

Offer Adonai a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving

¹⁴ Offer God a sacrifice of thank offerings...²³ A sacrifice of praise honors Me, and to the one who orders his way, I will show the salvation of God.” (Ps. 50:14, 23)

Gratefulness and thanksgiving are Scriptural! Being grateful or thankful is defined in the dictionary as the *showing appreciation for benefits received*. It includes learning to recognize the benefits which *Adonai* and others have provided. It is also looking for appropriate ways to express genuine appreciation. Gratefulness is communicating to others the precise ways in which they have benefited your life and looking for ways to honor them. The opposite of gratefulness is *PRIDE*. Pride is believing the lie that I have achieved on my own efforts what *Adonai* and others have done for me and through me. We should be acknowledging the fact that everything that we have is the result of *Adonai* and others investing in us. Scripture states: *“For who makes you different? And what do you have that you did not receive? But if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?” (1 Corinthians 4:7)*

Gratefulness/Thankfulness is an attitude of indebtedness along with the motivation to adequately express that attitude. It is recognizing that in ourselves we have nothing, and that we are nothing, and that whatever we do have, we owe to *Adonai*, to our parents, to our family, and to others. One of the signs of an adulterous and unholy generation is *“²¹ for even though they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God or give Him thanks. Instead, their thinking became futile, and their senseless hearts were made dark” (Ro. 1:21).*

The word *gratefulness/thankfulness* is expressed in the *Newer Testament* by the Greek word (*yoo-kar-iss-TEH-oh*), which means *to be thankful and express gratitude*. *Yoo* means *good or well*, and *charis* means *grace*. We know that *grace* is the *desire and the power* that *Adonai* gives us to *do His will* or *succinctly the power to do what we ought*: *“in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Messiah Yeshua” (1 Thessalonians 5:18).*

There are a number of keys to gratefulness and thankfulness. One very important key is that the more we realize how indebted we are to *Adonai* and how deserving of nothing but eternal judgment we are, the more grateful we will be for the many ways He and others have benefitted us.

Here is a beautiful Scriptural example. One day Simon, a Pharisee, invited *Yeshua* to his home for a meal. During the meal a repentant woman came in, wept over His feet and then wiped His feet with her hair. Simon murmured against *Yeshua* for letting an immoral woman touch Him, but He said: *“A certain creditor had two debtors; the one owed ten times as much as the other. When they were unable to pay him back, he canceled both their debts. Now which of them will love him more?” (Luke 7:41-42)* Simon answered that the one who was forgiven the most would be most grateful. *Yeshua* commended him for the correct answer and then explained that the woman who was weeping at his feet had been forgiven many sins, and, therefore, she was very grateful to *Adonai*.

The woman who washed Messiah's feet was repentant for her many sins. Each of us is also guilty of many sins as we compare our lives to the holy standards of *Adonai's Holy Torah* (See *Exodus 20-23*). But we can indeed follow her good example by repenting of our pride/willfulness and receiving the forgiveness that *Yeshua* has already provided for us by His death on the execution stake (See *John 3:1-17*).

Every time someone thanks us for doing good or praises us for some achievement, we have an important opportunity and responsibility to express gratefulness to *Adonai* and to others. Whatever we have accomplished has not been done by our efforts alone. Many others have helped us. Most importantly, *Adonai* has made it all possible. If we thank people for their praise and fail to acknowledge the work of others, we give the false idea that we accomplished it all. Such a response would demonstrate pride. Whenever someone thanks you or praises you, consider doing the following (deflecting the praise):

- Thank the one who praises you. A bright, cheery *thank you* will be a pleasant reward to the person who is expressing the quality of gratefulness to you.

- Praise the one who thanks you. When you are thanked, identify a character quality that you can praise in return. If you are thanked for helping someone, you could say, *Thank you! You are very kind in saying that.* If complimented for an achievement, you could answer, *Thank you! You are very thoughtful to encourage me.* If you are praised by one who exhibits the same quality, you could say, *Thank you! You have been an example to me in this area.* Genuine praise is not flattery and gives energy!
- Recognize those who helped you. Be prepared to acknowledge immediately those who helped you do that for which you were just praised. Here are some examples: *I am grateful for my parents' training; I had some very good teachers; It was a team effort, and I could not have done it without so and so...* or *I am grateful to Adonai for making it possible for me to do this.* A proper response usually requires much forethought in order for it to be accurate and appropriate.
- Distinguish praise from flattery. *Praise is pointing out a specific character quality in another person and telling him how it has benefited your life. Flattery is an exaggerated compliment, usually given with an ulterior motive.* Flattery brings destruction. *Adonai* compares flattery to a net that catches its prey in *Prov. 29:5* and states its dangers in *Prov. 26:28*: "...a flattering mouth causes ruin."

What can we give *Adonai*? How can we show appreciation for ALL He has done for us? In the siddur prayers we routinely say: "*Deserving of praise are You O Lord, King of the Universe...*" It is hard to give something to someone who owns the "*cattle of a 1,000 hills...*" He said: "¹⁴*Offer God a sacrifice of thank offerings...*"²³*A sacrifice of praise honors Me*" (*Paslm 50:14, 23*). I would add "*This is our reasonable service.*" Let this be our commitment and our precious offering that He desires: ♪ *We Bring the Sacrifice of Praise into the House of the Lord... And we offer unto You the sacrifices of thanksgiving. And we offer unto You the sacrifices of joy!* ♪ Let us pray:

O Adonai, I recognize that I am a great sinner and deserving of eternal judgment. I thank You for sending Messiah Yeshua to pay the penalty for all my sin, and I do now receive Him as my Lord and Savior. Thank You for hearing this prayer and for giving me eternal life. I want to be grateful to Him in everything, good and bad. Shabbat Shalom!