

# Honor Thy Father and Thy Mother

written by Ozer Bergman  
January 20, 2011



“in order that thy days should be long” (Exodus 20:12).

Besides Mom and Dad, the “father” and “mother” being referred to here are *chokhmah*/wisdom and *binah*/understanding. *Chokhmah* and *binah* parent all that we do. They beget our actions, our words and even our thoughts. (If you think what you think about, you might think differently!) Who are the parents of my thinking and of the way I live my life, of how I pray and how I behave towards my fellow human beings and towards God?

What seminal ideas do I really hold on to and gestate/think about? Whose are they? Ideally, “Dad” would be the Written Law (aka *TaNaKh*) and “Mom” the Oral Law (aka Talmud and other Rabbinic writing). In *Sichot HaRan* (Rabbi Nachman’s *Wisdom*) #5, Rebbe Nachman tells us that thoughts are sent to us from two very large reservoirs, one holy, one not. From which reservoir a person receives depends on what he prepares to receive and how much.

It’s too late to choose who will be your parents. It’s not at all too late to choose what you want to think. Honor your *chokhmah* and *binah* by choosing that they be holy, and preparing yourself to greet them. And may you live a long and honorable life. Amen.