

Sura Yusuf, Verse 101

رَبِّ قَدْ آتَيْتَنِي مِنَ الْمُلْكِ وَعَلَّمْتَنِي مِنْ تَأْوِيلِ الْأَحَادِيثِ فَاطِرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ أَنْتَ وَلِيِّي فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ تَوَفَّنِي مُسْلِمًا وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ

My Lord! You have given me a share in the kingdom and taught me the interpretation of dreams. The Originator of the heavens and the earth, You are my guardian in this world and in the Hereafter, let me die as a Muslim and join me with the good people.

Reflections

- Nabi Yusuf attributes all he has as blessings from God, not out of his own abilities.
- what is the link between Originator of the Heavens and the earth, and guardianship of the human being?
- why does he ask to die as a Muslim when he already is one?
- how was he a Muslim before the coming of the Holy Prophet (s)?
- what does 'join me with the good' mean? When would this joining happen, in the world or in the Hereafter?

Tafsir

After talking to his family Nabi Yusuf now talks to God. He shows his gratitude and conveys his wishes for what is really important to him. He thanks him for giving him a share of the Kingdom which allowed him to help others and eventually brought his family back to him. He also thanks God for giving him the ability to interpret dreams as that became the means for his release from prison and appointment by the King. He knows that this knowledge is not from his own cleverness but is a gift from the Almighty. There is no hint of pride or vanity in Nabi Yusuf.

When a human being understands that whatever ability and talent he/she has is a gift from God that alone is gratitude. Gratitude starts from the heart, an understanding of having received a gift. Then it goes to the tongue where there is a verbal acknowledgement. Then it moves to actions when a human being uses what he has been given in the way that Allah would like. This is the true meaning of gratitude.

After thanking God, Nabi Yusuf praises Him as the Originator and Creator of the Heavens and the Earth. All forces are under His control and no benefit or harm can reach the human being

except by his permission. Thus he acknowledges that Allah alone is his guardian and protects him from all things.

The two things he requests from God in this verse are to die as a Muslim – one who has submitted to God – and to be raised with the virtuous people. Note that he does not ask for his kingdom to stay or increase. He is not attached to it and is only grateful for it as a means to a higher goal. What he is more concerned about is how he will leave this world and return to God. It shows the understanding of a believer who knows that whatever the world has to offer, however good or bad, will eventually pass. The real life is the life to come which will be for eternity. The heart of a believer is very attached to God and love for Him makes him want only nearness to Him and His pleasure. The focus is life of the Hereafter.

To stay firm on faith till the end of life is more important than having faith and then fluctuating in it. It is possible for a human being to change in many ways during his lifetime. The nafs, the Shaytan, life circumstances etc. can change the faith of a person and so a constant prayer of the believer is to die with faith, even if he has faith at the moment. The last part of life before death is very important. The hope is to have a faithful and good ending to life in this world.

To be with the righteous people is an honor and privilege. It is a sign that God is pleased with you. There is joy in the company of those who believe in the same thing and believers in the Hereafter will enjoy the pleasure of each other's company.

Hadith

It has been narrated that Nabi Dawud (a) said, "O Lord! How can I thank You, for my thankfulness is another bounty from You that itself requires thanksgiving!" God revealed to him: "O Dawud, when you have known that every blessing that you enjoy is from Me, you have thanked Me.

Gratitude for God's gifts lies in staying away from what He has made unlawful.
Imam as-Sadiq (a)

You thanksgiving is complete when you say: Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.
Imam as-Sadiq (a)

One who has been given thankfulness has been also given increase in blessing. Allah, Almighty and Glorious, says: "If you are thankful, surely I will increase you (14:7).
Imam as Sadiq (a)

Important Lessons

- 1) At the height of success, thank God and acknowledge that all you have is from him.
- 2) Realize that only God is your real protector. Do not fear anyone else.
- 3) Be firm on your faith and pray that it lasts throughout your life.
- 4) Be friends with people who have faith and do good deeds. Then you will be in their company in the Hereafter.

Possible Ideas for activities

- students can make a table or chart of the different parts of the dua of Nabi Yusuf; his gratitude, his praise of God, and his wishes.

- do a gratitude activity. Check the following for ideas:

http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/gratitude_activities_for_the_classroom

<http://www.bombshellbling.com/20-activities-to-teach-kids-gratitude/>

There are also many other websites for gratitude activities for children.

Sources:

Āytaullāh Nāsir Makārim Shirāzī (ed), *Tafsīr-e Namūneh*;

Aghae Muhsin Qaraati, *Tafsire Nur*

<http://www.al-islam.org/forty-hadith-an-exposition-second-edition-imam-khomeini/twenty-first-hadith-thankfulness-shukr>