

son but he knew the danger facing the folks and we are told that they found refuge in Moab as long as David was out of Judah. This act showed the sort of care that one should shower on his parents in keeping with the law of God.

Likewise in the New Testament, Jesus found fault with some of the outwardly religious people of his time. They gave their property to the temple and arranged to live from its supplies but could not use the stuff for the care of their aged parents. (Matthew 15:5-6) In so doing they made the law of God of no effect. The parental neglect circumvented the proper duty but it did not relive those guilty of the oversight of responsibility.

Actually the command while stating the importance of honor, also gives rise to the statements of Exodus 21:1. Not only must one honor his parents, he must be careful not to dishonor them. The wildly disobedient and profane child stands in danger of judgment. We do not know the extent or limit of disregard but we are assured that disobedience and disregard are causes of chastisement. As with other commands, this one has a positive and a negative thrust: you will honor, you will not dishonor.

The Fifth Command: Implications

There is a sense in which this command is foundational to much of the order of our society. "Father" and "mother" become representative terms of authority and the command that teaches us to honor parents also teaches us to honor all who are in a place of authority or control. This is not a blind giving of allegiance but a respectful appreciation of authority. The obedient party sees that God has established an order and he adheres to it. But what if the authority exceeds its bounds or acts blasphemously? The obedient person does not have to commit wickedness. The option is to