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The Responsibilities of Children and Parents

6: 1-4

The responsibilities of children and parents DIG: God's standard is that children are to obey their parents in keeping with their commitment to follow Messiah. How would you describe this kind of obedience? What are some of the benefits of children obeying their parents? How can dad's keep from provoking their children? How does this relate to the fact that children often times get upset when they are corrected?

REFLECT: What did it mean to obey your parents as a child? In what ways can you honor your parents now? What does it mean to honor your parents as an adult? What makes honoring your parents difficult in your life? Is disregarding your parents the same as dishonoring them? Why or why not? How can fathers nurture and instruct their children instead? How much time and energy does it take for fathers to do this?

**Children are to obey their parents,
and parents are to lovingly raise their children with godly discipline and guidance.**



The experiment is often recounted of placing a frog in a pan of room-temperature water on a stove and of slowly increasing the heat. Because the rise in temperature is so gradual, it is imperceptible to the frog, and he remains in the pan even when the water begins to boil. He adjusts to the heat as it rises and eventually boils to death. That process illustrates what has happened to the American family, including many families of faith. The changed values in our society have been so gradual that most people have hardly noticed them. Each small change in standards and values seems insignificant in itself. And because adjustments are gradually made to those lowered standards, the danger is not noticed even when the family and society start to disintegrate and crumble. Moral and spiritual standards have gradually eroded until countless families have been literally destroyed.

When the divorce rate among believers is almost as high as that in the rest of society, it is clear that many believers should have jumped out of the pan long ago. It is high time we leave the evil system that is engulfing and destroying us and reestablish ourselves in God's revealed standards of fidelity and purity. We have long lost the luxury of living in a society that gives some nominal support of the Church and biblical values.

The first step in transmitting **God's truth** is to pass it on to our **children**. **God's Word** declares: **These words, which I am ordering you today, are to be on your heart, and you are to teach them carefully to your children. You are to talk about them when you sit at home, when you are traveling on the road, when you lie down and when you get up (Deuteronomy 6:6-7).** **Parents** are to continually speak about the things of **the Lord**, so that knowledge and **love** of **Him** would become a matter of life and breath for the family. It is **God's plan** for **His Word** to be passed on from one generation to the next.

And **His** primary means in doing so is the family.

Parents who do not fully and tirelessly commit **themselves** to the godly teaching and training of **their children** are likely to wake up one day and find **their sons** and **daughters** intimately ensnared in the ungodly and immoral philosophies and practices of the world. If you have a wayward child see my commentary on [The Life of Christ, to see link click Hu - The Parable of the Lost Son and His Jealous Brother](#). Despite what the world would say, **children** are to **obey their parents**. **They** are not to be liberated from **their parents** and enabled to choose whatever **they** want to do, when **they** want to do it, and the way **they** want to do it.

In **God's Word**, **parents** have every truth and every guideline necessary for raising **their children** in righteousness and godliness. And what a **child** needs to know about how **he** should relate and respond to **his parents** is also there. The Bible was completed over two

thousand years ago, but mankind has not changed since then . . . and neither has **YHVH**. What Scripture has to say is timeless and up-to-date. No human discovery, philosophy, or attitude is new or surprising to **ADONAI** or outside the scope and judgment of **His** revealed **Word**.²⁴¹

The submission of children (6:1-3): Children, obey your parents . . . (6:1a). The Greek word *Tekna* (**children**) does not refer particularly to young **children**, but to all offspring. **Sons** and **daughters** still under **their parents'** roof are to **obey** and **honor them**. Although, **Paul** has just mentioned, men and women are no longer under the authority of their **parents** once they themselves marry (**5:31**), special **respect** and concern for their **parents** should continue as long as they live. **The child** who is brought up to **obey** and **honor** his **parents** will always be sensitive to **their** wisdom, counsel, and welfare.

