

So That You May Be Grateful

Friday Sermon Presented by
Dr Mahmud Abul-Huda Al Husaini
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The honorable, blessed, magnificent and beautiful month is waving us in farewell. This is the month in which the believer enjoys performing night prayer and fasting. In this month, hearts are directed to Allah, and faces surrender to Him. Now is the end of this month approaching.

This month has fruits summarized by the Holy Qur'an in three meanings:

1-Piety, "**O ye who believe! fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may {learn} self restraint**" (Al Baqarah, 183).

2-Guidance, "**to glorify Him in that He has guided you**" (Al Baqarah, 185).

3-Gratitude, "**and perchance ye shall be grateful**" (Al Baqarah, 185).

The Holy Qur'an mentions three fruits of this month so that we do not feel puzzled when we ask ourselves about what we have gained from this great month.

1- As for Piety, it is when man makes a pledge that will not be repealed with his Lord. It is a pledge in which the believer commits himself to the straight path so that he acts according to what makes his Lord satisfied, and avoids the prohibited and whatever his Lord dislikes. He never does something but whatever makes his Lord content even if it is what the souls desire or what pleases the others around.

Thus, the first pledge is a pledge of piety in which we commit ourselves to and feel its facility and easiness with the Exalted Allah.

2- The second fruit mentioned last week in details by the Holy Qur'an is guidance. The Exalted Allah said: "**to**

glorify Him in that He has guided you". But if you think thoroughly of this guidance, you find that in it the Exalted presents two kinds of guidance:

Guidance for the hearts, and another of behavior. The Exalted Allah said:

Ramadan is the {month} in which was sent down the Quran as a guide to mankind, also clear {Signs} for guidance and judgment {between right and wrong} (Al Baqarah, 185).

In this verse, guidance is mentioned twice:

-The first guidance is when people's hearts turn to Allah after they have been directed to the worldly life, to objects and to persons.

-The second guidance is in behavior, because, in this great month, and through the Holy Qur'an (the *Furqan* and its rules), the believer has been trained to be righteous and obedient to the command of Allah according the legislative rules the Exalted Allah has been explained in detail: "**clear {Signs} for guidance and judgment {between right and wrong}**".

Furqan means the Holy Book by which you can differentiate between what is harmful and what is beneficial for you, between sin and obedience. This can be achieved only when the believer makes a pledge with his Lord that he will never break or retract, and when he commits himself to the legislative rules on all levels of life, and to resort to the Islamic Fiqh and to the rules of the Holy Qur'an according to which he directs his heart, in the first guidance, and say to it:

"Oh heart, won't you turn to the One Who created you" . Natural disposition of Islam is within you, and it turns only to the One Who created it. The Exalted Allah said:

It would not be reasonable in me if I did not serve Him Who created me, and to Whom ye shall {all} be brought back (Yasin, 22).

After which he disciplines himself to abide by the Legislative laws indicated in the Book of the Exalted Allah that jurists spent their life in explaining in details and indicating.

3-The third fruit is gratitude that is the summary of this month. Briefly speaking, gratitude is to use the favor bestowed upon us by the Exalted Allah in a way that He likes and be content with.

The reality of gratitude is summarized in the following statement: It is to use the favor the Exalted Allah bestows upon us in a way that satisfies Him. For, He, Exalted He is, bestowed upon us sensual and well as abstract favors. This is indicated in the Holy Qur'an when the Exalted Allah said:

and he gave you hearing and sight and intelligence and affections: that ye may give thanks {to Allah} (An Nahl, 78).

He, Exalted He is, points out to the fact that He bestows upon us these senses so that we use them in a way that satisfies Him," **that ye may give thanks**", i.e., to use them for the purpose they were originally created for, and not in what He dislikes.

In addition, He, Exalted He is, bestows upon us many other cosmic favors such as cosmic balance in which we live. He said:

Among His Signs is this, that He sends the Winds, as heralds of Glad Tidings, giving you a taste of His {Grace and} Mercy (i.e., the rain that descends from the sky), **that the ships may sail {majestically} by His Command** (i.e., the ships on the seas that run according to cosmic laws decreed by the Exalted Allah), **and that ye may seek of His Bounty** (i.e., so that this may be the cause of your provision), **in order that ye may be grateful** (Ar Rum, 46).

He also said:

It is out of His Mercy that He has made for you Night and Day, that ye may rest therein, and that ye may seek of His Grace and in order that ye may be grateful (Al Qasas, 73).

