

Our Sacrifice of Thanksgiving

S#1.

Text : **Lev. 7: 11-21 ; Psa. 100: 1-5**

A. We are approaching the American holiday known as Thanksgiving.

S#2.

1. The first Thanksgiving day celebrated in America in the Fall of 1621.
2. It was celebrated after the custom the Pilgrims brought with them from England.
 - a. Up until 1536 England had 95 church holidays plus 52 Sundays. (**147 .. 40%**)
 - b. After 1536 the number of church holidays was reduced to 27. (**79 .. 21%**)
 - c. The Puritan Pilgrims were against ALL religious holidays. (*incl. Christmas and Easter*)
3. They called for special days of “*thanksgiving*” after certain “providential” events.

B. The puritans moved to Holland to avoid joining the church of England.

1. The society in Holland was so worldly they decided to go to the colonies instead.
2. Their goal was to establish a place where worldliness would not be tolerated.
3. 41 of those one the Mayflower were from the congregation of Puritans.
 - a. The Puritans referred to themselves as “saints.”
 - b. The other passengers were called outsiders.
 - c. The fight for survival brought them together.

C. They set sail from Plymouth Harbor, England on September 9 1620.

S#3.

1. They started on a ship named “Speedwell” which was traveling with the Mayflower.
 - a. They were forced to return to harbor because the Speedwell was leaking.
 - b. Passengers and cargo from both ships were crammed into the one, the Mayflower.
2. There were 102 passenger and approx.. 30 crew members. (*both ships in one*)
3. The Mayflower was only 80 to 90 feet long x 24 ft. wide. (*deck was 10 ft. longer*)

D. The delay put their journey into the peak of the storm season.

1. The overcrowded ship and bad weather made for an uncomfortable journey.
2. For example :

During a fierce storm, an indentured servant named John Howland had come topside for fresh air when the ship rolled violently, casting him into the raging sea. He sank well beneath the waves. Such a fate almost certainly meant death by drowning. Yet, somehow, Howland had managed to grab a halyard on his way overboard, and desperately clung to it long enough for the crew to haul him back to safety.

3. Point of interest :

Howland not only made it to America and worked off his indenture, but married a pretty young woman in the new colony named Elizabeth Tilley. They produced ten children, who begat 88 grandchildren, from whom an estimated two million Americans descended over the next four centuries. These included Ralph Waldo Emerson, Joseph Smith, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Humphrey Bogart, Chevy Chase, and both Presidents Bush.

E. When the Mayflower arrived the passengers stayed on board for months.

1. At an average speed of 2 mph the trip took 66 days.
2. Arrived in Cape Cod on November 9, 1620 and anchored in Provincetown Harbor
3. They spent to winter on the ship, but only 53 survived.

F. They formed an alliance with the Wampanoag Indians

1. A freed Indian slave they called Squanto (Tisquantum) acted as their translator.
2. The Indians helped them and allowed them to stay as allies against a rival tribe.

G. As the second winter approached they had shelter and enough food to last. S#4.

1. Feeling they had been providentially blessed they declared a time of Thanksgiving.
2. 90 of the Indians joined them bringing 5 deer and they feasted for 3 days.
3. However, this did not become an annual occurrence. (*To thank God, not Indians*)

H. President George Washington declared a day of Thanksgiving.

1. I read this to demonstrate that our country has not always been a heathen nation.
2. Thanksgiving Proclamation .. [New York, 3 October 1789]

By the President of the United States of America, a 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—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 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 which we experienced in the course and conclusion

of the late war—for the great degree of tranquillity, 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 hath 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 shewn kindness unto us) and to bless them with good government, peace, and concord—To promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, and the encrease 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.

Given under my hand at the City of New-York the third day of October in the year of our Lord 1789.

Go: Washington

I. Thanksgiving was made a permanent holiday by President Lincoln

Washington, D.C.,
October 3, 1863

By the President of the United States of America.

A Proclamation.

