



The Family Report

Loving God... Loving You...

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Origins of Thanksgiving



Even though most of us have probably put Thursday's "feast" out of our minds, I didn't want to let the opportunity pass to share a little Thanksgiving history lesson with every one. The following article was written by Mr. David Barton (of WallBuilders) and published on www.christiananswers.net. You may follow their link to get to this article as well: <http://www.christiananswers.net/q-wall/wal-g007.html>.



The Pilgrims left Plymouth, England, on September 6, 1620. Their destination? The New World. Although filled with uncertainty and peril, it offered both civil and religious liberty.

For over two months, the 102 passengers braved the harsh elements of a vast storm-tossed sea. Finally, with firm purpose and a reliance of Divine Providence, the cry of "Land!" was heard.

Arriving in Massachusetts in late November, the Pilgrims sought a suitable landing place. On December 11, just before disembarking at Plymouth

Rock, they signed the "Mayflower Compact" - America's first document of civil government and the first to introduce self-government.

After a prayer service, the Pilgrims began building hasty shelters. However, unprepared for the starvation and sickness of a harsh New England winter, nearly half died before spring. Yet, persevering in prayer, and assisted by helpful Indians, they reaped a bountiful harvest the following summer.

The grateful Pilgrims then declared a three-day feast, starting on December 13, 1621, to thank God and to celebrate with their Indian friends. While this was not the first Thanksgiving in America (thanksgiving services were held in Virginia as early as 1607), it was America's first Thanksgiving Festival.

Pilgrim Edward Winslow described the Pilgrims' Thanksgiving in these words:

"Our harvest being gotten in, our Governor sent four men on fowling [bird hunting] so that we might, after a special manner, rejoice together after we had gathered the fruit of our labors. They four in one day killed as much fowl as... served the company almost a week... Many of the Indians [came] amongst us and...their greatest King, Mas-

sasoit, with some ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted; and they went out and killed five deer, which they brought... And although it be not always so plentiful as it was at this time with us, yet BY THE GOODNESS OF GOD WE ARE...FAR FROM WANT."

IN 1789, following a proclamation issued by President George Washington, America celebrated its first Day of Thanksgiving to God under its new constitution. That same year, the Protestant Episcopal Church, of which President Washington was a member, announced that the first Thursday in November would become its regular day for giving thanks, "unless another day be appointed by the civil authorities." Yet, despite these early national proclamations, official Thanksgiving observances usually occurred only at the State level.

Much of the credit for the adoption of a later ANNUAL national Thanksgiving Day may be attributed to Mrs. Sarah Joseph Hale, the editor of *Godey's Lady's Book*. For thirty years, she promoted the idea of a national Thanksgiving Day, contacting President after President until President Abraham Lincoln responded in 1863 by setting

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aside the last Thursday of November as a national Day of Thanksgiving. Over the next seventy-five years, Presidents followed Lincoln's precedent, annually declaring a national Thanksgiving Day. Then, in 1941, Congress *permanently* established the fourth Thursday of each November as a national holiday.

Lincoln's original 1863 Thanksgiving Proclamation came –spiritually speaking– at a pivotal point in his life. During the first week of July of that year, the Battle of Gettysburg occurred, result-

ing in the loss of some 60,000 American lives. Four months later in November, Lincoln delivered his famous "Gettysburg Address." It was while Lincoln was walking among the thousands of graves there at Gettysburg that he committed his life to Christ. As he explained to a friend:

"When I left Springfield [to assume the Presidency] I asked the people to pray for me. I was not a Christian. When I buried my son, the severest trial of my life, I was not a Christian. But when I went to Gettysburg

and saw the graves of thousands of our soldiers, I then and there consecrated myself to Christ."

As Americans celebrate Thanksgiving each year, we hope they will retain the original gratefulness to God displayed by the Pilgrims and many other founding fathers, and remember that it is to those early and courageous Pilgrims that we owe not only the traditional Thanksgiving holiday but also the concepts of self-government, the "hard-work" ethic, self-reliant communities, and devout religious faith.

President Lincoln's 1863 Proclamation of Thanksgiving

(from WallBuilders, also posted on www.christiananswers.net)

The year that is drawing toward its close has been filled with the blessings of fruitful years 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 can not fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever-watchful providence of Almighty God.

In the midst of a civil war of unequalled magnitude and severity, which has sometimes seemed to foreign states to invite and provoke their aggression, peace has been preserved with all nations, order has been maintained, the laws have been respected and obeyed, and harmony has prevailed everywhere, except in the theater of military conflict, while that theater has been greatly contracted by the advancing armies and navies of the Union.

Needful diversions of wealth and of strength from the field of the peaceful industry to the national defense have not arrested the plow, the shuttle, or the ship; the ax has enlarged the borders of our settlements, and the mines, as well of iron and coal as of the precious metals, have yielded even more abundantly than theretofore. Population has steadily increased notwithstanding the waste that has been made in the camp, the siege, and the battlefield, and the country, rejoicing in the consciousness of augmented strength and vigor, is permitted to expect continuance of years with large increase of freedom.

No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are gracious gifts of the Most High God, who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy.

It has seemed to me fit and proper that they should be solemnly, reverently, and gratefully acknowledged, as with one heart and one voice, by the whole American people. I do therefore invite my fellow-citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next as a day of thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens. And I recommend to them that while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings they do also, with humble patience for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners, or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it, as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes, to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility, and union.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

[Signed]

Prayer Report

We have a wonderful privilege and honor to go to God in prayer. As you pray, please remember the following people:

Carolyn and Edward, Vicki's parents, are dealing with several health issues.

