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Duty Towards Parents

"And be thankful to Me and to thy parents" (Qur'an 31:14).

Obedience, kindness and thankfulness to the parents are amongst the most important commandments of Islam. Allah is the Creator; he is the Helper; he provides us with the sustenance. But he has made the parents the means of that creation, help and sustenance. No wonder, in three places– in Qur'an, the commandment of obedience and thankfulness to the parents has been mentioned next to the commandment of worshipping Allah alone.

Obedience to the parents is not in conflict with obedience to God, because it is based upon the command of God. The help obtained from the parents is not against asking help from God alone, because God has made them his agents. Thanking the parents is not against thanking God, because God has ordered us to thank them; and, now, if we refuse to thank them, if will be a revolt against God. That is why Imam Ali Al-Raza (A.S.) told: "God has joined the orders of thanking him and thanking one's parents in one ayat. If a man thanks God, but does not thank his parents, his thanks to God also will not be accepted".

The Holy Prophet was preparing to meet an enemy of Islam in a war. A young man came and asked permission to join in the militia. The Prophet (S.A.) allowed. Then during the conversation, the young man said: 'I have old-aged parents who think that my presence gives them satisfaction and content, and, they do not like this journey of mine'. The Holy Prophet (S.A.) at once told him to stay at home with his parents, saying: "The satisfaction which your parents derive from your presence one day and night is better for you than the fighting in the way of God for one whole year".

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