Forgive the people of good qualities their slips, but not faults to which prescribed corporal punishments apply

‘Ā’ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) reported that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Forgive the people of good qualities their slips, but not faults to which prescribed corporal punishments apply."
[Authentic hadith] [Narrated by Abu Daoud - Narrated by Ahmad]

In this Hadīth, ‘Ā’ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) relates that the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) instructed the Muslim rulers and their representatives, meaning the judges, to be tolerant with the people of noble qualities and high moral values, who rarely commit evils. Tolerance here means either to pardon them or reduce their punishment as compared to that of others. However, the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) stated that such tolerance is only applicable regarding discretionary punishments that are based on the Muslim ruler's personal reasoning rather than the cases to which a prescribed corporeal punishment applies. That is so because the prescribed corporeal punishments are to be applied to anyone regardless of their status or rank.

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