

# The Legacy of a Good Father

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Jeremiah 35:1-10

Today I am preaching about the legacy of a father in the Bible named Jonadab [READ TEXT— Jeremiah 35:1-10].

➡ Jonadab lived approximately 275 years before the time of our text. He lived during a very dark period of history during the reign of wicked Ahab and Jezebel. Baal worship was wide spread. Jonadab was one of those 7,000 who did not bow to Baal. He became so **disgusted by the corruption of his society**, he determined to live a life of complete separation.

He later **joined forces with Jehu** to exterminate Baal worship from Israel (2 Kings 10:15-31).

➡ After 275, years God uses the descendants of Jonadab as an illustration of children who obey their father's commandments and an indictment against Israel for not obeying God's commandments.

The fifth commandment is "*Honor thy Father.*" You honor your father by living by the principles and values he sought to instill in you. Jonadab's children are an example of obeying this commandment.

## I. The TESTING of the command (vs. 1-5).

A. The **test of a father's success** is not revealed in his children, but in his children's children.

- Proverbs 17:6— *Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers.*

➡ Jonadab was a successful father because his influence could still be seen in his descendants 275 years after he was dead.

➡ It would be like me still obeying a commandment of my great, great, great, great grandfather back in 1732.

B. The test comes **when your father is not present**.

1. It is hypocrisy to honor your father in his presence, but not in his absence.
2. True honor comes when your parents are not around.
3. The idea that once a person is living on their own they no longer obligated to honor their Father is false!

C. The test will come when the **conditions change**.

1. It was no longer fashionable to live in tents. Living in tents went out of style after Joshua crossed over Jordan into the promised land. Yet, these children were **not swayed by the fashions of the day**.  
 ➔ Situation ethics. The cliché, "When in Rome do as the Romans do," is cowardly and immoral.
2. Conditions change – Convictions never change. Don't live by convenience – Live by principle and convictions.

D. Test comes when **tempted to "compromise."**

1. It is was the "preacher" who was offering them wine.  
 ➔ NOTE: Jeremiah does not say the Lord commanded them to drink wine. He simply OFFERED them wine— "Have a glass of wine." Like, "Have a Coke... beer... smoke..." He was giving them an opportunity to disobey Jonadab. **But they didn't!**  


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 ➔ ILLUS— Uncle Murray offering to buy me a drink.
2. The fact they were in the House of God didn't matter.

**II. The TENACITY of their conviction** (vs. 6-11).

A. Their **REFUSAL**—

1. They were **FAST** in their refusal—They didn't hesitate to say "no." When you live by principle, you don't have to hesitate.
2. They were **FIRM** in their refusal. They didn't have to pray about Jeremiah's offer.

B. Their **REASON**— Where did these convictions come from? They were passed down from Jonabad to succeeding generations.

1. Jonadab stood for God against the worship of Baal. Wine and sex were important parts of Baal worship. So Jonadab gave his family commandments that would protect them from the corrupting influence of his society.
2. Fathers, what kind of values and convictions are you instilling in your children to protect them from the evils of our society.  
 ➔ Wouldn't it be a great day if our kids said...

- “No thanks, I don’t **drink** because daddy told me not to.”
- “No, I won’t have **pre-marital sex** because my daddy said it was wrong.”
- “No, I **don’t believe we evolved** from monkeys because daddy taught me we we’re created by God.”
- “No, I don’t approve of **gay lifestyles** because daddy taught me from God’s Word it was an abomination.”
- “No, I won’t get a **divorce** because my daddy said marriage is for keeps.”
- “No, I **won’t miss church** on Sunday because daddy said we should not forsake the assembly of God’s people.”

C. Their **RESOLVE** — They had unreserved obedience.

1. In all particulars
2. At all times
3. Without exception. “**We...**” Not a divided family.

### III. The **TESTIMONY of the children** (vs. 12-17).

- God knew they would not drink the wine, otherwise God’s “object lesson” would have been defeated.
  - The obedience of the sons of Jonadab was a testimony to Israel.
- A. The **REBUKE** to backsliding Judah (v. 14). If the command of a mere man, Jonadab, was respected and obeyed by his family for over two centuries, why didn't God’s people obey the command of Almighty God?
1. Jonadab gave his command **ONCE** and it was still being obeyed 275 years later (v 6). God repeatedly commanded His people by the prophets, yet they would not obey (v. 15).
  2. Just as God used the obedience of the Rechabites as a testimony to Israel, so our obedience to God will be a testimony to those around us.
- B. The **REWARD** for Jonadab (vs. 18-19).
1. Just as disobedience is punished, obedience will always be rewarded (Eph. 6:1-3 cf. Ex. 20:12).

- a) God promised there would always be one of Jonadab's descendants serving Him (150 yrs. later— Neh. 3:14).
  - b) I believe somewhere in the world today there are descendants of Jonadab still living & serving the Lord.
2. Jonadab never lived to see this reward—Sometimes God's rewards will transcend your own life on earth.

**SUMMATION:** What a legacy Jonadab left! What will be your legacy to your children?

1. Fathers, you have a responsibility to instill godly convictions in your children.

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I love baseball. One of the most feared power hitters of all time—Harmon Killebrew—once told this story from his childhood: He was outside on the lawn with his dad, learning how to play ball. His mother ran outside and yelled: "You're tearing up the grass!" Harmon's father answered quickly: "We're not raising grass, we're raising boys!" "AMEN!" Our children need our time, love and attention more than anything we could ever buy for them.

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- ➡ BBC is here to help Dads leave this a godly legacy. We cannot raise your child for you. But we can reenforce your influence and give you tools to help you in raising a godly generation.
2. Young people, you have a responsibility to honor your father by living by the godly standards he seeks to teach you. **God always honors those who honor their father.** I can't think of a single person who was greatly used of God who did not honor their father.

Proverbs 10:1— *"A wise son maketh a glad father."*