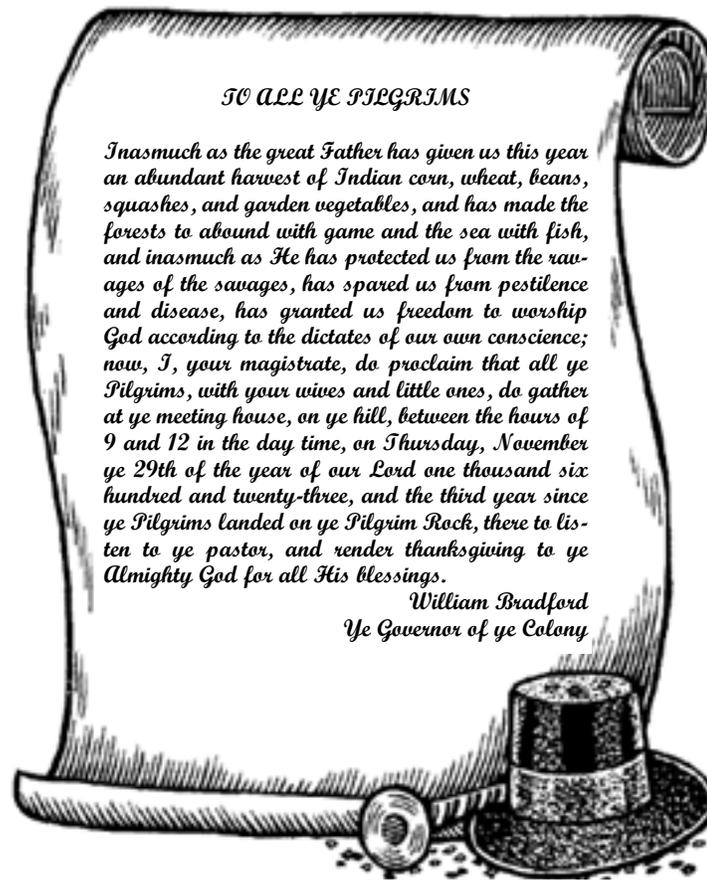


# Thanksgiving in America



The First Thanksgiving, reproduction of an oil painting by J.L.G. Ferris, early 20th century.

For over three centuries, on a day in the fall of each year, most of the inhabitants of the United States of America cease all work, close and shutter their business establishments, abandon farm work except necessary chores; and gather in family homes to join in a day of friendship, the point of which is the eating of a large meal called: "Thanksgiving dinner."

Nowhere in all the rest of the world is there quite such a day. Oh yes, many nations and religions have "holidays," some have scores of them through the year, but only in the United States is a "Thanksgiving Day" commanded by the civil authorities; even by a Presidential Proclamation, sanctioned and urged by the church, and participated in by such a large percentage of the populace.

And this proclaimed day does not celebrate some victory in war, nor a momentous event of history, nor does it honor a long dead national hero; it has but one declared purpose, TO GIVE THANKS UNTO GOD!

This is one national holiday which the secret and open antichrist enemies of America and Christendom have been unable to change or subvert to another purpose. Although they may hate and malign the Christian religion and the United States of America, they seem to have their mouths "stopped" from criticism of this NATIONAL HOLY DAY!

Thanksgiving cannot be compared to the more religious "Christmas," which has become mostly an organ for the manifestation of commercial ingenuity and the selling of cheap goods at high prices. Christmas weeks (sometimes months) long "season," participated in by the unbeliever and antichrist for "fun and profit." No such degrading motives can be

ascribed to those who observe "Thanksgiving Day." In fact, Thanksgiving Day seems to demand quietness, and a peace before God such as no other day of the year. It is almost a certainty that in millions of homes in America, where none stop to "thank God," for any meal the other 364 days of the year, someone is bound to be asked to "say grace" at the Thanksgiving table before the eager children and adults pitch in to see how much they can consume of the bounty of the land set before them. And often, those who demonstrate no piety of thanksgiving toward God the rest of the year, either add their thanks, or at least refrain from previous blasphemous utterings. Editors and cloumnists, who are non-religious, or even anti-religious, at all other times, write articles commending the giving to God thanks for the good things in the land. And millions of children, who are never taken to church, participate in a "feast" during which adults bow their heads to say, or hear, "thanksgiving unto God."

Why does "Thanksgiving Day" have such an effect on our people? Why is such a "feast" held in America; sanctioned by both civil and church powers? Why ONLY in America? Just what is this strange and unique ritual in which we participate each year? Is it related only to our Christian heritage? Or is it perhaps older than the Christian doctrines? Let us examine the Bible, and see.

## **Thanksgiving is Christian**

Paul wrote to the Christians at Corinth, thanking them for contributions to his ministry and to the poor saints at Jerusalem, and said to them, among other things: *"Now He that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed*

*sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness; being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, (liberality) which causeth through us thanksgiving to God."*

**2 Cor. 9:10-11**

Their prosperity and abundance in both material goods and Christian righteousness was desired by Paul, because, as he wrote, it brought about "many thanksgivings unto God."

To the Philippian Christians Paul wrote: "*be careful for nothing; (don't worry about anything) but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*"

**Phil. 4:6**

It is not just a case of making God to know your requests, but to do it with "thanksgiving."

