



Du‘ā 37:
When **Giving Thanks** in
the *Sahīfa* with two
translations



Translation by Dr. William C. Chittick	Translation by Ahmad Ali Muhani	Text of the Du‘ā in Arabic
<i>His Supplication when confessing his Shortcomings in Giving Thanks.</i>	<i>One of his prayers acknowledging his deficiency in thanking God</i>	وَكَاَنَّ مِنْ دُعَائِهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ إِذَا اعْتَرَفَ بِالتَّقْصِيرِ عَنْ تَأْدِيَةِ الشُّكْرِ
1. O Allah, no one reaches a limit in thanking You without acquiring that of Your beneficence which enjoins upon him thanksgiving.	1. O Allah, verily none comes to an end of thanking You before (there) accrues to him, from Your Benevolence, that which requires of him more Thanks.	(1) اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّ أَحَدًا لَا يَبْلُغُ مِنْ شُكْرِكَ غَايَةَ إِلَّا حَصَلَ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ إِحْسَانِكَ مَا يُلْزِمُهُ شُكْرًا
2. Nor does anyone reach a degree in obeying You, even if he strives, without falling short of what You deserves because of Your bounty.	2. None reaches a goal in Your service, even though he tries his best but he turns out to be deficient by the side of Your (claim), due to Your Excellence.	(2) وَلَا يَبْلُغُ مَبْلَغًا مِنْ طَاعَتِكَ وَإِنْ اجْتَهَدَ إِلَّا كَانَ مُقْصِرًا دُونَ اسْتِحْقَاقِكَ بِفَضْلِكَ
3. The most thankful of Your servants has not the capacity to thank You, and the most worshipful of them falls short of obeying You.	3. Therefore, the most thankful of Your servants is he who is (conscious that he is) unable to thank You. The most devout of them is he who is sensible of the insufficiency of his adoration of You.	(3) فَأَشْكُرُ عِبَادِكَ عَاجِزٌ عَنْ شُكْرِكَ، وَ أَعْبُدُهُمْ مُقْصِرٌ عَنْ طَاعَتِكَ
4. To none of them is due Your forgiveness through what he himself deserves or Your good pleasure for his own merit.	4. Neither is any one entitled that You should forgive him for his merit, nor that You should be pleased with him on account of his worth.	(4) لَا يَجِبُ لِأَحَدٍ أَنْ تَغْفِرَ لَهُ بِاسْتِحْقَاقِهِ، وَلَا أَنْ تَرْضَى عَنْهُ بِاسْتِجَابِهِ
5. When You forgives someone, it is through Your graciousness, and when You are pleased with someone, it is through Your bounty.	5. Therefore, whomsoever You forgive, it is from Your Generosity. Whomsoever You approve, it is because of Your Kindness.	(5) فَمَنْ غَفَرْتَ لَهُ فَبَطَوْلِكَ، وَمَنْ رَضَيْتَ عَنْهُ فَبِفَضْلِكَ
6. You show gratitude for the paltry for which You show gratitude and You reward the small act in which You are obeyed, so that it seems as if Your	6. You award for the least of what You are thanked with, and requite for the smallest of what You are obeyed in. So much so, (as if) the thanksgiving of Your servants	(6) تَشْكُرُ يَسِيرَ مَا شَكَرْتَهُ، وَتُثِيبُ عَلَى قَلِيلٍ مَا تُطَاعُ فِيهِ حَتَّى كَأَنَّ شُكْرَ عِبَادِكَ الَّذِي

