

Thankfulness towards Allah (swt)

"That is because Allah will never change the grace which He hath bestowed on a people until they change what is in their (own) souls" {Sûrah al-Anfal (8):53}

This is one of the ways in which Allah deals with His servants, for He made the condition of people directly related to their belief. If they change their belief, Allah will change their condition. Allah will replace their security with fear, and their sustenance. And security and sustenance are two Allah's greatest graces. Allah says in the Qur'ân:

"So let them worship Allah the Lord of this House (the Kâba) Who provides them with food against hunger and with security against fear (of danger)" {Sûrah Quraish (106:3-4)}

Suhaib ibn Sinan narrated that the Prophet said:

"How remarkable is the case of the believer! There is good for him in everything, but this is not the case for anyone except for the believer. When the believer receives any good, he is thankful to Allah, and gets a reward. And when some misfortune befalls him, he endures it patiently, for which he is (also) rewarded." {Fiqh as-Sunnah, vol.4, p.1.}

What is Thankfulness?

In Islamic terminology, Thankfulness is the acknowledgment of the fact that Allah is the only Grantor of graces, and full submission to Allah in a way that assures that acknowledgment. The graces (favours) of Allah are endless and countless. Allah says in His Book: "And if you were to count the blessings of Allah, you will never be able to count them." {Sûrah Ibraîim (14): 34}

He, the All Mighty also says:

"And whatever blessings and good you have, it is from Allah .." {Sûrah an-Nahl, (16): 53}

How can a servant (Abd) thank Allah?

{The word 'slaves' represents mankind, for all of mankind are expected to totally submit to the will of Allah}

The servant can thank Allah in many ways

These include: Prostrating to Allah, when the servant receives a blessing from Allah or when Allah saves him from a disaster. The Messenger of Allah (salAllahu alaihi wasallam) used to prostrate to Allah whenever he received a pleasant thing or was told good news. This prostration is conducted for the sole purpose of giving thanks to Allah, the Granter of the grace and benefit that the servant received. [see Fiqh as-Sunnah by Sayyid Sabiq (English trans.) vol.2, p.45]

Abdur-Rahmân ibn 'Auf relates that the Messenger of Allah (sAllahu alayhi wasallam) went out once and he followed him until he entered a grove of palm trees and prostrated. His prostration was so long that

'Abdur-Rahmân feared that Allah had taken his soul. 'Abdur-Rahmân came to look at him and he raised his head and said: "What is wrong, Abdur-Rahmân?" Abdur-Rahmân mentioned what had happened, and he (salAllahu alaihi wa-sallam) said: "Gibra'el came to me and said: 'Shall I not give you glad tidings'? Allah says to you, Whoever prays upon you, I pray upon him. Whoever salutes you, I salute him.' Therefore, I prostrated to Allah in thanks." {This is related by Ahmad and by Al-Hâkim who says: "It is sahih according to the criterion of al-Bukhâri and Muslim}

Thanking Allah in words: The majority of the scholars agreed that if the servant does not thank Allah for the grace he has, then that grace will go away and may never come back. Allah's Messenger (sAllahu alayhi wasallam) said: "It is a fine thing when a believer praises and thanks Allah if good comes to him, and praises Allah and shows endurance if smitten by affliction. The believer is rewarded for everything, even for the morsel he raises to his wife's mouth." {Bayhaqi transmitted it in Shu'ab al-Iman. Sunan at-Tirmidhî no.1733 See also Sahîh Muslim (7138)}

Talking about the benefits Allah has granted him. This is because concealing the benefits of Allah is ungrateful. Allah says in the Qur'ân: "Do they believe in the false deities and deny the favor of Allah." {Sûrah an-Nahl (16):72} Ibn Kathîr commented that denying

the favors of Allah means hiding his grants and/or relating them to others than Allah.

Narrated by Zaid bin Khâlid Al Juhani : The Prophet led us in the Fajr prayer at Hudaibiya after a rainy night. On completion of the prayer, he faced the people and said, "Do you know what your Lord has said (revealed)?" The people replied, "Allah and His Apostle know better." He said, "Allah has said, 'In this morning some of my slaves remained as true believers and some became non-believers; whoever said that the rain was due to the Blessings and the Mercy of Allah had belief in Me and he disbelieves in the stars, and whoever said that it rained because of a particular star had no belief in Me but believes in that star.'" {Sahîh al-Bukhâri (1:807)}

Helping people in need. It was mentioned in a Hadîth of Prophet Muhammad (sAllahu alayhi wasallam) that: "As the grants from Allah to a servant increase, so will the people's needs of that blessed servant's services. If the servant ignores their needs, it will cause those grants to be removed" (Ibn Hibban) The Prophet (sAllahu alayhi wasallam) said, "If anyone strokes an orphan's head, doing so only for Allah's sake, he will have blessings for every hair over which his hand passes; and if anyone treats well an orphan girl or boy under his care, he and I shall be like these two in Paradise," putting two of his fingers together." {Sunan at-Tirmidhî no.4974}

Why does the servant not thank Allah?

