

# Honor

## vs. Disrespect

**Honor is humbling myself in the presence of a God-given authority and expressing my devotion with an appropriate gift.**

### Definition

The first aspect of honor is a spirit of reverence. A primary Hebrew word for *reverence* is *shachah*. It means “to depress oneself, to prostrate oneself in order to pay homage to one in authority, to bow down, to crouch, to fall down and do obeisance.”

Jonathan’s lame son, Mephibosheth, “fell on his face, and did reverence [*shachah*]” (II Samuel 9:6). “Bathsheba bowed with her face to the earth, and did reverence to the king” (I Kings 1:31).

*Shachah* is translated *worship* in Joshua 5:14: “Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship [*shachah*]” the captain of the host of the Lord. It is also translated *worship* in Psalm 95:6: “O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.”

True reverence and the fear of the Lord are closely associated. The Hebrew word *yare* is translated as both *fear* and *reverence*: “Ye shall reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD” (Leviticus 19:30). “I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts” (Psalm 119:63). Reverence also involves honor. The Greek word for *honor* is *timao*. It means “to prize, to fix a valuation, to value someone at a price, to esteem, to revere.” Scripture provides a significant listing of those whom we are to reverence and honor.

### Honor and Respect

In addition to reverence, worship, and honor, the concept of respect must be considered. The Greek word for *respect* is *apoblepo*, which means “to look away from all else to the person or object being revered, to look steadfastly.” This word is used to describe how Moses looked steadfastly (*apoblepo*) at the “recompense of reward” and therefore was able to accept the reproaches of Christ as of greater value than all the treasures of Egypt. (See Hebrews 11:26.)

In contrast, Esau failed to reverence his birthright and therefore sold it for a bowl of pottage. Afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was unable to obtain it, though he “sought it carefully with tears” (Hebrews 12:16–17).

### The Key to Reverence

Sincere reverence for people grows out of a proper fear of the Lord, since He is the One who created all men and established structures of authority. There are actually three levels of the fear of the Lord, as indicated by three Hebrew and Greek words. Each level involves a progressive understanding and reverence for the ways of God and His dealings with mankind.



**To reverence a ruler is to be reminded that God gave him his authority and will work through it to accomplish His will.**

*“The king’s heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.”*

—Proverbs 21:1

*“God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.”*

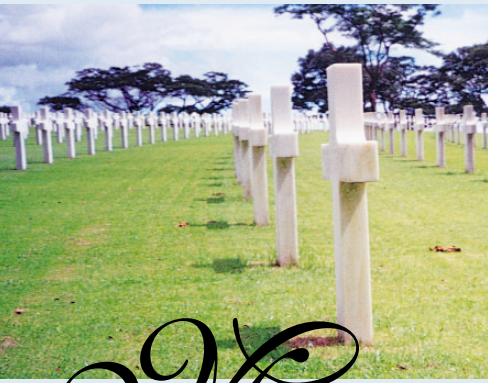
—Psalm 75:7

**A fool reacts to the personality of a ruler. A wise man respects the position of a ruler.**

**Our ultimate appeal is not to the ruler on the throne, but to God Who placed him there.**

*“There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.”*

—Romans 13:1



**Monuments**  
are built for men and  
women who regard honor  
as more valuable than  
their lives.

## A Single Phrase More Powerful Than Torture

During the Vietnam War, a group of soldiers was captured and held in a concentration camp. Routinely, they would be taken from their crude barracks and told to sign certain false documents or be tortured.

When a guard would come to the barracks door and call out a prisoner's name, his fellow prisoners would whisper one phrase to him as he walked by. That phrase gave him the courage to maintain his integrity through excruciating torture.

Each survivor continues to be challenged by this phrase. One of those prisoners was Sam Johnson, who is now a United States congressman. The phrase that challenged them all was:

**Return with  
Honor!**

### First Level: Fear of punishment

All people should have this level of fear. (Hebrew [3372] *yare*; Greek [2126] *eulabes*.)

- Because God sent wild lions among them in Samaria, the king appointed a priest to teach the people to fear (*yare*) the Lord, but still they did not turn from their idols. (II Kings 17:28–32)
- Daniel prayed to the great and dreadful (*yare*) God Who kept His word. (Daniel 9:2–4)
- The people of Israel feared God (*yare*) when they saw the Egyptian army destroyed in the Red Sea. (Exodus 14:31)
- Devout (*eulabes*) men of every nation revered God. (Acts 2:5)

### Second Level: Fear of causing shame

This is fear that motivates Godly action. (Hebrew [3373] *yare*; Greek [2125] *eulabeomai*. Morally reverent and circumspect)

- Abraham offered Isaac on the altar: "Now I know that thou fearest [*yare*] God" (Genesis 22:12).
- Joseph told his brothers he feared (*yare*) God and sent them home to his father. (Genesis 42:18)
- Pharaoh's servants who feared (*yare*) God sought protection from the hail. (Exodus 9:20)
- Men who feared (*yare*) the Lord were to be appointed rulers in Israel. (Exodus 18:21)
- Obadiah hid 100 prophets from Jezebel's wrath because he feared (*yare*) the Lord. (I Kings 18:3–4)
- Job was "a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth [*yare*] God, and escheweth evil" (Job 1:8).

