

Follow the principles of justice

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

The ideal social system, as set forth in the Quran, is based on justice. Indeed, justice is the central idea of all the social teachings in Islam. In the chapter entitled Al-Nisa' (Women) of the Quran, there is a particularly apt and detailed verse on this subject. Its translation is as follows: "Believers, be strict in upholding justice and bear witness for the sake of God, even though it be against yourselves, your parents, or your kindred. Be they rich or poor, God knows better about them both. Do not, then, follow your own desires, lest you swerve from justice. If you conceal the truth or evade it, then remember that God is well aware of all that you do." (4:135) According to the Quran, a good society can be established only on the principles of justice. Justice has an absolute value and one should uphold justice, even if the outcome

goes against him, his relatives and friends. No excuse whatsoever is acceptable in this regard. The above Quranic verse does not say: "O believers, establish the system of justice on earth." It simply urges believers to follow the principles of justice in their own lives. In other words, this verse is to be taken in a passive rather than in an active sense. If you give people the target of either establishing justice on earth or implementing the laws of justice in society, that will cause confrontational situations. This kind of target divides people into two categories: Those who want to establish justice and those who are the subjects of justice. This kind of target is bound to create conflict between two groups, ultimately leading to war between them. The Quran does not ask its followers to pursue such ends.

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