

Yahweh, the Almighty God of Israel, is with us
"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet,
and shew my people their transgression,
and the house of Jacob their sins." Isaiah 58:1

Prayer, Praise & Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving

1. Introduction

One of the cardinal shortcomings of this generation is **ingratitude - unthankfulness**. It follows close on the heels of prosperity. It is a growing failing of the people of this generation and is causing the Almighty to **turn away** from many a soul, not so much in anger but in sorrow. Here is how the Apostle Paul identifies the people living in the last days.

2 Timothy 3: 2: *"For men will be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, **unthankful**, unholy,*
3: *Without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those who are good,*
4: *Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God,*
5: *Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."*

'**Ingratitude**' stifles spiritual growth, checks the progress of friendship and in the end severs the links between loved ones and also between God and man. And yet this need not be; for we all know that no matter how **unworthy** or **poor** a person may be, it is always possible to be '**thankful**' for what we have received. We all know that saying '**thank you**' doesn't cost the receiver anything; but it brings a lot of joy to the giver. A thankful heart is in fact the hallmark of the truly great person, just as ingratitude is of the small. Let us therefore study this matter of **thankfulness to Yahweh**, noting all the while that it is a reaction which brings great joy to His heart.

2. Give Thanks unto Yahweh

Coming a close second to the statement "**Have faith in God**" is the Bible admonition to '**Give thanks to Yahweh.**' The Scriptures abound with texts to this effect:

1 Chronicles 16:
34: *"O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.*
35: *And say ye, Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from*

the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, and glory in thy praise.”

Psalm 105: 1: *“O give thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people.*

2: Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works.”

Psalm 106: 1: **Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD;** for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

2: Who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD? who can shew forth all his praise?”

Psalm 107: 1: **“O give thanks unto the LORD,** for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

2: Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy;”

3. Give Thanks at all Times

It is of course an easy matter to give thanks when we receive something we want. The Scriptures advise however that we give thanks **at all times and in all circumstances**. This is a difficult - though not impossible - concept to appreciate. It only becomes possible when we realise that sometimes Yahweh allows experiences to come our way in order to improve the tenor of our spiritual performance and to raise us to even higher realms of glory. Therefore in good times and in bad, remember to give thanks.

Psalm 119: 62: **“At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee** because of thy righteous judgments.”

1 Thessalonians 2: 13: For this cause also **thank we God without ceasing**, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the **word of God**, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.”

Ephesians 5: 20: **“Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;”**

1 Thessalonians 5: 18: **“In every thing give thanks:** for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”

The martyr **Richard Roth**, writing with his own blood before his death, penned these words of advice to all believers: ‘For our lives are in the Lord’s hands; and they can do nothing unto us, before God suffer them. **Therefore give all thanks to God.**’ (Fox’s Book of Martyrs page 263, publisher Zondervan House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA)

4. Give Thanks in the Presence of All

It is reasonably easy to give thanks to Yahweh in the presence of those who believe in Him. It doesn’t take much courage to do so because there is no fear of being laughed at. But to give thanks to the Most High amidst a group of unbelievers is quite another matter. That takes courage. And though we are not to needlessly ‘**cast our pearls before swine,**’ there are times when we should, in the presence of others, praise and thank Yahweh for His overwhelming goodness to mankind.

Acts 27: 35: **“And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all: and when he had broken it, he began to eat.”**

Note that mostly unbelievers were present when this experience took place.

5. The Believer’s Obligation to give Thanks

All believers, especially Christian leaders, are under obligation to give thanks for blessings (and trials) received by church members and also for those outside the faith. In this way thanksgiving, like perfume, will ascend before the Most High for the manifold goodness which we humans receive daily from His hand.

1 Corinthians 1: 4: **“I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ.”**

1 Thessalonians 1: 2: **“We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers.”**

1 Timothy 2: 1: **“I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men.”**

Note: The word ‘**for**’ in this context means ‘**on behalf of.**’ In other words, we believers can and should pray ‘**on**

behalf of others' - for all men! This is a mandatory requirement! Are we meeting it?

6. The Sacrifice of Thanks

In the Scriptures we read of the various types of sacrifices:

Sin offerings:

The Saviour fulfilled these. He paid the price for our sins. Forgiveness is only possible through faith in him. See Sermon Notes on **Yeshua the Saviour** and **Salvation**.

Peace/thank offerings:

This is where we believers come into the picture. The old covenant thank offerings are symbolic of our role. (Leviticus 7: 12-13, 2 Chronicles 29: 31, 33: 16).

7. The Correct Mental Attitude of Thanksgiving

Luke 22: 17: *“And he took the cup, and gave thanks...”*

Verse: 19: *“And he took bread, and gave thanks...”*

The Messiah was perfectly aware of what these symbols stood for. They represented his blood and broken body. They represented his suffering and death. And yet - wonder of wonders! He gave thanks at such a time as this. Pause awhile and try to appreciate the mental stature required for such an act. It indicates a height of perfection few if any believers have ever reached. But it tells of a truth we can all understand. It tells us that no matter how difficult our circumstances, no matter how painful the prospect, no matter how bleak the future, we can - and should - give thanks unto the Most High.

We are reminded repeatedly in Psalm 136:

- 1: *“O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.*
- 2: *“O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his mercy endureth for ever.*
- 3: *“O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth for ever.”*

AMEN!

In the Son's Name - For the Father's glory.

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