

مواقف بوالدين

(باللغة الإنجليزية)

HONOR
THY FATHER
AND MOTHER
(The Fifth Commandment)

Abdul - Malik Leblanc



PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Islam is a complete code of life. Every aspect of life is found in the Qur'an and Sunnah. Qur'an is the final Testament revealed from Allah (SWT). It has existed for the last 15 centuries in its natural state unchanged. This makes us believe that it is a miraculous Book truly from Allah.

The basic structure of human society must be according to Allah's will.

There are rights of parents towards children and children also have rights towards their parents. As human beings, we must follow these rules in order that we shall be successful in this world and in the hereafter.

Allah(SWT) commanded mankind to obey Him, His messenger and the ruling authorities in order to maintain a good living system in this material world.

In the following Qura'nic verse, Almighty Allah ordered us to obey Him and be humble and kind to our parents. Allah (SWT) said: (Your Lord had decreed that you worship none but Him. And that be kind to your parents. One or both of them may attain old age in your life. Say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them. Address them with a speech of politeness.) Qura'an 17:23

We can find from the above verse that Allah (SWT) ranked the service to one's parents next to worshiping Him. This expresses the importance of parent's service in the life of human being.

Brother Abdul-Malik LeBlanc, having experienced two different ways of life(life in christianity and life in Islam) presents a distinct interpretation of human life. Let us study his presentation and decide on the reality of life.

Finally, May Allah reward the author and bless this work and also guide us to the authentic and prosperous way of life.

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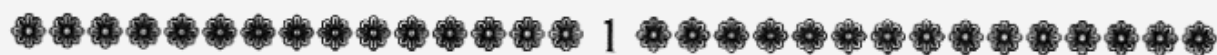


This booklet is dedicated to
my mother and father:

Maybel & Richard LeBlanc

"Thy Lord hath decreed that ye worship none but Him and that ye be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in thy life say not to them a word of contempt nor repel them but address them in terms of honor." (Quran: Isra 17:23)

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ۗ إِنَّمَا
يَبْلُغُنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا
أُفٍ وَلَا نَهْرَهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٢٣﴾





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INTRODUCTION

As a young boy, I was raised in a Catholic home. I attended Catholic school on Saturday mornings for Bible study classes and served as an altar boy on Sunday mornings and during the pre-dawn hours on weekdays. Even with this connection to religion at an early age, I was still the “bad” child of the family, or should I say, the worst of seven children. I was the one who, on most occasions, was sassy to my mother and disrespectful to my father, in addition to committing other social evils that my brothers and sisters avoided.

From a young Catholic to an adult Christian, which at that time I thought was the same, I never really saw myself giving my father or my mother the respect or honor that was required of us-Christians under the fifth commandment of God according to the Bible. When looking back and questioning why I didn’t honor them, as I should have, I guess the primary reasons were the lack of divine guidance and no absolute fear of God.



Now after becoming a Muslim and having learned more about the significance of the fifth commandment, I felt it was important for Catholics / Christians to know what Islam says specifically about honoring one's father and mother based on the divine instructions of Allah and Prophet Mohammed (Peace Be Upon Him-PBUH). It is these instructions which I feel will aid the Catholics/Christians in seeing that Islam has the comprehensive guidance needed for a true God fearing individual to righteously uphold, to the letter and spirit of the Law, the fifth commandment of God that says:

Honor thy father and thy mother.



THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

The ten laws are the Ten Commandments given by God as guidelines for daily living. They are part of a covenant between God and the Israelites (Exodus 34:28; Deuteronomy 4:13; 10:4). These laws are often called the Decalogue, from the Greek word that means "ten words."

Although God gave the Ten Commandments through Moses at Mount Sinai more than 3,000 years ago, they are still relevant today. They have an abiding significance, for God's character is unchangeable. These laws originate from God and from His eternal character; therefore, their moral value cannot change.

About 1,300 years after God gave the laws, Jesus upheld them calling them the "commandments" and listing five of them for the rich young ruler in Matthew 19:16-21:

“And, behold, one came and said unto him, ‘Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?’ And he said unto him, ‘Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.’ He saith unto him, ‘Which?’ Jesus said, ‘Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.’ The young man saith unto him, ‘All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?’ Jesus said unto him, ‘If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.’”¹

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus showed that His coming had not cancelled the Commandments. He specifically mentioned the laws against killing in Matthew 5:21, committing adultery in Matthew. 5:27, and honoring the father and mother in Matthew 15:4-6:

Matthew 5:21

“Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment.”¹



Matthew 5:27

“Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery...”¹

Matthew 15:4-6:

For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.¹

Furthermore, Jesus actually placed these laws on a higher plane by demanding that the spirit as well as the legal aspects of the law be kept. Jesus placed His eternal stamp of approval on the law by declaring in Matthew 5:17-19 that he did not come to destroy the Law:

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so,

he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but
whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great
in the kingdom of heaven.”¹

The Ten Commandments form the heart of the special COVENANT between God and His people. He told them, "Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:5). These verses also emphasize that their obedience to the Commandments was to be the basis of Israel's existence as the special people of God.

God never intended for the Ten Commandments to be a set of regulations by which the people of Israel would earn salvation. God's favor had already been freely granted! This was overwhelmingly demonstrated by His deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage (Deuteronomy 4:37). Therefore, at the heart of the covenant relationship lay an act of divine GRACE. God even prefaced the Ten Commandments with a reminder of His deliverance (Exodus 20:2).²



From the above text, it is clear that the Ten Commandments are still relevant today, even though some Christians don't believe in or follow the Old Testament. The world desperately needs to see the name and character of God displayed in the lives of those individuals who still take His Word seriously.

The revelation to Moses went into the details of people's lives, and thus served as a practical guide to the Jews and after them to the Christians. Admittedly, the message delivered by Jesus dealt with general principles only and in no way with specific details. It is my hope to share some of the specific details that Prophet Mohammed mentioned concerning honoring our father and mother.



HONOR - DEFINITION

According to Webster dictionary, the word “honor” is defined as follows:

Special esteem; reverence; high regard or deep respect; personal integrity; privilege; high rank; an expression of admiration and devotion.

