

Surah 2. Al-Baqara

Asad: IT IS ordained for you, when death approaches any of you and he is leaving behind much wealth, to make bequests in favour of his parents and [other] near of kin in accordance with what is fair:¹⁵² this is binding on all who are conscious of God.

Malik: The will is made obligatory before the death of anyone of you who is leaving some property behinds to bequest it equitably to his parents and relatives. This is a duty incumbent on the righteous.

Mustafa Khattab:

It is prescribed that when death approaches any of you—if they leave something of value—a will should be made in favour of parents and immediate family with fairness.¹ ?This is? an obligation on those who are mindful ?of Allah?.

Pickthall: It is prescribed for you, when one of you approacheth death, if he leave wealth, that he bequeath unto parents and near relatives in kindness. (This is) a duty for all those who ward off (evil).

Yusuf Ali: It is prescribed when death approaches any of you if he leave any goods that he make a bequest to parents and next of kin according to reasonable usage; this is due from the Allah-fearing.¹⁸⁶

Transliteration: Kutiba AAalaykum itha hadara ahadakumu almawtu in taraka khayran alwasiyatu lilwalidayni waalaqrabeena bialmaAAroofi haqqan AAala almuttaqeena

Author Comments

152 - The word khayr occurring in this sentence denotes "much wealth" and not simply "property": and this explains the injunction that one who leaves much wealth behind should make bequests to particularly deserving members of his family in addition to - and preceding the distribution of - the legally-fixed shares mentioned in {4:11-12}. This interpretation of khayr is supported by sayings of 'A'ishah and 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, both of them referring to this particular verse (cf. Zamakhshari and Baydawi).

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This ruling should be understood in light of the inheritance laws in 4:11-12, which give specific shares to parents and close relatives. Relatives who do not have a share may get a bequest up to one third of the estate.

186 - There are rules of course for the disposal of intestate property. But it is a good thing that a dying man or woman should, of his own free-will, think of his parents and his next of kin, not in a spirit of injustice to other, but in a spirit of love and reverence for those who have cherished him. He must, however, do it "according to reasonable usage": the limitations will be seen further on.

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