

Surah 4. An-Nisaa

Asad: And do not entrust to those who are weak of judgment the possessions which God has placed in your charge⁶ for [their] support; but let them have their sustenance therefrom, and clothe them, and speak unto them in a kindly way.

Malik: Do not entrust your property which Allah has made a means of support for your family, to feeble-minded people for investment in business, however, provide such people with food and clothing and speak to them nicely and give them good advice.

Pickthall: Give not unto the foolish (what is in) your (keeping of their) wealth, which Allah hath given you to maintain; but feed and clothe them from it, and speak kindly unto them.

Yusuf Ali: To those weak of understanding make not over your property which Allah hath made a means of support for you but feed and clothe them therewith and speak to them words of kindness and justice. ⁵¹⁰

Transliteration: Wala tutoo alssufahaa amwalakumu allatee jaAAala Allahu lakum qiyaman
waorzuqoohum feeha waoksoohum waqooloo lahum qawlan maAAroofan

Khattab:

Do not entrust the incapable ?among your dependants? with your wealth which Allah has made a means of support for you—but feed and clothe them from it, and speak to them kindly.

Author Comments

6 - Lit., "your possessions which God has assigned to you". The context makes it obvious that this relates to the property of orphans who have not yet reached the age of discretion and are, therefore, "weak of judgment" (lit., "weak-minded").

510 - This applies to orphans, but the wording is perfectly general, and defines principles like those of Chancery in English Law and the Court of Wards in Indian Law. Property has not only its rights but also its responsibilities. The owner may not do just what he likes absolutely; his right is limited by the good of his family of which he is a member, and if he is incapable of understanding it, his control should be removed. This does not mean that he is harshly dealt with. On the contrary his interest must be protected, and he must be treated with special kindness because of his incapacity.

511 - Your property: Ultimately all property belongs to Allah, and is intended for the support of his close relations. It is held in trust by a particular individual. If he is incapable, he is put aside but gently and with

kindness. While his incapacity remains, the duties and responsibilities devolve on his guardian even more strictly than in the case of the original owner: for he may not take any of the profits for himself unless he is poor, and in that case his remuneration for his trouble must be on a scale that is no more than just and reasonable.

[View Page](#)

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