In today’s society many sons/daughters are influenced by contemporary (secular) cultures, which stress personal freedom and independence of children. This “freedom” blindly encourages children to distance themselves from their parents. This behavior results in the children showing little respect to their parents (disobeying God’s commandment) and inevitably leads to mistreating them in one way or another. Such mistreatment of parents can be found in the following occurrences:

- Raising our voices at them.



- Holding grudges against them.
- Not being kind to their friends.
- Being ashamed of their oldness.
- Having no patience with their oldness.
- Placing them in “old folks” homes.
- Emotionally and physically abusing them.
- Separating ourselves from them simply because of mere disagreements.
- Our wealth is not shared with them freely.
- Cherishing our wife and children more than we cherish them.
- Having no fear for the punishment of God when we mistreat or disrespect them.

All of the above-mentioned actions toward one’s parents are forbidden in Islam. It is not befitting for a Muslim to admit his parent(s) to a nursing home unless it is necessary for medical reasons. The older the parents, the more the Muslim son/daughter is required to provide respect, attention and care,³ and more consideration of their sensitive feelings.



The Quran sums up the whole matter of parental honor in a master concept called *ihsan*, which denotes what is right, good and beautiful. It means in the Islamic context, among other things, kindness, compassion, charity, reverence, and conscientiousness.

It is a Muslim's religious duty as well as a virtue to show *ihsan* to his parents. Concrete behavioral manifestations of this Divine Ordinance of *ihsan* to the parents include active empathy or "role taking," compassionate gratitude, patience, honoring their commitments on their behalf when they can no longer do so, sincere counsel and veneration.⁴ Another integral part of *ihsan* is that children are responsible for the support and maintenance of parents. It is an absolute religious duty to provide for the parents in case of need and help them to make their lives as comfortable as possible.

It is Allah's Divine Ordinance of showing *ihsan* to one's parents and the instructions from Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) that will be explained in this



booklet to present a clearer picture for the reader to understand a child's mandatory responsibility toward their parents.

SOURCES OF ISLAM

The Holy Quran is the Word of Allah and it is the first source of divine guidance in Islam. Some 1400 years ago, Allah gave the inspiration of the Quran to Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) through the Angel Gabriel.

It is He who has sent down the Book (the Quran) to you (Mohammed) with truth, confirming what came before it. And he sent down the Taurat (Torah/Law) and the Injeel (Gospel). (Al-Imran 3:3)

نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ
بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَأَنْزَلَ التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ ﴿٢﴾

The Sunnah, which is the saying and actions of Prophet Mohammed (PBUH), is the second source of divine guidance. It is an extension to the Quran where the details of a matter are not discussed. Words alone, no matter how powerful and colorful, cannot be fully

 comprehended until they form clear concepts in our minds. Concepts can best be understood and appreciated when supported by living examples. It is indeed a bounteous favor of Allah to humanity that, along with His message, He also sent a messenger, who was the living embodiment of the Quran ⁵ and the best example for the Muslims to follow:

“Indeed in the Messenger of Allah (Mohammed) you have a beautiful pattern (of conduct) for him who hopes for (the meeting with) Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much.” (Al-Ahzab 33:21)

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ
 حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ
 الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ﴿٢١﴾

In Prophet Mohammed’s (PBUH) sayings and actions, one can seek guidance in all aspects of human life. His examples are from the highly personal to the purely

social – as: a man, a son, a husband, a father, a preacher, a teacher, a trader, a statesman, a commander, a peace-negotiator, a judge or a head of state. ⁶ George Bernard Shaw wrote that if a man like Mohammed (PBUH) were to assume the leadership of the modern world, he would succeed in solving its problems and bring much needed peace and happiness. ³

The sayings and examples of Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) should not be looked upon as that of wise sayings of a sage, philosopher or the verdicts of a ruler or leader. Prophet Mohammed's actions and sayings were divinely inspired by Allah's command.

The Quran and the Sunnah does not lose sight of the ethical principles of the family operation nor does it cease to present Allah as an integral element of any action or situation, especially the treatment of Muslim or non-Muslim parents.

These two sources (Quran & Sunnah) are the most comprehensive guidance for the Muslims, and for

mankind, which I will refer to in unveiling the details,
descriptions and instructions on how to truly:

*"Honor your father and your mother."
(Exodus 20:12)*

Before covering the prescriptions for honoring our parents, it is necessary to share with the non-Muslim readers some information and instructions that has been given to Muslims by Islamic scholars that specifically address the treatment of fathers and of mothers.

The majority of religious scholars agree that mothers enjoy greater rights than the father but it does not in the least mean that children should serve their mother and ignore their father. As far as the respect and reverence is concerned, the father also deserves this treatment and such negligence does not reflect a true believer. For both of them (father and mother), nice behavior is emphasized.⁷ But bear in mind that due to the greater services rendered by mothers, they are more deserving to be comforted and treated nicely by the children.



ATTITUDE TOWARDS ONE'S FATHER

In Islam, it is the father who is responsible for holding the family together and to command an unquestionable fear of Allah in instructing the members of the family to enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. The Prophet (PBUH) said:

“The pleasure of Allah lies in the pleasure of fathers, and the displeasure of Allah lies in the displeasure of fathers.” (Tirmizi, Hakim)

“Of all that a father can give to his children, the best is their good education and training (religiously).” (Mishat, Book XIII, p. 716)

In many non-Islamic societies this kind of fatherly love is viewed as old fashion, domineering, and sometimes

is used by the son/daughter as a (immature) justification
for rebelling against their father.

