
People of this country...; for the signal and manifold mercies, and the favorable interpositions of His Providence...

President Lincoln, Nov. 1863: a national Day of Thanksgiving and Praise.

“The year that is drawing toward its close has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the Source from which they come, others have been added which are of so extraordinary a nature that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever-watchful providence of Almighty God. . . . No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, Who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy...”

5 grains of corn... (1623)

As Governor Bradford explained:

“It came without either wind or thunder or any violence, and by degrees in abundance, as that ye earth was thoroughly wet and soaked therewith, which did so apparently revive and quicken ye decayed corn and other fruits as was wonderful to see, and made ye Indians astonished to behold; and afterwards the Lord sent them such seasonable showers, with interchange of fair warm weather as, through His blessing, caused a fruitful and liberal harvest, to their no small comfort and rejoicing.”

Thanksgiving in America

Psalm 107

November 25, 2012

Psalm 107:1, 8-9, 22 Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever... Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men! For He satisfies the longing soul, and fills the hungry soul with goodness... Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare His works with rejoicing.

God is our Creator--we owe our very life to Him.

God is our Redeemer--we owe our salvation to Him.

God is our Deliverer, even when we are our own worst enemy

God is our Provider--we owe our sustenance to His hand of providence.

God is our Lord--we are wise indeed, to obey Him.

God is our Sanctifier - He is changing us to be like His Son.

1621; the Mayflower Compact

- “*In the Name of God*”
- “*For the Glory of God and the Advancement of the Christian Faith.*”

“Being thus arived in a good harbor and brought safe to land, they fell upon their knees & blessed ye God of heaven who had brought them over ye vast & furious ocean, and delivered them from all ye periles & miseries therof, againe to set their feete on ye firme and stable earth, their proper elemente... What could now sustain them but the Spirit of God and His grace?”

The “first” American Thanksgiving, December 1621

Edward Winslow wrote: “Our harvest being gotten in, our governor sent four men on fowling (turkey hunting), so that we might after a special manner rejoice together after we had gathered the fruit of our labors.”¹⁰

- Winslow expressed their thanksgiving: “God be praised, we had a good increase of corn... by the goodness of God, we are far from want...”¹¹

■ The War for Independence: 1776-1783

“Forasmuch as it is the indispensable duty of all men to adore the superintending Providence of Almighty God; to acknowledge with gratitude their obligation to Him for benefits received and to implore such further blessing as they stand in need of; and it having pleased Him in His abundant mercy not only to continue to us the innumerable bounties of His common Providence... It is therefore recommended to the legislative or executive powers of these United States, to set apart Thursday, the eighteenth day of December next, for the solemn thanksgiving and praise:

- That with one heart and one voice the good people may express the grateful feelings of their hearts, and consecrate themselves to the service of their Divine Benefactor; and that together with their sincere acknowledgements and offerings, they may join the penitent confession of their manifold sins, whereby they had forfeited every favour, and their humble and earnest supplication that it may please

God, through the merits of Jesus Christ, mercifully to forgive and blot them out of remembrance;...

- That it may please Him, to prosper the trade and manufactures of the people, and the labour of the husbandman, that our land may yet yield its increase; to take school and seminaries of education, so necessary for cultivating the principles of true liberty, virtue and piety, under His nurturing hand, and to prosper the means of religion for the promotion and enlargement of that kingdom which consisteth “in righteous, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.”¹⁵

Proclamation of Thanksgiving: as a new nation!

- President George Washington issued the first federal Thanksgiving proclamation on October 3, 1789:

Whereas it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the Providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor; and

Whereas both Houses of Congress have by their joint
 - Committee requested me ‘to recommend to the People of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God, especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness;’
 - Now, therefore, I do recommend and assign Thursday, the twenty-sixth day of November next, to be devoted by the People of these United States to the service of that great and glorious Being, who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be;
 - That we may then all unite in rendering unto Him our sincere and humble thanks, for His kind care and protection of the
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