

Gratitude (*shukr*) is the key that unlocks the treasures of Allah's innumerable *nemat*. *Shukr* is amazing; it not only ensures the continuity of *nemat*, it also assures its perpetuation. An expression of gratitude, not only by the tongue, but emerging from the heart, and displayed through action, leads to the overall betterment of an individual. It prevents him from indulging in extravagance which causes misery and suffering.

The most precious of all *nemat* is that which is taken for granted. Deprived of a drop of water, a king will give away his entire kingdom, and a morsel if not found can cause starvation and death, hence, it does not befit a human to waste this *nemat*.

Allah says, "Eat from the pure of what we have provided you and thank Allah. Aqa Maula (TUS) said, "Eat what is *halal* and abstain from *haram* as it is sinful and results in the deprivation of the *nemat*." Illustrating the importance of *shukr*, Aqa Maula (TUS) narrated the plight of a village described in the Quran, which perished because the dwellers showed extreme ingratitude by the ill use of the food that they had in plenty.

Aqa Maula (TUS) today, elucidated the importance of *shukr* by narrating a few examples from history. Imam Mehdi (SA) would caution his family members against wasting food and eventually, when they did not pay heed to his repeated warnings, had their share of provisions reduced.

Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin (RA), the 49th Dai al Mutlaq, would stop on the way to pick up grains lying on the floor and eat them before proceeding further. Syedi Luqmanji, who served as the *aamil* of Surat for a number of years, was very particular about food. Many a time he would avoid passing through a path where he knew people threw their uneaten food. These examples remind of the worth of Allah's '*rizq*'.

Parents deserve their share of gratitude for the amount of pain they undertake in the birth and upbringing of their children. Unlike the young of animal who are not entirely dependant on their parents for sustenance, the human baby is born utterly helpless and survives only through the nourishment, untiring care and careful nurture of the mother and father.

Imam Husain's (SA) *shukr* was exceptional. He recited this *dua* on the day of Ashura: "O Lord! I offer you my gratitude permeating every pulsating vein in my body; for every morsel and droplet you have provided; by the number of follicles in my body." Aqa Maula (TUS) interpreting the meaning of this supplication, expounded, "Though blood was flowing from his veins; though he had not tasted a drop of water for three days; though wounds abounded his body, Imam Husain (SA) expressed his gratitude to Allah.

Imam Husain's (SA) courage is mentioned in intercession by those who pray to Allah, along with the intercession of Rasulullah's *nubuwwat*, Ali's *walayyat*, and Hasan Imam's *hilm*. The number of wounds Husain (SA) suffered of swords, spears and arrows amounted to nine hundred and fifty. Under the sword of Laeen Shimr, Imam Husain (SA) did *dua* for mumineen, and for Duat Mutlaqueen; indeed this *dua* was Imam Husain's expression of *shukr* for Allah.