The Christians at Colosse were instructed in this same doctrine: "*As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him: rooted and built up in Him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.*"

**Col. 2:6,7**

Their being built up in Jesus, and their establishment in the Christian faith, was to be accompanied with "*thanksgiving.*"

That non-Christian religions are not religions of thanksgiving is indicated by Paul as he immediately followed the above with this warning: "Beware lest any man spoil (rob) you through philosophy and vain deceit, (lies) after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." (verse 8) Only the Christians, of all the worlds people, are

taught, and believe, that giving thanks to God is not only commendable, but their duty.

If any should think that "thanksgiving" is beneath them as men, they should read" John's written account of his vision of the throne of God in **Revelation 7** where the angels "*stood round about the throne.. Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, AND THANKSGIVING, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.*"

**(Rev. 7:11-12; emphasis added)**

From the very brief references in the New Testament above, we can be assured thanksgiving to God is decidedly Christian. Let us now search in the Old Testament, more correctly called the Old Scriptures.

## **God's Law Covenant With Israel**

God gave Israel a divine set of laws, statutes and judgments, as recorded in the Books of Moses in the Bible. The Law Covenant was made with the House of Israel at Mount Sinai. God offered to make Israel "*a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people*" if they would obey His voice and keep His covenant (**Exodus 19:5**). They, as a people, agreed to do so (**vs 8**), so God gave them the ten commandments and other laws, and it was sealed with the blood of a sacrificed bull (**Exodus 24:5-8**), completing the agreement or "*covenant*". and making it binding upon Israel.

In the midst of this Law Covenant we find this, "*Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto Me in the year. Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread: (thou shalt eat unleavened bread*

*seven days, as I commanded thee, (indicating this feast had already been given) in the time appointed of the month Abib; for in it thou camest out from Egypt: and none shall appear before Me empty;) And the feast of the harvest, the first fruits of thy Labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field." (Exodus 23:14-17)*

We are here interested in the third feast, the one at the end of the harvest, but I shall briefly identify the first two for those who may not know them.

## **The Feast of Unleavened Bread**

The first one is familiar to most Bible students as the feast following the passover, here called "**the feast of unleavened bread.**" It was first instituted on the night Israel was delivered from Egypt by the slaying of all the first born of Egypt, and is recorded in **Exodus 12**. The lamb was sacrificed, its blood placed on the door posts of the children of Israel to prevent the angel of death from entering, and they were commanded to eat the flesh of the lamb before morning. They were, also, told to prepare unleavened bread, which was to be eaten for seven days; these seven days being called "the feast of unleavened bread."

God commanded Israel, "*Ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.*" (Ex. 12:14)

The Passover is kept by Christians today by the substitution of Jesus Christ as "*the Lamb of God*" (**John 1:29,36**) who has redeemed us with His Blood "*as a lamb without blemish and without spot*" (**1 Peter 1: 19**), and as "*the Lamb*

*slain from the foundation of the world."* (**Rev. 13:8**) Jesus is called "the Lamb" 26 times in the Book of Revelation. He is called "*our passover*" in **1 Cor. 5:7**, and the "*bread of life*" in **John 6:32-58** and **1 Cor. 10:16-17**. Christians acknowledge Jesus as the passover Lamb and the bread in the ordinance of communion. No others do this.

## **The Feast of The Harvest**

The second feast is less well understood in Christendom; perhaps because of so much preaching against the law by modern ministers. It is called "**the feast of the harvest,**" and the real clue as to what it is follows, "the firstfruits of thy labours." It is very simply the tithe, the tenth of one's income that belongs to God. Yes, God calls it a "**feast,**" but so few sup at its table today, that Christian churches and the entire nation suffer because of it. **Verse 19 (of Exodus 23)** makes it a little plainer, "*The firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the LORD thy God.*"

It is too long to quote here, but you should read **Lev. 23:9-21** on this offering of "the firstfruits of the harvest." This was apparently to be done at the very beginning of the harvest, not at the end. Paul makes it plain in **Hebrews 7** that the tithe is still to be paid, and Malachi tells us a man who does not pay the tithe "*is cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed Me*" (**Malachi 3:9**) He further states that the whole nation suffers when the people do not tithe, and the whole nation will be blessed when the people do!

Further provision in the Law authorizes those who cannot bring the product of the field for the offering, are to convert their gain (harvest) into money and bring that to the priest. For a more complete

understanding of, this subject, write to me for a copy of "The Law of Tithing in Scripture" by Pastor Curtis Clair Ewing. The following is a quote from William Arthur, a Wesleyan Methodist minister of London, England, from his famous lecture on systematic and proportionate giving: "I asked a friend of mine who had adopted the principle of giving a tenth early in life, and whom the prospering Hand of God had raised from humble beginnings to a position of great and valuable influence, if he ever knew a case in which a man set out on the principle of giving a tenth to God, and PERSEVERED IN IT, and then failed in life? He answered "not one."

### **The Feast of The Ingathering — The American Thanksgiving**

The third feast of **Exodus 23**, which Israel was to keep, was called "the feast of the ingathering," and the time of the year was stipulated as "when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field." Where would we find such a "feast" being observed today? Would it be logical to expect it among the children of Israel?

