

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Submitters Perspective

Monthly Bulletin of International
Community of Submitters

www.masjidtucson.org



Published by Masjid Tucson
Rabi II 1445

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Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving, in the US, is a very hyped-up event. There's much marketing and advertising. There is the iconic Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade, which is a great spectacle to watch even on TV. So much attention giving thanks on just that one day.

Yet, there is, a common tradition before digging into the food, of everyone taking turns going around the table and sharing with their family and friends what they are thankful for. And I feel that for millions of people, in that moment of reflection, they may be truly thankful for whatever it is they are thankful for. Could be their family, their health, the food, the new job, whatever.

But how many of those millions of people thank God, or thank God first? How many of those people by the time they are in their food induced couch comas watching football are even thinking about God at all?

For submitters EVERY DAY is Thanksgiving! Every day we are given another chance to redeem ourselves for the stupid and arrogant mistake of not siding solely with God when we

were given the chance to do so eons ago.

[38:75] He said, "O Satan, what prevented you from prostrating before what I created with My hands? Are you too arrogant? Have you rebelled?"

[7:13] He said, "Therefore, you must go down, for you are not to be arrogant here. Get out; you are debased."

[40:60] Your Lord says, "Implore Me, and I will respond to you. Surely, those who are too arrogant to worship Me will enter Gehenna, forcibly."

So here we are. As submitters we know why we're here. The significance of the mistake we made by not fully siding with God way back then cannot be overstated. And we have clear instructions throughout the Quran on how to get back to God.

One of those things is being constantly aware that God is running everything and that everything that happens in our lives was recorded before the creation (57:22-23) and no matter what test God has specifically designed for each and every one of us, no matter how difficult (Submitter or

not), we still need to be thankful to God. There are only 8 occurrences of the word thankful in the Quran.

[2:172] O you who believe, eat from the good things we provided for you, and be thankful to GOD, if you do worship Him alone.

[21:80] And we taught him the skill of making shields to protect you in war. Are you then thankful?

[32:9] He shaped him and blew into him from His spirit. And He gave you the hearing, the eyesight, and the brains; rarely are you thankful.

[36:35] This is to provide them with fruits, and to let them manufacture with their own hands whatever they need. Would they be thankful?

[40:61] GOD is the One who designed the night so you can rest in it, and the day lighted. GOD bestows many blessings upon the people, but most people are not thankful.

[56:68-70] Have you noted the water you drink? Did you send it down from the clouds, or did we? If we will, we can make it salty. You should be thankful.

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Those six verses mention specific things for us to be thankful for—food, fruits, shields for protection, things we can manufacture, our senses, the night and the day, and the water we need to survive.

Then God tells us to be appreciative, to be thankful:

[2:152] You shall remember Me, that I may remember you, and be thankful to Me; do not be unappreciative.

And...my favorite

[14:7] Your Lord has decreed: “The more you thank Me, the more I give you.” But if you turn unappreciative, then My retribution is severe.

This is not just God making a casual statement. ‘Your Lord has decreed’. This is an authoritative judicial command, a mandate. The more you thank God the more He gives you. It’s so simple!

[5:6] GOD does not wish to make the religion difficult for you.

It’s so easy to say thank you. Whether you say it out loud, or in your mind, God knows our innermost thoughts. So... Thank You God ... for everything.

[16:22-23] Your god is one god. As for those who do not believe in the Hereafter, their hearts are denying, and they are arrogant. Absolutely, GOD knows everything they conceal and everything they declare. He does not love those who are arrogant.

Bob

[Ed note: While we as submitters know that every day is a day of thanksgiving, there’s nothing wrong with sharing Thanksgiving Day with friends and family. Our example of showing our appreciation for God’s gifts may serve as a reminder to them that God needs to be remembered every single day with thanks. Happy Thanksgiving.]

George Washington in 1789 assigned a specific day “to be devoted by the People of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being, who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be....”

Abraham Lincoln in 1863 made it an official holiday. “I do, therefore, invite my fellow-citizens in every part of the United States...to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next as a Day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens.”

“I am grateful for what I am and have. My thanksgiving is perpetual.” *Henry David Thoreau*

* * * * *

TRUST IN GOD

[3:159] It was mercy from GOD that you became compassionate towards them.

Had you been harsh and mean-hearted, they would have abandoned you. Therefore, you shall pardon them and ask forgiveness for them, and consult them.

Once you make a decision, carry out your plan, and trust in GOD. GOD loves those who trust in Him.

[3:160] If GOD supports you, none can defeat you. And if He abandons you, who else can support you? In GOD the believers shall trust.

