

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Submitters Perspective

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Blessings

[14:34] And He gives you all kinds of things that you implore Him for. If you count GOD's blessings, you can never encompass them. Indeed, the human being is transgressing, unappreciative.

[16:18] If you count GOD's blessings, you cannot possibly encompass them. GOD is Forgiver, Most Merciful.

Google definitions of blessing:

1. God's favor and protection
2. A prayer asking for God's favor and protection
3. A beneficial thing for which one is grateful

The first definition, *God's favor and protection*, is God's mercy. His mercy allows the universes to exist, and He constantly maintains their existence. 7:156 teaches us that God's mercy encompasses all things. Therefore, every second of every minute of every hour is a blessing of God's mercy. God informs us in 14:34 and 16:18, God's blessings are uncountable.

The second definition, *a prayer asking for God's favor and protection*, includes all kinds of things we implore God for. These blessings are things

provided to us apart from God's all-encompassing mercy such as maintaining gravity so we don't float up into space, or sending down water from the sky to revive the land, etc. These particular blessings could be things like enabling us to make contact with the Creator by establishing Salat, or having the means to fix or buy a vehicle for transportation. As stated in 14:34, these blessings are things God gives us that we are imploring to receive. We learn in 17:11, the human being often prays for things that hurt us. Therefore, God does not just give us what we ask for; He gives us exactly what we need as we need it.

The third definition, *a beneficial thing for which one is grateful* combines the first two definitions with an action of appreciation. Everything God gives us—whether it is gravity, water, Salat, or physical property—is beneficial to us. The added word, *grateful*, defines that we should appreciate our blessings all of the time, and therefore appreciate God all of the time.

God willing, we can eliminate drama and negativity in our lives with con-

stant thanks and appreciation to God for the number of blessings we can count. Since we never could encompass them, we would not have time to object to the things we do not understand. We would be constantly thanking God for the blessings He is giving us.

God granted me blessings of knowledge and faith, thank you God.

[30:56] Those who are blessed with knowledge and faith will say, "You have lasted, according to GOD's decree, until the Day of Resurrection. Now, this is the Day of Resurrection, but you failed to recognize it."

God willing, I would like to take you back to my childhood. February 21, 1975, was a time in my life I could not speak, read, or write. Thank God, He provided me with hearing, eyesight, and brains so I could learn from all the things around me. This learning process was a blessing although the outcomes were not always good for others or me.

When I was 3 years old, Mom used to babysit other people's kids. Using my eyesight and brains, I learned she put

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things that I wanted up high. I col-
luded with one of the bigger babies to
help me get something from a higher
cabinet. Being that we were babies,
the plan was, he just stands there
while I climbed up on him. Success, I
came down, lined up the arrows and
pop, we were eating baby aspirin.
Seemingly, they make them taste
good, and at that age, for us it was
just as good as candy. Thank You,
God, a blessing of knowledge how to
“overcome obstacles” that came with a
stern “retribution” on my backside.

Now a little older at five, I began to
use the knowledge of words. I was all
dressed up ready to go somewhere
nice, and it just stopped raining. I
wanted to go outside and play until we
left, but my Mom said I could not, be-
cause I was going to get my clothes
dirty. I studied what she said and
decided that it was ok to play as long
as I did not get my clothes dirty, so I
carried out my plan. Five minutes
later, my Mom came looking for me
outside, and low and behold, there I
was playing outside, buck-naked with
my clothes off so they would not get
dirty. Thank You, God, a blessing of
knowledge how to use words to
“benefit me” that again came with
stern “retribution” to my backside.

Throughout my life there were many,
many other blessings of knowledge
God gave me including several more
that came with retributions to my
backside. The most important
knowledge I received as a child was
the existence of a Creator. The first
two commandments of the Old Testa-
ment, worshiping only God and do not
make idols, were the foundation of my
family’s belief system. Thank You
God, a blessing of knowledge that
could provide eternal life in Paradise.

In my late teen years, I took time to
meditate on how I came into existence
and the purpose of life. Thank You God.
This is when God gave me the bless-
ing of faith and belief in the unseen.

More blessings! God granted me

blessings of a messenger, scripture,
and wisdom to bless me with a purifi-
cation process and teach me what I
never knew, thank You God.

