

# The Glorious Results of Giving Thanks

by Zac Poonen

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*The sermon highlights the transformative power of giving thanks to God, illustrating its role in receiving greater blessings and deliverance.*

**Duration:** 15:21

**Scripture:** Psalm 50:23, Psalm 106:12, Jonah 2:9, Luke 17:12-19, Philippians 4:6-7

**Topics:** "Gratitude And Thanksgiving", "Faith And Worship"

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## Description

This sermon focuses on the importance of gratitude and thanksgiving in our relationship with God, drawing lessons from the story of the ten lepers healed by Jesus. It emphasizes the significance of returning to give thanks with the same passion and voice as when we pray, highlighting the blessings that come from a heart of gratitude. The message underscores how offering a sacrifice of thanksgiving honors God and opens the way for Him to show His salvation and deliverance in our lives, even before we see the manifestation of it.

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## Transcript

I'd like to turn to Luke, Gospel Chapter 17. This is the story you all know of ten lepers who came to Jesus for cleansing, to be healed. And it says in Luke 17, that verse 12, as he entered a certain village, ten leprous men stood at a distance.

And they raised their voices, because they were needy, saying, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And Jesus said, Go and show yourself to the priests. And as they went, they were cleansed.

And one of them, when he saw that he'd been healed, turned back, and again with a loud voice, just like he did when he prayed, it wasn't any softer this time, it was just as loud, he glorified God. And he fell on his face, and he was a Samaritan, one would least expect to realize the value of giving thanks. And then Jesus answered and said, Were there not ten cleansed? But the nine, where are they? That is a question he asks even today.

Weren't there so many who received answers to prayer? Where are the others? Is it only one who found, who turned back to give thanks and give glory to God, except this foreigner? And see what he got. He got something the other nine did not get. Arise, go your way, for your faith has saved you.

He got salvation. The other nine only got healing. Because he came back to give thanks, he got something more than the others got, who only came to pray.

What we learn from this is that with as loud a voice, and with as great a desire and passion we pray, it must be with an equally great passion and desire and voice that we return to give thanks. Why does the Lord want thanks? I mean, it looks like a very selfish thing, if you said, why don't you come and thank me? If a human being said it, it would look very selfish. We don't go around expecting people to say thank you to us.

But when Jesus asked this question, where are the nine? He knew the tremendous blessing that would come to them, if they developed the habit of thanksgiving. He's always seeking our good. It's not that he was waiting for people to say thank you to him, he never bothered about that.

And it's with our good in view that he teaches us to thank him. It's the same thing with God. God doesn't want a few people on earth to thank him, he's got millions of angels praising him there.

So when the Lord tells us to thank him, many places in scripture it says that, he's seeking something good for us, something more than we already have. And there's a promise connected to this in the Psalms. In Psalm 50, it says, in the last verse, Psalm 50 and verse 23, he, and I want to read this in another translation, it comes like this, he who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honors me and thereby makes a way for me to show him my salvation or my deliverance.

He who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honors me and thereby makes a way for me to show him my deliverance or my salvation. And we see an example of that in 2 Chronicles, in chapter 20, where we read of a time when a great multitude came against Jehoshaphat, in verse 2, 2 Chronicles 20 verse 2, there was a great multitude that came against him, and Jehoshaphat was afraid because he knew he couldn't tackle this multitude. He proclaimed a fast.

These things written in the Old Testament, the Bible says, are written for our example that we can learn lessons from them. God allows great multitudes to come against, allowed great multitudes to come against Israel and he allows great multitudes to come against Christians, in various ways, opposing us, attacking us. And Judah gathered together to seek help from the Lord, and I just want to point out one thing in Jehoshaphat's prayer, and that is in verse 12.

This is what it means to pray the prayer of faith. Lord, we don't have power, in the middle of that verse, we don't have wisdom. The two things that we need the most, power and wisdom, we don't have.

We are powerless against these people and we don't know what to do. But our eyes are on Thee. So it's an acknowledgement, we have no wisdom and no power in this situation, but our eyes are on Thee.

If you stop at the first two statements, it's unbelief. It's when you add that third statement, but our eyes are on Thee, that means we expect you to bring a deliverance. And the Lord spoke through the prophets and said that He would do it, in verse 17.

You don't need to fight in this battle. Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Words similar to what Moses said at the Red Sea when the Egyptians were following the Israelites.

Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. You don't need to fight in this battle. That's a great word that we can hear in different situations in our own life, when we are confronted with difficult situations and

difficult people.

You don't need to fight in this battle, verse 17. Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will work for you. Don't be dismayed, go out and the Lord will be with you.

