

Honor Your Father and Your Mother....

Overview

The commandment, *Honor your father and your mother*, is stated mainly in the positive. Rather than forbidding a particular form of evil, it calls us to honor the goodness and truth in our parents—our earthly parents and also our spiritual parents.

There are, however, a number of pitfalls that people can avoid as part of their practice of this commandment. These include the following:

- Contempt
- Disobedience (going against God and His Word)
- Rebellion

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Honor Your Father and Your Mother....

Quick Reference

- from -

Secrets of Heaven

Emanuel Swedenborg

Note: This commandment is stated mainly in the positive, such that it doesn't forbid a particular form of evil. There are, however, a number of pitfalls that people can avoid as part of their practice of this commandment. These have been bolded and underlined for quick identification.

"Honor your father and your mother..."¹

1. This means...
 - a. Loving goodness and truth (in the internal sense of the Word of God).
 - b. Loving the Lord and His kingdom (in the supreme sense).
2. Notes:
 - a. "To honor" means to love.
 - 1) In heaven people love one another.
 - 2) When they love they also honor.
 - 3) The reason is that within honor there is love.
 - 4) Honor without love is refused in heaven, in fact, it is rejected.
 - a) The reason for this is that honor without love is devoid of life from what is good.
3. "Father" symbolically means...
 - a. What is good (in the internal sense).
 - b. The Lord as to divine goodness (in the supreme sense).
 - 1) The Lord in the supreme sense is the "father."
 - 2) He gives new life to people.
 - 3) In this way people become "sons" and heirs of His kingdom.
4. "Mother" symbolically means...
 - a. Truth (in the internal sense).
 - b. The Lord as to divine truth (in the supreme sense), thus His kingdom.
 - 1) Note: The divine truth that goes forth from the Lord makes heaven.
5. Notes:
 - a. The Lord is the sun in the other life as to divine goodness.
 - b. He is light as to divine truth.
 - c. Divine light from the Lord as the sun is what lights up angelic minds.
 - d. It fills them with intelligence and wisdom.
 - e. It makes them to be angels of light.
 - f. Divine goodness is within divine truth, similarly as heat from the sun is within light in springtime and summer.

“That your days may be prolonged upon the land...”²

1. This refers to the consequent state of life in heaven.
2. “Your days” refers to states of life.
3. “To be prolonged” refers to goodness and its increase.
4. “Land” means the kingdom of the Lord.

“Which Jehovah your God gives you.”³

1. This means...
 - a. Where the Divine is.
 - b. Consequent inflow.
2. “Jehovah God” refers to the Divine in heaven.
3. “To give” refers to inflow.
4. Heaven is the reception of inflow from the Divine.
5. Notes:
 - a. The Ten Commandments are rules of life both for those who are in the world and those who are in heaven.
 - 1) The literal sense of these commandments is for those who are in the world.
 - 2) The spiritual or internal sense is for those who are in heaven.
 - 3) Both senses are for those who while they are in the world are also in heaven,
 - a) That is, for those who are in the good of life according to true doctrine.
 - b. In heaven parents and children do not come together the same as on earth.
 - 1) There they have the Lord as their “father” and His kingdom as their “mother.”
 - c. This commandment means...
 - 1) Love of the Lord.
 - 2) The consequent love of goodness and truth, which are from the Lord.
 - d. Because of this...
 - 1) **Contempt for parents** is included among the crimes that are meant by “shedding blood” in Scripture.⁴
 - 2) **Disobedient and rebellious** sons were stoned.⁵

Final notes:⁶

1. “Mother” in Scripture symbolically means the kingdom of the Lord.
2. The kingdom of the Lord on the earth is called “the church.”
3. Therefore “mother” also means the church.
4. The sons born of this mother are truths.
 - a. These truths are called “the sons of the kingdom.”⁷
5. To all those who are in it, the Lord’s kingdom is their country.
6. Therefore one’s country is also meant by “mother” in Scripture.

Parents Must Be Honored.

Quick Reference

- from -

The Apocalypse Explained

Emanuel Swedenborg

Parents must be honored.⁸

1. Honor for parents in Scripture symbolizes...
 - a. Love of the Lord.
 - b. Love of the church.
2. "Father" (that is, the Heavenly Father) refers to the Lord.
 - a. No other father than the Lord is known in heaven.
 - 1) Scripture: Call no one your father on earth; for one is your Father who is in the heavens.⁹
 - 2) Note: The above was said by the Lord with reference to children and angels in heaven, not children and people on earth.¹⁰
 - b. "Father" symbolically means the Lord as to divine goodness.
3. "Mother" (that is, the heavenly mother) refers to the church.
 - a. No other mother than the kingdom of the Lord is known in heaven.
 - b. The kingdom of the Lord is also the church.
 - c. "Mother" symbolically means...
 - 1) The Lord's kingdom.
 - 2) The church.
 - 3) The divine truth.
4. "Honor" means to love.
5. "Length of days" refers to the happiness of eternal life.
6. Notes:
 - a. The Lord gives life from Himself.
 - b. He gives nourishment to people through the church.
 - c. The third and fourth commandments involve secrets related to the Lord.
 - d. These secrets are...
 - 1) Acknowledgment and confession of His divinity.
 - 2) Worship of Him from the good of love.

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Honor Your Father and Your Mother....