<p>servants thanksgiving for which You have made incumbent their reward and made great their repayment is an affair from which they could have held back without You, and hence You will recompense them, and whose cause is not in Your hand, and hence You will repay them.</p>	<p>for which You did entitle them to reward and on account of which You did magnify their recompense were an affair from which they could abstain (in spite of) You and therefore You did reward them Or (as if) its cause were not in Your hand and therefore You did requite them.</p>	<p>أَوْجِبْتَ عَلَيْهِ ثَوَابَهُمْ وَأَعْظَمْتَ عَنْهُ جَزَاءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مَلَكَوا اسْتِطَاعَةَ الْإِمْتِنَاعِ مِنْهُ دُونَكَ فَكَافَيْتَهُمْ، أَوْ لَمْ يَكُنْ سَبَبُهُ بِيَدِكَ فَجَارَيْتَهُمْ</p>
<p>7. Nay, my God, You had power over their affair before they had power to worship You, and You had prepared their reward before they began to obey You, and that because Your wont is bestowal of bounty, Your custom beneficence, Your way pardon.</p>	<p>7. Nay, You had power over their affair before they were able to adore You and did provide their reward before they began to serve You. This because it is Your custom to be Benevolent and Your way is to Forgive.</p>	<p>(7) بَلْ مَلَكَتْ يَا إِلَهِي أَمْرَهُمْ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَمْلِكُوا عِبَادَتَكَ، وَأَعَدَدْتَ ثَوَابَهُمْ قَبْلَ أَنْ يُفِيضُوا فِي طَاعَتِكَ، وَذَلِكَ أَنَّ سُنَّتَكَ الْإِفْضَالُ، وَ عَادَتَكَ الْإِحْسَانُ، وَ سَبِيلَكَ الْعَفْوُ</p>
<p>8. So all creatures confess that You wrong not him whom You punisher and bear witness that You bestow bounty upon him whom You pardon. Each admits that he has fallen short of what You merit.</p>	<p>8. Hence, the whole creation acknowledges that You are not unjust to him whom You punish; bears witness that verily You are gracious to him whom You give security. Everyone admits against himself his failure to do (for You) what You deserve.</p>	<p>(8) فَكُلُّ الْبَرِيَّةِ مُعْتَرِفَةٌ بِأَنَّكَ غَيْرُ ظَالِمٍ لِمَنْ عَاقَبْتَ، وَشَاهِدَةٌ بِأَنَّكَ مُتَّفَضِّلٌ عَلَى مَنْ عَاقَبْتَ، وَكُلُّ مُقَرَّرٍ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ بِالتَّقْصِيرِ عَمَّا اسْتَوْجِبْتَ</p>
<p>9. Had Satan not misled them from Your obedience, no disobeyer would have disobeyed You, and had he not shown falsehood to them in the likeness of truth no strayer would have gone astray from Your path.</p>	<p>9. So if it were not for Satan's leading them away from obedience to You, no sinner would have disobeyed You. If it were not for his shaping wrong for them into the likeness of right, no erring (soul) would have gone astray from Your path.</p>	<p>(9) فَلَوْ لَا أَنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَحْتَدِئُهُمْ عَنْ طَاعَتِكَ مَا عَصَاكَ عَاصٍ، وَلَوْ لَا أَنَّهُ صَوَّرَ لَهُمُ الْبَاطِلَ فِي مِثَالِ الْحَقِّ مَا ضَلَّ عَنْ طَرِيقِكَ ضَالٌّ</p>

10. So glory be to You! How manifest is Your generosity in dealing with him who obeys or disobeys You! You show gratitude to the obedient for that which You undertakes for him, and You grant a respite to the disobedient in that within which You are able to hurry him.

10. Therefore, Holiness to You! How evident is Your Grace in the case of those who obey You or disobey You. You reward the obedient with that over which You have authority for him and bear long with the sinner and allow time to the sinner when You have power to hasten his punishment.

10) فَسُبْحَانَكَ مَا أَبَيَّنَ كَرَمَكَ
فِي مُعَامَلَةٍ مَنِ اطَّاعَكَ أَوْ
عَصَاكَ تَشْكُرُ لِلْمُطِيعِ مَا أَنْتَ
تَوَلَّيْتَهُ لَهُ، وَ تُؤَلِّمِي لِلْعَاصِي فِيمَا
تَمَلِّكُ مُعَاجَلَتَهُ فِيهِ

11. You give to each of them that which is not his due, and You bestow bounty upon each in that bestow bounty upon each in that wherein his works fall short.

