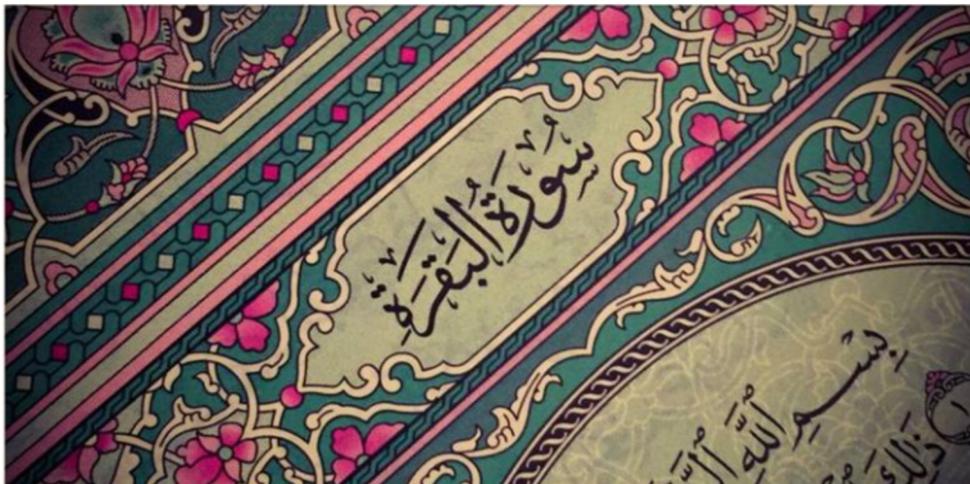


Al-Baqarah

21 جمادى الأولى 1439

6.2.18



The ayaat are a means to increase faith, so you must run to Allah. When your faith increases, the desire for worldly benefits will decrease, and you will give more importance to the pleasure of Allah.

Life is a big blessing, but at the same time, you cannot escape from the decree. No one but Allah has the power to make you die or stay alive. It took one word from Allah, موتوا, to make the whole nation of thousands die.

It is a favour of Allah that He chooses when, where and how we will die. Don't think too much about it, just concentrate on living your life in the best way that you can. Be a good person, do good deeds which will hold you in stead when you need them the most, in the akhirah.

The word ناس comes from the verb يَنُوسُ / ناسٌ, which means تَحَرَّكَ, moving, and اُنْسَ, becoming familiar. The human being is a social creature, he needs the company of others of his kind, he cannot live alone. He also develops familiarity with those around him. They are also mobile, and this is a favour of Allah. But the majority of people are ungrateful; we can take this as a rule. The minority is good, the majority is bad.

إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا

Indeed, We guided him to the way, be he grateful or be he ungrateful.
سورة الإنسان
76:3

You must benefit from life, don't waste it. This is gratitude. The more blessings Allah gives you, the more gratitude is required from you. Shukr takes more of an effort and struggle than sabr.



Allah describes the one who is ungrateful as كفوراً, which is صيغة مبالغة, a superlative pronoun. But when He mentions the one who is grateful, He says شاكراً, a participle. This means that you can never be grateful enough. What makes us so ungrateful? We take all the blessings Allah bestows upon us as a right, as if we deserve it. In dunya, whatever we

get is a favour from Allah, we don't deserve anything. The water we drink, the air we breathe, the wealth we enjoy, all are favours from Allah. They are not our right, they are favours. If one day, the weather is hot, or the money is not enough, we will complain. Whether you get it or not, don't be angry. Your existence itself is a favour of Allah, so what about anything else?

The Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said he saw the majority of the people in the hellfire were women.



This is because of their tendency to ingratitude. This starts from your home, with your husband. Don't think everything is your right. When you remember that everything is a favour from Allah, you will not be ungrateful. Sabr is easier because you have no choice, and are helpless. But shukr is when you have the upper hand, and all is well in life.

The Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said :
أُرِيْتُ النَّارَ فَإِذَا أَكْثَرُ أَهْلِهَا النِّسَاءُ يَكْفُرْنَ

I was shown the Hell-fire and that the majority of its dwellers were women who were ungrateful.

It was asked :

أَيَكْفُرْنَ بِاللَّهِ ؟

Do they disbelieve in Allah?

He replied :

يَكْفُرْنَ الْعَشِيرَ، وَيَكْفُرْنَ الْإِحْسَانَ، لَوْ أَحْسَنْتَ إِلَى إِحْدَاهُنَّ الدَّهْرَ ثُمَّ رَأَتْ مِنْكَ شَيْئًا قَالَتْ مَا رَأَيْتُ مِنْكَ خَيْرًا قَطُّ.

They are ungrateful to their husbands and are ungrateful for the favours and the good (charitable deeds) done to them. If you have always been good (benevolent) to one of them and then she sees something in you (not of her liking), she will say I have never received any good from you.

صحيح البخاري ، حديث #29

How can we make ourselves grateful?

- Make du'a, ask Allah to help you.
- Give sadaqah.

These two actions are an antidote to ingratitude. Struggle for the sake of Allah. When Allah asks who will give Him a goodly loan, thus should make us feel so ashamed of ourselves. But Allah tells us when you give charity for His sake, don't worry, because it will be returned to you multiple fold.

There are two commands in ayaat 244 & 245. One is direct ► قاتلوا, and the other is indirect ► مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي. Shukr is an apparent action, so the one who is grateful is visible. The word شَكَرَ is also used for fertile land which takes very little amount of water to flourish and grow. So the one who is شاكر sees little things in his life to be grateful for. The word كَفَرَ means to cover, so the one who is ungrateful will cover even big things in his life for which he should grateful. Most people are ungrateful; they will be sad and unhappy, and complain.

How can you be grateful? قاتلوا. Struggle for the sake of Allah.

There are visible and hidden worships. Some can be hidden, and some have to be apparent, such as jihad, acquiring knowledge. The command for struggle is also visible, not hidden. Fight your enemy, your nafs and the shaitan.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِهِ صَفًّا كَانَهُمْ بِنْيَانٍ مَرصوص

Indeed, Allah loves those who fight in His cause in a row as though they are a [single] structure joined firmly
سورة الصف
61:4

Acquiring knowledge is a great struggle, you are fighting ignorance. You drive to the markaz, attend the study circles, sit for hours, listening and writing, you interact with the people there. Even the tests you face there are jihad. Allah uses the plural term when He says قاتلوا.

All battles are easier within a gathering. Allah doesn't want you to fight alone. The shaitan will plant bad feelings on your mind, and you must fight these too, and refute them. The shaitan is your enemy, and he joins your other enemy, your nafs. So you must suppress your desires.

The Messenger of Allah

said :
مَنْ خَرَجَ فِي طَلَبِ الْعِلْمِ كَانَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ حَتَّى يَرْجِعَ

Whoever goes out seeking knowledge is in the path of Allah until he returns.
سنن الترمذي ، حديث #2647