The June 28, 1993 issue of Time Magazine reported that as many as 40% of all children in the United States, who were born between 1970 and 1984, have spent most of their childhood without a father due to the divorce or non-marriage of the parents.⁸ This circumstance, especially a divorce situation, could lead the child to disown their father. This type of parental disowning and insulting is totally forbidden in Islam and has its reward in the punishment of the Hell Fire:

The Prophet said, "If somebody claims to be the son of any other than his real father knowingly, he but disbelieves in Allah, and if somebody claims to belong to some folk to whom he does not belong, let such a person take his place in the (Hell) Fire." Hadith 4.711 (Al-Bukhari)

Once Abu Harairah, one of the senior companions of the Prophet, came across two persons. He asked one of them about the other. The son replied that the other one was his respected father (giving his father's first name). Then Abu Harairah strictly advised the son on three (3) things:⁷

1. Never call his father by his first name.
2. Don't walk ahead of him.
3. Never to take a seat before he takes the seat first in a gathering.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS ONE'S MOTHER

Take a moment and think about the person that carried us for nine months in her womb, experienced great hardship during pregnancy, suffered extreme pain during delivery, responded to our infant cries, fed and nurtured us, and changed our dirty diapers among numerous other child rearing activities.

The Quran refers to the mother being given precedence because of pregnancy and breast feeding, and the pains and trails that she suffers during these two stages, in a most gentle and compassionate way. It recognizes her noble sacrifice and great tenderness and care:⁹

"...in travail upon travail did his mother bear him, and in years twain was his weaning..." (Luqman 31:14)

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ
وَهَنَّا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ وَفِصْلُهُ فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنِ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ
إِلَى الْمَصِيرِ ﴿١٤﴾



- (2) When you think you have done enough for your mother, you should go back and do even more.

- (3) When you think you have done enough for you mother, you should go back and do much more.

There is an account about a man who made a great sacrifice of time, effort and money to help his mother in ill health during her old age. When she passed away, he went and asked a wise man, "Have I repaid all that I owed to my mother?" The wise man answered, "No. She gave birth to you and helped you grow, praying for you to live and thrive. You helped her knowing that she would die."⁸

Another example of our incomplete service to our mother is illustrated in conjunction with using our physical strength for their behalf:

One of the Companions of the Prophet (Ibn Omar) saw a man carrying his

mother on his shoulder while going round the Kaba. The man said: "O Omar, did you see me taking her around?" He replied: "Yes, but your effort is only equal to a single one of her labor pains. Nonetheless, you are doing (something) good and Allah will give you a great reward for the little you are doing."

Depending upon the amount of people around the Kaba, one walk around the Kaba could equal to two (2) New York City blocks. Imagine carrying your mother seven (7) times around two (2) New York City blocks and your efforts are only equal to one (1) of her labor pains.

Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) has also conveyed to Muslims that showing love and kindness to one's mother can serve as penitence for committing a serious sin:

A man came to Allah's Apostle (PBUH) and said, "Messenger of Allah, I have committed a serious sin. Can I do any act of penitence?" He asked him if he had a mother, and when he replied that he had not, he asked if he had a maternal aunt. On his replying that he had, he said, "Then do kindness to her." *Hadith 4935 (Al-Tirmidhi Hadith)*

The following occurrence concerning a Muslim son inability to recite the Kalimah (Proclamation of Allah's Oneness and Mohammed is his messenger) on his dying bed because of his disrespectfulness to his mother conveys the importance that Allah has placed on honoring one's mother.

Once, when the Prophet (PBUH) was talking to his companions a man came and addressed him, "O Messenger of Allah! A young man is breathing his

.....
last. People are asking him to recite the Kalimah but he is unable to do so.” The Holy Prophet asked, “Did this man offer prayers,” and he got the answer in the affirmative. Then the Prophet (PBUH) accompanied the man to the house of the dying young man along with others present at the time. The man was at the end of his life journey. The Messenger of Allah advised him to offer the Kalimah. The man replied that he was unable to do so as the words did not come out of his mouth. He then called for the mother of the dying man whom he had disobeyed persistently. When his aged mother approached the scene, the Prophet (PBUH) asked, “Respected lady, is he your son?” She replied in the affirmative. He then put her a question, “O respected lady, if we threaten to throw your son in a raging

fire, will you recommend him to be forgiven?" The lady replied that she would definitely do so at that time. The Prophet (PBUH) than said to her, "If so, declare, making Allah and me your witnesses, that you are now pleased with him." The aged woman readily declared, "O Allah you and your Messenger be my witness that I am pleased with this beloved son of mine." Just after that, the Prophet turned to the dying man and asked him to recite, "There is no god but Allah. He is One and has no partners and I witness that Mohammed (PBUH) is His Servant and His Messenger." By the virtue of the forgiveness of his mother he found the words flowing out of his mouth, and he was able to recite the Kalimah. Seeing this, the Prophet (PBUH) praised Almighty Allah and thanked Him

•••••
saying, "Thanks to Almighty Allah that He saved this man from the fearful fire of Hell through me." (Tabarani, Ahmad)

And finally:

The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: "Allah forbids all of you to disobey your mothers." (Bukhari & Muslim)

A special reference should be made here concerning the mother's right over her son. This right can best be illustrated and understood by an exposé that mentions a Muslim son who disliked eating from the same plate as his mother because he feared that he might eat a piece of food/meat that she had intended to eat. Such honor and wisdom are not to be found in any other religion. Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) has made the mother's right over the son clear:

.....
The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) was asked, "Who has greater rights over a woman?" The Prophet replied, "Her husband." He was asked, "Then who has a greater right over the man?" He replied, "His mother." (Hakim)

STATUS OF PARENTS

Islam has raised the status of the parents to a level that is unknown in any other religion. It has placed kindness and respect towards parents on a level that is just one degree below the belief in Allah and the true worship of Him.⁹

Allah established parents as the authority figures in the family unit. Children often get their first impressions about Allah from their parents. Parents who walk in the fear of Allah, honestly desiring to follow the divine guidelines given to mankind, will set better examples for their children. Likewise, children who want to please Allah will respect and be thankful to their parents regardless of the pressure from the world and their peers. The Quran says:

“Be thankful to Me and to your parents.” (Luqman 31:14)



In Islam, disrespecting one's parents, denying them their rights, not treating them well, or treating them badly is uncharacteristic of a Muslim who is truly following the commands of Allah:

"Thy Lord hath decreed that ye worship none but Him and that ye be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in thy life say not to them a word of contempt nor repel them but address them in terms of honor." (Isra 17:23)

﴿ وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ۖ إِنَّمَا يُبَلِّغُنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا
أُفٍ وَلَا لِنَهَرِهِمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٢٣﴾

This is a divine commandment to the Muslims. It is presented in the form of an ultimate and inescapable decree in the Quran:

“Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be kind to parents.” (Israa 17:23)

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا

These words represent the strong connection between worshipping Allah and treating parents with kindness and respect. This statue of parents, in Islam, is raised to a level that wise men, reformers and philosophers have never managed to ascribe to them.⁹

Treating our parents well means to take care of their needs with love and kindness, while never saying “Uff” to them. If there was anything more minor than saying “Uff” to one’s parent, Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) said:

.....