Almost every Christian American knows it was the Pilgrims who began what has now become a national custom, the setting aside of a "day of Thanksgiving." But how few may have any understanding of WHY they did such a thing, or the circumstances which led them to do so. So we shall give our readers an all too brief glimpse. Below is reproduced, from William Bradford's "History of Plymouth Plantation," a portion of the account of the many trials and sorrows of the Pilgrims in Europe BEFORE they came to America:

"I cannot but here take occasion, not only to mention, but greatly to admire ye marvelous providence of God, that notwith-

standing ye many changes and hardships that these people, wente through, and ye many enemies they had and difficulties they mette with all, that so many of them should live to very olde age! It was not only this reved mans condition, (for one swallow makes no summer, as they say,) but many more of them did ye like, some dying aboute and before this time, and many still living, who attained to 60 years of age, and to 65 diverse to 70, and above, and some nere 80, as he did. It must needs be more then ordinarie, and above naturall reason, that so it should be; for it is found in experience, that chaing of aeir, famine, or unholosome foode, much drinking of water, sorrows & troubls, &c., all of them are enimies to health, causes of many diseaces, consumers of naturall vigoure and ye bodys of men, and shortners of life. And yet of all these things they had a large parte, and suffered deeply in ye same. They wente from England to Holand, wher they found both worse air and dyet then that they came from; from thence (induring a long imprisonmente, as it were, in ye ships at sea) into New England; and how it hath been with them hear hath allready beene showne; and what crosses, troubls, fears, wants, and sorrowes they had been; lyable unto, is easie to conjecture; so as in some sorte they may say with ye Apostle, **2 Cor. 11:26,27.** they were in journeyings often, in perils of waterers, in perills of robers, in perils of their owne nation, in perils among ye heathen, in perils in ye willdernes, in perils in ye sea, in perills among false brethern, in wearines & painfullnes, in watching often, in hunger and thirst, in fasting often, in could and nakednes. What was it then that upheld them? It was Gods vissitation that preserved their spirits. **Job10:12.** Thou hast given me life and grace, and thy vissitation hath preserved my spirite. He that upheld ye Apostle upheld them. They

were persecuted, but not forsaken, cast downe, but perished not. **2. Cor. 4:9.** As unknown, and yet known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and yett not kiled. **2 Cor 6:9.** God, it seems, would have all men to behold and observe such mercies and works of his providence as these are towards his people, that they in like cases might be encouraged to depend upon God in their trials, & also blesse his name. when they see his goodnes towards others. Man lives not by bread only, **Deut: 8:3.** It is not by good & dainty fare,. by peace, & rest, and harts ease, in injoying ye contentments and good things of this world only, that preserves health and pro longs life. God in such examples would have ye world see & behold that he can doe it without them; and if ye world will shut ther eyes, and take no notice therof, yet he would have his people to see and consider it. Daniell could be better liking with pulse then others were with ye kings dainties. Jaacob, though he wente from one nation to another people, and passed throw famine, fears, & many afflictions, yet he lived till old age, and dyed sweetly, & rested in ye Lord, as infinite others of Gods servants have done, and still shall doe, (through Gods goodnes,) notwithstanding all ye malice of their enemies; when ye branch of ye wicked shall be cut of before.his day, **Job15:32.** and ye bloody and deceitfull men shall not live out halfe their days. **Psalm 55: 23. . . .”**

The small part reproduced above was but a summing up by Mr. Bradford of over 100 previous pages of the years of persecution in England and the years of discouragement in Holland. Many of the Pilgrims had been imprisoned, many had their homes sacked, their possessions either destroyed or confiscated by the authorities for their persistance in holding worship services not authorized by the crown.

Few Christian Americans today have a true vision of the sufferings of those who were literally driven out of England by the state church. The enemies of Christendom have been writing the school textbooks in America for over two generations, and they slyly ridicule, or make light of, the events preceding the founding of the American Colonies, and often completely delete the history of the first generations of the Christians in America.

That their purpose in making the dangerous voyage to a new and strange land was based entirely on Godly and Christian motives can be deduced from their stated attitude toward the old church in England as a “pache of popery and a puddle of corruption,” and their willingness to leave all of civilization, as they knew it, and risk life and health in a wild land occupied by unknown savages for the simple purpose and hope expressed by William Bradford in the lines below:

“Lastly, (and which was not least, ) a great hope & inward zeall they had of laying some good foundation, or at least to make some way therunto, for ye propagating & advancing ye gospell of ye kingdom of Christ in those remote parts of ye world; yea, though they should be but even as stepping-stones unto others for ye performing of so great a work.”

As they left Holland for England to board the Mayflower, John Robinson, their Pastor, likened them to the children of Israel leaving Babylon to rebuild Jerusalem, sing as his text **Ezra 8:21,** *“Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before God, to seek of Him a right way for us. and for our little ones, and for all our substance.”* The frightful (for landbound English men, women and children) 66 day voyage to



## The Mayflower Compact — A Conception of Freedom

**Pilgrims aboard the Mayflower. Now free to worship as their consciences dictated, a group of pilgrims signed the famed Mayflower Compact, a short set of laws, which established certain concepts of religious freedom. The document later became a basis for democratic government in the colonies. This painting, by Robert W. Weir, hangs in the Capitol at Washington, D. C.**

America, afflicting them with sickness, bad food and bad water, left their high purpose undaunted, for they wrote in the Mayflower Compact, signed before they would set foot on America, that they came "for the glory of God, and the advancement of the Christian faith."