*[2:151] (Blessings) such as the sending
of a messenger from among you to re-
cite our revelations to you, purify you,
teach you the scripture and wisdom,
and to teach you what you never knew.*

I remember getting a Bible as a gift in
my younger teen years, which was
when I began reading scripture.
When I was reading I was amazed
with Jesus’s life. During this time, I
realized what kind of lifestyle was
required to achieve a high standard of
human morals. I read the New Testa-
ment for several years, and then
around the age of 18, I began to read
the Old Testament. Astonished by the
historical accounts of the miracles
that took place, I read the entire Bi-
ble. God had blessed me with scrip-
ture.

By God’s leave, I began studying the
Bible and finding contradictions. God
inspired me to ask questions. Shortly
after, God presented the Quran to me.
I continued my study, compared both
books, and concluded the Quran is the
scripture I needed to implement in my
life. Such a blessing.

Living my life as a traditionalist for
approximately 20 years, there was an
unsettling sense of overwhelming ritu-
alism. I became discouraged many
times, feeling it was an impossible
task to keep up with all the rituals to
achieve Paradise. I fell on and off that
path until God blessed me with wis-
dom.

God gave me a two-week mental
breakdown that eventually landed me
at Masjid Tucson at the age of 39.
Using the knowledge of my past, God
gave me the wisdom to recognize the
Messenger of the Covenant, his trans-
lation, and the proofs associated.
Thank You God, by the age of 40, God
blessed me with knowledge, faith, a
messenger with an undisputed mathe-
matical proof, scripture, and wisdom
to bless me with a purification process

and teach me what I never knew,
which is to worship God alone at all
times.

These blessings are just the base of
many other blessings God has been
showering upon me. Using the Quran
I looked up more things God names as
blessings and that He has already
given me. God blessed me with: the
correct way to perform religious duties
of Salat, Zakat, Hajj, and Ramadan,
joy (3:15), reconciling my heart to turn
enemies into friends (3:103), protec-
tion from aggressors (5:11), kindness
to believers, sternness with disbeliev-
ers, and striving in the cause of God
without fear of any blame (5:54), good
provisions (10:93), moral character
(68:4), contentment (47:5), children &
grandchildren (16:72), shelter and
garments (16:81), resources (24:22),
and many, many, many other bless-
ings that I can never encompass.

God willing, I will not forget that God
is pouring a never-ending string of
blessings upon me. God tells us we
need to remember His blessings for
success in 7:69, and He is strict in
retribution with those who disregard
them in 2:211.

I would like to close with another
verse in the Quran that we can use to
implore God for blessings.

*[3:194] “Our Lord, shower us with the
blessings You promised us through
Your messengers, and do not forsake
us on the Day of Resurrection. You
never break a promise.”*

Robert

* * * * *

Everyday is Thanksgiving

***Our happiness both in this life and in the
Hereafter is associated with our appreci-
ation of God’s blessings***

One of the most neglected virtues of our
daily existence is appreciation. We often

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take our parents, spouses, children, brothers and sisters, good friends... so much for granted that we rarely let them know we appreciate them. Similarly, all the blessings from God, material or otherwise, may become so much a part of our livelihood that we tend to forget their existence in our lives. Unfortunately, it is our tendency not to appreciate things until something happens to them. But it may be too late then.

Why not appreciate God's blessings to us when we can? Why not take the time and reflect on what God has bestowed on us? Not only once a year, on Thanksgiving day, or during some religious days, but much more often. Every day, every possible moment of our lives. We should reflect and thank God for His blessings, and also show our appreciation to the people that we love. If we do, we will be appreciated by these people, but more importantly by God, who promises to give us more because we value His blessings.

We see the faults of others more easily than our own. We also tend to talk about and highlight people's mistakes more often than their good works. Indeed, we do not show the same keenness to appreciate people when they do good, as we do to criticize them. As an old saying goes:

Once I did bad and that I heard ever.
Twice I did good, but that I heard never.

Believers' Trait

By definition, believers are appreciative of God's blessings to them. It is their trait. It is a distinguishing quality from the disbelievers. They value God and whatever He provides for them. A good family and caring friends, beautiful brothers and sisters in faith. A community that they can rely on. All the material or spiritual blessings that God bestowed on them, no matter how little or how abundant. They are thankful to God.

The Quran teaches us that God increases His blessings to people and communities when they are appreciative of the bless-

ings they receive. On the other hand, an unappreciative state of mind is associated with disbelief in God and will lead people to an eventual loss, both in this life and in the Hereafter.