He also said:

It is He Who has made the sea subject, that ye may eat thereof flesh that is fresh and tender, and that ye may extract therefrom ornaments to wear; and thou seest the ships therein that plough the waves, that ye may seek {thus} of the Bounty of Allah and that ye may be grateful (An Nahl, 14).

Notice how The Exalted Allah points out to gratitude when He mentions our senses. He also draws our attention to consider His abundant blessings and bounties that spread in this universe. But the greatest favor that man should give attention to is when the Exalted Allah makes him be acquainted with these favors.

Making us recognize the bounties of Truth is the greatest favor, especially in this particular month to which our Lord refers by saying:

Thus doth Allah make clear to you his sign, that ye may be grateful (Al Ma'idah, 89).

Recognizing these favors is a state you feel when your heart realizes the signs of the Exalted Allah and when you realize His Greatness; when you find that you are in need for prostrating to Him, Exalted He is; when you realize that you are a slave to Him, and that He is the only One worthy of worship; and when you admit deity only to Him and see that no other master is really worthy of mastery but Him.

This is the favor of the recognition of His bounties after which you graduate from the school of Ramadan, i.e., when you have not prostrated but to Allah, nor do you fast but to Allah. It is when all people wait for the moment of

sunset, and the sun sets only by the order of Allah. They do not have their meal till the sun sets because they obey the order of Allah alone. Food is before them displayed on the table, but they do not have it. Why? It is because they wait for the permission of the Exalted Allah. They stand in the late night prayer, bow for *Ruku'* and prostrate only to Him.

It is a school in which man is trained to be thankful after his recognition of this favor?

How can man be thankful after the Exalted Allah makes him know the truth?

The gratitude of recognizing the favors should have consistency. The means of knowledge are the mind, the heart and the soul:

-Direct your heart to whatever satisfies your Lord.

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-Make your soul a sacrifice to what your Lord loves, a sacrifice to the religion of Allah. Make your soul a lover of Allah, His Messenger and His religion:

Say: if it be that your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your mates, or your kindred; the wealth that ye have gained; the commerce in which ye fear a decline; or the dwellings in which ye delight, are dearer to you than Allah, or His Messenger, or the striving in his cause, then wait until Allah brings about His Decision (At Tawbah, 24).

Hadn't the Companions of the Messenger of Allah fought in the month Ramadan?

Didn't the expedition of Badr happen in the month of Ramadan?

Didn't the Companions sacrifice their souls for the cause of Allah?

Before the expedition of Badr in the month of Ramadan, didn't the Messenger of Allah say: "**Come on to a Paradise as wide as the heavens and earth**" while he was reciting to them "**Allah hath purchased of the**

Believers their persons and their goods; for their {in return} is the Garden {of Paradise} (At Tawbah, 111)?

This is the gratitude of recognition.

If the gratitude of the senses is to use them in whatever satisfies our Lord, the gratitude of recognition is not realized unless we direct our minds and our hearts to Him, and sacrifice our souls to Him alone, Exalted He is.

When we direct our minds, our hearts and our souls to Him, Exalted He is, and we employ them for Him, Exalted He is, only then we will have been among those who perform the gratitude of recognition.

Certainly, the third fruit of gratitude is a great fruit. If man is verified by it, he will never feel fear because the Exalted Allah sets a law out of His favor and generosity when He said:

And remember! your Lord caused to be declared {publicly}: "If ye are grateful, I will add more {favours} unto you" (Ibrahim, 7).

If you become verified by the state of gratitude, your spiritual state will not be degraded after the month Ramadan. On the other hand, if you are away from gratitude, you will lose the profit you have gained in Ramadan. But if you are verified by the truth of gratitude in Ramadan, your state will be better after the month of Ramadan, for the Exalted Allah said: **"If ye are grateful, I will add more {favours} unto you"** (Ibrahim, 7).

It is He, Exalted He is, Who draws the attention to the hardships of being grateful. Do not believe that the blessing of gratitude is easily attained. The Exalted Allah said: **"but few of My servants are Grateful"** (Saba', 13).

Certainly, those who are able to go on thanking the Lord of the favor, the Giver of the favor, the One Who inspires and teaches man how to recognize the favor after getting it, are very few.

Those who understand the truth of gratitude and deal with their Lord with gratitude after getting the favor are few. Therefore, you are invited to gratitude after this month so that your state becomes purer and cleaner, and so that you become more brilliant and be promoted, for what preserves you after the month of Ramadan is gratitude: "**If ye are grateful, I will add more {favours} unto you**" (Ibrahim, 7). Gratitude should be understood through this detailed meaning.

Allahum..., guide us to You favorably, and make us from those who listen to wisdom and follow the best of it. I say my words and ask Allah's forgiveness.