

## READINGS - Honoring Our Fathers - Page 1 of 4

### Opening Prayer

O Lord! In this Most Great Dispensation Thou dost accept the intercession of children in behalf of their parents. This is one of the special infinite bestowals of this Dispensation. Therefore, O Thou kind Lord, accept the request of this Thy servant at the threshold of Thy singleness and submerge his father in the ocean of Thy grace, because this son hath arisen to render Thee service and is exerting effort at all times in the pathway of Thy love, Verily, Thou art the Giver, the Forgiver and the Kind!

*Bahá'í Faith, 'Abdu'l-Bahá*

### First Reading

Supporting one's father and mother, cherishing wife and children and a peaceful occupation; this is the greatest blessing.

*Buddhism, Sutta Nipata 262*

Oh ye who have peace of soul! Among the divine Texts as set forth in the Most Holy Book and also in other Tablets is this: It is incumbent upon the father and mother to train their children both in good conduct and the study of books; study, that is, to the degree required, so that no child, whether girl or boy, will remain illiterate.

*Bahá'í Faith, 'Abdu'l-Bahá*

Honour thy father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

*Bible, Ephesians 6:2-4*

### *Music*

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### *Music*

#### **Second Reading**

The child, according to its natural disposition, commits thousands of faults, The father instructs and slights, but again hugs him to his bosom.

*Sikhism, Adi Granth*

The father must always endeavour to educate his son and to acquaint him with the heavenly teachings. He must give him advice and exhort him at all times, teach him praiseworthy conduct and character, enable him to receive training at school and to be instructed in such arts and sciences as are deemed useful and necessary. In brief, let him instill into his mind the virtues and perfections of the world of humanity. Above all he should continually call to his mind the remembrance of God so that his throbbing veins and arteries may pulsate with the love of God. ...Children are even as a branch that is fresh and green; they will grow up in whatever way you train them. Take the utmost care to give them high ideals and goals, so that once they come of age, they will cast their beams like brilliant candles on the world, and will not be defiled by lusts and passions in the way of animals, heedless and unaware, but instead will set their hearts on achieving everlasting honour and acquiring all the excellences of humankind.

*Bahá'í Faith, 'Abdu'l-Bahá*

Do not despise the breath of your fathers, but draw it into your body, that our roads may reach to where the life-giving road of our sun father comes out; that, clasping one another tight, holding one another fast, We may finish our roads together; That this may be, I add to your breath now. To this end: May my father bless you with life; May your road reach to Dawn Lake, May your road be fulfilled.

*Native American Religions, Zuni Prayer*

One can never repay two persons, I declare. What two? Mother and father. Even if one should carry about his mother on one shoulder and his father on the other, and so doing should live a hundred years; and if he should support them, anointing them with unguents, kneading and rubbing their limbs, even so could he not repay his parents. Moreover, if he should establish his parents in supreme authority, in the absolute rule over this mighty earth abounding in the seven treasures--not even thus could he repay his parents. Why not? Brethren, parents do much for their children; they bring them up, they nourish them, they introduce them to this world.

*Buddhism, Anguttara Nikaya i.6*

Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord.

*Bible, Colossians 3:20-23*

### **Music**

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### *Music*

#### **Third Reading**

He commanded the fathers to teach to their children; that the next generation, the children yet unborn, might know Him and arise and tell their children, so they shall set their hope in God, and forget not the works of God, but keep His commandments.

*Bible, Psalm 78.5-7*

May, in this family, discipline overcome indiscipline, peace overcome discord, charity overcome miserliness, devotion overcome arrogance, and the truth-spoken word overcome the false spoken word which destroys the holy order.

*Zoroastrianism, Avesta Yasna 60.5*

My father, thank you for caring for me; My mother, thank you for making me comfortable; Thank you for robing me with wisdom, which is more important than robing me with clothes. The children I shall bear will minister unto you.

*African Traditional Religions, Yoruba Nuptial Chant (Nigeria)*

If thou wouldst show kindness and consideration to thy parents so that they may feel generally pleased, this would also please Me, for parents must be highly respected and it is essential that they should feel contented, provided they deter thee not from gaining access to the Threshold of the Almighty, nor keep thee back from walking in the way of the Kingdom. Indeed it behoveth them to encourage and spur thee on in this direction.

*Baha'i Faith, Abdul-Baha*

### **Music**

Open Prayers

### **Music**

*Music*

**Fourth Reading**

My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head.

*Bible, Proverbs 1:5-9*

According to the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh the family, being a human unit, must be educated according to the rules of sanctity. All the virtues must be taught the family. The integrity of the family bond must be constantly considered, and the rights of the individual members must not be transgressed. The rights of the son, the father, the mother--none of them must be transgressed, none of them must be arbitrary. Just as the son has certain obligations to his father, the father, likewise, has certain obligations to his son. The mother, the sister and other members of the household have their certain prerogatives. All these rights and prerogatives must be conserved, yet the unity of the family must be sustained. The injury of one shall be considered the injury of all; the comfort of each, the comfort of all; the honor of one, the honor of all.

*Bahá'í Faith, 'Abdu'l-Bahá*

**Closing Prayer**

Most gracious Heavenly Father, we thank you for our fathers, those to whom you have entrusted the responsibility to provide loving protection of their families and guidance of their children. May our earthly fathers imitate the manly courage of all the holy fathers of the past in providing wise counsel to the children you have given to their care. Give them valiant faith in the face of confusion and conflict, hope in time of trouble and sorrow, and steadfast love for you, for their families, and for all your people throughout the world. Assist all fathers of families that through your Grace they may steadily grow in holiness and in knowledge and understanding of your Truth. May they generously impart this knowledge to those who rely on them. We ask you to help all men to manifest gentleness and mercy toward those who are weak; humility, perfect obedience to your will, and fearless witness to your Truth. May their lives be examples to all of heroic faithfulness to you. We ask your blessing on all those to whom you have entrusted fatherhood. May your Holy Spirit constantly inspire them with justice and mercy, wisdom and strength, fidelity and self-giving love. May they receive your Grace abundantly in this earthly life, and may they look forward to eternal joy in the life to come.

*Prayer for Fathers, Women for Faith and Family*