After two and one half months on the winter Atlantic, the Mayflower, a vessel of 180 tons, reached the shores of Cape Cod. Contrary to general belief, the Pilgrims were not of one mind. Those who had joined the ship at Plymouth had no intention of submitting to the Leyden group. But they all had sense enough to know that if they were to survive in the bleak wilderness, they had to submit themselves to some form of government. Forty-one of the members drew up a covenant,

which is known in history as the Mayflower Compact. Winston Churchill called it "one of the remarkable documents in history, a spontaneous covenant for political organization." It is as follows:

IN THE NAME of God, Amen. We, whose names are under-written, the loyal subjects of our dread sovereign Lord, King James, by the grace of God, of Great Britaine, France, and Ireland king, defender of the faith, etc., having undertaken, for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith, and honour of our king and country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the Northerne parts of Virginia, doe, by these presents, solemnly and mutually in the presence of God, and one of another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civill body politick,



### **Pilgrims landing at Plymouth Rock**

for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute, and frame such just and equall laws, ordinances, acts, constitions, and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meete and convenient for the generall good of the Colonie unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunder subscribed our names at Cap-Codd the II. of November, in the year of the reigne of our sovereigne lord. King James, of England, France. and Ireland, the eighteenth. and of Scotland the fiftie-fourth. Anno. Dom. 1620.

GOD'S children are like stars that shine brightest in the darkest skies; like the chamomile, which, the more it is trodden down, the faster it spreads and grows.

"The glories of Christianity in England are to be traced in the sufferings of confessors and martyrs in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; and it was under the influence of Christian principles, imbibed at this very period, that the Mayflower brought over the band of Pilgrims to Plymouth. . . We should never forget that the prison, the scaffold, and the stake were stages in the march of civil and religious liberty, which our forefathers had to travel, in order that we might attain our present liberty. . .

"Before our children remove their religious connections. . . before they leave the old paths of God's Word. . . before they barter their birthright for a mess of pottage — let us place in their hands this chronicle of the glorious days of the suffering Churches, and let them know that

they are the sons of the men 'of whom the world was not worthy,' and whose sufferings for conscience' sake are here monumentally recorded."

— John Overton Choules, August., 12, 1843 — Preface to the 1844 reprint of Neal's "History of the Puritans", 1731

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### The Landing of The Pilgrims

By Felicia D. Hemans

The Pilgrims set sail in the Mayflower from Delftshaven, Holland, July, 1620, and landed on the coast of Massachusetts, December 21, 1620.

THE breaking waves dashed high  
On a stern and rock-bound coast,  
And the woods against a stormy sky  
Their giant branches tossed;

And the heavy night hung dark  
The hills and waters o'er,  
When a band of exiles moored their bark  
On the wild New England shore.

Not as the conqueror comes,  
They, the true-hearted, came;  
Not with the roll of the stirring drums,  
And the trumpet that sings of fame;

Not as the flying come,  
In silence and in fear;  
They shook the depths of the desert's gloom  
With their hymns of lofty cheer.

Amid the storm they sang,  
And the stars heard, and the sea;  
And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang  
To the anthem of the free.

The ocean eagle soared  
From his nest by the white wave's foam,  
And the rocking pines of the forest roared;  
This was their welcome home!

There was woman's fearless eye,  
Lit by her deep love's truth;  
There was manhood's brow, serenely high,  
And the fiery heart of youth.

What sought they thus afar?  
Bright jewels of the mine?  
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war? —  
They sought a faith's pure shrine!

Aye, call it holy ground,  
The soil where first they trod!  
They have left unstained what there they found  
Freedom to worship God!

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## Lest We Forget

Some may think the poems and accounts of the Christian people who first came to these shores are too highly romanticized, or that we may too much exalt their pious motives or character. Perhaps this is partially true, but at the same time, let us not forget that their travels, their work, and their lives, were often hard, sometimes extremely so, and many of these courageous Christian forefathers of ours died untimely deaths. Those who worked so hard, suffered so much, and dreamed such great dreams, had a large part in the creation of the greatest Christian nation of all history, the United States of America, and neither they, nor their motives, should be forgotten or slighted.

### The Voyage

The hardships of their voyage to the New World, with 102 passengers on a tiny ship, hardly designed for 30, can scarcely be imagined. For lack of deck space, they were forced to spend most of their hours in the crowded quarters below, where poor ventilation, lack of sanitary facilities, spoiling food, and contaminated water, made many of them sick and despairing of life. Halfway across, the main beam under the deck buckled, leaving the ship in danger of breaking in two in high seas. As the Pilgrims prayed, someone remembered the heavy screw they had brought from Holland, it was placed under the break, and they were able to force the beam up and reinforce it.

Bradford later described the voyage at some length, summing it up thusly: "It was a long, tedious and uncomfortable voyage. On several occasions the winds were so fierce and the seas so high that she could not carry sail and took to drift-

ing for days on end." But God brought them through and would not allow them to be lost at sea.

