

## **And they [Ahl-us-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah] command with being kind and dutiful to one's parents**

And this is because of the magnitude of their right.

And Allaah has not made anyone's right follow His right or the right of His Messenger except that of the parents, so He said:

وَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا ۚ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا

### **Worship Allaah and join none with Him in worship, and do good to parents [4:36]**

So the right of the Messenger is included within the command to worship Allaah, because worship cannot be correctly established until it is based upon the right of the Messenger 'alaihi salaatu wassalaam, through loving him and following his way. That is why it is included in His statement, "Worship Allaah and join none with Him in worship". How could one worship Allaah except through the way and example of the Messenger sallallahu 'alaihi wasallam? So when one worships Allaah in accordance with the legislation of the Messenger, then one would have fulfilled his right.

Then after this comes the right of the parents. So the parents undergo difficulty because of the child, particularly the mother. Allaah the Exalted said:

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا ۚ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ كُرْهًا ۚ

### **And We have enjoined on man to be dutiful and kind to his parents. His mother bears him with hardship and she brings him forth with hardship [46:15]**

And in another aayah:

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ

### **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 [31:14]**

So the mother encounters difficulty during pregnancy and childbirth, and after childbirth, and the mercy and kindness she shows to her child is greater than that of the father for him. Therefore she is the most deserving of the people for one's companionship and kind treatment over and above even the father.

A man asked, "O Messenger of Allaah, who is the most deserving of my companionship?". He said, "**Your mother**". He said, "Then who?". He said, "**Your mother**". He said, "Then who?". He said, "**Your mother**". Then on the fourth occasion he said, "**Then your father**".[1]

And the father likewise encounters difficulty regarding his children, and he worries about that which troubles them and he is happy with that which pleases them and he strives for everything that would comfort them and put them at ease and which would ensure that they have a good life. He would travel high and low to earn a livelihood for himself and for his children.

So both the mother and the father have a right, whatever you were to do for them in terms of actions, it would not fulfill their right and for this reason Allaah 'azza wajal said:

وَإِخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا

**And say: "My Lord! Bestow on them Your Mercy as they did bring me up when I was small." [17:24]**

So their right is from before, in that they raised you when you were small when you were not able to benefit or harm yourself. So it is obligatory to show kindness to them. And being dutiful to one's parents is an individual obligation by consensus. It is for this reason that the Prophet sallallaahu'alaihiwasallam gave precedence to this over jihaad in the way of Allaah, as in the Hadeeth of Ibn Mas'ood. He said, I said, "O Messenger of Allaah! Which of the actions is most beloved to Allaah?". He said, "**Performing the prayer on time**". I said, "Then what?". He said, "**Being kind and dutiful to one's parents**". I said, "Then what?". He said, "**Jihaad in the way of Allaah**".[2]

The parents are the mother and the father. As for the grandfather and grandmother, then one must show them kind treatment, but it does not equal that shown to one's parents. This is because the grandparents don't undergo that which the parents undergo from difficulty, giving attention to and supervising their children. So showing them [the grandparents] kindness is obligatory in the sense of keeping the ties and they are the relations who are most deserving of this. However, regarding al-Birr, or showing kindness and being dutiful, then this is for the mother and the father.

However, what does 'al-Birr' mean?

Al-Birr is to try to bring about good as far as one is able, and to restrict harm. Bringing about good in terms of wealth, serving them, and trying to make them happy by, for example, being cheerful, talking to them nicely and treating them well and trying to do all that one can to please them.

It is for this reason that the correct opinion is that it is obligatory upon the children to serve the father and mother, so long as this does not harm the son. So if it were to harm

him, then it would not be obligatory to serve them, except in a case of necessity. And therefore we say: Indeed obedience to them is obligatory in that which benefits them and does not harm the son. As for that which harms him, whether this harm is in terms of the religion, such as their commanding him to leave something which is obligatory or to do something which is forbidden, then there is no obedience to them in this; or if this harm is in terms of the worldly affairs, then it is not obligatory to obey them. As for wealth, then it is obligatory upon him to treat them kindly through spending freely upon them, even if it is a large amount, so long as this does not harm him, and he is not dependent upon it. In addition the father is specifically allowed to take from the wealth of his son as he wishes, so long as it does not harm him.

When we reflect upon the state of people today, we find that many of them do not treat their parents kindly rather they openly disobey them and treat them badly. You would find someone being good to his friends and not tiring of sitting with them. However, if he were to sit with his father or mother for just an hour in the day, you would find him restless as though he were on hot coals. So this is not from kind treatment. Rather the one who shows kindness is one who opens his heart to his mother and father and serves them and is devoted to them and who has the utmost eagerness to please them with everything that he is able to do.

And as it is commonly said, "Al-Birr is an investment". For indeed if someone is good to his parents], then he will receive a great reward in the next life, and he will even be repaid for it in this life. So good or bad treatment of one's parents is like, as is commonly said, "an investment", or a loan. If you had been good to your parents, then your children will be good to you, and if you had been disobedient to your parents, then your children will be disobedient to you.

And there are many reports, that from the people there are those who treated their parents well, and their children then treated them well; likewise regarding disobedience there are reports which show that those whose children are disobedient had likewise been disobedient to their parents.

So Ahl-us-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah command with being kind and dutiful to one's parents.

[Taken from Sharh ul-'Aqeedat-il-Waasitiyyah by Shaikh Ibn 'Uthaimeen p673-676; Daaruth-Thurayyaa edition 1421 (2000). Translated by Adnaan ibn Salman.]

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[1] Reported by Al-Bukhaaree in the Book of Good Manners, Chapter: Who is the Most Deserving of One's Companionship; and in Muslim in the Book of Kind Treatment and Keeping the Ties.

[2] Reported by Al-Bukhaaree in the Book of Good Manners, Chapter: Kind treatment and Keeping the Ties and Muslim in the Book of Eemaan.