

THE BIBLE VIEW

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Volume: 885 November 21, 2022

Theme: Thanksgiving

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First Thanksgiving Proclamation

William Bradford, Governor of the First American Colony, 1623

Inasmuch as the great Father has given us this year an abundant harvest of Indian corn, wheat, peas, beans, squashes, and garden vegetables, and has made the forests abound with game and the sea with fish and clams, and inasmuch as he has protected us from the ravages of the savages, has spared us from pestilence and disease, has granted us the freedom to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience.

Now I, your magistrate, do proclaim that all ye Pilgrims, with your wives and ye little ones, do gather at ye meeting house, on ye hill, between the hours of 9 and 12 in the day time, on Thursday, November 29th, of the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred and twenty-three and the third year since ye Pilgrims landed on ye Pilgrim Rock, there to listen to ye pastor and render thanksgiving to ye Almighty God for all His blessings.

*William Bradford
Ye Governor of Ye Colony*

“Thanksgiving is a time when the world gets to see just how blessed and how workable the Christian system is. The emphasis is not on giving or buying, but on being thankful and expressing that appreciation to God and to one another.”

— John Clayton

1789 Thanksgiving Proclamation

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;

WHEREAS, Both the 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 and 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 26th day of November next, to be devoted by the people of these 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 people of this country previous to their becoming a nation; for the signal and manifold mercies and the favorable interpositions of His providence in the course and conclusion of the late war; for the great degree of tranquility, union, and plenty which we have since enjoyed; for the peaceable and rational manner in which we have been enabled to establish constitutions of government for our safety and happiness, and particularly the national one now lately instituted for the civil and religious liberty with which we are blessed, and the means we have of acquiring and diffusing useful knowledge; and, in general, for all the great and various favors which He has been pleased to confer upon us.

And also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations and beseech Him to pardon our national and other transgressions; to enable us all, whether in public or private stations, to perform our several and relative duties properly and punctually; to render our National Government a blessing to all the people by constantly being a Government of wise, just, and constitutional laws, discreetly and faithfully executed and obeyed; to protect and guide all sovereigns and nations (especially such as have shown kindness to us), and to bless them with good governments, peace, and concord; to promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, and the increase of science among them and us; and, generally to grant unto all mankind such a degree of temporal prosperity as He alone knows to be best.

George Washington - October 3, 1789

“The worship most acceptable to God comes from a thankful and cheerful heart.”

— Plutarch

In Everything, Give Thanks!

Author Unknown

‘Mid sunshine, cloud, or stormy days,
When hope abounds, or care dismays,
When trials press and toils increase
Let not thy faith in God decrease —
“In everything, give thanks...”

All things we know shall work for good,
Nor would we change them if we could;
 'Tis well if only He command;
 His promise will ever stand —
 “In everything, give thanks....”

He satisfies the longing heart,
He thwarts the tempter's cruel dart,
With goodness fills the hungry soul,
And helps us sing when billows roll.
 “In everything, give thanks....”

“In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” — 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Mother of Thanksgiving

Author Unknown

President George Washington proclaimed the national observance of Thanksgiving Day on Thursday, November 26, 1789. After a few years, presidential proclamations lapsed. Although most New England communities continued the observance faithfully, they did not always celebrate at the same time. In other parts of the country, the holiday was frequently overlooked altogether. Nobody appeared to care very much whether the day was observed except a woman named Sarah Josepha Buell Hale.

Mrs. Hale was a widow with a will. When her husband died, leaving her with five children, she went to work. This took several varieties of courage, for Mrs. Hale was a great lady of an old New England family of important ladies and gentlemen. Several of her peers did not approve of a lady working beyond her home. Others were especially outraged at the nature of their kinswoman's job. Mrs. Hale became editor of the periodical “The Ladies' Magazine.”

Mrs. Hale had a rare editorial writing gift. She began an editorial campaign for a national set observance of Thanksgiving Day. For twenty years, she wrote scores of editorials on the subject. Men, as well as women, read them.

One man who read them was Abraham Lincoln. In 1864, he declared that thereafter, by annual presidential proclamation, the last Thursday in November should be a national Thanksgiving Day. Since then, every president has followed his suggestion.

After President Lincoln acted, Mrs. Hale was called “Mother of Thanksgiving,” a title by which she deserves to be remembered.

“Count your blessings, not your problems.” — B. B.

“You Should Be Thankful.”

Author Unknown

A train was crowded, and many were standing in the aisles and on the platforms. They took that opportunity to express themselves by complaining to the railway company. Some moaned they had been standing for three hours.

At a station, others came aboard, one of whom was an invalid and had to be carried on. As the passengers made room for him, one repeated his complaint, “Yes, we’ve been standing here for three hours.”

The invalid looked at him and quietly said, “You are fortunate.”

They were tired, but the invalid’s rebuke changed hearts. The complaining stopped, and many silently counted their blessings.

**“Count your blessings, name them one by one,
Count your blessings, see what God hath done...”**

Words from the hymn “Count Your Blessings, by Johnson Oatman