Let’s reflect about God’s support and trusting in God. In many ways these two concepts go hand in hand. Along with the knowledge of God’s greatness – that all power belongs to God, that He sees everything, and that He controls everything including life and death. To trust God is to believe that no matter what happens – God has planned something good for you if you are a believer.

I realized I don’t always trust God enough. Every time I get annoyed or upset—that’s showing lack of faith in God, that somehow God is not running every-

thing. Because if I truly believed God is in full control, I would not get annoyed at anything—I would recognize that God did that or God allowed that to happen—so there’s a good reason.

[3:156] O you who believe, do not be like those who disbelieved and said of their kinsmen who traveled or mobilized for war, “Had they stayed with us, they would not have died or gotten killed.” GOD renders this a source of grief in their hearts. GOD controls life and death. GOD is Seer of everything you do. [3:157] Whether you get killed or die in the cause of GOD, the forgiveness from GOD, and mercy are far better than anything they hoard.

Here we see that God sees everything, He controls life and death (and everything else of course). And that if you’re working in the cause of God – don’t worry, the forgiveness and mercy are what we really should be seeking.

[10:61] You do not get into any situation, nor do you recite any Quran, nor do you do anything, without us being witnesses thereof as you do it. Not even an atom’s weight is out of your Lord’s control, be it in the heavens or the earth. Nor is there anything smaller than an atom, or larger, that is not recorded in a profound record.

Not even an atom out of God’s control is extremely reassuring. Because it tells us that we can rely totally on God and no one else. Because no one else controls an atom—only God does. So, who can help and support us? Obviously the One who controls everything and has power over everything!

In our daily lives, we must trust God. Suppose our team members at work or school aren’t pulling their weight on an important deadline. We could get harsh and mean-hearted and lash out, or we can be compassionate. We can talk with them and consult them and perhaps through this process we can each express

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what's going on and understand the other perspective. No one is hurt and the work may get done more efficiently. We may even become friends and develop a greater sense of cooperation.

We also see this principle of trusting in God when it comes to our biggest enemy, Satan. We know that jinns and Satan have "worldly power". If they can move palaces faster than the speed of light (27:38-40), they could in theory move nuclear bombs. But God tells us that if we seek refuge in Him, we can have faith that God will protect us from Satan.

[16:98] When you read the Quran, you shall seek refuge in GOD from Satan the rejected. [16:99] He has no power over those who believe and trust in their Lord.

The system God points out is that we must believe in God and trust in God, then Satan will have no power. And none of us want Satan to have power, so we must work on that belief and trust. Because the flip side is that if we don't trust God, Satan will whisper and try to put fear and doubt and all kinds of anxiety and pessimism in our hearts.

[3:173] When the people say to them, "People have mobilized against you; you should fear them," this only strengthens their faith and they say, "GOD suffices us; He is the best Protector."

[3:174] They have deserved GOD's blessings and grace. No harm ever touches them, for they have attained GOD's approval. GOD possesses infinite grace.

Fear: The Devil's Tool

[3:175] It is the devil's system to instill fear into his subjects. Do not fear them and fear Me instead, if you are believers.

[3:176] Do not be saddened by those who hasten to disbelieve. They never hurt GOD in the least. Instead, GOD has willed that they will have no share in the Hereafter. They have incurred a terrible retribution.

Even if powerful people are actively conspiring, God is in control; no one can harm us. *[58:10] Secret conspiracy is the devil's idea, through which he seeks to hurt those who believed. However, he cannot hurt them against GOD's will. In GOD the believers shall trust.*

Many of the Quran's verses regarding trust in God and God's support concern war. If we can trust God in war where we face arrows or bullets and people actively trying to kill us, then whatever else we face in life is "tame" compared to that.

[2:250] When they faced Goliath and his troops, they prayed, "Our Lord, grant us steadfastness, strengthen our foothold, and support us against the disbelieving people."

David and Goliath is a classic story of the little guy winning against the big guy. It shows us what God's support can do. We see here that the believers were praying for steadfastness and God's support. And God gave it to them. Recall also God's support in the battle of Badr (3:123-4), and for Muhammed in the cave (9:40).

If we can trust God, our faith strengthens when we are faced with a test. God gives us confidence.

[33:22] When the true believers saw the parties (ready to attack), they said, "This is what GOD and His messenger have promised us, and GOD and His messenger are truthful." This (dangerous situation) only strengthened their faith and augmented their submission.