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

Count God's Blessings

Even those of us who are not as fortunate as some others in this material life can find many things in our lives to be thankful for. Just looking at ourselves should be enough. Do we have eyes with which we can see? Do we have ears with which we can hear? Tongues we can speak and taste with? Legs we can walk with? Lungs we can breathe with? Think about all the organs, small or large, external or internal, that make up our body, and are functioning without giving us any trouble, in accordance with God's design. Think about the countless red and white blood cells running around in our veins to keep us going. They busily work in their designated jobs day and night for as long as we live.

Think about the air we breathe. We do not have to carry an oxygen tank on our backs to get the air we need. How difficult it would have been for us then. Imagine people lining up to refill their tanks in oxygen stations. God made the air freely available. We should be thankful to Him for His infinite mercy.

How about the sun and the moon, and the stars God has put for our service. Nights He has designed for our rest. Days He has made for us to provide sustenance. The seasons. The rain. The snow. The oceans, the mountains, the trees, the animals ... The list of God's provisions and blessings is virtually endless.

Do you not see that God has committed in your service everything in the heavens and the earth, and has showered you with His blessings—obvious and hidden? Yet, some people argue about God without knowledge, without guidance, and

without the enlightening scripture. [31:20]

And He gives you all kinds of things that you implore Him for. If you count God's blessings, you can never encompass them. Indeed, the human being is transgressing, unappreciative. [14:34]

For Our Own Good

Appreciating all the blessings of God is for our own good. We reap its benefits manifold. It makes our soul grow and brings us closer to God. It reminds us that God is the ultimate source and provider of everything. Furthermore, God blesses us with more, watches over us, and protects us from evil as long as we remain appreciative.

The more appreciative we are of God's blessings, the better believers we can become. But if we turn unappreciative, God is in no need, Praiseworthy (31:12). Because only the disbelievers lack appreciation of His blessings, we cannot afford to take any of God's blessings for granted if we want happiness in this life and in the Hereafter.

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. [16:114]

Abdullah Arik

[reprinted from SP November 1995]

Abraham Lincoln said something that we need to consider carefully in our society today. It's more true now than ever. We must turn back to God in humbleness and appreciation for all our blessings.

"We have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us! It behooves us then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.

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Biology student

The life of a student in the biology major is difficult and often times intense. Classes such as biology and chemistry make it harder for me to keep up with the lectures and courses because of the overwhelming workload.

During last semester, I had to take Organic Chemistry-I as part of my required classes for the major. I was quite intimidated because I was never a fan of chemistry and found it quite confusing and not at all fun. In the beginning of the semester I was struggling, not understanding the topics. After having failed my first exam, I feared the possibility of having to retake the class.

While studying for my second exam I was still having trouble understanding Newman Projections. I had become so frustrated that I just broke down and left my desk. I knew I needed help from God to get me through this, so I went to do my prayer.

[2:45] You shall seek help through steadfastness and the Contact Prayers (Salat). This is difficult indeed, but not so for the reverent,

[2:153] O you who believe, seek help through steadfastness and the Contact Prayers (Salat). GOD is with those

who steadfastly persevere.

After my prayer, I picked up the Quran and decided to read it. I felt my mind cleanse and my body relax as if all my stress melted away. After getting back to my studies I was amazed. God had answered my prayers because I began to understand Newman Projections and every topic after that.

I ended up passing organic chemistry with an A. I am so appreciative and thankful that God has helped me through this semester and hopefully He will help me throughout my other semesters, God willing.

Throughout this experience, I learned that I have to remain steadfast and ask God for help instead of panicking and feeling frustrated. I am so appreciative that He has answered my prayers and forever appreciative for being a Submitter.

[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.

Anonymous student submitter

God Answers the Prayers of "His Servants"

[2:186] When My servants ask you about Me, I am always near. I answer their prayers when they pray to Me. The people shall respond to Me and believe in Me, in order to be guided.

BLESSINGS FROM GOD, GIVE THANKS

[16:18] If you count GOD's blessings, you cannot possibly encompass them. GOD is Forgiver, Most Merciful.

[17:87] This is but mercy from your Lord. His blessings upon you have been great.

[93:5] And your Lord will give you enough; you will be pleased. [93:6] Did He not find you orphaned and He gave you a home? [93:7] He found you astray, and guided you. [93:8] He found you poor, and made you rich. [93:11] You shall proclaim the blessing your Lord has bestowed upon you.

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

[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.

[7:69] Remember GOD's blessings, that you may succeed."

[9:72] GOD promises the believing men and the believing women gardens with flowing streams, wherein they abide forever, and magnificent mansions in the gardens of Eden. And GOD's blessings and approval are even greater. This is the greatest triumph.