

DEDICATED TO THE BELOVED MEMORY
OF MY DEAR FATHER AND MOTHER
SAMUEL AND ANITA LEVY

Gibraltar - Tetouan

כַּבֵּד אֶת אָבִיךָ וְאֶת אִמְךָ

KABED ETE ABIHA VEETE IMEHA"

James Levy

The 5th Commandment

Given the traditional and sentimental religious purpose of this selection of songs, which bring back happy memories, I must emphasize that I have no pretention to write on this topic from a profound knowledge of the Talmud or the Zohar, these being far too serious and sacred subjects. I leave this great merit to our venerable rabbis, much more learned than me in this field, they who possess all their precious qualities for this kind of dissertation.

I am only inspired to quote the Fifth and divine commandment, one of those which is closest to our hearts, in our feelings and affections for our dearest ones, and also, the one which relates to the whole of humanity. This commandment, which we have received as one of our most precious inheritance, tells us, without going into details behind the deep and sacred meaning that it entails, but which has a direct relationship with the *raison d'être* of this traditional musical selection:

"Honor your father and your mother"

Honor your parents, not as one respects a teacher, or a police officer, out of fear or apprehension of the law, but rather in the literal sense of the word, out of pure affection, filial love and tenderness, thoughtfulness, attention, and finally out of respect, kindness, recognition and gratitude.

The Lord our G-d provided us with a great and wonderful gift when we were born, giving us two precious toys: These are our father and our mother. We were happy with them, we could always have fun at any time, without fear of breaking these toys which belonged to us, they were always near us, when we needed them to feed us, to clothe us, to educate us, to teach us, to pamper us, to kiss us, to encourage us, to laugh with us, also to laugh at our childish words. They were everything to us, and we were in their eyes the center of the world. They made our sorrows disappear by magic, our pain quickly forgotten. It felt so good to snuggle in the arms of our mom, and Papa was so kind, in spite of his big mustache, and his deep voice; we were rich with an inexhaustible affection.

Later, when we became adults, in our turn, at the peak of our lives, of our ambitions, of our ideals, of our careers and our situations, we still liked to listen to our parents, with their sweet voices, talking to us tenderly, giving us wise and judicious advice, and comforting us with their words and their presence.

Let us love them as they have loved us so much, and let us give back to them in happiness, in pride for what they have done for us, and in satisfaction, for all the great love they have always lavished upon us, with abnegation and without reserve.

Oh my Lord! Keep for all the children of the world their father and their mother. Let us respect our dear parents with all our soul and with all our heart! With love, tenderness and veneration as it is said in the fifth commandment, and consequently, it will then be much easier for us to respect all the other and divine commandments, which are the basis of brotherly love, and universal peace among men.

"Honor your father and your mother, so that your days will be lengthened upon the land that the Lord, your G-d, will give you" (Exodus-Chapter 20:12)

כְּבֹד אֶת אָבִיךָ וְאֶת אִמְךָ לְמַעַן יָאָרְכוּן יָמֶיךָ

James Levy