[26:61] When both parties saw each other, Moses' people said, "We will be caught." [26:62] He said, "No way. My Lord is with me; He will guide me." [26:63] We then inspired Moses: "Strike the sea with your staff," whereupon it parted. Each part was like a great hill.

If we truly trust in God, we can be assured of God's support. So, since He is Omnipotent, if we suffer a setback, it

doesn't mean God could not protect us but that we stepped out of His "bubble of protection" or perhaps it's part of a test to distinguish who is a believer and will steadfastly worship God alone under all circumstances.

[3:165-166] Now that you have suffered a setback, and even though you inflicted twice as much suffering (upon your enemy), you said, "Why did this happen to us?" Say, "This is a consequence of your own deeds." GOD is Omnipotent. What afflicted you the day the two armies clashed was in accordance with GOD's will, and to distinguish the believers.

God doesn't need anything from us, but support is a two-way street. The end of 22:39 says: *Absolutely, GOD supports those who support Him. GOD is Powerful, Almighty.*

And 47:7 says the same: *O you who believe, if you support GOD, He will support you, and strengthen your foothold.*

How can we support God? *[61:10] O you who believe, let Me inform you of a trade that will save you from painful retribution. [61:11] Believe in GOD and His messenger and strive in the cause of GOD with your money and your lives. This is the best deal for you, if you only knew.*

[61:12] In return, He forgives your sins, and admits you into gardens with flowing streams, with beautiful mansions in the gardens of Eden. This is the greatest triumph. [61:13] Additionally, you get something you truly love: support from GOD and guaranteed victory. Give good news to the believers. [61:14] O you who believe, be GOD's supporters, like the disciples of Jesus, son of Mary. When he said to them, "Who are my supporters towards GOD," they said, "We are GOD's supporters." Thus, a group from the Children of Israel believed, and another group disbelieved. We helped those who believed against their enemy, until they won.

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Non-profit Org
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ISSN 1089-053X

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The Bible is also full of verses about trusting God and seeking God's support.

Isiah 12:2: God indeed is my salvation; I am confident and unafraid.

For the LORD is my strength and my might, and he has been my salvation.

Isaiah 26:4: Trust in the LORD forever, For in GOD the LORD, we have an everlasting Rock.

Isaiah 41:10: Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will also help you, I will also uphold you with My righteous right hand.'

Joshua 1:9: I command you: be strong and steadfast! Do not fear nor be dismayed, for the LORD, your God, is with you wherever you go.

Proverbs 29:25: The fear of man brings a snare, But one who trusts in the LORD will be protected.

Psalms 20:7: Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.

Psalms 118:8: It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in humans.

Psalms 62 is subtitled Trust in God Alone and its last two verses say: My deliverance and honor are with God, my strong rock; my refuge is with God. Trust God at

all times, my people! Pour out your hearts to God our refuge!

[9:51] Say, "Nothing happens to us, except what GOD has decreed for us. He is our Lord and Master. In GOD the believers shall trust."

[64:13] GOD: there is no other god besides Him. In GOD the believers shall trust.

[11:56] "I have put my trust in GOD, my Lord and your Lord. There is not a creature that He does not control. My Lord is on the right path.

[14:12] "Why should we not trust in GOD, when He has guided us in our paths? We will steadfastly persevere in the face of your persecution. In GOD all the trusters shall trust."

[26:217] And put your trust in the Almighty, Most Merciful.

[33:3] And put your trust in GOD. GOD suffices as an advocate.

Faiz

Write for the Submitters Perspective

We appreciate your contributions to the *Submitters Perspective* in the form of articles, comments and suggestions. Please do not hesitate to contact us at: info@masjiduntucson.org

Be Appreciative

[2:152] You shall remember Me, that I may remember you, and be thankful to Me; do not be unappreciative.

[3:145] No one dies except by GOD's leave, at a predetermined time. Whoever seeks the vanities of this world, we give him therefrom, and whoever seeks the rewards of the Hereafter, we bless him therein. We reward those who are appreciative.

[8:26] Remember that you used to be few and oppressed, fearing that the people may snatch you, and He granted you a secure sanctuary, supported you with His victory, and provided you with good provisions, that you may be appreciative.

Appreciative vs Unappreciative
[14:7] Your Lord has decreed: "The more you thank Me, the more I give you." But if you turn unappreciative, then My retribution is severe.

[16:78] GOD brought you out of your mothers' bellies knowing nothing, and He gave you the hearing, the eyesight, and the brains, that you may be appreciative.

[16:114] Therefore, you shall eat from GOD's provisions everything that is lawful and good, and be appreciative of GOD's blessings, if you do worship Him alone.