

Barakah, or Lasting Abundance October 31, 2025

walaw anna ahla l-qurā āmanū wa-ttaqaw lafataḥnā ‘alayhim barakātim minas-samāi wal-arḍ Surah al-A’raf (7:96)

Had the people of those towns believed and been God-conscious, We would certainly have opened up to them the barakah from the heavens and the earth.

Since the beginning of time, regardless of their faith or religion, humankind has believed in barakah and universally associated the concept barakah with the Divine. Barakah roughly translates as blessings, but it is so much more than that. It is a Divine favor that makes good things endure and grow, yield more benefit than anticipated. In other words, it is lasting, amplifying goodness in effort, wealth, relationship, knowledge or time.

In material matters, barakah appears as lasting abundance; your resources endure and never run out. As an example, barakah in your money is observed when you find yourself constantly spending on necessities, yet never sensing any loss. A modest income covers many needs and even allows generosity. Barakah in your food manifests when you thought that the food would be insufficient for your guest, but at the end you find that not only did it suffice, but you had leftovers. Barakah in time works in a similar way. If you have barakah in your time, you feel time is stretched and find yourself unusually productive and able to accomplish many things in a short amount of time. Barakah in knowledge is that it benefits many people beyond the original learner. Barakah in a relationship means a connection brings lasting peace, mutual growth, trust, love and respect, where forgiveness outpaces resentment. Barakah is not only for material examples but also encompasses spiritual life. Barakah in spiritual life manifests itself as a steady sense of contentment, a feeling of solace and peace that lasts, that continues.

With advancements in technology, humankind has developed an insatiable desire to acquire more of everything, often prioritizing quantity over quality and sustainability. Technological progress has led to massive gains in production. Crop yields have increased, and even the genetics of foods have been altered to make them look brighter and bigger, and new fruits and vegetables have appeared in the market. While outwardly everything seems more and better, the barakah (divine blessing and sustained goodness) has begun to disappear.

As humankind increasingly placed trust in their own capability rather than in God (Allah), they simultaneously lost this divine gift. Despite supposed abundance, we are facing a puzzling contradiction: people are not better off. The number of people who are hungry and starving is increasing. Except for a small minority, many people are falling into poverty and can no longer afford to adequately feed their families. The relentless pursuit of infinite material growth has led to severe environmental degradation. We observe deforestation, as well as

water and air pollution. While we produce more, we cannot have enough for everyone. These are all the signs of the loss of barakah. There is no abundance and lasting presence and this is exactly what we have lost.

We have also lost the barakah of time. Often we hear people saying that they don't have enough time, and this sentiment is widely shared. Despite our efforts, we always seem to feel like something is missing, and we often wish we had more time to complete our tasks. This is quite a contradiction: while technology is advancing to save us time, it also seems to be taking that time away from us.

With tasks requiring less time to complete, one would presume we would have more time. Yet, many of us struggle to find it. Rasulallah (saws) said that, "the hour will not come until time shrinks." He said, "A year will feel like a month, a month will feel like a week, a week will feel like a day, a day will feel like just an hour, the hour will feel like a burning bush, or like the flare of a fire." Everything goes by so quickly that we don't feel the barakah, the lasting abundance, in time. It is obvious that we have more of everything: more food, more time, and more opportunities in quantity, but we do not have material or spiritual barakah.

Blessings (*Barakat*) are virtually an advance reward given in this world to those who are the sincere servants of Allah-u Ta'ala. The receivers of barakah never feel that they are short of anything. They always have time to complete their obligations; they have rewarding and lasting relationships, and experience spiritual peace and growth. How do we bring barakah to both our material and spiritual lives?

In Surah Al A'raf (verse 96), barakah is associated with faith. Allah says: "Had the people of those towns believed and been God-conscious, We would certainly have opened up to them the barakah from the heavens and the earth." The barakah here is not limited to food or nourishment, but it also encompasses Divine grace. It is one of the most explicit statements in the Quran linking faith to lasting grace, as opposed to temporal material gain.

In Surah Saba (34:39), barakah is associated with spending for Allah's sake: "Say, whatever you spend for Allah's sake He will compensate it..." And Rasulallah (saws) said: "He who does a good deed will have ten times that amount of blessing or more." Both the verse and the hadith confirm spending for God's sake is not a loss, but an investment.

In Surah Al Maidah, barakah is associated with observing Allah's commands and chastising the people of the book for losing the barakah and the Divine favor for not observing revelations sent to them. In 5:66, Allah says: "If they had observed the Torah and the Gospel and that which was revealed unto them from their Lord, they would surely have been nourished from above them and from beneath their feet."

In Surah Hud, barakah is associated with istighfar, seeking forgiveness. In verse 11:52, Allah says: "Oh my people! Ask forgiveness of your Lord, then turn unto Him repentant; He will cause the sky to rain abundance on you and will add strength to your strength."

In Surah Ibrahim, barakah is associated with gratitude. In verse 14:7, Allah says: "If you show gratitude, I will give you more and more, even more than you deserve." Also loss of

barakah is associated with ungratefulness. He says, “If you are thankless, my punishment will be severe indeed!”

The concept of barakah is lost with the ambition of endless material growth, but Allah shows the way for the faithful as to how to receive this beautiful gift in our Book, and the traditions of the Prophet (saws). Strengthen our faith in the midst of adversities by trusting in Allah. May we spend for His sake and help those who are in need, obeying Allah’s commands by doing what He asks us to do and not doing what He does not want us to do. Let us seek forgiveness and repentance. Last but not the least, let us be aware of the blessings around us and may we show our gratitude.

Yurdaer Al Latif Al Jerrahi