

BIBLE LIFE MESSAGES

# Commandment # 5 - Honor Your Parents

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Exodus 20:12

**1 The Fifth Commandment is to honor your parents. 2**

**From Exodus, chapter 20, verse 12, we read, Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you. 3**

## **I. What Did This Mean to Them?**

**What did this mean to them? 4**

**Let's examine the position of parents in Old Testament culture. 5**

**According to Nelson Bible Dictionary: "The father commanded a high position in the family of Old Testament times; his word was law. In addition, the Hebrew word translated "husband" actually meant 'lord', 'master', 'owner', or 'possessor'." 1 This is seen in Genesis, chapter 18, verse 12, So Sarah laughed to herself as she thought, "After I am worn out and my master is old, will I now have this pleasure?" 6 A New Testament reference to this is First Peter, chapter 3,**

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**1 Youngblood, Ronald F., Bruce F. F., and Harrison, R. K., Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Nashville, TN.**

verse 5 and 6, **For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master.** <sup>7</sup> Because of this position, shared to some degree with his wife, a man was expected to be treated as royalty by the rest of his family. <sup>8</sup>

What did “honor” mean? <sup>9</sup>

The word **honor**, in the original language, <sup>2</sup> meant literally “to make heavy”, so “to make honorable”, “to glorify”. <sup>10</sup>

It implied **respect**. Leviticus, chapter 19, verses 3 and 32, state this, **Each of you must respect his mother and father . . . Rise in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly and revere your God.** <sup>11</sup> You are not to **complain** or **speak harshly** to them. <sup>3</sup> In the New

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<sup>2</sup> כָּבֵד.

<sup>3</sup> Isaiah 45: 10 - Woe to him who says to his father, ‘What have you begotten?’ or to his mother, ‘What have you brought to birth?’

Testament, the Apostle Paul emphasized, **Do not rebuke** an older man **harshly**, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity. <sup>4</sup> <sub>12</sub> A few verses further on, he implies that includes **financial support**, **But if a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family** and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God.

<sup>5</sup> <sub>13</sub>

Honor also implies **obedience**. Proverbs, chapter 6, verse 20, **My son, keep your father's commands and do not forsake your mother's teaching**. <sup>14</sup> This is supported twice in the New Testament. **Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right**. <sup>6</sup> <sub>15</sub> Again,

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<sup>4</sup> | Timothy 5:102.

<sup>5</sup> | Timothy 5:4.

<sup>6</sup> | Ephesians 6:1.

**Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.**<sup>7</sup> <sup>16</sup>

It also implies **listening to their advice**. Proverbs, chapter 23, verse 22, **Listen to your father, who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old.** <sup>17</sup>

What are the results of giving, or not giving, honor to your parents? <sup>18</sup>

There are the **rewards**. Ephesians, chapter 6, verses 2 and 3, **“Honor your father and mother”— which is the first commandment with a promise — “that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.”** <sup>19</sup>

Then, there are a couple of warnings or **punishments**.

First, there’s a curse to those who dishonor their parents. <sup>8</sup> <sup>20</sup> Second, God promises to put your lights

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<sup>7</sup> Colossians 3:20.

<sup>8</sup> Deuteronomy 27:16 - **Cursed** is the man who dishonors his father or his mother.

**out! If a man curses his father or mother, his lamp will be snuffed out in pitch darkness.** <sup>9</sup> <sub>21</sub>

Then, there's the command of **capital punishment**. Deuteronomy, chapter 21, verses 18 through 21, states, **If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who does not obey his father and mother and will not listen to them when they discipline him, his father and mother shall take hold of him and bring him to the elders at the gate of his town. They shall say to the elders, "This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious. He will not obey us. He is a profligate and a drunkard."** **Then all the men of his town shall stone him to death.** You must purge the evil from among you. All Israel will hear of it and be afraid. <sup>22</sup> Lord Jesus referred to this law when He said, **For God said, 'Honor your father and mother' and 'Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.** <sup>10</sup> <sub>23</sub>

**So, what are some examples of Bible people honoring their parents?** <sub>24</sub>

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<sup>9</sup> Proverbs 20:20.

<sup>10</sup> Matthew 15:4.

King David **protected** his parents. <sup>11</sup> <sub>25</sub>

King Solomon respected his mother. <sup>12</sup> <sub>26</sub>

Lord Jesus was **obedient** and **cared for** His parents. Luke, chapter 2, verse 15, **Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them.** <sup>27</sup> Then, again, **Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son" . . .** <sup>13</sup> referring to the Apostle John. <sup>28</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> I Samuel 22:3 - From there David went to Mizpah in Moab and said to the king of Moab, "Would you let my father and mother come and stay with you until I learn what God will do for me?"

<sup>12</sup> I Kings 2:19 - When Bathsheba went to King Solomon to speak to him for Adonijah, the king stood up to meet her, bowed down to her and sat down on his throne. He had a throne brought for the king's mother, and she sat down at his right hand.

<sup>13</sup> John 19:25-26.