*"Allah would have prohibited that."*¹⁰

It is an obligation upon us to serve them as they served us when we were little children, as well as having brought us into life. Therefore, we should bear any trouble from them with forbearance until they leave this life¹⁰ as stated in the Quran:

"And out of kindness lower to them the wing of humility and say: "My Lord! bestow on them Thy Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood." (Isra 17:24)

وَأَخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ أَرْحَمُهُمَا
كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا ﴿١٢٤﴾

This metaphor of "lower to them the wing of humility" is that of a bird which lowers her wings out of tenderness to her offspring. There is a double aptness:



- (1) When the parents were strong and the child was helpless, parental affection was showered on the child: when the child grows up and is strong, and the parents are helpless, can s/he do less than bestow similar tender care on their parents?

- (2) But more: he must approach the matter with gentle humility: for parental love should remind him of the great love with which Allah cherishes His creatures? There is something here more than simple human gratitude; it goes up into the highest spiritual region.¹¹

In other words, honoring our father and mother in Islam is placed on a higher and more universal ground, such as befitting a perfect revelation, whereas the worship of the One True God is linked with showing kindness to our parents. Just as treating them with kindness and respect is connected to belief in Allah, mistreating them is a sign of disbelief:

Say: "Come I will rehearse what Allah hath (really) prohibited you from": join not anything as equal with Him; be good to your parents... (Al-Anam 6:151)

قُلْ تَعَالَوْا أَتْلُ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ عَلَيْكُمْ أَن تَشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا

The mentioning of being good to parents immediately after worshipping the One True God suggests that our first duty after the worship of Allah is to our father and mother, whose love leads us to the conception of divine love.

"We have enjoined on man Kindness to his parents" (Al-Ahqaf 46:15)

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا



If one would go through and ponder the above-mentioned verses of the Quran, the following points in respect to the treatment of parents will be evident:

1. Parents' rights are next to those of Allah in Islam. This is authenticated by the fact that, after the description of the Unity of Allah, the Quran has repeatedly ordered for the most pleasant and submissive behavior with the parents.

2. When parents become old, their temperament changes. They may usually become easily irritated and short-tempered due to their age. Their children should take these changes for granted and show considerable patience and magnanimity for their aging parents at all the stages of their life.

3. The children should adopt attitudes of humbleness, politeness and obedience for their parents. They should readily carry out the orders of parents and should feel comforted by doing so. In old age when parents are invalids and naturally dependent upon their children, the children should serve them like an



obedient servant. While doing so, instead of showing or even feeling benevolence or pity, they should rather feel exalted and thank Allah for getting the opportunity of serving their parents in their old age.

4. We should recall those days of infancy when we were totally dependent on our parents. During that period we were weak and in need of help from our parents to survive. In those days, our parents nourished us with love and affection bearing all sorts of hardships. They felt happy when we were happy and became restless when we were even slightly harmed. The children should always have these memories fresh in mind and pray to Allah to be merciful and kind to their parents in their old age as they had been considerate and kind to them in their hours of need.⁷

The Prophet (PBUH), who was a great educator and reformer, was instructed by Allah to place kindness and respect towards one's parents between two of the greatest deeds in Islam: prayer and fighting in the cause of Allah:



The Prophet (PBUH) was asked: "Which deed is loved most by Allah?" He replied, "To offer prayers at their early (very first) stated times." 'Abdullah asked, "What is the next (in goodness)?" The Prophet said, "To be good and dutiful to one's parents." 'Abdullah asked, "What is the next (in goodness)?" The Prophet said, "To participate in Jihad for Allah's Cause." 'Abdullah added, "The Prophet narrated to me these three things, and if I had asked more, he would have told me more."
Hadith 8.1 (Al-Bukhari)

Nobody can estimate the amount of Grace and Mercy that Allah has associated when a Muslim shows love and affection for one's parents. A small example of Allah's bounties to a child who looks at his/her parents with love is provided in this hadith:

The Prophet said, "The virtuous children who once look at their parents with love, Allah give them the benefit of one accepted Hajj." Somebody asked, "O Prophet of Allah, even if one looks a hundred times like this at his parents in a day." He replied, "Yes, Allah is Far Greater (than you can imagine) and Infallible."⁷



DISHONORING PARENTS - MAJOR SIN

Within the text of the Bible, dishonoring one's father and mother is considered a sin. In Islam, the act of not honoring one's parent is considered one of the greatest sins, and is classified as one of the 70 major sins in Islam:¹⁰

Allah's Apostle said thrice, "Should I inform you of the greatest of the great sins?" They said, "Yes, O Allah's Apostle!" He said, "To join others in worship with Allah and to be undutiful to one's parents." Hadith 3.822 (Al-Bukhari Hadith)

Allah's Apostle said. "It is one of the greatest sins that a man should curse his parents." It was asked (by the people), "O Allah's Apostle! How does a man curse his parents?" The Prophet

said, "The man abuses the father of another man and the latter abuses the father of the former and abuses his mother." Hadith 8.4 (Al-Bukhari Hadith)

"And he that curseth his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death."
Exodus 21:17

"The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.
Proverbs 30:17

As Muslims, we can not hold grudges against our parents, be rude or unkind to them and expect that Allah will forgive our sins. This type of behavior towards our parents is hypocritical and totally against the guidance of Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) and Jesus (PBUH):

Prophet (PBUH) said: Allah's pleasure consists in the pleasure of parents and Allah's anger consists in the anger of parents." ¹⁰

"And when you stand praying, forgive, if you have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses." (Mark 11:25-26)

The above reference from the Gospel (Injeel) is in accord with the Islamic teaching that Allah will not forgive the sins of a person who in his heart holds bitterness towards one of his Muslim brothers/relatives (including father and mother) until the situation is reconciled between them. However, given that dishonoring one's parent is a major sin, it is extremely

advisable for a son/daughter not to hold any type of grudge or bitterness against their parents.