## **The First Winter**

But, as many have forgotten, or perhaps never knew, they were bound for Virginia and warm climes, not for the coast of Massachusetts to which God finally delivered them in early November. Finding they were so far to the north, they attempted to go south toward Virginia, but winds and currents drove them back north, and God brought them into what is now Cape Cod Bay on December 20 in the Year of our Lord, 1620.

The Mayflower Compact was drawn up and signed, and they went ashore to search what must be done, hopefully to build houses against the winter cold. But the lateness of the season, with its beginning winter cold, prevented this, and they were forced to live aboard the Mayflower for the winter. The damp cold, hardly alleviated by the only allowable heat, cooking fires, must have been enough to make them wonder, as the Israelites did in the wilderness, if God had but delivered them from the bondage of the Old World, to abandon them in this bleak and howling wilderness that was Massachusetts in December of 1620! To return to England was out of the question, for they had not enough food for the journey, and the damaged and weakened ship would never have survived the winter storms of the North Atlantic.

With fish, and a few deer and smaller animals, they added to their meager food supply. But by March, when it became warm enough to move ashore to temporary cabins, only five of the eighteen married women had survived, and only ten of the 29 young men and servants were left

alive. William Bradford, at 44, was the oldest colonist to go ashore in March of 1621. John Alden was 21 and Priscilla Mullen was 17. I wonder how many teenagers in Christian homes today could have borne such circumstances?

## **The Indians Did Not Save Them**

Twentieth Century subversives, who write much of our present text-books, and "history," try to tell us the English Colony would have perished if it had not been for the "noble red man!" That is a strange theory, but the truth is even stranger, for there was not one Indian within 75 miles of Cape Cod Bay in 1620!

This was wondered at by the Pilgrims, who actually attempted to search out the Indians in hopes of bartering for food. They did find a few caches of dried berries and meat, obviously stored by the now missing Indians, which they took for themselves, and these did prevent the deaths of some who would, otherwise, have died. But they found no living Indians.

It was not til several years later that they learned the reason, from other Indians from further away who slowly moved into the area. We will take the story as told by a Puritan, Captain Edward Johnson in his "Wonder-Working Providence of Sions Savior in New England," published in London in 1653:

"Now let all men know the admirable Acts of Christ for His Churches and chosen, are universally over the whole Earth at one and the same time, bur sorry man cannot so discourse of them . . . And therefore let us...tell of the marvelous doings of Christ preparing for His peoples arrival in the Western World, whereas the Indians report they beheld to their great wonder-

ment that perspicuous bright. blazing Comet (this was the celebrated comet of November, 1618, so bright as to be visible in daylight), anon after Sun set it appeared, as they say, in the Southwest, about three houres, continuing in their Horizon for the space of thirty sleepes (for so they reckon their dayes) after which uncouth sight they expected some strange things to follow. . . . which he now tells). The Summer after the blazing Starre (whose motion in the Heavens was from East to West, poynting out to the sons of men the progress of the glorious Gospel! of Christ, the glorious King of His Churches) even about the yeare 1618 a little before the removeall of that Church of Christ from Holland to Plimoth in New England, as the ancient Indians report, there befell a great mortality among them, the greatest that ever the member of father to sonne tooke notice of, chiefly desolating those places where the English afterward planted. By this meanes Christ (whose great and glorious workes the Earth throughout are altogether for the benefit of His Churches and chosen) not onely made roome for His people to plant; but also tamed the hard and cruell hearts of these barbarous Indians, insomuch that halfe a handfull of His people landing not long after in Plimoth-Plantation, found little resistance . . . ." (old spelling kept)

The antichrists may scoff, may beguile us to forget, but it is certainly a miracle, and who but by God, that no hostile or savage Indian was left alive in the land to which God had driven the little Mayflower. Only after they had been firmly planted, and had grown from their first weakness, did the Indians return, and then they mostly looked on these strange White Men with awe, as their primitive minds made connection between the comet, the plague, and the sudden arrival of these "Christians."

## Spring

Their troubles were not over, although the warming weather ended the deaths from pneumonia and cold, and now provided roots and other edibles from the forests, and made fishing easier and more productive. But crops were necessary, and a goodly harvest, if they were to survive the next winter. Some wondered if they should return with the Mayflower to England and home, but none did, for as Elder Brewster had said, "It is not with us as with other men whom small things can discourage, or small discontentments cause to wish themselves home again." It is highly probable that not one man in a thousand, perhaps not one in ten thousand, of modern Christendom, finding himself in similar circumstances, but would elect to escape in whatever manner and by whatever means possible. Of a certainty, these were uncommon men and women, hand-picked by the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob for this purpose. Who can explain it any other way?

With the coming of Spring, and. the revival of both their spirits and strength, they set about the necessary work of building, clearing small trees, and preparing for a permanent settlement. The first large building constructed was the "common house," used for many years for worship services and necessary civil meetings. The Mayflower left for England, to carry'news of their situation, and to make provision for others to come, including the wives and children of some of the men still alive.

As the weather warmed, they began to plant the precious seed they had held from eating during the long winter, knowing that if they were to consume it, it would have meant the end of the colony, and Spring, would have required their return to England.

They had no machinery, such as we are accustomed to use to break and plant the ground, not even horses, so all was done by hand, by bodies weakened by long confinement on the ship, and by poor nourishment. Their first year's crop was a meager one, but with fishing, hunting, and trapping, they had food for the second winter.

