Surah 17. Al-Israa

Asad: And give his due to the near of kin, as well as to the needy and the wayfarer, but do not squander [thy substance] senselessly.

Malik: You shall give to your relatives their due and to the needy and to the wayfarers. You shall not be a spendthrift

Pickthall: Give the kinsman his due, and the needy, and the wayfarer, and squander not (thy wealth) in wantonness.

Yusuf Ali: And render to the kindred their due rights as (also) to those in want and to the wayfarer: but squander not (your wealth) in the manner of a spendthrift.

Transliteration: Waati thea alqurbah haqqahu waalmiskeena waibna alssabeeli wala tubaththir tabtheeran

Khattab:

Give to close relatives their due, as well as the poor and needy? travellers. And do not spend wastefully.

Author Comments

30 - In this instance, "his due" evidently refers to the loving consideration due to one's relatives (Zamakhsharl and Razi); those of them who are in a state of want are included in the subsequent mention of "the needy" (al-miskin).

31 - Regarding this expression, see surah (2), note [145].

32 - Lit., "with [utter] squandering" (tabdhiran) i.e., senselessly and to no good purpose. It is to be borne in mind that the term tabdhir does not relate to the quantity but, rather, to the purpose of one's spending. Thus, Ibn'Abbas and Ibn Mas'ud (both of them quoted by Tabari) defined tabdhir as "spending without a righteous purpose" or "in a frivolous (basil) cause": and Mujahid is reported (ibid.) to have said, "If a man were to spend all that he possesses in a righteous cause, it could not be termed squandering; but if he spends even a small amount in a frivolous cause, it is squandering."
In the Jewish Decalogue, which was given to a primitive and hard-hearted people, this refinement of Kindness—to those in want and to wayfarers (i.e., total strangers whom you come across) finds no place. Nor was there much danger of their wasting their substance out of exuberance. Even the command "to honour thy father and mother" comes after the ceremonial observance of the Sabbath. With us, the worship of Allah is linked up with kindness to parents, kindred, those in want, those who are far from their homes though they may be total strangers to us. It is not mere verbal kindness. They have certain rights which must be fulfilled.

All charity, kindness, and help are conditioned by our own resources. There is no merit if we merely spend out of bravado or for idle show. How many families are ruined by extravagant expenses at weddings, funerals, etc., or (as they may call it) to "oblige friends or relatives", or to give to able-bodied beggars? To no one was this command more necessary than it is to Muslims of the present day.