Quick Reference

- from -

True Christianity

Emanuel Swedenborg

Earthly (literal) meaning:¹¹

1. "To honor your father and your mother" means to...
 - a. Honor parents.
 - 1) Be obedient to them.
 - 2) Be devoted to them.
 - 3) Return thanks to them for the benefits they confer.
 - a) They provide food and clothing for their children.
 - (1) In this way they introduce their children into the world, that they may act in it as civil and moral people.
 - b) They introduce their children also into heaven.
 - (1) They do this by means of the principles of religion.
 - c) In these ways they provide for...
 - (1) Their earthly prosperity.
 - (2) Their eternal happiness.
 - d) Parents do all of this from a love that they have from the Lord, in whose stead they act.
 - b. Honor guardians (if parents are deceased).
 - c. Honor the king and magistrates.
 - 1) These provide for people in general the necessities that parents provide in particular.
 - d. Love your country.
 - 1) The country supports and protects its people.
 - 2) Therefore, it is called fatherland (from father).
 2. Notes:
 - a. Honor must be rendered by parents to country, king, and magistrates, and it must be implanted in children by their parents.

Spiritual meaning:¹²

1. "To honor father and mother" means to...
 - a. Revere and love God.
 - 1) God is the father of all.
 - 2) "Father" means God.
 - b. Revere the goodness and truth of the church.
 - 1) "Mother" means the church.
 - a) A mother on earth nourishes her children with earthly food.
 - b) Likewise the church nourishes her children with spiritual food.

- c) Jesus stretched forth His hand toward His disciples and said, "My mother and My brethren are these who hear the Word of God and do it."¹³

2. Notes:

- a. Little children and angels in the heavens know no other father and no other mother than God and the church.
- b. The reason is that they are born anew of the Lord through the church.
- c. Therefore the Lord says:
 - 1) Call no one your father on the earth; for one is your Father, who is in the heavens.¹⁴
- d. Note: The above was said by the Lord with reference to children and angels in heaven, not children and people on earth.¹⁵
- e. The Lord teaches the same thing in the common prayer of the Christian churches:
 - 1) Our Father who art in the heavens, hallowed be Thy name.¹⁶

Heavenly meaning:¹⁷

1. "Father" means...

- a. Our Lord Jesus Christ.
- b. Scripture:
 - 1) Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given. His name is God, Mighty, Father of eternity, Prince of Peace.¹⁸
 - 2) You are our Father; Abraham does not know us, and Israel does not acknowledge us; You are our Father, our Redeemer from Everlasting is Your name.¹⁹
 - 3) Philip said, "Show us the Father." Jesus said to him, "He who sees Me sees the Father. How do you say then, 'Show us the Father'? Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me."²⁰

2. "Mother" means...

- a. The communion of saints,
 - 1) That is, the Lord's church spread throughout the whole world.
 - 2) That is, the New Church which the Lord is establishing at this day, and not the preceding church.
 - 3) [Editorial note: In the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, "the New Church" does not refer to a church organization, but rather, to all people who pattern their lives after genuine truths of religion (see **Final notes** below).]
 - 4) The spiritual offspring that are born from the marriage of the Lord with this church are good deeds that are products of goodwill and also truths of faith.
 - 5) Those who are in what is good and true from the Lord are called...
 - a) "Sons of the marriage."
 - b) "Sons of God."
 - c) "Born of God."

Final notes:²¹

- 1. A divine, heavenly aura of love constantly goes forth from the Lord toward all who...
 - a. Embrace the true teachings of His church.
 - b. Are obedient to Him, as children are to their father and mother in the world.
 - c. Devote themselves to Him.

- d. Wish to be fed, that is, instructed by Him.
- 2. From the inflow of that heavenly aura into the natural world...
 - a. Vegetation develops from seed to fruit, and again to new seed.
 - b. Many kinds of plants turn, as it were, their faces to the sun during the day, and turn them away when the sun sets.
 - c. There are flowers that open at the rising of the sun and close at its setting.
 - d. Songbirds sing sweetly during the early dawn, and likewise after they have been fed by their mother earth.
 - e. Notes:
 - 1) In this way, all of these honor their father and mother.
 - 2) All of them bear testimony that the Lord provides all necessities for both animate and inanimate things.
 - f. Scripture:
 - 1) Praise Jehovah from the heavens; praise Him, sun and moon; praise Him from the earth, you great sea creatures and all deeps; praise Him, fruitful trees and all cedars, beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying fowl, kings of the earth and all peoples, young men and maidens.²²
 - 2) Ask, I pray, the beasts, and they shall teach you; or the fowls of the air, and they shall tell you; or the shrub of the earth, and it shall teach you; and the fishes of the sea shall declare to you. Who does not know from all these things that the hand of Jehovah has wrought this?²³
 - a) Note: "Ask and they will teach" means to observe, study, and judge from these things that the Lord Jehovah created them.

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Endnotes

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- ¹ SH 8897
² SH 8898
³ SH 8899
⁴ SH 8899, Ezek. 22:6,7
⁵ SH 8899, Deut. 21:18-21
⁶ SH 8900
⁷ SH 8900, Matt. 13:38
⁸ AE 966:2
⁹ AE 966:2, Matt. 23:9
¹⁰ TC 306, emphasis added
¹¹ TC 305
¹² TC 306
¹³ TC 306, Matt. 12:48-50, Mark 3:33-35, Luke 7:21, John 19:25-27
¹⁴ TC 306, Matt. 23:9
¹⁵ TC 306, emphasis added
¹⁶ TC 306, Matt. 6:9
¹⁷ TC 307
¹⁸ TC 307, Isa. 9:6
¹⁹ TC 307, Isa. 63:16
²⁰ TC 307, John 14:8-11, 12:45
²¹ TC 308
²² TC 308, Ps. 148:1-12
²³ TC 308, Job 12:7-9