

# THE PROMISE

(A meditation for Father's Day)

**"Honour your father and mother"-- which is the first commandment with a promise--  
(Eph 6:2)**

According to Exodus 20 Moses went up on Mt. Sinai and received Ten Commandments. The first commandment with a promise was number five. Honoring parents would provide national security, **"so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you"** ( Ex. 20:12)

Note this time line:

- Moses received the Ten Commandments about 1490 B.C.
- Israel entered the Promised Land about 1450 B.C.
- Israel ruled by Judges for about 350 years (conquered many times by pagans)
- Saul, David, and Solomon reigned for 120 years (fought many wars with pagans)
- Kingdom divided about 975 B.C.
- Northern Kingdom led into captivity about 722 B.C.
- Southern Kingdom led into captivity about 600 B.C.

A study of Israel's history will show a direct correlation between family life and the longevity of the nation. If families were good and strong, good and strong leaders would be available to rule the nation. Corrupt families would produce corrupt leaders and consequently hasten national disaster. The disappearance of godly families is seen clearly in the last four kings of Israel. Menahem reigned for ten years and the Bible states: *"He did evil in the eyes of the LORD. During his entire reign he did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he had caused Israel to commit."* (II Ki 15:18) Next, his son Pekahiah reigned for two years. The Bible says of him: *"And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin."* (II Ki 15:24). Next, Pekah reigned for twenty years. Again the Bible states: *"And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin."* (II Ki 15:28) Next, Hoshea usurped the throne by killing Pekah (II Kings 15:30). It was during his reign that the King of Assyria led Israel into captivity. The Bible tells why: *"All this took place because the Israelites had sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them up out of Egypt from under the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. They worshipped other gods . . ."* (II Ki 17:7)

The story of Judah's national disaster is much the same. The last four kings of Judah were Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. Every one of them also did evil in the sight of the Lord (See II Kings 23:32; II Kings 23:37; II Kings 24:9; and II Kings 24:19). The first deportation of Judah came during the evil reign of Jehoichin. The Bible states: *"He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, just as his father had done. At that time the officers of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon advanced on Jerusalem and laid siege to it, and Nebuchadnezzar himself came up to the city while his officers were besieging it. Jehoiachin king of Judah, his mother, his attendants, his nobles and his officials all surrendered to him. In the eighth year of the reign of the king of Babylon, he took Jehoiachin prisoner. As the LORD had declared, Nebuchadnezzar removed all the treasures from the temple of the LORD and from the royal palace, and took away all the gold articles that Solomon king of Israel had made for the temple of the LORD. He carried into exile all Jerusalem: all the officers and fighting men, and all the craftsmen and artisans-- a total of ten thousand. Only the poorest people of the land were left. Nebuchadnezzar took Jehoiachin captive to Babylon. He also took from Jerusalem to Babylon the king's mother, his wives, his officials and the leading men of the land."* (II Ki 24:9-15) The last king, Zedekiah, was appointed by Nebuchadnezzar, and he also did evil in the sight of the Lord. With family life in shambles, no wonder there were no godly kings to be used of God to save the nation.

The cynic has said: "One thing we learn from history is that people do not learn from history". Honoring your father is not only something you do to please him, it also pleases God and provides a strong building block for the stability of the family, church, and nation.