If you’re a child, this is important for you to learn. And if you’re a parent, you should learn this too—and make sure to teach it to your children.

Leviticus 19:3 (NIV) says:
“Each of you must respect your mother and father, and you must keep my Sabbaths. I am the LORD your God.”

This verse is part of the Holiness Code where God calls His people to live holy lives, set apart by obedience and respect—not only to Him but also within family relationships. The command to “honor” parents is foundational and highlights the importance of family order and respect.

To “honor” your parents does not mean to worship them, which is reserved for God alone (Exodus 20:3-5). Instead, it means to show them the highest respect—listening to them, obeying their guidance, and treating them with dignity and care, as long as their requests do not contradict God’s will (Acts 5:29).

This reflects the biblical principle that honoring parents brings

God’s blessing. Just as we obey God to receive His favor and avoid His discipline, honoring parents invites blessing and peace into our lives (Ephesians 6:1-3).

Many think this command applies only to young children under parental care, but Scripture teaches otherwise. Even adults—regardless of age—are called to honor their living parents. The command is lifelong because the parent-child relationship endures (Psalm 71:18).

The Apostle Paul echoes this in Ephesians 6:1-3 (NIV):
“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ‘Honor your father and mother’—which is the first commandment with a promise—‘so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.’”

If you disrespect your parents simply because they are elderly, you misunderstand God’s word.

Proverbs 23:22 (NIV) instructs:
“Listen to your father, who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old.”

The book of Proverbs frequently emphasizes wisdom in relationships and warns against disrespecting parents. Such behavior is seen as foolish and leads to serious consequences.

Proverbs 30:11 (NIV) says:
“There is a generation that curses their father and does not bless their mother.”

This highlights a societal breakdown when respect for parents is lost.

Consequences of Not Honoring Parents

1. Loss of Sight (Spiritual Blindness)
   Proverbs 30:17 (NIV) says:
   “The eye that mocks a father, that scorns an aged mother, will be pecked out by the ravens of the valley, will be eaten by the vultures.”

This is a poetic way to warn that disrespecting parents leads to severe consequences, including loss of spiritual insight or guidance. The “eye” symbolizes understanding and direction in life.

2. Death
   Proverbs 20:20 (NIV) warns:
   “If someone curses their father or mother, their lamp will be snuffed out in pitch darkness.”

The “lamp” here symbolizes life itself (Job 21:17). To curse one’s parents invites God’s judgment, which can include premature death or a life devoid of blessing.

Other consequences include a lack of prosperity and blessings (Malachi 4:6).

Reflection:
Do you honor your parents? Do you pray for them? Have you made peace with them? If not, today is the perfect day to begin.

The biblical call to honor parents is not just cultural—it is a divine command with promises of blessing and consequences for disobedience.

May God bless you and guide us all in living out this truth.

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