## **II. What Should This Mean to You?**

**What should this mean to you? <sup>29</sup>**

**Honoring your parents doesn't stop when you leave home.**

**Sometimes teens are so anxious to get away from mom and dad that they run away from home. Bitterness and resentment persist on both sides. Kids want nothing to do with parents and shirk any responsibility for them the rest of their lives.**

**The religious leaders during Jesus' life even came up with a tradition to circumvent this commandment. It was called The Oath of Korban. <sup>30</sup>**

**Lord Jesus referred to what they were doing in Matthew, chapter 15, verses 4 through 6, **And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? For God said, 'Honor your father and mother' and 'Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.'** But you say that if a man says to his father or mother, 'Whatever help you might**



otherwise have received from me is a gift devoted to God,' he is not to 'honor his father' with it. Thus you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition.

So – what was The Oath of Korban? William Barclay, in his The Daily Study Bible, gives this rather lengthy explanation.

*“Korban can mean that which is dedicated to God. Now suppose that a man had a father or mother in poverty and in need; and suppose that his poor parent came to him with a request for help. There was a way in which the man could avoid giving any help. He could, as it were, officially dedicate all his money and all his property to God and to the Temple; his property would then be *Korban*, God-dedicated; then he would say to his father or mother: ‘I’m very sorry, I can give you nothing; all my belongings are dedicated to God.’ He could use a ritual practice to evade the basic duty in helping and honoring his father and mother. He could take a scribal regulation to wipe out one of the Ten Commandments.”*

(ii) “But *Korban* has another meaning, and it may well be that it is this second meaning which is at issue here. *Korban* was used as an oath. A man might say to his father or mother: ‘*Korban*, if anything I have will ever be used to help you.’ Now, suppose this man to have remorse of conscience; suppose him to have made the refusal in a moment of anger, or temper, or even of irritation; suppose him to have second and kinder and more filial thoughts, and to feel that after all there was a duty to help his parents. In such a case any reasonable person would say that that man had undergone a genuine repentance, and that his change of mind was a good thing; and since he was not prepared to do the right thing and obey the law of God. He should be encouraged to follow that line.”

“The strict Scribe said, ‘No. Our Law says that no oath can ever be broken.’ He would quote Numbers 30:2: ‘When a man vows a vow to the Lord or swears an oath to bind himself by a pledge, he shall not break his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds

**out of his mouth.’ The Scribe could legalistically argue: ‘You took an oath: and for no reason could you ever break it.’ That is to say, the Scribe would hold a man to a reckless oath, taken in a moment of passion, an oath which actually compelled a man to break the higher law of humanity and of God.”**

**“That is what Jesus meant. He meant: ‘You are using your scribal interpretations, your traditions, to compel a man to dishonor his father and mother, even when he himself has repented and has seen the better way.”**

<sup>14</sup><sub>31</sub>

**Lord Jesus was talking to adult children who were not supporting their parents financially when they were in need! <sub>32</sub>**

**What can you give to your parents to show that you honor them? <sub>33</sub>**

**Your financial support when they need it. <sub>34</sub>**

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<sup>14</sup> Barclay, William, lecturer in the University of Glasgow (Hrsg.): The Gospel of Matthew: Volume 2, Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 2000, c1975 (The Daily Study Bible, Rev. Ed), S. 115.

**Your time.** Initiate phone calls on a routine basis. <sup>35</sup>

**Your listening ear.** Many seniors simply need a listening ear genuinely interested in what they have to say. <sup>36</sup>

**Your respect and obedience.** Dr. James Dobson once stated, “It’s amazing how much your parents have learned from the time you were 13 until you were 25!” Go out of your way to obey their wishes as much as you can. <sup>37</sup>

**Your tribute to them!**

Let me end this message with a tribute I wrote to my mom who was in her nineties. We often talked together about her life.

“You were living with your parents in San Francisco when you gave birth to me, your firstborn son. Like many young women of the time, you bore me without the support of your husband. He was away fighting a war.”

**“Fiercely patriotic, you cry at military parades. You married a military man and served your country with him for twenty years. As a career Navy officer’s wife, you were dragged all over the world to befriend, with respect and dignity, people of all ethnic backgrounds from Guamanians in the Pacific to Arabs in North Africa. Your unbiased acceptance of people influenced your sons and grandchildren to love people of all races.”**

**“There were always people, music and art in our home. Your sons and grandchildren now sing, play instruments and involve themselves in artistic endeavors because of your influence. I can recall always having animals in the house; dogs, cats, birds and white rats!”**

**“It’s hard to understand a mother’s love. I can only imagine, having launched two of my sons, how you must have felt when I hopped into that ’51 Ford, waved goodbye, and drove out of your life to attend college. But you were always there when I returned**

**home for glasses, developed Scarlet Fever and when you nursed me back to health after that almost fatal car accident.”**

**“When I was younger, I misunderstood your faith. I thought I was the only Christian in the family when I went to church alone. I should have realized it was dad’s resentment that kept you home because when he left on Navy assignments you took me, sang with me in the choir and encouraged my decision to enter the ministry.”**

**“I guess that’s way I chose a wife with the same character traits I so admired in you; love for people, devotion to family and an unswerving faith.”**

**“Perpetually young, you are my recycled teenager. I love you mom! – Steve”**

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