

How to be Kind to One's Parents

Allamah Ibn al-Jawzi said: "To be kind to one's parents is:

- (1) To obey them when they order you to do something, unless it is something which Allah has forbidden;
- (2) to give priority to their orders over voluntary acts of worship;
- (3) to abstain from that which they forbid you to do;
- (4) to provide for them;
- (5) to serve them;
- (6) to approach them with gentle humility and mercy;
- (7) not to raise your voice in front of them;
- (8) nor to fix your glance on them;
- (9) nor to call them by their names;
- (10) and to be patient with them.

(Ibn al-Jawzi, "*Birr al-Waalidayn*")

It is reported in the *Sahih* of Imam al-Bukhari that Asmaa, daughter of Abu Bakr as-Siddiq (radhiAllahu anhu), said: "My mother came to me while she was an idol-worshipper, hoping (for my favor), during the lifetime of the Prophet (Sallallahu alayhi wa sallam). I asked the Prophet (Sallallahu alayhi wa sallam), 'Should I still treat her kindly (even though she is an idol-worshipper)?' He (Sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) replied, 'Yes.'

Ibn 'Uyayna said, 'Then Allah (Subhanahu wa Ta'ala) revealed: [Allah forbids you not to deal justly and kindly with regards to those who fought not against you

because of religion, and drove you not out from your homes. Verily, Allah loves those who deal with justice...] (Surah Mumtahinah: 8)

Asma's mother was a disbeliever at that time, yet the Prophet (Sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) still ordered her to welcome her and be kind to her; so what if the mother were a good, pious Muslim, would she not deserve better?

However, if we were to look at many Muslims' daily lives, we would be shocked and distressed, because of their maltreatment of their parents.

One girl describes her mother as being backward and ignorant; one tells her friends that her own mother is just a servant in her home; one raises her voice to her mother's face and feels annoyed by her orders; one does not like to help her mother when she calls her; and one gets annoyed if her mother asks her not to talk too much on the phone.

Worse than that, one Muslim girl abandoned her mother and never spoke to her again. Even when her mother was taken to hospital and had an operation, she did not visit her. We seek refuge with Allah from such actions.

This girl should read the following story, which illustrates the kindness of a good pious Muslim. Yahya' Ibn Abu Kathir said: "When Abu Musa' al-Ash'ari and Abu `Amir came to the Prophet (Sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) to embrace Islam and pledge their lives to him (Sallallahu alayhi wa sallam), he (Sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) said: "Why did you leave a woman in your tribe called so and so?" They said: "We left her in her household."

The Prophet (Sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) said: "Allah has forgiven all her sins!" They asked: "Why, O Messenger of Allah?" The Messenger (Sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) said: "Because she was kind to her mother."

He (Sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) added: "She had an old mother; one day a warner came to her tribe and warned them that their enemy would attack them. So she carried her mother on her back and ran on a very hot day until they reached a safe place."

(*Musannaf* of Abdur Razzaq & Ahmad Aashur, "Birr al-Waalidayn)