We shall pass quickly over the next two years. 35 people arrived from England in the summer of 1621, to add to their numbers, and to add to their need for food. The winter again took the frailer folk, but not so harsh as that first one aboard ship. Also, by this time Indians had appeared, some trading was done, and the now legendary Squanto had shown them how to plant and fertilize corn with a fish to increase the yield. Split shingles, beaver hides, and other forest products were sent off to England to pay for debts incurred in mounting the venture, and it seemed as if they were finally being established in their new home.

### **The Third Year**

More Pilgrims arrived the third spring, including a number of wives and children of men who had come on the Mayflower. This was certainly a time of rejoicing, but what happened during the summer and fall can only be explained as the Hand of God preparing them to do something special, something He required of them AS GOD'S PEOPLE! Let us read it in the words of William Bradford, written several years after the event:

"I may not here omite how, notwithstanding all their great paines & industrie, and ye great hops, of a large cropp, the Lord seemed to blast, & take away the same, and to threaten further & more sore famine unto them, by a great drought which continued from ye 3. weeke in May,

till about ye midle of July, without any raine, and with great heat (for ye most parte). insomuch as ye corne begane to wither away. though it was set with fishe. the moysture wherof helped it much. Ye at length it begane to languish sore, and some of ye drier grounds were partched like withered hay, part wherof was never recovered. Upon which they sett a parte a solemne day of humilliation, to seek Yc Lord by humble & fervente prayer. in this great distrese. And he was pleased to give them a gracious & speedy answer, both to their owne, & the Indeans admiration, that lived amongst them, For all ye morning, and greatest part of the day, it was clear weather & very hotte, and not a cloud or any signe of raine to be seen, yet toward evening it begane to overcast, and shortly after to raine, with shuch sweete and gentle showers, as gave them cause of rejoyceing, & blesing God. It came, without either wind, or thunder, or any violence, and by degreese, in yt abundance, as that ye earth was thorowly wete and soked therwith. Which did so apparently revive & quicken ye decayed corne & other fruits, as was wonderfull to see, and made ye Indeans astonished to behold; and afterwards the Lord sent them shuch seasonable showers, with enterchange of faire warme weather, as, through his blessing; caused a fruitfull & liberall harvest, to their no small comforte and rejoycing. For which mercie (in time conveniente) they also sett aparte a day of thanksgiveing. This being overslipt in its place, I thought meet here to inserte ye same. . . "

The above excerpts arc from the original manuscript, written 1647, (1901 Edition)

### **"They Also Sett Aparte a Day of Thanksgiving"**

If we have believed, and I believe rightly so, the events so far related came about by the Guiding Hand of God, would it not follow that God, also, caused the heat to almost destroy their crops, that they might "seek ye Lord by humble & fervent prayer," and then answered that prayer with just the right amount of rain. and just the right temperatures, to provide to them their, so far, most bountiful harvest?

Is it so far beyond the realm of Christian reason, but to believe that God's purpose was TO CAUSE THEM TO PROCLAIM "A DAY OF THANKSGIVING?" That it was done, and following such unique and marvelous events, should serve as greater proof than any argument I might offer.

### **“Three Times Thou Shalt Keep a Feast Unto Me In The Year”**

God had told Israel, as we have seen, that there were three "feasts" (rituals) they were to keep for ever and ever (see previous Scripture quoted). Other history gives us proof that the Christian Pilgrims were honoring the first two "feasts" of **Exodus 23:14-16**, by, as we have shown, keeping the "passover" and "feast of unleavened bread" in the ordinance of communion and acceptance of Jesus Christ as the substitutionary Lamb and Bread of Life, and the second, the "feast of harvest," by giving their tithe, or the tenth of their earnings, to the church for Christ's Work.

But, we have no record of anyone, anywhere, keeping that which would fulfill the third feast, "the feast of the ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field," **until God's circumstances led our Anglo-Saxon forefathers to**

**“restore” it in the end of the harvest in 1623 — in the new world, in what was to become the greatest of all Christian nations — The United States of America!**

Isn't it strange, or at least provoking of thought, **that only in America**, is the third feast of Israel kept? And by almost unanimous agreement, it is kept by the entire White population, the descendants of those English and other Europeans who migrated to this continent by the millions between 1620 and 1920?

### **Restoration**

The Israel Prophets foretold a time of "restoration." Jesus Christ even spoke of Elijah, who was to come "and restore all things." (**Matt. 17:11**) To those who look for Jesus' second coming, we point to **Acts 3:21** and the words of Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, and speaking of Christ, ***"Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy Prophets since the world began."***

Jesus will NOT come until the "times of restitution of all things." Again, is it so far beyond reason to believe that the events related in this short story of **our** "Thanksgiving Day," could be God restoring His Ways among His Children of Israel?

Christian friend, have you really looked at History in the Light of Prophecy? Are the events of the world just so much confusion to you? Or is God working out His plan upon the earth **and working it out in His chosen, Israel people?**

The simple facts of history, that the People of Anglo-Saxondom, comprising

perhaps 95% of all Christians in the world, keep, however poorly, God's **required Israel feast days**, should lead you to search the Bible, and history, to see if perhaps your understanding of just **who God's Isreal people really are**, could use some enlightenment.

