

# THE STATUS OF PARENTS IN ISLAAM

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It is an undeniable fact amongst mankind that ones' parents are indeed the two people most deserving of great respect, honor, value and love. From a purely natural state of mind, mankind can acknowledge that it is incumbent upon them to have respect, honor, and have patience and love towards their parents. The parents as a team support each other in raising their generations to come. Indeed one can never pay back; rather it is impossible to pay back parents entirely. Islaam acknowledges the efforts set forth by parents and thus holds the status of parents in high esteem.

It should be mentioned before going any further, that honoring one's parents has several meanings. It means obeying them, respecting them, praying for them, smiling at them, showing humility to them, not showing displeasure towards them, striving to serve them, fulfilling their wishes, consulting them, listening to what they say, not being stubborn towards them, and respecting their wishes both during their lifetime and after they have died. It should be noted however that obedience is only in the cases that which are permissible. There is no obedience to the creation, in disobedience to the Creator, as stated by a Hadeeth: **"There can be no obedience to the created which involves disobedience to the Creator."**[Saheeh-Haakim & Ahmad]

There are numerous ayaat (verses) in the Quraan that are in relevance to our parents. As Allaah (swt) states: **"And We have enjoined on man (to be dutiful and good) to his parents. His mother bore him in weakness and hardship upon weakness and hardship, and his weaning is in two years give thanks to Me and to your parents, unto Me is the final destination" (31:14)** As can be noted from the above, it is an obligation to be dutiful and good towards parents, for it is a commandment from Allaah (swt).

The status of the mother in particular is greatly emphasized in Islaam, due to the supreme sacrifices and hardships that she faces. Allaah (swt) states in the Holy Quraan: **"We have enjoined on man kindness to his parents; in pain did his mother bear him, and in pain did she give him birth." (46:15)**. After the child is born, it is generally the mother who looks after it. She is the one who raises the child with immense love and patience. From the distress of giving birth, onto the whining and crying of infancy, the mother upholds and faces it all. Thus it goes without say that the mother should be deserving of care, affection, and obedience (so as long as not within the prohibited actions). In reference to the actual status of the mother in Islaam, the well-known hadeeth can be related. **A man asked the Prophet (saw): "Who is most deserving of friendly care from me?" He replied: "Your Mother." The man asked, "Who comes next?" The Prophet (saw) replied: "Your Mother." The man asked, "Who comes next?" The Prophet (saw) replied: "Your Mother." The man asked, "Who comes next?" The Prophet (saw) replied: "Your Father."** [Bukhari & Muslim]

In regards to the father, Islaam has also set a status for him. He is deserving of honor, respect, obedience and care just as the mother is. Allaah (swt) mentions both when commanding to obey parents. As stated above Allaah (swt) says in Surah AI-Isra, ayah 23 and 24: **"Thy Lord hath decreed that ye worship none but Him, and that ye be kind to parents. Whether one or more attain old age in thy life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honor. 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."** It has been narrated on the authority of 'Ali ibn ai-Husain (A.S.) that the Prophet (sallahu aleyhi wa sallam) is reported to have said: **"The right of your mother on you is that you should know that nobody could endure the trouble and the conditions under which she protected you and nourished you with the juice of her life; and tried with her heart and soul to satisfy all your needs in relation to hunger, thirst, dress, etc. She passed sleepless nights, suffering anxieties. She provided you with shelter against heat and cold, and protected you from ailments. It is not possible for you to compensate her, or thank her enough for all the services, except that God may give you guidance for that. The right of your father on you is that you should know that it is he who brought you into existence, and you are a branch of the tree of his life."**

No words, expressions, or actions can truly do enough justice to get across the true value of our parents. Indeed when a person acknowledges that there is no deity worthy of worship except for Allaah (swt), and that Allaah (swt) is the only one who can benefit or harm them; that is when a person will begin to obey and comply with His commands. Acknowledging the status of parents and striving to make this status known is what Allaah (swt) commands. It is only out of Allaah (swt)'s countless mercy that He has bestowed upon man parents who take care of him and nurture him so that he may stand up for himself, and fulfill his purpose of life-which is to worship Allaah (swt) alone. As Allaah says in the Quraan: **"And I (Allaah) created not the jinns and humans except they should worship Me (Alone)."** (51:56) No doubt a true believer should strive to do whatever it takes to please and attain the pleasure of Allaah (swt). Pleasing the parents is one of the most profound ways of doing so. Let us not forget Allaah (swt) says: **"So whosoever does good equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant), shall see it. And whosoever does evil equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant), shall see it."** (99:7-8)

May Allaah (swt) give us the capability to obey him in each and every circumstance. May he allow us to please our parents so as long as it is in accordance to that which he has commanded. May Allaah (swt) guide us to be respectful, kind, and obedient to our parents, and that we continue to show them humility regardless of the power, position, wealth, and influence we may have.

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[Soorah al-Isra:23-24]

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT: [INFO@WHYTAWHEED.COM](mailto:INFO@WHYTAWHEED.COM)