Parents stand in the gap, so to speak, between **children** and **YHVH** while the **children** are too young to have a full and mature relationship with **Him themselves**. **Parents** are **God's** stewards, **His** proxy authority, for **their children**, who are simply loaned to **them** in trust by **their** own heavenly **Father**. That is why **children** are commanded: **Be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord (Colossians 3:20)**. The only exception to that obedience is in the matter of doing what is wrong. Every believer should refuse to do anything that is clearly against **God's** will as taught in Scripture. **He** should say with **Peter** and **John**: **Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; for we cannot stop speaking of what we have seen and heard** (see the commentary on [Acts Ar - Peter and John Stand before the Sanhedrin](#)). Otherwise, **the child of God** is to obey **his** or **her** parents **in all things**.

. . . in the Lord, for this is right (6:1b). The basic reason for **children** to **obey** and **honor their parents** is simply that **it is right**. The **rightness** is not based on psychological case studies or other human evidence or theory, but on **God's** standard of **right**. The declaration of **ADONAI** makes it **right**. **Children** are to **honor** both **their father** and **mother**, to hold **them** in the highest possible **respect**. When **ADONAI** first introduced **His** written **Torah** in the form of **the Ten Words** (see [Deuteronomy Bk - The Ten Words](#)), **the first** mitzvah relating to human relationships was **Honor your father and your mother, which is the first commandment with a promise**. What was the promise? **So you may live long in the Land ADONAI your God is giving you (Exodus 20:12)**. And this is the mitzvah that **Paul** repeats here. It is the only mitzvah of the **ten** that relates to the family, because that one principle alone, when **obeyed**, is enough to secure the right relationship of **children** to **their parents**. Not only that, but it is the key principle behind all right human relationships in society. **A person** who grows up with a sense of **respect** for

and **obedience** to **their parents** will have the necessary foundation (see [Bu - The Necessary Foundation](#)) for **respecting** the authority of other leaders and the rights of other people in general.

The mitzvah to **honor your father and mother** is twofold. **So that it may go well with you** relates to the quality of life, **and that you may live long in the earth** (Greek: *ges*, meaning *the earth* or *land*) relates to the quantity of life promised (**6:2-3**). **Sha'ul's** original promise was to **Isra'el** and involved many tangible, physical, earthly blessings. But **Paul's** reference to **it** here shows that it also extends to believers today. Though its blessings may not always be tangible, a family where **children** and **parents** live in mutual **love** and submission will have a rich, **God-given** harmony and satisfaction that other families can never know. As for the promise of living long on the earth, the believer who honors his parents (see [Deuteronomy Bp - Honor Your Parents](#)), can know that his or her lifetime will be the full measure that God intends, rather than cut short like the death of **Nadab and Abihu** (**Leviticus 10:1-11**), **Ananias and Sapphira** (**Acts 5:5-10**) and certain members of the **Corinthian** church (**First Corinthians 11:30**).²⁴²

The submission of parents (6:4): After the exhortation to **the Ephesian children**, the **Rabbi** addresses the responsibilities facing **fathers**. For discipline to take place in the home, necessary in the raising of **children**, **fathers** need to be strong leaders. This is especially true with teenage boys who can simply overwhelm their mother physically. But some **fathers** go overboard with this and are too aggressive. Therefore, **Paul** wisely condemns **irritating** or **provoking children**, saying: **Fathers, don't provoke your children and make them resentful (6:4a)**. **Children** or **teenagers** may not perfectly live up to **God's** standards, but it is also a sobering reminder that **fathers** can stumble as well. **They** may act out or be inappropriate. But a deeper analysis looks at the environment of the home, in which **fathers** play a crucial role. **They** can even be a source of the **provocation** of **their sons** and **daughters**, and for that, **Ha'Shem** holds **them** accountable.