## The Children of Abraham

God told father Abraham, "*And I will establish My covenant between Me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting comenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.*" (Gen. 17:7) God said to the Israelites after He had brought them out of Egypt. "*For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.*" (Deut. 7:6)

These, and hundreds of other verses in the Holy Word testify of a special people of God. Where, and among what people, would you have found such in 1620 and 1623? Where, my Christian friend, do you find the people blessed by God above all people upon the face of the earth today? Looking at the subsequent history of the colonies, their growth, their eventual independence from mother England and the emergence of the United States of America as the pre-eminent nation of this age, can any rational, Bible-believing Christian consider that Captain Edward Johnson was wrong when he called the Saxon-Christians — "His chosen?"

## For Your "Thanksgivings" of the Future

It has been three and one-half long centuries since that little band of Christians bowed their heads and

thanked the God of Abraham for His overpowering Hand and Providence in their lives. There is little I can add to their act, to the True Faith to which they were restored, but I will reproduce here a few thoughts of great Christians who followed them, and will leave them all with my prayer that "Thanksgiving Day" will mean more to you this year, and in the years to come, for your having read this humble effort to bring you a glimpse of the greatness of the Christian men and women who left so much. and came so far. and began so well, that which has now been left in our hands. Surely, as Abraham, they believed God, and it was accounted unto them for righteousness. They certainly believed Jesus, who said, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." They made Jesus Christ the foundation of this Kingdom in America; may we build on no other. May God bless you, and true Israel in America. in Jesus Christ,

Sheldon Emry

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## The Significance of Pilgrim Endurance

NOTHING can be trivial which relates to the voyage of the 'Mayflower' or the first four years' experience of the Colony.

"There is importance in every event, which in any degree, affected the question whether the settlement should be maintained or abandoned; for reading between the lines of that question there is seen within it another, as to whether posterity should behold an Anglo-Saxon state on the American continent. Had Plymouth been deserted by the Pilgrim Fathers in 1621 - 22, Massachusetts Bay would have remained desolate, and even Virginia would doubtless have been abandoned.

Then, before new colonization could be organized,. France would have made good her claim by pushing down our Atlantic coast until she met Spain ascending from the south, — unless, indeed, Holland had retained her hold at the centre. . . Such were some of the momentous issues that were largely-decided by the, apparently, little things which makeup the Pilgrim history. . . Sir Thomas Hutchinson, whose tastes would not have led him to an undue estimation of the uncourtly and unchartered settlers at Plymouth, thus spoke of them in his History: "These were the founders of the Colony at New Plymouth. The settlement of this Colony occasioned the settlement of Massachusetts Bay, which was the source of all the other Colonies in New England. Virginia was in a dying state, and seemed to revive and flourish from the example of New England."

The above excerpts are from John A. Goodwin's "The Pilgrim Republic" — 1888

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"Let divines and philosophers, statesmen and patriots, unite their endeavors to renovate the age, by impressing the minds of men with the importance of educating their little. boys and girls, of inculcating in the minds of youth the fear and love of the Deity and universal philanthropy, and, in subordination to these great principles, the love of their country; of instructing them in the art of self-government, without which they never can act a wise part in the government or societies, great or small; in short, of leading them in the study and practice of the exalted virtues of the Christian system. . . "

Samuel Adams, Boston, October 4, 1790

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The following are excerpts from "A

Discourse delivered at Plymouth, on the 22nd of December, 1820 by Daniel Webster," Vol. I, The Works of Daniel Webster — 1851. This speech was upon the occasion of the dedication of the Statue of Faith on the 200th anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth:

"The morning that beamed on the first night of their repose saw the Pilgrims already at home in their country. There were political institutions, and civil liberty, and religious worship. Poetry has fancied nothing, in the wanderings of heroes, so distinct and characteristic. Here was man, indeed, unprotected, and unprovided for, on the shore of a rude and fearful wilderness; but it was politic, intelligent, and educated man. Everything was civilized, but the physical world. Institutions, containing, in substance, all that ages had done for human government, were organized in a forest.

"Cultivated mind was to act on uncultivated nature; and, more than all, a government and a country were to commence, with the very first foundations laid under the divine light of the Christian religion. Happy auspices of a happy futurity! Who would wish that his country's existence had otherwise begun? Who would desire the power of going back to the ages of fable? Who would wish for an origin obscured in the darkness of antiquity? Who would wish for other emblazoning of his country's heraldry, or other ornaments of her genealogy, than to be able to say, that her first existence was with intelligence, her first breath the inspiration of liberty, her first principle the truth of divine religion? . . .

"Lastly, our ancestors established their system of government on morality and religious sentiment. Moral habits, they

believed, cannot safely be trusted on any other foundation than religious principle, nor any government be secure which is not supported by moral habits. Living under the heavenly light of revelation, they hoped to find all the social dispositions, all the duties which men owe to each other and to society, enforced and performed. Whatever makes men good Christians, makes them good citizens. . . .

"Her eyes look toward the sea. Forever she beholds upon its waves the incoming 'Mayflower'; she sees the Pilgrims land. They vanish, but she, the monument of their faith, remains, and tells their story to the world. This our generation too shall pass away, and its successors for centuries to-come; but she will stand, and, overlooking our forgotten memory, will still speak of them and of their foundation of the Republic on the Plymouth Rocks of Liberty, Law, Morality, and Education."