- Hezekiah feared (*yare*) the Lord and sought Him. (Jeremiah 26:19)
- Jonah told the sailors to throw him overboard to calm the storm because Jonah feared (*yare*) God. (Jonah 1:9, 12)
- Noah prepared an ark, being moved with fear (*eulabeomai*) and saved his household. (Hebrews 11:7)

### Rewards for those with this fear:

- God will teach you in the right way. (Psalm 25:12)
- God will show you His covenant. (Psalm 25:14)
- God's eye of protection will be upon you. (Psalm 33:18)
- Angels will surround and deliver you. (Psalm 34:7)
- You will not lack anything. (Psalm 34:9)
- God pities you as His children. (Psalm 103:13)
- God will show mercy to your grandchildren. (Psalm 103:17)
- God will take pleasure in you. (Psalm 147:11)
- The Sun of righteousness shall arise unto you. (Malachi 4:2)

### Third Level: Fear of losing intimacy

A dread of losing an intimate relationship with God. (Hebrew [3374] *yirah*; Greek [2124] *eulabeia*.)

- "I will put my fear [*yirah*] in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me" (Jeremiah 32:40).
- Whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear [*eulabeia*]" (Hebrews 12:28).
- David stated, "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear [*yirah*] of God" (II Samuel 23:3).

- David said to God, “I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy and in thy fear [*yirah*] will I worship” (Psalm 5:7).
- “And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear [*yirah*] of the LORD; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear [*yirah*] of the LORD” (Isaiah 11:2–3).

#### Rewards for those with this fear:

- True wisdom begins on this level. (Psalm 111:10)
- It is also the beginning of knowledge. (Proverbs 1:7)
- Your days will be prolonged. (Proverbs 10:27)
- You will have strong confidence. (Proverbs 14:26)
- You will enjoy a fountain of life. (Proverbs 14:27)
- You will be satisfied and will not be visited with evil. (Proverbs 19:23)
- You will have riches, honor, and life. (Proverbs 22:4)

## How to Find the Fear of the Lord

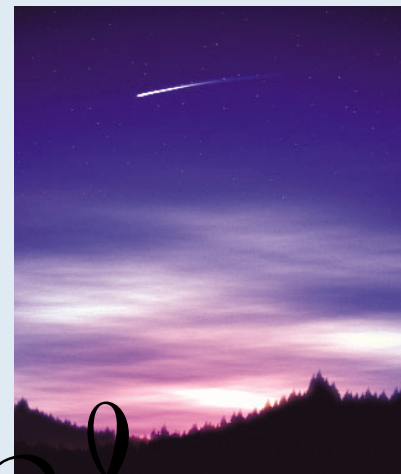
Understanding the fear of the Lord is one of the most important and valuable discoveries we can make—especially its third level. When we realize its importance, we will be able to expend the spiritual effort that is required to achieve it.

“If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God” (Proverbs 2:3–5).

## Personal Evaluation

### How much honor do you give?

- Do you have a continual awareness that God is watching all that you think, say, and do?
- Do you bow before the Lord in honor of His holiness?
- Have you bowed the knee to Jesus Christ and proclaimed that He is your Lord?
- As the temple of the Holy Spirit, do you treat your body with respect?
- Do you honor the name of the Lord by living according to each aspect of His name?
- Would your parents say that you fully and sincerely honor and obey them?
- Do you honor the Lord with generous giving from all your increase?
- Do you respect government authorities as ministers of God for your good?
- Do you pay your accurate share of taxes and fees punctually?
- Do you view your employer as an instrument through whom God is working on you?
- Do you spend the Lord’s Day delighting in Him rather than in your own pursuits?
- When an elderly person enters the room, do you stand up in respect?
- Do you look for ways to praise others and to deflect praise when you receive it?



**It is a paradox that throngs will wait for hours to catch just a glimpse of a passing dignitary, while those who see him often tend to ignore him.**

Leadership is a lonely road, and leaders long for fellowship with those who understand their pressures.

*“We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake.”* —1 Thessalonians 5:12–13

**When we honor a leader, we actually honor ourselves, because the leader represents us.**

*“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.”* —Hebrews 13:17