

## Redacted Files and the Illusion of Transparency

### News:

Justice Department's heavily redacted Epstein file release draws criticism from lawmakers. ([Source](#))

### Comment:

The heavily redacted release of the Epstein files has once again highlighted a fundamental reality of capitalist systems: when wealth and power concentrate in the hands of a few, accountability becomes selective and transparency conditional. This is the byproduct of a system that shields the influential while claiming to serve the public. The controversy was further intensified by revelations that certain images, reportedly depicting Epstein alongside high-profile figures, including President Donald Trump were either heavily redacted or removed entirely, deepening public suspicion and distrust.

The Epstein case also revives an uncomfortable but longstanding reality: the use of blackmail and moral corruption as tools of political influence. History shows that Western states and elite networks have long used vice as leverage to cultivate, enable, and record moral failures to compromise politicians, financiers, and leaders. This is not incidental but systemic. When societies normalize immorality, corruption becomes a mechanism of governance and control. Islam, by contrast, seeks to prevent such exploitation by closing the doors to vice altogether, not commercializing or institutionalizing it as a political instrument.

Capitalist systems, which elevate profit, influence, and individual gain above moral accountability, are particularly susceptible to this form of corruption. Wealth buys access, access buys silence, and silence preserves the system. The redactions surrounding Epstein's network are not anomalies, but symptoms of a broader order where transparency is permitted only insofar as it does not threaten entrenched interests. Islam rejects this hierarchy outright. In Islamic governance, no individual, regardless of status, is above the law. No truth is too dangerous to reveal and no punishment is withheld when justice requires it.

Ultimately, the outrage surrounding the Epstein files reflects a deeper hunger for real accountability, one that the capitalist world order consistently fails to deliver. Islam offers a radically different foundation of justice rooted in accountability and governance as a responsibility rather than a privilege, and timeless rules free from manipulation. Islam teaches that all people are held to account regardless of their status or wealth.

The Prophet (saw) said: **«إِنَّمَا أَهْلَكَ الدِّينَ قَبْلَكُمْ أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا إِذَا سَرَقَ فِيهِمُ الشَّرِيفُ تَرَكَوهُ وَإِذَا سَرَقَ فِيهِمُ الضَّعِيفُ أَقَامُوا عَلَيْهِ الْحَدَّ وَإِنَّمَا اللَّهُ لَوْ أَنَّ فَاطِمَةَ بِنْتَ مُحَمَّدٍ سَرَقَتْ لَقَطَعْتُ يَدَهَا»** *“Those who came before you were destroyed because if a noble person among them stole, they would let him go, but if a weak person stole, they would carry out the punishment upon him. By Allah, if Fatimah, the daughter of Muhammad, were to steal, I would cut off her hand.”* (Bukhari)

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by

Haitham Ibn Thbait

Media Representative of Hizb ut Tahrir in America