In the Old Testament, Allah said that if we honored our father and mother our days on this earth would be lengthened. So it stands to reason that if we dishonored our parents, our days on earth are shortened. This statement has both a figurative and literal meaning. Furthermore, Islamic scholars say that if someone disrespect his parents, not only will their days on earth be shortened, but they will also be given children who will disrespect them.

*The Prophet (PBUH) said: "He who does not show tenderness to the young and respect to the elder is not one of us."
(Tirmidi)*

In other cases, righteous parents often have unrighteous children, who flouts all that the parents held sacred, and looks upon them as old-fashion and unworthy of respect or regard. The contrast in an individual family

may be matched by the contrast in the passing and the rising generations of mankind. All this happens as a passing phase in the nominal evolution of mankind, and there is nothing in this to be despondent about. What we have to do is for the mature generations to bring up their children in ways prescribed by Allah, and to educate them to understand that age and experience must be honored, especially in the understanding of spiritual matters.



FEELINGS OF PARENTS

Islam has the utmost consideration for the feelings of parents even in the time of war, when the love of a parent is inseparable from a son or daughter. The Prophet (PBUH) did not forget the weakness of parents and their claims on their children during the time of war, so he gently discouraged those who wanted to participate in wars (Jihad) and directed them in taking care of their parents.⁹

A man came to the Prophet asking his permission to take part in Jihad. The Prophet asked him, "Are your parents alive?" He replied in the affirmative. The Prophet said to him, "Then exert yourself in their service." Hadith 4.248 (Al-Bukhari Hadith)

A man came to the Prophet (PBUH) to make Bayah and to pledge to

undertake hijrah and jihad in the hope of receiving reward from Allah. The Prophet did not rush to accept his bayah, but asked him: "Are either of your parents alive?" the man said, "Yes, both of them." The Prophet asked, "And do you wish to receive reward from Allah?" The man replied, "Yes." So the kindhearted and compassionate Prophet told him: "Go back to your parents and keep them company in the best possible way." (Agreed upon)

One man came to the Prophet (PBUH) and said, "Messenger of Allah, I desire to go on a military expedition and I have come to consult you. He asked him if he had a mother, and when he replied that he had, he said, "Stay with her, for Paradise is at her feet." Hadith 4939 (Al-Tirmidhi Hadith)



“Paradise is at her feet,” is a very simple but comprehensive statement. It means, among other things, that this son should treat his mother with the utmost respect, extreme politeness and submission. She should be served selflessly by her son if he expects Allah’s Mercy on the Day of Judgment. Another example would be, if you had a treasure underneath a wall, wouldn’t you keep that wall from falling down, maybe put a guard or a fence around it and maintain it so people would know that the wall belongs to someone. The same analogy applies to the treasure of Paradise being under this mother’s feet. Her mental and physical health should be maintained, she should be visited often, or most honorably, live in her household, and share one’s earnings with her. For the treasure of Paradise is far greater than worldly treasures.

We should be concerned for our parents’ feelings even when we are speaking to them. We must not raise our voice to them. Our speech/voice should reflect honor and respect and have a calm and polite tone similar to that of a sick/ill person.

The involvement of our parents in our decision making process, especially when it is likely to affect them, is very important. A Muslim should not make a decision that will hurt his parents. S/he must consider their feelings and try not to cause them any emotional discomfort:

A man came to the Apostle (PBUH) of Allah and said: "I came to you to take the oath of allegiance to you on emigration, and I left my parents weeping." He (the Prophet) said: "Return to them and make them laugh as you made them weep." Hadith 2522 (Abu-Dawood Hadith)

A man emigrated to the Apostle (PBUH) of Allah from Yemen. He asked (him): "Have you anyone (of your relatives) in Yemen?" He replied: "My parents." He asked: "Did they permit you?" He replied: "No." He said: "Go back to them



and ask for their permission. If they permit you, then fight (in the path of Allah), otherwise be devoted to them.”
Hadith 2524 (Abu-Dawood Hadith)



PARADISE - TREATING PARENTS GOOD

Entering Paradise is the hope of all obedient and Allah (God) fearing individuals. As Muslims, we know that the pleasure of entering Paradise is totally based on the Mercy of Allah, and not on our deeds alone. However, Allah has associated the treatment of our parents with entering Paradise in the hope that we can avail ourselves to being on the straight path and seeking His blessings.

Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said: "A person who is disrespectful to his parents, the one who keeps reminding (another) of the favours he has done (him), and the one who is addicted to wine will not enter Paradise. (Bukhari & Muslim)

The Prophet (PBUH) said, "If anyone possesses these three characteristics

Allah will give him an easy death and bring him into His Paradise: gentleness towards the weak, affection towards parents, and kindness to slaves." Hadith 3364 (Al-Tirmidhi Hadith)

As mentioned, being unkind to one's parent is a major sin. It is said by Islamic scholars that on the Day of Judgment the greatest punishment will be reserved for three types of people: the idolater, the adulterer, and the one who was disrespectful to his parents.¹⁰ There are many warnings and instructions of the Prophet (PBUH) that links unkind treatment or disregard for our parents to not entering Paradise:

Allah's Apostle (PBUH) said: Let him be humbled into dust; let him be humbled into dust. It was said: Allah's Messenger, who is he? He said: He who sees either of his parents during their old age or he sees both of them, but he

does not enter Paradise. Hadith 6189
(Muslim Hadith)

A man said, "Messenger of Allah (PBUH) what rights can parents demand from their children?" He replied, "They are your Paradise and your Hell." Hadith 4941 (Al-Tirmidhi Hadith)

In addition to receiving the punishment of not entering Paradise, the punishment for disobedience to one's parents is given to the individual while they are on earth:

The Prophet (PBUH) said, "Allah the Almighty, forgives any sin He pleases, except disobedience to parents; and Allah hastens (the punishment) in this life for one who disobeys his parents."

