

OBEDIENCE TO PARENTS

My dear respected elders and brothers

* The story of three men:

In the books of Hadith, the messenger of Allah (Sal) is reported to have mentioned a story of three men. Let us have a fresh look at it. One day when these men were out walking, suddenly heavy storm forced them to take shelter in a mountain cave. The rain lashed and wind blew. The men felt secure inside the cave. But they had hardly heaved a sigh of relief when strong wind rolled down a huge piece of stone from above the cave. The stone came rolling and settled against the entrance to the cave. The mouth of the cave was not wide. It, therefore, became blocked and the three men were shut in the cave.

They grew worried and began to think a way out of that dark prison. They said one to another, "Recollect the acts of kindness you have done merely for the sake of Allah. Call on Allah on their account. Allah will perhaps remove the stone."

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* The effect of Dua:

One of the three men said, "O Allah, my parents have been very old and I had small children to feed. I used to graze goats and sheep to earn a living to support them. Everyday, on coming back home, I used to milk my goats and offer it first to my parents before giving anything to my children to eat. But one day I returned very late in the evening. I found that my parents had gone to sleep. I milked the animals as usual and went to offer the drink to my parents. I did not awaken them for fear of disturbing their sweet sleep."

I stood near them, thinking they might get up to drink it. But they did not. The whole night passed thus and I continued standing near them till daybreak. O Allah, if I did this merely to seek your pleasure, make an opening for us so that we may see through it.'

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* The value of serving the parents:

His dua was soon responded. The stone moved to make an opening for them to see through. The second and the third also narrated their good deeds. The stone was removed and they were able to go home safely. The value of serving parents is great in the sight of Allah. Allah has commanded us to be kind to our parents. The status and value attached to parents in Islam is very high. In the words of the Holy Qur'an.

(And your Lord has decreed: Do not worship any but Him, and be good to parents. If one or both of them grow old in your company, say not to them 'ugh' neither chide them, but say gentle words to them, and lower to them the wing of humbleness out of kindness and say, "My Lord have mercy upon them as they nourished me when I was small.")

The metaphor used here is that of a bird which so lovingly spreads wings over its young ones in the nest. No better way to express kindly treatment to parents can be thought of.

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* Paradise lies at the feet of the mothers:

It is reported that a man came to prophet (Sal) and asked, 'who deserves to be treated well by me more

than anyone else?" The prophet replied, "your mother" (this he repeated three times) "then your father, then your nearest relatives in order." In another Hadith it says, "paradise lies at the feet of the mothers". In other words paradise awaits those who obey and respect their mother.

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★ Disobedience to parents: a major sin.

It is the right of the parents that their children obey and treat them well. Because, while Allah is the real cause of man's coming into world, his parents are the outward and immediate cause. The Qur'an stresses a kindly treatment to parents, especially when they grow old. As they grow old, their strength fails. They badly need support and kindly treatment. It comes in a Hadith that disobedience to parents is one of the major sins. The prophet (sal) is reported to have said, "shall I not inform you about the three major sins?" Those who were present replied, "yes, O messenger of Allah." He said, "Associating anything with Allah, disobedience to parents." And sitting forward from the reclining position, he continued, "and telling lies and bearing false witness.

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★ Help your parents in every possible way!

Allah wants us to have great respect and love for our parents. They make all sorts of sacrifices and it is the duty of their children to cherish them. Sometimes parents punish their children to correct their mistakes. They do so for the good of their children. Obey your parents. Never say 'no' to them for something they ask you to do. You may help them doing household jobs, running errands, and keeping the house clean. You may help them by

comforting them and by looking after them in their sickness. Always try to remember the things they have ask you to do. Do not make them have to tell you the same thing again and again, such as 'do your home-work, offer your salah, stay away from bad girls and boys' etc. The surest way to succeed in this life and hereafter is to obey parents. All who showed love and respect for their parents are praised in the Holy Qur'an. Hence respect your parents' opinion, pray for them, whether they are dead or alive.

May al-mighty Allah bless us all to ^{be} obedient to our parents and elders and whatever we heard to apply in our day to day lives.

Ameen

Jazakallah

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