

Honoring God Above Children

2045

“Wherefore kick ye at My sacrifice and at My offering . . . and honorest thy sons above Me, to make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel My people?”

If we are to honor God in all things, that must include the way we rear our children. The only way to honor God is to follow His example and His counsel. Merely to agree that He is right is insufficient; doing that brings no honor to Him. We honor His example by imitating it and making it our own.

We are told by Paul to bring up our children in a loving, godly manner. He said, *“Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”* To nurture is “to feed or nourish, to support and bring up to maturity, to rear”. It is to provide a child with a sense of protection, care, and goodness. When they are not provided with those precious feelings, they are more susceptible to spirits of self-will and anger.

The range of instruction for child rearing is too wide to consider in all its nuances here. We must narrow it down to fit the case at hand; namely, Eli and his ungodly sons. Eli failed to chastise his sons according to the will of God, and the results were tragic for everyone. This same unwillingness to correct disobedient children, and this failure to teach them how to behave is now rampant in our society. On every hand, in public and in private, children prove themselves to be their parents’ masters. By such stubborn and ungovernable conduct as we commonly see now, parents everywhere are made to look weak and foolish. And they are. But God has always had the answer for those who are willing to receive it.

In our time, this pretentious society has shifted away from the acceptance of spanking as a means of punishment. Children can be legally seized from their homes now if a parent spanks a child hard enough to make it count. God said that the blueness of a wound would “cleanse away evil”. This government says that the blueness of a wound is grounds to forcibly take your child way from you and your home. Thinking themselves wise again, men have again become fools (Rom. 1:22), and the results of this error for society as a whole has yet to be fully realized.

This is a generation such as Solomon’s friend Agur described: “There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! And their eyelids are lifted up.” But it is not the fault of the young people who have had no godly guidance. Nothing but pain will bring down the lofty looks that many parents are allowing their children to express in their presence. Those foolish parents love themselves more than they love their children, and the only hope for their children is that God will love their children enough to humble them with suffering.

Here are some of the Scriptures concerning the chastening of children by their elders, and the chastening of the saints by our heavenly Father.

GOD'S INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING THE CHASTENING OF CHILDREN

Proverbs 19:18:

“Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.”

Proverbs 13:24:

“He that spareth the rod hateth his son, but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes [that is, early].”

Proverbs 22:15:

“Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.”

Proverbs 23:13-14:

“Withhold not correction from the child, for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod and shalt deliver his soul from hell.”

THE WAY GOD DEALS WITH HIS CHILDREN

2Samuel 7:14 (concerning David's young son Solomon, when he would become King):

“I will be his Father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men.”

Psalms 94:8-12:

“Understand, ye brutish among the people (!). And ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planteth the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, shall He not see? He that chastiseth the heathen (see Dt. 11:1-4), shall He not correct? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall he not know?

“The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vain.

“Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy Law, that thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity until the Pit be digged for the wicked. For the Lord will not cast off His people; neither will he forsake His inheritance.”

Psalms 118:18:

“The LORD has chastened me sore, but He has not given me over to death.”

Job 34:31: “Surely it is meet to be said unto God, ‘I have borne chastisement; I will not offend any more. That which I see not, teach thou me. If I have done iniquity, I will do no more.’”

1 Corinthians 11:30-32:

“For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord that we should not be condemned with the world.”

Revelation 3:19:

“As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.”

Proverbs 3:11-12:

“My son, despise not thou the chastening of the LORD, neither be weary of His correction, for whom the LORD loveth, He corrected, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.”

Note: Proverbs 8:30 and Hebrews 5:7-9 and 2:9-10.

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Leviticus 26:14-45: God refuses to give up on the people He loves. His mercy and patience reach to the clouds.

Isaiah 1:1-9: Even though God says there is no use for Him to continue to chasten them . . . well, think about it.

Jeremiah 31:18-21: God’s heart aches for His chastened people.

Hebrews 12:1-17: An exhortation to have faith in God’s love when it hurts. It is significant that this chapter follows chapter 11.