In other words, the son/daughter who is disobedient to their parents will receive punishment in this world and in the Hell Fire.

On the other hand, no other reward is greater than earning the pleasure of Allah and deserving the entrance to Heaven by serving and obeying our parents. This reward is to be enjoyed in the life Hereafter. But those who uphold the rights of their parents and serve them sincerely are also rewarded in their worldly lives by Allah,⁷ as depicted in the following account of Prophet Mohammed (PBUH):

Three persons were traveling when heavy rains began to fall. They took shelter in a cave. Incidentally, a big stone came hurtling down and blocked the opening of the cave. The three travelers lost the hope of their survival. One of them told the rest not to lose hope and pray to Allah, by describing

.....
the most virtuous deed of their lives, to enable them to get out of the cave which had no exit. - One of them addressing Allah, submitted that he had old parents and several small children. When he would come back home after grazing the goats, he would first offer the milk to his parents and then to his children. Once when he came home quite late his parents were asleep. He milked the goats as usual and took the cup of milk to his parents, but could not dare to disturb their sleep. So he stood there the whole night holding the cup in his hands, ignoring the cries of his small children who clung to his feet to be fed. He did not like the very idea of feeding his children while his parents were sleeping with empty stomachs. -He beseeched Allah to enable them to come out of the

cave if He judged that his action was done to please Him. Suddenly, the big stone slid a little from the mouth of the cave. Then the remaining two men also prayed to Allah by describing their own virtuous deeds for His judgment. As they finished, the big stone slide completely from the opening of the cave and they were free to move out by the Grace of Allah. (Bakhari Hadith 3.472)

The above-mentioned hadith represents an example of an exemplary Muslim who truly fears Allah in terms of honoring his father and mother. This man was able to ignore the hunger cries of his small children in order to please his elderly parents. Given the same situation today, there are not many of us who would not give the milk to our children. Furthermore, given the secular intrusion of Western government in the family life, this situation could be classified as child abuse, regardless of its religious implications.

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FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO PARENTS

The Western social structures that have taken over the minds of many will make the man, who is convinced of Western ideas, think mainly of his wife and children. The man hardly ever have the time to look back with love and kindness in gratitude to the generation that came before, those who stayed up so many nights to care for him and who spent so much on his upbringing and preparing him for life. When he thinks of a comfortable home, fine clothes, good food and travel, he thinks in terms of providing them for his wife and children. He barely gives a thought to the share his parents should have in these luxuries, when they are most in need of receiving them from the hand of their beloved son.⁹ Allah says in the Holy Quran:

“They ask you (O Messenger) what they should spend. Say whatever of good you spend let it be for the parents...” (2:215)

يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلْ

مَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسْكِينِ

وَأَبْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا تَفَعَّلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢١٥﴾

In addition to a Muslim's dutiful service to one's parents, it is the son's responsibility to give first preference to his parents in spending his earnings. Muslims are responsible for the support and maintenance of their parents. It is an absolute religious duty to provide for parents in case of need and to help make their lives as comfortable as possible. Obedience to one's parents also includes financial help.

The Prophet (PBUH) said, "O community of Mohammed, by Him who has sent me with truth, Allah cannot accept the charity of those whose relatives (parents included) are in want of his kindness and help, while he is distributing it among others, leaving them out. By Him in whose power is my

.....
life, on the Day of Judgment Allah will not look at such a man.” (Tabarani)

In the Muslim household the father is the one who is responsible for providing the financial stability of the family. The father’s religious guidance and his efforts to provide the family’s sustenance are reasons enough for a child to render due honor, respect, and to share his property in support of his father’s household.

A man came to the Prophet (PBUH) and said: “Apostle of Allah, I have property and children, and my father finishes my property.” He replied, “You and your property belong to your father; your children come from the pleasantest of what you earn; so enjoy from the earning of your children.”
Hadith 3523 (Abu-Dawood Hadith)

Islam holds the father responsible for the maintenance of the children, and the children responsible for the parents' maintenance. If the father fulfills his religious duties to his children, his children must give him the right to reciprocal support, should the need for such support arise. The father's responsibility for his children must be compensated by the assurance that the children are also responsible for him and his household. Thus, by the general principle of "reciprocity" the rules of Islam⁴ ensure mutual interdependence between the father's household and the adult son. This type of honor and respect from the child has its greatest potential for being fulfilled if the father raises his children under the values of Islam.

Once a man complained to the Prophet about his father who took away his belonging whenever he liked. The Messenger of Allah called the father, who was a very old man, and asked him the details of the matter. He said, "O Messenger of Allah, a time was when he (the son) was weak and helpless and

.....
barehanded while I had strength and wealth. I never hesitated to give him my belongings whenever he needed them. Today, I am weak and barehanded while he is rich and now he keeps his belonging from me." Hearing this, tears came to the eyes of the Prophet. Then the Prophet said twice to the son, "You and your belongings belong to your father. You and your belongings belong to your father."⁷



DEATH OF A PARENT

In Islam, the responsibility of sons and daughters to demonstrate their honor and respect for their parents does not end upon their death. A Muslim should continue to pray and act accordingly to the Quran so that they (parents) can benefit from their children's actions:

The Prophet (PBUH) said: "If anyone recites the Qur'an and acts according to its contents, on the Day of Judgment his parents will be given to wear a crown whose light is better than the light of the sun in the dwellings of this world if it were among you. So what do you think of him who acts according to this." Hadith 1448 (Abu-Dawood Hadith)

.....
Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said, "Allah Who is Great and Glorious will raise a righteous servant's degree in Paradise, and when he asks his Lord how this has been granted him, He will reply that it is because his son has asked pardon for him." Ahmed (Tirmidhi Hadith 2348)

All too often, a son/daughter is faced with the untimely death of a parent and s[he] has never rectified an argument, disrespectful behavior or unpleasant circumstance that occurred between them. This could be very traumatic for the son/daughter once they have sincerely reflected upon their actions. The Prophet (PBUH) has conveyed to Muslims how Allah's Grace and Mercy is applied in this situation:

The Prophet (PBUH) said, "Often it so happens that someone has been disobedient to one or both of his parents in their life and has thus earned their displeasure. But if after

their death(s) he sincerely prays to Allah to bless them with His mercy and forgiveness, Allah then declares this disobedient person as an obedient one.” (Al-Bayhaqí)

Muslims should never forget the obligation to one’s parent(s), and that they should pray for their parents while they are living and after their death.

