

The Life of Thanksgiving

H.H Pope Shenouda III



He who lives the life of thanksgiving is a noble person, acknowledges and does not forget a favor. NEVER forgets any good offered to him, and expresses his thanks. Thanksgiving is in his heart and on the tip of his tongue, for God and men.

The Lord Jesus blessed the one of the ten lepers who were cleansed, when the only one returned to Jesus

"and fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks."

So Jesus answered and said,

"Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?"

(Luke 17:15-18)

Therefore, when you give thanks, you are glorifying God, acknowledging his loving kindness to you. If God has done something good to you through anyone, you give thanks to God and also to this person, who was the mean in receiving such goodness.

Most people give thanks to God at the beginning and end of the each day, and on occasions like new year, feasts and certain important events in their lives, but the life of thanksgiving has its characteristics, perhaps in the first place is the saying of the apostle, *"Giving thanks always for all things"* (Eph. 5:20).



Giving Thanks Always

Then our giving thanks to God has no specific occasions but it is "Always." And as long as it is continuous, it covers the whole life and therefore the expression "Life of Thanksgiving" applies to it.

The same teaching was explained in the first epistle of the Thessalonians, "*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks.*" (1 Thess 5:16-18).

On account of this, the Prayer of Thanksgiving precedes all Prayers, all the church rituals and masses begin with the prayer of Thanksgiving, also the seven prayers (in the Agpeya) either in the morning or at night.

We always give thanks to God "evening and morning and at noon." Also we say the Psalmist "*at midnight I will rise to give thanks to you, because of your righteous judgments.*"

In addition to the general prayer of thanksgiving, we give thanks in absolutions of the hours,

- ❖ ***In the first Hour we say:*** "We thank you O Eternal King, for you permitted us to pass this night in peace and brought us to the day break, "we thank Him for keeping us safe during the night and giving us a new day in life.

- ❖ ***In the Third Hour we say:*** "We give you thanks for raising us up to pray at this holy hour, where you poured Your Holy Spirit in abundance, upon your disciples and honorable apostles like tongues of fire."

- ❖ ***In the Sixth Hour, we say:*** "We give thanks to you O our King The Almighty, Father of our God and Savior Jesus Christ, we glorify you because you made the time of suffering of your Only Begotten Son, a time of prayer and comfort."

- ❖ ***In the Sunset prayer we say:*** "We thank You, O our Compassionate King, for you granted us to pass this day in peace, and brought us thankfully to the evening, and made us worthy to see the light until sunset."



We thank God for every hour that passes in peace. Then, it is a continuous thanksgiving either at the beginning of every prayer or at certain occasions.

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