And the proof that they believed was that Jehoshaphat sent out his army and right in front of the army he sent people who would, verse 22, verse 21 rather, he appointed those who sing to the Lord and who praise Him, who went out in front of the army. It's the most unusual way to go to battle with all the folks with bows and arrows at the back and right in front are people just raising their hands and saying praise the Lord, He's won the victory, we're not going to fight in this battle. And he set them in front, that was the expression of faith.

God had said that He would fight the battle and we don't have to fight in this battle. And so they were going to give thanks and He said all those priests up in front who could praise and thank the Lord and they went forth to battle with a whole number of priests right in front praising the Lord. And verse 22, when, that word when is very important.

When, verse 22, they began singing and praising the Lord, that's the time the Lord set ambushes against the sons of Ammon Moab and the whole multitude and they were routed. They were routed by a group of people who decided we're going to praise the Lord. Something like happened in Jericho when they just went around the city praising the Lord and the walls came down.

I think of another instance, you know this was a fulfillment of what we just read in Psalm 50, who so offers praise, makes the sacrifice of praise, makes a way thereby for me to show him my deliverance. That's how they got the deliverance here. If you turn to the book of Jonah, in the Minor Prophets, Jonah chapter 1, verse 17, you know it says when he was thrown into the sea, the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow him and he was in the stomach of the fish for three days and three nights.

And I think he was trying to crawl out of the belly of the fish for three days and three nights. And then, verse chapter 2, verse 1, which means at the end of three days and three nights, he began to pray. And he continued in that prayer and finally, in verse 9, he says, well, I've been here three days and three nights and doesn't look as if there's any deliverance, but I will offer to God the voice of sacrifice, the voice of thanksgiving.

Okay, I'm going to be in the belly of this fish and I don't see the deliverance coming, but I'm going to praise the Lord and give thanks to him. Psalm, I will declare that deliverance comes only from the Lord. And then you find that word again, then, then, who so offers praise to me, makes a way thereby for me to show him my deliverance.

Just then the Lord commanded the fish and he vomited Jonah out of his mouth into dry land. So, we see the same thing there, the fulfillment of what we read in Psalm 50. I'm going to show you another verse in Psalm 105, sorry, Psalm 106.

This is speaking about the time when the Israelites were delivered from the Egyptians by the Red Sea, burying the Egyptian army. Psalm 106 verse 11, the waters covered the Egyptians and not one of them was left. And the Israelites were safe on the other side.

Then, then, they believed his words and they sang his praise. In the old covenant, generally speaking, except for some rare exceptions like in Jehoshaphat's case, in most cases, they would praise the Lord

after the deliverance was accomplished. The waters covered their adversaries, then they sang his praise.

The difference in the new covenant is that by faith we can sing his praise even before the deliverance has come. You know, in the new covenant we read in Philippians 4 about situations which cause us anxiety and fear and problems that we can face in our life. What are we supposed to do in such situations? Philippians 4, 6 says, be anxious for nothing, but in every situation we are to pray, and supplication means specific prayer, and having prayed before the deliverance has come, Philippians 4, 6, we thank the Lord with thanksgiving.

So think of a person who's facing a critical situation where he's bringing fear and anxiety and tension into his heart, and he's commanded to be anxious for nothing, but how to come to that place of freedom from anxiety and come to rest? Pray, be specific with supplication, and thank the Lord before the deliverance comes, and then the peace of God will be like a garrison around your heart. Verse 7, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. So this is the difference.

In the old covenant they would give thanks mostly after the deliverance came. To live by faith and to walk by faith means we give thanks even before. We've committed our cause to the Lord, we believe He's heard us, and we sing His praise.

The mark of faith is always that. Psalm 106, what we read there, they believed His words, they sang His praise. There they could believe only after the deliverance came, today we can believe before the deliverance comes, but the proof of our faith is we sing His praise.

So it's a wonderful promise to claim in the different situations of life, and if you experiment with this, you'll find that it really works. I found that in many situations, that you face a situation, you don't know the answer, you say like Jehoshaphat, Lord, we have no wisdom, we have no power in this situation, but we believe You're going to fight on our behalf because we're seeking Your glory and honor, we're seeking nothing for ourselves, and we thank You and praise You. Every prayer of ours should finish with thanksgiving and praise.

You know, Jesus taught us that. All will be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, lead us not into temptation, deliver us from evil. Thine is the kingdom, Thine is the power, Thine is the glory.

Every prayer must end with praise to God. May it be so not only in prayer meetings like this, but that it becomes a habit in our life, like it says, we considered it yesterday, in everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you, and that's His will at all times. Amen.

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