



Parenting Advice for Muslim Mothers

Connecting with Allah ﷻ Through *Dua* During Ramadan (Part 7)

DUA TO BE RECITED AFTER A MEAL

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِيْ اَطْعَمَنَا وَسَقَانَا وَجَعَلَنَا مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ

Alhamdu lillahilladhi at'amanaa wa saqaanaa wa ja'alanaa minal muslimeen

All praise is for Allah Who fed us, and gave us drink, and made us among the Muslims.

Just like the *dua* before a meal, the *dua* after a meal has the super-power to turn the simple act of eating and drinking into an act that makes Allah ﷻ happy, that makes us dear to Allah ﷻ, and gets us into Jannah. This *dua* is also special because in it we are thanking Allah ﷻ, because the way to thank Allah ﷻ is by saying *Alhamdulillah*.

In this *dua* we thank Allah ﷻ for three things:

1. For the food that we have just eaten.

At this point discuss the following with your children:

- The benefits of food in general, such as strength and energy
- The different kinds of edible things that Allah ﷻ has created in nature, and the nutritional value of each, such as fruits and vegetables, meat and fish, bread and rice. Talk about the vitamins and minerals present in different kinds of foods and how essential they are for maintaining good health.
- The different dishes we put together using what Allah ﷻ has made in nature. Ask the children about their favorite food items and ask them to guess what ingredients are in them. Share with them some of your favorite dishes and tell them what goes in them. Highlight that food doesn't just provide us with physical strength and benefit, but also gives us great pleasure.
- How weak or ill we would get if we didn't have enough food, or enough of different kinds of foods. Mention to your children different deficiencies and health problems that can develop if we don't get a balanced diet.



- How many children in the world do not have enough to eat and the reasons for this including drought, famine, other natural disasters, war, poverty etc. and how blessed we are to get enough of a variety of food, to be able to eat what we want, when we want to. Talk about how many children have to earn money themselves to buy their own food, while they don't even have to lift a finger to get theirs. Perhaps point out specific children who you know of who have to work to earn food for themselves and their families.

2. **For the water (or any other drink) that we have just had with our meal.**



At this point discuss the following with your children:

- All the different kinds of drinks that Allah ﷻ has created, including water, juices from fruits that Allah ﷻ has made, milk, tea and coffee etc.
- The benefits of these different drinks, and how water, in particular, is essential for life. Talk about the other uses of water as well.
- How many children around the world do not have access to clean drinking water, or water for other purposes, and how that affects their lives. Some children have to walk for miles just to get a pot full of water for themselves and their families. Conversely, how blessed we are to not only have water and a variety of other drinks to consume whenever we need them, but also to have running water in our taps for other uses.

3. **For being Muslims.**



At this point discuss the following with your children:

- The importance of having clear instructions, e.g. about how to assemble a piece of furniture, or operate a new toy, or bake a cake, or answer the questions in your homework or test, and how without instructions we would end up ruining and wasting the furniture or toy or ingredients for the cake, or failing in the homework or test. So when we have been placed in this world and given this life to live, it is a huge blessing to have detailed guidance about how to do everything in the best way (e.g how to stay clean and healthy, how to stay safe, how to avoid fights and help each other, how to be happy and make others happy, how to get the help of Allah ﷻ in every matter hence making that matter easy for ourselves, etc.). And how Muslims are doubly blessed because they not only have a Book which has all the instructions in it, but also the Prophet ﷺ who practically taught us how those instructions are to be followed.
- Not just do Muslims get instructions on how to live this life in the best way and be happy and make others happy, but they also learn how to make Allah ﷻ happy and get into Jannah once their time in this world is finished. And of course this is even more important than being happy in this world, because while our time here will surely finish, our time in Jannah will never, ever finish. At this point again, remind your children about the amazing treats awaiting them in Jannah!



Why is it important to thank Allah ﷻ?

Just like we should thank people when they give us a gift or help us or do something nice for us, we also need to thank Allah for all His innumerable blessings that He showers upon us all day, every day (At this point ask your children to think of some blessings they enjoy on a daily basis and add some in yourself). Not thanking is rude! Can you imagine if you gave a nice gift to a friend and he or she didn't even say thank you? That would make you pretty angry wouldn't it?

Also, when we thank Allah ﷻ for something, Allah ﷻ gives us more of it. He has made this promise in the Qur'an!

لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ

Translation: Indeed if you give thanks, surely, surely we will give you more (Ibrahim: 7)

So when we thank Allah ﷻ for food and drink, He will give us more of it in this world, and He will also give us much yummiier varieties of whatever food and drink we want in Jannah, even an unlimited supply of candies! (At this point ask your children what they would like to eat or drink in Jannah and mention some of your own choices as well even if they seem unrealistic; in fact the more imagination you use when talking about Jannah the better!)

This is why the *dua* after eating is called a *dua* although really it is giving thanks. Because when we give thanks we get more, so it is like making *dua* for more!

The opposite of this is that if we are ungrateful for something, we will not be given more of it, and maybe even what we have will be taken away from us. Can you imagine how you would feel if you lovingly gave your brother or sister or friend a nice gift and they didn't even bother to say thank you, and acted like they didn't even like the gift. Would you feel like giving them another gift? Probably not, in fact you would feel like taking it back! So in order to make sure we get more of the blessings that we have, or at least to make sure that we don't lose what we have already, we must give thanks. And we must never complain or act like we don't like what Allah ﷻ has given us, although we can certainly make *dua* for something different next time!



Remember, that being thankful for something includes not wasting it. So everytime we leave the last few bites in our plate, or the last few sips of water in our glass, this is like showing that we don't really care about food and drink and don't consider them to be something valuable....it is the opposite of giving thanks!

Also, remember that this little bit of food or drink could be enough to save the life of a starving person, and there are many, many children in the world who work hard all day just to earn the equivalent of these few bites and sips that you have so carelessly left behind. Hence cleaning your plate is the way of the Prophet ﷺ, the way that Allah ﷻ loves, and a way to thank Him ﷻ for the blessing of food and drink.