

The rights of parents

Placed in the Qur'an directly beside the command to worship Allah alone — not a sentiment, but a right, with instructions.



★ Beside tawhid

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا

“And your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be good to parents.” The two arrive in one sentence.

Qur'an 17:23

★ Not a word of impatience

فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أُفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا

“Do not say to them a word of disrespect, nor repel them, but speak to them a noble word.” Said of their old age in particular.

Qur'an 17:23

★ Lower the wing

رَبِّ أَرْحَمُهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَّانِي صَغِيرًا

“Lower to them the wing of humility out of mercy, and say: My Lord, have mercy upon them as they brought me up when I was small.”

Qur'an 17:24

★ What the mother carried

حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ

“His mother carried him in weakness upon weakness, and his weaning is in two years.” Another verse counts it as thirty months.

Qur'an 31:14 • 46:15

★ Your mother, three times

ثُمَّ أَبُوكَ

Asked who most deserves his good company, he عليه السلام said: “Your mother.” Then who? “Your mother.” Then who? “Your mother.” Then: “Then your father.”

Sahih al-Bukhari 5971

★ Second on the list

Asked which deed Allah loves most, he عليه السلام named prayer at its time; then kindness to one's parents; then striving in the way of Allah.

Sahih al-Bukhari 527

★ Your striving is at home

A man asked leave to go out and fight. He عليه السلام asked whether his parents were living, and then said: “Then exert yourself in their service.”

Sahih al-Bukhari 3004

★ Where obedience stops

وَصَاحِبُهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا

If they press you to associate anything with Allah, do not obey them in that — “but accompany them in this world with good conduct.”

Qur'an 31:15

★ The chance you can miss

مَنْ أَدْرَكَ أَبَوَيْهِ عِنْدَ الْكِبَرِ أَحَدَهُمَا أَوْ كِلَيْهِمَا فَلَمْ يَدْخُلِ الْجَنَّةَ

“Let him be humbled” — three times — “who finds his parents in old age, one or both of them, and does not enter Paradise.”

Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Birr wa's-Silah