11. You give each of them what he does not deserve and graciously confer on each of the two what his actions fall short of winning.

11) أُعْطِيَتْ كُلًّا مِنْهُمَا مَا لَمْ
يَحِبُّ لَهُ، وَتَفَضَّلْتَ عَلَى كُلِّ
مِنْهُمَا بِمَا يَقْصُرُ عَمَلُهُ عَنْهُ

12. Were You to counterbalance for the obedient servant that which You Yourself had undertaken, he would be on the point of losing Your reward and seeing the end of Your favour, but through Your generosity You have repaid him for a short, perishing term with a long, everlasting term, and for a near, vanishing limit.

12. And were You to requite the obedient, according to that over which You have power, verily he should have been very near losing Your Reward and been deprived of Your Bounty. But You with Your grace reward him for a short mortal term (of service) with an eternally long duration (of happiness) and for a close, transitory (goal) with a lasting, (permanent) one.

12) وَ لَوْ كَفَأْتَ الْمُطِيعَ عَلَى
مَا أَنْتَ تَوَلَّيْتَهُ لَأَوْشَكَ أَنْ
يَقْفِدَ ثَوَابَكَ، وَأَنْ تَزُولَ عَنْهُ
نِعْمَتُكَ، وَلَكِنَّكَ بِكَرَمِكَ
جَازَيْتَهُ عَلَى الْمُدَّةِ الْقَصِيرَةِ
الْقَانِيَةِ بِالْمُدَّةِ الطَّوِيلَةِ الْخَالِدَةِ،
وَعَلَى الْعَايَةِ الْقَرِيبَةِ الزَّائِلَةِ
بِالْعَايَةِ الْمَدِيدَةِ الْبَاقِيَةِ

13. Then You do not visit him with a settling of accounts for Your provision through which he gained strength to obey You, nor dost You force him to make reckonings for the organs he employed to find the means to Your forgiveness, Were You to do that to him, it would take away everything for which he had laboured

13. Moreover You did not hold him under obligation for what he ate of Your sustenance, wherewith he acquired the strength to serve You and does not dispute with him (about) his organs, by using which he contrived to win Your Forgiveness. Were You to deal with him thus, verily he should lose all that he toiled for and the

13) ثُمَّ لَمْ تَسْمُهُ الْقِصَاصَ فِيمَا
أَكَلَ مِنْ رِزْقِكَ الَّذِي يَقْوَى
بِهِ عَلَى طَاعَتِكَ، وَلَمْ تَحْمِلْهُ
عَلَى الْمُنَاقَشَاتِ فِي الْأَلَاتِ
الَّتِي تَسَبَّبَ بِاسْتِعْمَالِهَا إِلَى
مَعْفَرَتِكَ، وَلَوْ فَعَلْتَ ذَلِكَ بِهِ

and all wherein he had exerted himself as repayment for the smallest of Your benefits and kindnesses, and he would remain hostage before You for Your other favours. So how can he deserve something of Your reward? Indeed, how?

whole of that in which he exerted himself, in return for the least of Your Gifts and Blessings and must remain under obligation to You for all Your (other) Favours. Then how could he have been entitled to anything of Your Reward? Never! Never!

لَدَهَبَ بِجَمِيعِ مَا كَدَحَ لَهُ
وَجُمْلَةَ مَا سَعَى فِيهِ جَزَاءً
لِلصُّغْرَى مِنْ أَيْدِيكَ وَمِنْكَ،
وَلَبَقِي زَهِيناً بَيْنَ يَدَيْكَ بِسَائِرِ
نِعْمِكَ، فَمَتَى كَانَ يَسْتَحِقُّ
شَيْئاً مِنْ ثَوَابِكَ لَا مَتَى

14. This, my God, is the state of him who obeys You and the path of him who worships You. But as for him who disobeys Your command and goes against Your prohibition, You dost not hurry him to Your vengeance, so that he may seek to replace his state in disobeying You with the state of turning back to obey You, though he deserved from the time he set out to disobey You every punishment which You have prepared for all Your creatures.