Keith, Coeta's brother, is sick. Also, for **Coeta**. Please remember **Coeta's family** as they mourn the passing of her brother.

Ollie A., Coeta's friend, is battling cancer.

Nita M. is having eye problems.

Vince, Stacy's brother, has scar tissue on his brain. Also, for his wife who is recovering from surgery.

Cathy M. is suffering from emphysema due to smoking cigarettes.

Shirley, Luther's daughter, is suffering from lupus. She recently had to have surgery on her head to repair a shunt which drains fluid off of her brain.

Ladonna and Lauren, both Henry's friends, are suffering from cancer. Lauren is a freshman in high school and is only 15 years old.

Kevin, Randy's brother, is battling an addiction to drugs.

Olivia M. has cancer. She is only 5 years old.

Gary D.'s father is recovering from a stroke.

Fay B. is currently undergoing treatment for cancer.

Randy M. is dealing with heart trouble.

Frieda D. also is suffering from heart problems.

Dan, Randy's co-worker, recently had a stroke.

Brenda, Stacy's cousin, is going through a divorce. She has two children.

Johnny, Rick's brother, is serving in Iraq.

Ray, Wes's friend, suffered a stroke.

Karen, Wes's co-worker, has cancer.

Grant T., Randy's nephew, was recently diagnosed with Crohn's disease.

We want to always remember the entire **Tambov congregation** in our prayers. Let us pray that they will have strong leadership.

Nellie, Pat's mom, is suffering from a blockage in her neck.

Frank, Jean's stepdad, has a spot on his lung.

Dan and Denise, neighbors of Todd and Alicia, are currently separated.

Leland D. is recovering from a stroke.

James O. is in the last stages of brain cancer.

Gary's mother is suffering from brittle bones

Pearlie T., Wes's co-worker, is suffering from seizures.

Wayne is recovering from surgery. Also, **Justin**, Wayne's son, will be going to Iraq in March.

Additionally, remember **Mike and Jim C.**, **Beth and Michael** (friends of Kat and Don), **W.D.** (Randy's neighbor), **Pam** (Stacy's sister), **Ann** (Wayne's mom), **Garcia's father**, **Sarah** (Jeff and Lona's neighbor), **Don**

(Randy's brother), **Clara** (Paulette's mom), and **Val V.**

Alma K. recently had knee replacement surgery. She will have surgery on her other knee in a few weeks. Also, her sister, **Millie**, was diagnosed with cancer.

Jimmy V., who had suffered with bouts of depression, committed suicide. Please keep his family in your prayers during this trying and emotional time.

Greg, Donna's son, is suffering from an autoimmune disease.

Mike and Jenna, friends of Aaron and Jessie, are expecting a child. Pray for a healthy pregnancy and healthy baby.

Greta is recovering from recent surgery. Also, pray for her as she is dealing with a personal situation.

Grant B., from St. Louis, is suffering from undiagnosed stomach problems.

We don't want to forget to pray for the **Haysville congregation**.

Let us remember our upcoming "**Jesus Celebration**" in prayer. Hopefully lives can be touched and souls can be saved as a result of this work.

We also don't want to forget to thank God and praise Him for all of His wonderful blessings.

Several people in our congregation have recently received job promotions and advancements.

Praise God!!!

Our Vision

Community

It is our vision to become an active member of our immediate community; to provide hope, help, love, acceptance, and spiritual encouragement.

Growth

It is our vision to welcome new people into the fold, and help them discover the gifts and talents that God gave them to be used in proclaiming Christ to a lost and dying world.

Faithful to God's Word

It is our vision to remain faithful to God's word, to place Christ first in everything we do, and to allow ourselves to be led only by His Word and Holy Spirit.

Concern for Others

It is our vision to become intimately aware of the needs of our congregation and community and to actively try to meet those needs.

Evangelism (Reaching the Lost)

It is our vision to focus intently on ways to reach the lost in our local community and in foreign lands, and to send missionaries from the body on short and long term mission projects.

Leadership

It is our vision to have scriptural leadership; to have elders, deacons, and teachers within the next two years.

Family Atmosphere/Relationships

It is our vision to maintain and promote a true family environment where all may feel they belong and everyone knows each other's name.

Elbows and Ego

"There are no elbows in the afterlife, according to an illustration of an anonymous origin I have used numerous times to make clear the insanity of selfishness. Imagine you are in the center of a Great Hall in hell and spread before you is a banquet table loaded with a veritable cornucopia of earthly delights— a feast. To your dismay, however, the people seated at the table are emaciated, literally starving to death. You are wondering what could possibly warrant such madness, until the answer becomes quite clear. These people have no elbows! They can grab the food, but they can't get it to their mouths.

Now imagine yourself in a Great Hall in Heaven among the feasting and fellowship of people who are obviously well-fed and happy. Here the sounds of singing and laughter fill the room, and here, too, you notice that these people do not have elbows. The difference is that here the people are feeding each other and the next tasty morsel is only the arm's length of a friend away."

Mayhall, C.W. (2007). From the Editor. *Christian Research Journal*. 30(4). p. 3

*Please join us in
worshipping God!!!*

*Sunday morning: 10 am
Wednesday evening: 7 pm*

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www.gods bible.org