Quran stresses the need for peaceable conduct towards others, but it is implied that if others breach the peace, you must reassess the whole situation, re-plan your strategy and reconsider your future course of action. This does not mean that in the case of a breach of peace, you should at once commence hostilities. This kind of instant reaction is not permitted in Islam. In fact, war is a last resort, at a stage when all efforts to defuse the situation have failed, and there is no other alternative. It must be conceded that peace is good for

everyone. Initially, everyone has the same peace-loving nature that you have. So, if there is a breach of the peace, do not act in haste. Perhaps there are options other than war. For example, if there is a misunderstanding, you should try to clear it up by amicable means. The option to wage war is the hardest option in human life and is counterproductive for both sides. It is permitted only under the law of necessity. In a normal situation, Muslims would be expected to carry on their affairs by peaceful methods — a course of action that will continue to bear fruit, unless there is some unavoidable breakdown.

Aggression, being an expression of anger, and not the outcome of any reasoned planning, cannot serve any positive purpose. It should not, therefore, be a course that anyone should consider following.

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