The servant may not thank Allah for several reasons:

The servant may be unaware of the general grants that were bestowed by Allah on the creatures. Many people wrongly think that money is the only thing to be considered and ignore the other general grants such as hearing, vision, sanity and health. The Prophet (sAllahu alayhi wasallam) said, "There are two blessings which many people lose: (They are) health and free time for doing good." {Sahîh al-Bukhâri vol 8: 421}

Aishah (Mother of Believers), the Prophet's wife said: " Whenever a servant drinks a drop of water which gets into his body and leaves it with no harm, then a thanks is due."

A man came to a good Muslim and complained that Allah made him very poor. The good man said: "Would you like to have ten thousand dinars and be insane?" The Complainer answered: "No." The good

man said: "Would you like to have ten thousand dinars but have your legs chopped off" The complainer answered: "No." The good man then said: "Aren't you ashamed of yourself complaining about your Lord while all of these grants which are His; have been bestowed on you?"

The servant may not give thanks to his Lord because he is unaware of the people who have less bounties than him. . This is mentioned in a Hadîth in Sahîh Muslim, that: Allah's Messenger (sAllahu alayhi wasallam) said, "Look at those people who have less than you and never look at those who have more grants than you, this will ensure that you will not depreciate Allah's grants." {Sahîh Muslim no.1530}

At times of hardship, one should turn his eyes towards a person who owns less worldly things than him. He will then be calmed and his ungratefulness will disappear. One will then thank his Lord and say: "Thanks to Allah who has guarded me against the harm which He has afflicted others, and who has chosen not to afflict me" {Sunan at-Tirmidhî }

The servant may not give thanks to his Lord because he is unaware of Allah's names, attributes and laws. The real ignorant person is the one who gets deceived by the amount of money he has or by his position or his power. He forgets the fact that as Allah has granted, He may also take the blessings away. Allah says in His Book, "Say, O Allah! Lord of Power (and Rule) You give Power to whom You will and You take away power from whom You will, and you endue with honor whom you will, and humiliate who you will. In Your Hand is the good. Verily, You are Able to do all things." {Sûrah al-Imrân (3):26}

When does Allah take His grants away from His servants?

When one commits sins: The Messenger of Allah (sAllahu alayhi wasallam) said, "The servant will be deprived a provision because he committed a sin" (Musnad Ahmed)

On the other hand, fearing Allah causes His provisions to come forth, Allah says in the Qur'ân: "And whoever fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him, Allah will make way for him out of every difficulty, And He will provide for him from sources he never imagined" {Sûrah at-Talaq (65):2-3}

When the servant relates the grants to himself and does not acknowledge that Allah is their Grantor as Qaroon (a tyrannical king

mentioned in the Qur'aan al-Qasas (28): 78) said: "This has been given to me only because of knowledge I possess." Consequently, his punishment was, "So We caused the earth to swallow him and his dwelling place. Then he had no group or party to help him against Allah." {Sûrah al-Qasas (28): 81}

When the servant does not give Zakaat. The Messenger of Allah (sAllahu alayhi wasallam) said, "Indeed Allah the Most High said, 'We have sent down the wealth for the prayer to be established and that Zakât be given; and if the son of ?dam had a valley, he would love to have a second; if he had two valleys, he would love to have a third, and nothing will fill the belly of the son of ?dam except dust ...'" {Musnad Ahmed & at-Tabarânî. Sahîh al-Jâmi, no.1777}

So the money is actually Allah's money, and we have been entrusted with it. And he (sAllahu alayhi wasallam) said, "Do not shut your money bag; otherwise Allah too will withhold His blessings from you. Spend (in Allah's cause) as much as you can afford. " {Sahîh al-Bukhâri 2/515}

The Prophet of Allah (sAllahu alayhi wasallam) also said, "Do not withhold your money by counting it (i.e. hoarding it), (for if you did so), Allah would also withhold His blessings from you." {Sahîh al-Bukhâri vol.2: 514}

When the servant of Allah becomes arrogant due to the large amount of money he has. If the person feels superior to other people, and his wealth becomes his only business, if he talks about it and only about it wherever he goes, and forgets to remember Allah and praise Him; if he starts evaluating people based on their wealth, then Allah will remove his grants. Allah says in the Qur'ân: "Woe to every slanderer and back biter. Who has gathered wealth and counted it. He thinks that his wealth will make last forever. Nay! Verily, he will be thrown into the crushing fire." {Sûrah al-Humazah (104):1-4}

And finally there is no better example for us than the Messenger of Allah (sAllahu alayhi wasallam) who used to offer night prayers till his feet became swollen. Somebody said to him, "Allah has forgiven you, your faults of the past and those to follow." On that, he said, "Shouldn't I be a thankful slave (of Allah)?" {Sahîh al-Bukhâri vol.6: 360}

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Source:

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