

Arab Republic of Egypt

Ministry of Awqaf

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Respecting the Elders

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all worlds, Who says in His Ever Glorious Book, **“Truly you [O Muhammad] have a high moral character.”** I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammad is His Servant and Messenger. May Allah’s Peace and Blessings be upon him, his Household, Companions and upon those who follow their path to the Day of Judgment.

Respecting the elders is a noble human value and a well-established Islamic moral. Islam treats the elders with full of appreciation and respect, as our Prophet (PBUH) said, “The best of you are the most aged ones and the best in their conduct.” The Prophet (PBUH) also said, “Blessing comes with the most aged among you.” Also, when Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) brought his father “Abu Quhafah” to the Prophet (Peace be upon him) to accept Islam the Prophet (PBUH) said to Abu Bakr, “Would not you let him in his place, so that we would be the ones to go to him?!” This situation from the Prophet was out of his respect for his old age.

Our pure religion has called for respecting the elders and honoring them, as they missed their young which they had spent in obeying Allah,

the Almighty, and in serving their homeland and their community. Our Prophet (PBUH) said, "It is out of reverence to Allah to respect an aged Muslim, and the one who commits the Qur'an to memory and acts extravagantly regarding it, or turns away from it, and to respect the just ruler." The Prophet (PBUH) also said, "He is not one of us who shows no mercy to younger ones and does not acknowledge the honour due to our elders." In another Hadith, The Prophet (PBUH) said, "The young ones should greet the elders." The Prophet also instructed the young people not to speak before the elders speak.

When our Prophet (PBUH) asked his companions saying, "Amongst the trees, there is a tree, the leaves of which do not fall and is like a Muslim. Tell me the name of that tree!" Abdullah bin Umar realized the correct answer, but because he was a young boy, he felt shy to answer out of respect for the elder companions.

The rulings of the Shari'ah also pay attention the elders though facilitating acts of worship for them, in consideration of their weakness. The Prophet (PBUH) said, "When one of you leads the people in prayer, he should be brief, for among them are the sick, the aged and those who have needs to attend to."

Islam also instructs its followers to show respect for people of honor. Once, the Prophet (PBUH) ordered the companions to stand up to receive

Saad bin Mu'adh saying, "Stand up (showing respect) to your chief." The Prophet (PBUH) also said, "Treat people according to their status." This indicates the necessity of honoring them and showing respect to them.

There is no doubt that the value of respecting the elders becomes more emphatic when the elders are relatives. Therefore, respecting one's parents is a sublime value. This is why the Almighty Allah commanded us to show complete kindness to our parents. Allah said in the Qur'an, **"Your Lord has commanded that you should worship none but Him, and that you be kind to your parents. If either or both of them reach old age with you, say no word that shows impatience with them, and do not be harsh with them, but speak to them respectfully; and lower your wing in humility towards them in kindness and say, 'Lord, have mercy on them, just as they cared for me when I was little."** The verses of the Qur'an emphasize the rights of parents especially when they become aged, out of being grateful for their incomparable favours. The Almighty Allah said, **"Give thanks to Me and to your parents- all will return to Me."** Such conduct is the conduct of Prophets and Messengers of Allah. Allah said about Prophet John, **"[He was] kind to his parents, not domineering or rebellious."** Allah also said about Prophet Jesus, **"And to be kind to my mother. He [Allah] has not made me arrogant or defiant."** When Prophet Muhammad visited the grave of his mother, he wept so much out of his love for her, until his companions wept too.

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the Worlds; may Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), his companions and followers:

It goes without saying that a successful person is the one who gets the pleasure of his parents as a result of respecting them and being kind to them. In this way, one gets happiness in this world and in the Hereafter, as our Prophet (PBUH) said "There are three supplications that will undoubtedly be answered: the supplication of one who has been wronged; the supplication of the traveler; and the supplication of a father for his child." Thus, the supplication made by parent for their children will be answered by Allah. However, a person who does not respect his parents is deprived of any blessing, and he lives in great danger. Our Prophet (PBUH) said, "Three persons will not enter Paradise: the one who reminds others of his favors; the one who is disobedient to his parents, and the one who is addicted to wine." The Prophet (PBUH) also said, "Should I not inform you about the most grievous of the grave sins? (The Prophet) repeated it three times, and then said: "Associating partners with Allah, disobedience to parents, and false testimony."

Also the intensified respect for parents and being kind to them are means to get Allah's pleasure, as our Prophet (PBUH) said, "Allah's pleasure results from the parent's pleasure, and Allah's displeasure results from the parent's displeasure."

We ask Allah to protect Egypt and raise its flag high among all countries of the world!