

YOUR *Parents* Your Paradise or Hell!



"Your Lord has commanded that you should worship none but Him, and show kindness to your parents. Whether one or both of them reach old age while with you, say not to them (so much as), "uff," and do not rebuke them, but always speak gently to them." (17:23)

In the above verse, our obligation to parents is mentioned next to our obligation to Allah because kindness and honouring our parents is the single greatest obligation from among all rights that we owe to fellow humans. Kindness to parents is to treat them with the same commitment and affection they demonstrated when we were weak, feeble and helpless.

Major Sin

Disobedience to parents is from among the major sins in Islam. Nabi ﷺ has said: "(Major sins are) associating partners with Allah, disobedience to parents, killing a person and false utterance." (Muslim) The commission of major sin ultimately leads to the prevention of obedience to Allah. If there was no other punishment for sin other than it preventing one from obedience to Allah, it would suffice as the ultimate deprivation.

Superior than Jihad

Our duty to parents takes precedence over Jihad. Abdullah ibn 'Amr ﷺ said: "A man came to Nabi ﷺ and asked his permission to take part in Jihad. Nabi ﷺ asked him, 'Are your parents alive?' 'Yes, they are,' he replied. Nabi ﷺ told him, 'then exert yourself in their service.' (Bukhari) Jihad is the epitome of all worship to Allah, yet serving our parents in certain circumstances is superior to what is otherwise considered as the highest form of subservience to Allah- Jihad!

Your Paradise or Hell

Nabi ﷺ has said: "They (parents) are your Paradise and Hell." (Ibn Majah) Your attitude with your parents is going to determine your ultimate abode in the hereafter. Your relationship with your parents will pave the way to Paradise or Hell. Abdullah bin Abi Auf ﷺ says: "There was a young man who was on his death bed; people were encouraging him to recite the shahaadah (kalimah), but he was unable to do so until Nabi ﷺ entered and asked him to recite the Kalimah; to which he replied "I am unable to do so." Upon enquiry it was then found that his mother was unhappy with him so she was asked to forgive him, (only after she forgave him) was he able to recite the shahaadah." (Tabrani)

The Pleasure of Allah

"The pleasure of the Allah lies in the pleasure of the parents, and the displeasure of the Allah lies in the displeasure of the parents." (Tirmidhi)

Punishable in this World

"The punishment for all sins, if Allah wills, may be delayed until the Day of Judgement, except the punishment for disobedience of parents - which Allah sends in this lifetime." (Tabrani)

There are five types of children in this world.

1. A child who openly disobeys his parents - *He is guilty of one of the seven major sins.*
2. A child who grudgingly and unwillingly serves his parents - *He does not gain any reward for his services.*
3. A child who serves his parents but continuously reminds them of his kindness - *He is regarded sinful.*
4. A child who does what he is told willingly and happily - *He will be rewarded for his services in both the worlds.*
5. A child who serves his parents even before he is asked to do so - *He is dutiful, kind and devoted to his parents - His conduct is referred to as "Al-Birr".*

- Al-Birr is to recognize what is in the heart of your parents and act upon it without waiting for instruction.
- Al-Birr is to know what makes them happy and to be aware of what hurts them without them having to express their feelings.
- Al-Birr is to ensure the comfort of your parents before your own comfort.
- Al-Birr is to make them feel honoured and special by displaying humility and selflessness.
- Al-Birr is to constantly make du'aa for them - "...and say, "My Lord, have mercy upon them as they brought me up [when I was] small." (17:24)

One who does "Al-Birr" attracts the unseen help of Allah, which includes ease of sustenance, protection from disaster, inner peace and solace. It paves the way for death on Imaan and for securing the pleasure of Allah. The hearts of his parents naturally make du'aa for him. He earns the unseen blessings of Allah in his time, wealth, health and in his relationship with others. Which one of the five categories describes your relationship with your parents? It is never too late to make amends and to strive to be from among the fifth category.

May Allah grant us the ability to be among those who do 'Al- Birr' to our parents.