The year that is drawing towards 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. ... They are the 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,

J. Thanksgiving became an annual celebration on the 4th Thursday of Nov. in 1941

I. God's faithful people have always been a grateful people.**S#5.**

- A. **Gen 9:20** .. The first thing Noah did when he got out of the ark was to thank God
- B. Abraham's wanderings could be traced by the altars he left behind.
- C. When God delivered Israel from the Egyptian army
 - 1. **Exod 15; 1-18** .. Moses sang a song of thanks and praise
 - 2. **Exod 15; 21** .. Miriam led the women in thanksgiving and praise
- D. David wrote many psalms of thanksgiving.

II. The first time the word "thanksgiving" appears is in our text.**S#6.**

- A. **Lev. 7: 12-13** – If he offers it by way of thanksgiving, then along with the sacrifice of thanksgiving he shall offer unleavened cakes mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers spread with oil, and cakes of well stirred fine flour mixed with oil. **13** 'With the sacrifice of his peace offerings for thanksgiving, he shall present his offering with cakes of leavened bread. **S#7.**
- B. God ordained a sacrifice as the way His people were to thank Him. **S#8.**
 - 1. Gratitude is an attitude of heart so it cannot be ordered.
 - 2. The sacrifice of peace and of thanksgiving are voluntarily given ... not commanded.

Lev. 7: 16 – But if (*since*) the sacrifice of his offering is a votive or a freewill offering, it shall be eaten on the day that he offers his sacrifice, and on the next day what is left of it may be eaten;
- C. There were many kinds of offerings required, but "thank offering" is the last one.
 - 1. Burnt offering ... symbolic of total surrender ... whole
 - 2. Grain offering ... often given to the priests (*grain products with oil, but no leaven*)
 - 3. Sin offering ... for sinfulness in general and specific sins
 - 4. Guilt offering ... unintentional sins, refusal to testify in a trial
 - 5. Wave offering ... payment to priests
 - 6. Peace offering ... restore relationship with God (voluntary)
 - 7. Thank offering ... voluntarily express gratitude

S#9.**III. No matter what the sacrifice God was very strict about HOW it was offered.**

- A. Anyone in high office must demand his office be respected

B. God was very quick to teach that lesson to the Israelites.

1. **Lev. 10: 1** – Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective **S#10.** firepans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it and offered strange fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them. **2** And fire came out from the presence of the Lord and consumed them, and they died before the Lord. **3** Then Moses said to Aaron, "It is what the Lord spoke, saying, 'By those who come near Me I will be treated as holy, And before all the people I will be honored.'" So Aaron, therefore, kept silent.
2. Many people today consider that an unfair punishment.
 - a. "Fire is fire" no matter where one gets it.
 - b. They were trying to do a good thing to worship God.
3. When the altar was built Aaron had been instructed to be the one to burn the incense. **Exod. 30: 7** – You shall put this altar in front of the veil that is near the ark of **S#11.** the testimony, in front of the mercy seat that is over the ark of the testimony, where I will meet with you. **7** Aaron shall burn fragrant incense on it; he shall burn it every morning when he trims the lamps. **8** When Aaron trims the lamps at twilight, he shall burn incense. There shall be perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations. **9** You shall not offer any strange incense on this altar, or burnt offering or meal offering; and you shall not pour out a drink offering on it.
4. Aaron was told to get fire from the sacred altar for the burning of incense **Lev. 16: 12** – He shall take a firepan full of coals of fire from upon the altar **S#12.** before the Lord and two handfuls of finely ground sweet incense, and bring it inside the veil.
5. Even in figures of the eternal, the fire is taken from the altar. **Rev. 8: 5** – Then the angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar, and threw it to the earth; and there followed peals of thunder and sound
6. Neither God nor Moses made a list of places NOT to get the fire. Specific instructions eliminated ALL else.