Instead of provoking his children, the believing **father** is to **raise them with the Lord's kind of discipline and guidance (6:4b)**. **Sha'ul** says that this includes godly **discipline**, which will include boundaries for acceptable behavior. This **discipline** is related to the word "disciple" and a **father's** first disciples must be in **his** own home. We would like to believe that our **children** will naturally behave, but world history proves otherwise! **Children**, when left to **their** own devices, often make the wrong choices. It is hard to blame **them** too much since **they** lack life experience. That is why **Solomon** encourages **the parents** of **his** day to **train up a child in the way he should go (Proverbs 22:6)**. **Fathers** must be concerned enough about **their children** to correct **their** bad behavior and

give **them** proper boundaries to have a chance for a successful life.

Therefore, **the father** should be the servant leader of **his** family, especially in regards to taking **his** family to their Messianic congregation or church, teaching at home, and reading **the Word**. **The Sh'ma** reminds **fathers** that they are to talk of godly values all the time (**Deuteronomy 6:6-7**). The implication is that **the fathers** are not merely to speak **the Torah**, but more importantly, to model **the Torah**. In fact, a great deal of spiritual damage can be done if **fathers** speak **the Torah** without walking in **the Torah**.

There is another way in Jewish tradition for fathers to bless their children . . . literally! At every Shabbat dinner, after the blessings over the candles and challah, there is a blessing over the children. For the boys it is the biblical blessing found in Genesis 48:20: May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh. Over the daughters the Jews say: May God make you like Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, and Leah. Not only do the children receive the benefits of these powerful words, but every Shabbat the fathers get to show their appreciation for them. Instead of provoking the children, fathers can encourage them in the ways of Messiah. Fathers, are we living up to our sacred duties?²⁴³

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, Praise **You** that loving and obeying **You** is the wisest way to obtain eternal joy! **Parents** who **love You** will want to teach **their children** to obey **You** for then **the children** will be happiest both now and for all eternity. How wonderful for **parents** to be able to encourage and train **their children** that **God** will always give them the very best, when they follow **him for God is love (First John 4:8c)**.*

*Comforting for **children** is when **their parents** teach **them** that **they** are never alone, even when **their parents** are not with **them**, for **God** is with all who **love Him** and have become His **children**. **Yeshua answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word. My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our dwelling with him (John 14:23)**.*

*Please help each **parent** who is reading this to know how to guide **their children lovingly**. It is hard to train **children** now, for the world wrongly teaches them that what you call wrong is right. Please give wisdom to **parents** to be sure to teach **their children** that obeying **You** will bring the greatest happiness that will last through all eternity. Help **parents** to teach about how **You** are holy and cannot let people into heaven who do whatever they want, for **Your** standard of holiness is heaven's standard of holiness. Suffering is sure to come, but the hard times will soon be over and replaced with joy and peace for all eternity! **For I consider the sufferings of this present time not worthy to***

be compared with the coming glory to be revealed to us (Romans 8:18).

Many **parents** also teach that saying **I love You God** as a **child** and then living to please yourself does Not qualify for salvation. What someone does speaks louder than a few words that were said a long time ago. A heart of **love** and repentance, turning from sins to **God** is so important. **I tell you, in the same way there will be more joy in heaven over one repentant sinner than over the ninety-nine righteous people who have no need of repentance (Luke 15:7).** Turning to **You** in humble **love**, believing in you as **Lord** and **Savior (Romans 10:9-10)** and continuing in the faith (**Colossians 1:23, First John 2:19**) brings eternal joy! To **love** and to follow **You, You** so graciously bestow the right to become **Your child (John 1:12)** and thereby receive redemption (**Ephesians 1:7**) and **Messiah's** righteousness thru **His** blood sacrifice. **He made the One who knew no sin to become a sin offering on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God (Second Corinthians 5:21).** **Your children love** to teach **their children** to **love** and follow **You** so they may live eternally in heaven with **You**, our wonderful holy and **loving** heavenly **Father**. In the Holy **Messiah's Name** and power of **His** resurrection. Amen