One of the greatest forms of love and respect that a Muslim son/daughter can display to their parents is to maintain contact with their friends, while they are still alive and after their death:

A man of the Bani Salamah tribe came and said: “O Messenger of Allah! Is there anything I can now do in benevolence towards my parents after their death? The Prophet (PBUH) answered: “Yes, by praying for them

and soliciting (Allah's) mercy and forgiveness towards them, fulfilling their promises and undertakings, doing kindness to those who may be related to you through them, and respecting their friends." (Abu-Dawood Hadith)

The true Muslim always seeks to strengthen the ties of friendship with those whom his parents love. S[he] continues to care about their parents after they have died. They never forget those old friendships, and they maintain their ties with the circles of friends forged by one's parents.

Allah's Apostle (PBUH) said: The finest act of goodness is the kind treatment of a person to the loved ones of his father after his death. Hadith 6194 (Muslim Hadith)

Noble human feelings such as these, and sincere friendships, adds beauty and enjoyment to life, and all of this depends on the presence of true Muslims⁷ who fear the punishment of Allah.



ATTITUDE TOWARDS NON-MUSLIM PARENTS

One main question that is frequently asked by a new Muslim who enters Islam is: How should I treat my parents even though they are following a religion other than Islam? The answer to this question may surprise most non-Muslim readers. The Prophet elevated his teachings to a new level when he instructed the Muslims to treat their parents with love, respect, and certain basic securities even if they followed a religion other than Islam:

During the period of the peace treaty of Quraish with Allah's Apostle, my mother, accompanied by her father, came to visit me, and she was a pagan. I consulted Allah's Apostle, "O Allah's Apostle! My mother has come to me and she desires to receive a reward from me, shall I keep good relation with her?" He said, "Yes, keep good relation with her." Hadith 4.407 (Al-Bukhari Hadith)



It is realized that certain mutual expectations and natural affections are inherent in the parent-child relationship. Islam recognizes that this relationship must be maintained irrespective of the religious differences of the parties involved. Regardless of the religious differences, it is the duty of the Muslim child to serve and treat them with kindness, respect and devotion.⁷ However, obedience is always given first to Allah. If one's parents order or make conditional circumstances for a Muslim child to disobey Allah, then one should follow the Quran, which states:

"And we enjoined on man (to be good) to his parents. In travail upon travail did his mother bear him and twain was his weaning. So show gratitude to Me and to your parents. To Me is the final destiny.

"But if they strive to make you join in worship with Me things of which you

 have no knowledge, obey them not. Yet bear them company in this life with justice and consideration and follow the way of those who turn to Me. In the end, the return of you all is to Me and I shall tell you (the truth and meaning of) all that you used to do."
 (Luqman, 31: 14-15).

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ
 وَهَنَا عَلَى وَهْنٍ وَفِصْلَهُ فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ
 إِلَى الْمَصِيرِ ﴿١٤﴾ وَإِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَى أَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ
 لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا وَصَاحِبُهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا
 وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ
 بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

The above two verses of the Quran were revealed to Prophet Mohammed in reference to a circumstance that his maternal Uncle (Sad ibn Abi Waqqas) encountered

when his mother attempted to force him to recant his faith as a Muslim:

While the Prophet (PBUH) was delighted with Sad's acceptance of Islam, others including and especially his mother were not. Sad relates: "When my mother heard the news of my Islam, she flew into a rage. She came up to me and said: "O Sad! What is this religion that you have embraced which has taken you away from the religion of your mother and father...? By God, either you forsake your new religion or I would not eat or drink until I die. Your heart would be broken with grief for me and remorse would consume you on account of the deed which you have done and people would censure you forever more.' 'Don't do (such a thing), my mother,' I said, 'for I would not give

.....
up my religion for anything.' However, she went on with her threat... For days she neither ate nor drank. She became emaciated and weak. Hour after hour, I went to her asking whether I should bring her some food or something to drink but she persistently refused, insisting that she would neither eat nor drink until she died or I abandoned my religion. I said to her: 'Yaa Ummaah (mother)! In spite of my strong love for you, my love for God and His Messenger is indeed stronger. By God, if you had a thousand souls and one soul after another was to depart, I would not abandon this my religion for anything.' When she saw that I was determined she relented unwillingly and ate and drank." (Biographies of Companions)



The Muslim is commanded by Allah not to obey one's parents in what they try to tell her (him) to do which is against Islam, since there cannot be obedience to a creature in sin against the Creator--and what sin could be greater than associating partners with Allah? At the same time, the Muslim is commanded to treat them honorably and with respect, unaffected by their stand against Islam.

In delicate and sensitive situations (as described above) between a Muslim and non-Muslim parents, the Muslim should strive hard to treat them with kindness and devotion, and leave the judgment between himself and his/her parents for the Day of the Most Just of Judges. A Day when the parents will not be able to benefit the child nor will the child be able to benefit the parents. Indeed, such tolerance, beneficent teachings and wisdom are not to be found in any other religion.¹²

ATTITUDE TOWARDS RELATIVES

As our parents are also our blood relatives, it is necessary to share some significant and serious instructions provided by Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) for breaking off relationships with our relatives.