C. We live in an era when, like Nadab & Abihu, man has lost the proper attitude toward God.. **S#13.**

1. **Lev. 10: 3** – Then Moses said to Aaron, "It is what the Lord spoke, saying, 'By those who come near Me I will be treated as holy, And before all the people I will be honored.'
2. It was not specifically the fire that was the big deal, *it was their attitude / heart.*
3. Men today have the same attitude as Nadab & Abihu,
 - a. They make the worship what THEY enjoy.

- b. One church on the radio even advertises having the most entertaining assembly.

S#14.

IV. God was, is, and always will be interested in the hearts of the worshippers.

- A. **Eph. 5: 19** – but be filled with the Spirit, **19** speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; **20** always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; **21** and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ. (I will be treated as holy,) S#15.

- B. Any form of worship that is not from the heart does not treat God as holy. S#16

Matt. 15: 8 –This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far away from Me.

9 – But in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrine the precepts of men.

S#17.

- C. As we approach God in Thanksgiving, let us make sure we do it from the heart.

1. **Heb. 13: 15** – Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name. **16** And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

2. Jesus gave us more to be thankful for than anyone who ever lived.

a. We do not butcher lambs. **JESUS is our once for all sacrifice.**

b. We present our hearts as living sacrifices.

- D. Those of the first centuries of America had a song the called,
“The national anthem of the church.”

1. Some would shout out ... “Let’s sing the old 100.”

2. They would then sing **Psalm 100** :

S#18.

Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth. **2** Serve the Lord with gladness;
Come before Him with joyful singing. **3** Know that the Lord Himself is God;
It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and
the sheep of His pasture.

4 Enter His gates with thanksgiving And His courts with praise.
Give thanks to Him, bless His name. **5** For the Lord is good;
His lovingkindness is everlasting And His faithfulness to all generations.

INVITATION :

S#19. ... Communion slide

Lesson Text :**Leviticus 7: 11-21**

Now this is the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings which shall be presented to the Lord. 12 'If he offers it by way of thanksgiving, then along with the sacrifice of thanksgiving he shall offer unleavened cakes mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers spread with oil, and cakes of well stirred fine flour mixed with oil. 13 'With the sacrifice of his peace offerings for thanksgiving, he shall present his offering with cakes of leavened bread. 14 'Of this he shall present one of every offering as a contribution to the Lord; it shall belong to the priest who sprinkles the blood of the peace offerings.

15 ' Now as for the flesh of the sacrifice of his thanksgiving peace offerings, it shall be eaten on the day of his offering; he shall not leave any of it over until morning. 16 'But if the sacrifice of his offering is a votive or a freewill offering, it shall be eaten on the day that he offers his sacrifice, and on the next day what is left of it may be eaten; 17 but what is left over from the flesh of the sacrifice on the third day shall be burned with fire. 18 'So if any of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offerings should ever be eaten on the third day, he who offers it will not be accepted, and it will not be reckoned to his benefit. It shall be an offensive thing, and the person who eats of it will bear his own iniquity.

19 'Also the flesh that touches anything unclean shall not be eaten; it shall be burned with fire. As for other flesh, anyone who is clean may eat such flesh. 20 ' But the person who eats the flesh of the sacrifice of peace offerings which belong to the Lord, in his uncleanness, that person shall be cut off from his people. 21 ' When anyone touches anything unclean, whether human uncleanness, or an unclean animal, or any unclean detestable thing, and eats of the flesh of the sacrifice of peace offerings which belong to the Lord, that person shall be cut off from his people.'"

Psalms 100

Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth. 2 Serve the Lord with gladness; Come before Him with joyful singing. 3 Know that the Lord Himself is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.

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Thanksgiving Proclamation

[New York, 3 October 1789]

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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 shewn kindness unto us) and to bless them with good government, peace, and concord—To promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, and the encrease 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.

Given under my hand at the City of New-York the third day of October in the year of our Lord 1789.

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Washington, D.C.,
October 3, 1863

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

Done at the City of Washington, this Third day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the Independence of the United States the Eighty-eighth.

By the President: Abraham Lincoln

William H. Seward,
Secretary of State