14. Such is the case, O God of him, who obeys You, the career of one who adores You. But as regards him who disobeys Your Command and commits things prohibited by You, You do not hasten him to Your Chastisement, in order that he may change his rebellious attitude into one of return to Your obedience. Verily he deserves for what he resolved in disobedience to You, the whole of what You have provided for all Your creatures of Your Chastisement.

14 هَذَا يَا إِلَهِي حَالُ مَنْ
أَطَاعَكَ، وَسَبِيلُ مَنْ تَعَبَّدَ
لَكَ، فَأَمَّا الْعَاصِي أَمْرَكَ
وَالْمُوقِعَ نَهْيِكَ فَلَمْ تُعَاجِلْهُ
بِنِقْمَتِكَ لِكَيْ يَسْتَبْدِلَ بِحَالِهِ
فِي مَعْصِيَتِكَ حَالِ الْإِنَابَةِ إِلَى
طَاعَتِكَ، وَلَقَدْ كَانَ يَسْتَحِقُّ فِي
أَوَّلِ مَا هَمَّ بِعِصْيَانِكَ كُلِّ مَا
أَعَدَدْتَ لِجَمِيعِ خَلْقِكَ مِنْ
عُقُوبَتِكَ

15. Through each chastisement which You have kept back from him and each penalty of Your vengeance and Your punishment which You have delayed from him, You have refrained from Your right and shown good pleasure in place of what You have made obligatory.

15. Therefore, all that You did delay from him of Your punishment and keep away from him of Your torment and torture was a relinquishment of Your right and acceptance of what was not meet for You.

15 فَجَمِيعُ مَا أَخَّرْتَ عَنْهُ مِنْ
الْعَذَابِ وَ أَبْطَأْتَ بِهِ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ
سَطَوَاتِ النِّقْمَةِ وَالْعِقَابِ تَرَكُّ
مِنْ حَقِّكَ، وَرَضَى بِدُونِ
وَاجِبِكَ

16. So who is more generous, my God, than You? And who is more

16. So who is more gracious than You, O Lord, and who more unlucky than he who

16 فَمَنْ أَكْرَمُ يَا إِلَهِي مِنْكَ،
وَمَنْ أَشَقَى مِمَّنْ هَلَكَ عَلَيْكَ لَا

wretched than he who perishes in spite of You? Indeed, who? You are too blessed to be described by any but beneficence and too generous for any but justice to be feared from You! There is no dread that You will be unjust toward him who disobeys You, nor any fear of Your neglecting to reward him who satisfies You. So bless Muhammad and his Household, give me my hope, and increase me in that of Your guidance through which I may be successful in my works! Surely You are All-kind, Generous.

perishes against (Your wish)? No one! Hence, You are too Great to be praised except with beneficence, too generous to be feared for anything save justice: There is no apprehension of Your oppression over one who disobeys You, nor is there fear of Your neglecting to reward him who pleases You. Therefore, bless Muhammad and his Āl (family). Grant me my wish. Increase for me of Your Guidance whereby I may earn Your favour in performing my work. Verily, You are most Benevolent and Generous.

مَنْ فَتَبَارَكْتَ أَنْ تُوصَفَ إِلَّا
بِالْإِحْسَانِ، وَرُمْتَ أَنْ يُخَافَ
مِنْكَ إِلَّا الْعَدْلُ، لَا يُخْشَى
جَوْرَكَ عَلَى مَنْ عَصَاكَ، وَلَا
يُخَافُ إِغْفَالَكَ ثَوَابَ مَنْ
أَرْضَاكَ، فَصَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ
وَأَلِهِ، وَهَبْ لِي أَمَلِي، وَزِدْنِي
مِنْ هُدَاكَ مَا أَصِلُ بِهِ إِلَى
التَّوْفِيقِ فِي عَمَلِي، إِنَّكَ مَنَّانٌ
كَرِيمٌ.