

GRATITUDE IN THE MUSLIM AND JEWISH TRADITIONS

Alhamdulillah (pronounced “al-ham-doo-li-lah”) means “Praise be to Allah”- said after a meal or whenever you want to express appreciation to Allah when something good happens.

Gratitude in Islam is called **Shukar** and it is an Islamic duty to be in a state of gratitude. There are three levels of gratitude:

1. Shukr bil qalb: Gratitude of the heart- to realize and appreciate all blessings by and within the heart
2. Shukr bil lisaan: Gratitude of the tongue- to say thanks with the tongue
3. Skukr bil jawarah: Gratitude through action - To express gratitude by doing righteous deeds

“I like to think of these as the gratitude muscle-builders. When we think about giving thanks, it is easy to be grateful in times of ease. In building gratitude muscles in challenging times, I have found that, like muscle bundles calling on other bundles to help, working together with others is what can build strength.” **Anne Kjemtrup, our SOSS sister and co-organizer**

The name for Jews - Yehudim - comes from the word 'thank you'

When Leah, wife of the patriarch Jacob, had her fourth child, she named him “**Yehudah**,” which means “I am grateful,” to reflect her gratitude to God for the gift of another son. The name Yehudah is the source of the Hebrew name of the Jewish people (Yehudim), revealing the very direct tie between Judaism and gratitude.

Genesis 29:35

וַתֵּהָרַע עוֹד וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן וַתֹּאמֶר הַפַּעַם אֲנִי אֹדֶה אֶת־יְהוָה עַל־כֵּן קָרָאתִי שְׁמוֹ יְהוּדָה וַתַּעֲמֵד מִלְדוֹת:

She (Leah) conceived again and bore a son, and declared, “This time I will praise/thank God.”

Therefore she named him Yehudah/Judah. Then she stopped bearing.

One of the opening prayers Jews say every day when they wake up is called *Modeh/Modah Ani*

מוֹדָה אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ מֶלֶךְ חַי וְקַיִּים. שְׁהַחֲזַרְתָּ בִּי נִשְׁמָתִי, בְּחַמְלָה. רַבָּה אֶמְוֹנְתְּךָ

Modah ani lefanekha melekh hai vekayam shehehezarta bi nishmati b'hemlah, rabah emunatekha. (version for a female who is praying)

I give thanks before you, Ruler Living and Eternal, for You have returned within me my soul with compassion; abundant is Your faithfulness!

Selected by Rachel Mackson-Landsberg, our beloved daughter

OTHER INSIGHTS ABOUT GRATITUDE

“Gratitude is not only the greatest of all virtues, but the parent of all others.”

Marcus Tullius Cicero, 1st Century BCE Roman Philosopher

“Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more.”

Melodie Beattie, Contemporary author

“If you cannot be grateful for what you have received, then be thankful for what you have been spared.”

Yiddish proverb

“The highest tribute to the dead is not grief, but gratitude.”

Thornton Wilder, 20th century playwright and novelist

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