The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: "He who breaks off the ties of blood will not enter Paradise." (Bukhari & Muslim)

The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: "He who just returns the visits of his relatives does not completely fulfill the obligations of relationship. But he who ignores the mistakes of his relatives, forgives them, and visits them in order to bind the ties of relationship when they are broken does fulfill the obligations of relationships." (Bukhari)



On the authority of Abu Sufyan Sakhr Bin Harb, who said: During his meeting with Hiraclius, the Roman Ruler, the latter asked him; "What does your Prophet ask you to do?" I said: 'He asks us to worship the only One Allah (Allah), and not to associate anybody with Him; not to follow the habits and practices of our ancestors; he further asks us to perform the praying (Salat), tell the truth, keep chaste and to treat our blood relations well.'" (Bukhari & Muslim)

The Prophet (PBUH) said: "When a person spends on his family and hopes for compensation from Allah, he is also seen by Allah to be giving charity." (Bukhari & Muslim)



The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: "The man who is merciful and kind hearted to every relative and to every Muslim, will be an inhabitant of Paradise." (Muslim)

Once when the Prophet was distributing meat at Jaranah, a woman came very close to him. He spread his sheet for her and she sat on it. One of the companions asked about her. They told him that she was the foster mother of the Prophet. (Abu Dawood)

Points of benefit that can be taken from the above-mentioned hadith:

- Our obligation of service to blood relative represents how much we fear Allah.



- Breaking off our ties with our blood relative is a serious offense.
- We should visit our blood relative for the sake of Allah and to seek only His blessings.
- We should also spend our wealth on our parents as well as our immediate family.
- The seriousness of good and bad treatment of blood relatives are associated with entering paradise and hell.
- We should treat our foster mother just like we are required to treat our real mother.

-
3. Obedience and respect for ones' parents enables a Muslim to be dutiful and beneficent to the community. Likewise, such a Muslim is loved by his/her parents.
 4. The act of serving parents devotedly and treating them nicely is equivalent to the virtuous deed of Jihad (fighting in the way of Allah). By serving them, a child enjoys the blessed status of a Mujahid (one who fights in the way of Allah).
 5. Muslims who earn the pleasures of their parents will receive a goodly reward on the Day of Judgement. Muslims who do not earn the pleasures of their parents will earn the wrath of Allah on the Day of Judgement.
 6. Muslims who have the opportunity of serving their parents are no doubt the fortunate ones. By serving them, you will be entitled to Paradise. By neglecting them, you destroy yourself in this life and in the hereafter.
 7. Performing Hajj and Umrah are the most virtuous deeds for a Muslim. But, if the Muslim treat their parents kindly and compassionately, Allah will



8. bestow upon them the same reward as Hajj and Umrah.
9. The servicing of parents relieves a person from sufferings and calamities. If a Muslim treat them well, it is hoped that Allah will forgive his/her sins.
10. Allah blesses, increases longevity and livelihood for those Muslims who are obedient and submissive to their parents.⁷



CLOSING REMARKS

There comes a time in the lives of sons/daughters when they are forced to re-evaluate their past relationship with their parents. This self-evaluation inevitably opens their eyes to the disrespect and ungratefulness he/she has shown to their parents. In some cases, the re-evaluation process occurs at a time of tragedy (i.e., death of a parent or family member), and the encounter is very emotional for the child and parent(s). Nevertheless, it closes the door on ill feelings and disrespectfulness, and opens a new door of forgiveness, honor, and kindness toward the parent(s).

This moment of self-evaluation could also occur when a son/daughter realizes their religious deficiencies, and begin to reflect upon their lack of gratefulness to Allah, His Favors, and their neglectfulness in following His Commandments, which includes honoring one's parents. This occurrence is mentioned in the Quran:

"At length when he reaches the age of full strength and attains forty years he says 'O my Lord, grant me that I may be grateful for Thy favor which Thou hast bestowed upon me and upon both my parents and that I may work righteousness such as Thou mayest approve; and be gracious to me in my issue. Truly have I turned to Thee and truly do I bow (to Thee) in Islam.'" (Al-Ahqaf 46:15)

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ
 كُرْهًا وَحَمَلُهُ وَفِصْلُهُ ثَلَاثُونَ شَهْرًا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَبَلَغَ
 أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً قَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ
 عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي
 ذُرِّيَّتِي إِنِّي بُنِيتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

It is my hope that this booklet has triggered the reader to realize that s/he may not be following the fifth commandment (Honor your father and mother) as

prescribed by Allah (God), and that amending one's shortcomings with his/her parents may be necessary.

However, as a non-Muslim you must first consider your religious beliefs, these divine instructions of Islam for following the fifth commandment and, most importantly, the first commandment that says:

“Thou shall have no other gods before Me.”

There are no other divine instructions that are similar to the ones identified in Islam that will give you a broader understanding, detailed examples and divine significance to practicing the two foremost commandments (1st & 5th) of Allah. Therefore, it is suggested that you begin to read about the religion of Islam from authentic sources.

You may be inclined to accept and follow the teachings of Islam as it applies only to honoring your parents, and not all of the Islamic beliefs and instructions. However,

.....
it is clearly stated in the Quran (18:103-106) that this type of partial-practice, not following all the Prophets and their instructions, will have no value for that individual on the Day of Judgment:

“Say: Shall we tell you of those who lost most in respect of their deeds? Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life, while they thought that they were acquiring good by their works?’ They are those who deny the Signs of their Lord and the fact of their having to meet Him (in the Hereafter): vain will be their works, nor shall We on the Day of Judgment give them any weight. That is their reward, Hell; because they rejected Faith, and took My Signs and My Messengers by way of jest.” (Kahf 18: 103-106)

قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ
 أَعْمَالًا ﴿١٠٣﴾ الَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ
 يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا ﴿١٠٤﴾ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ وَلِقَائِهِ
 فَحَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فَلَا نُقِيمُ لَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَزْنًا ﴿١٠٥﴾ ذَلِكَ جَزَاءُهُمْ
 جَهَنَّمَ بِمَا كَفَرُوا وَاتَّخَذُوا آيَاتِي وَرُسُلِي هُزُوًا ﴿١٠٦﴾

With the above Quranic verse in mind, let us not forget that we can not judge a man or his actions if we have not walked in his shoes. That is to say, if you have not personally read the Quran or the teachings of Prophet Mohammed (PBUH), you can not declare it to be false. False propaganda (from any source) does not give credence to correct judgment.

You are encouraged to read and study the divine sources of Islam (Quran and Sunnah) to learn more about how to honor one's father and mother, in addition to other comprehensive details for worshiping Allah

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