— John D. Long



**Statue of Faith Pilgrim Monument**

"If the blessings of our political and social condition have not been too highly estimated, we cannot well overrate the responsibility and duty which they impose upon us. We hold these institutions of government, religion, and learning, to be transmitted, as well as enjoyed. We are in the line of conveyance, through which whatever has been obtained by the spirit and efforts of our ancestors is to be communicated to our children.

"We are bound to maintain public liberty, and, by the example of our own systems, to convince the world that order and law, religion and morality, the rights of conscience, the rights of persons, and the rights of property, may all be preserved and secured, in the most perfect manner, by a government entirely and, purely elective. If we fail in this, our disaster will be signal, and will furnish an argument, stronger than has yet been found, in support of those opinions, which maintain that government can rest safely on nothing but power and coercion, . . .

"The cause of science and literature, also, imposes upon us an important and delicate trust. . . .If, almost on the day of their landing, our ancestors founded schools and endowed colleges, what obligations do not rest upon us, living under circumstances so much more favorable, both, for providing and for using the means of education? Literature becomes free institutions. It is the graceful ornament of civil liberty, and a happy restraint on the asperities which political controversies sometimes occasion. Just taste is not only an embellishment of society, but it raises almost to the rank of the virtues, and diffuses positive good throughout the whole extent of its influence. There is a connection between right feeling and right principles, and truth in taste is allied with truth in morality. . . .

"Finally, let us not forget the religious character of our origin. Our fathers were brought hither by their high veneration for the Christian religion. They journeyed by its light, and labored in its hope. They sought to incorporate its principles with the elements of their society, and to diffuse its influence through all their institu-

tions, civil, political, or literary. Let us cherish these sentiments, and extend this influence still more widely; in the full conviction, that is the happiest society which partakes in the highest degree of the mild and peaceful spirit of Christianity."

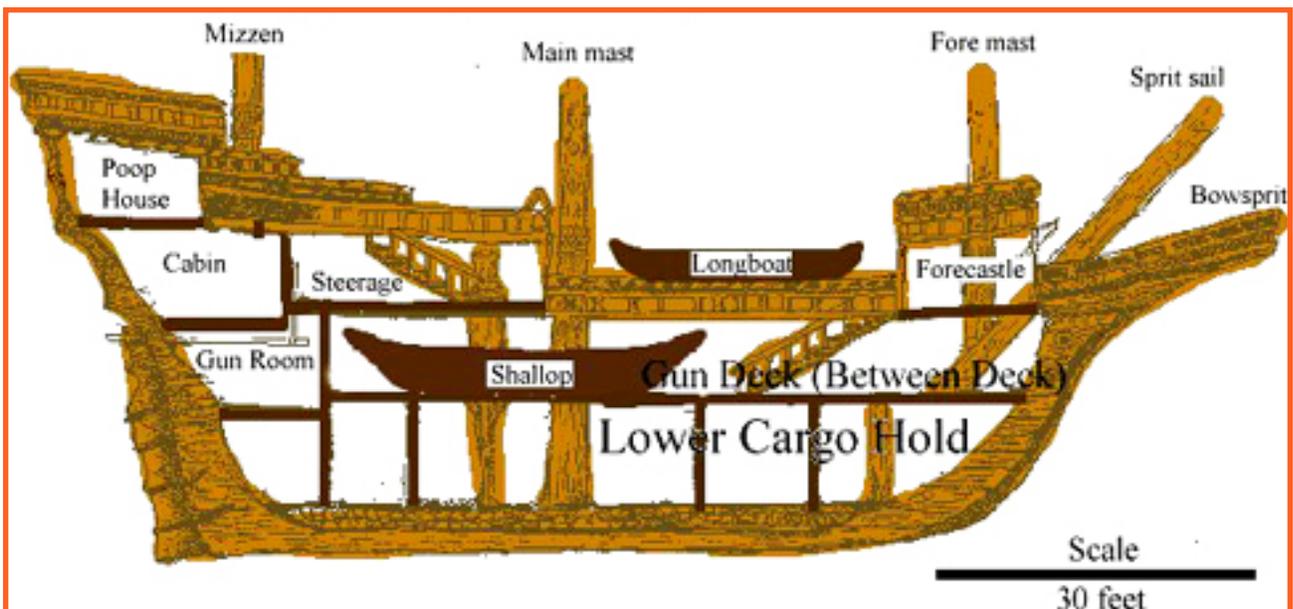


*"Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say.... Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord: for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion: And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding."*

**Jeremiah 3:12-15**

*"Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I call him alone.... For the Lord shall comfort Zion: He will comfort all her waste places; and He will make her desert like the garden of the Lord: joy and gladness shall be found therein, Thanksgiving, and the voice of melody. Harken unto Me, My People, and give ear unto Me, O My nation."*

**Isaiah 51:2-4**



# George Washington's Thanksgiving Proclamation

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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 and signal favors of almighty God, especially by affording them an opportunity peacefully 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 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 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 government, 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.

Given under my hand, at the city New York, the third day of October; A.D.1789.

**G. WASHINGTON**