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RATITUDE

## *A prayer to begin with*

O Thou kind Lord! O Thou Who art generous and merciful! We are servants of Thy threshold and are gathered beneath the sheltering shadow of Thy divine unity. The sun of Thy mercy is shining upon all, and the clouds of Thy bounty shower upon all. Thy gifts encompass all, Thy loving providence sustains all, Thy protection overshadows all, and the glances of Thy favor are cast upon all. O Lord! Grant Thine infinite bestowals, and let the light of Thy guidance shine. Illumine the eyes, gladden the hearts with abiding joy. Confer a new spirit upon all people and bestow upon them eternal life. Unlock the gates of true understanding and let the light of faith shine resplendent. Gather all people beneath the shadow of Thy bounty and cause them to unite in harmony, so that they may become as the rays of one sun, as the waves of one ocean, and as the fruit of one tree. May they drink from the same fountain. May they be refreshed by the same breeze. May they receive illumination from the same source of light. Thou art the Giver, the Merciful, the Omnipotent.

— *‘Abdu’l-Bahá*



Look to this day,  
For it is life,  
The very life of life.  
In its brief course lie all the truths  
And realities of your existence;  
The bliss of growth  
The glory of action, and  
The splendor of beauty;  
For yesterday is but a dream  
And tomorrow is only a vision,  
But today well lived makes  
Every yesterday a dream of happiness  
And every tomorrow a vision of hope.  
Look well, therefore, to this day.  
Such is the salvation of the dawn.

—*The Bhagavad Gita*

When you arise in the morning, give thanks for the morning light, for your life and strength. Give thanks for your food, and the joy of living. If you see no reason for giving thanks, the fault lies with yourself.

—*Tecumseh, Shawnee Chief*

Be generous in prosperity, and thankful in  
adversity.

—*Bahá'u'lláh*

He is a wise man who does not grieve for the things which he has not, but rejoices for those which he has.

— *Epictetus*

He who is not contented with what he has, would not be contented with what he would like to have.

— *Socrates*

A grateful mind is a great mind which eventually attracts to itself great things.

— *Plato*

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ake a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth! Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into his presence with singing! Know that the Lord, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name! For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations

—*The Bible: Psalms*

Seest thou not that it is God Whose praises all beings in the heavens and on earth do celebrate, and the birds with wings outspread? Each one knows its own mode of prayer and praise. And God knows well all that they do.

—*The Qur'an*

Physically and spiritually we are submerged in the sea of God's favor. He has provided our foods, drink and other requirements; His favors encompass us from all directions. The sustenances provided for man are blessings. Sight, hearing and all his faculties are wonderful gifts. These blessings are innumerable; no matter how many are mentioned, they are still endless. Spiritual blessings are likewise endless - spirit, consciousness, thought, memory, perception, ideation and other endowments. By these He has guided us, and we enter His Kingdom. He has opened the doors of all good before our faces. He has vouchsafed eternal glory. He has summoned us to the Kingdom of heaven. He has enriched us by the bestowals of God. Every day he has proclaimed new glad tidings. Every hour fresh bounties descend. . . —*Abdu'l-Bahá*

There is a cordial thanksgiving, too, which expresses itself in the deeds and actions of man when his heart is filled with gratitude. For example, God has conferred upon man the gift of guidance, and in thankfulness for this great gift certain deeds must emanate from him. To express his gratitude for the favors of God man must show forth praiseworthy actions. In response to these bestowals he must render good deeds, be self-sacrificing, loving the servants of God, forfeiting even life for them, showing kindness to all the creatures. He must be severed from the world, attracted to the Kingdom of Abha, the face radiant, the tongue eloquent, the ear attentive, striving day and night to attain the good pleasure of God. Whatsoever he wishes to do must be in harmony with the good pleasure of God. He must observe and see what is the will of God and act accordingly. There can be no doubt that such commendable deeds are thankfulness for the favors of God.

—*Abdu'l-Bahá*

They should manifest gratitude and thankfulness to God, and the best way to thank God is to love one another.

—*Abdu'l-Bahá*



The Cause of the Ancient Beauty is the very essence of love, the very channel of oneness, existing only that all may become the waves of one sea, and bright stars of the same endless sky, and pearls within the shell of singleness, and gleaming jewels quarried from the mines of unity; that they may become servants one to another, adore one another, bless one another, praise one another; that each one may loose his tongue and extol the rest without exception, each one voice his gratitude to all the rest; that all should lift up their eyes to the horizon of glory, and remember that they are linked to the Holy Threshold; that they should see nothing but good in one another, hear nothing but praise of one another, and speak no word of one another save only to praise.

—*Abdu'l-Bahá*

## *Questions for discussion*

- The religious traditions shared here have all mentioned the practice of starting our days focused on what we are grateful for. Why is walking into a new day in a state of gratitude so important and how does it affect our feelings, attitude, and how we will interact with others?
- What does it mean to be thankful in adversity and how do we achieve this?
- Why would a grateful mind attract great things?
- How does serving and loving all people show gratitude and thankfulness to God?
- How is the expression of love and the expression of gratitude towards each other related to building oneness?