

Thanksgiving, the USA and the Church

Fred R. Coulter—November 24, 2007

This past Thursday the United States celebrated, as a national holiday, the day of Thanksgiving. This day is unique in holidays that a nation keeps. Unique in a special way, far different than any of the harvest feasts that the Catholic Church has had in Europe down through the years.

Although, I read a book where the Catholics were trying to rewrite history and claim that they started Thanksgiving over here and they were only continuing what they did over there.

However, I doubt if the Protestants who came here would follow what the Catholics did over there, because they came here to get away from over there so they could do what they wanted to do here instead of over there.

Thinking about Thanksgiving and so forth, let's start out with some very interesting things in Scripture. Did you know that there was one man—probably more than one... Many people don't realize this, because God deals with the nations and men, and with unconverted men in the world, in a direct way. We actually have in Dan. 4 something very unusual.

We have an epistle, or letter, written by the emperor of Babylon Nebuchadnezzar, who was not converted, but God dealt with him so that he could learn a lesson as being the head of gold, as described in Dan. 2 by Daniel in the interpretation of that vision, so that Nebuchadnezzar could understand that God deals in the nations of men.

Nebuchadnezzar's Epistle:

Daniel 4:1: "Nebuchadnezzar the king, to all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth... [this not only to his empire, but this is prophetic to the rest of the world] ...'Peace be multiplied to you. It seemed good to me to declare the signs and wonders that the Most High God has done for me. How great *are* His signs! And how mighty *are* His wonders! His kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion *is* from generation to generation'" (vs 1-3).

That's quite an admission! Just previous to that he had made a big, huge idol and had everyone bow down to it (Dan. 3). ***So, God dealt with him!*** Then he gives the background of it, that he had this dream and he couldn't figure it out. Daniel was called in to tell him what the dream was, and what was going to happen.

So, he gives the last part of the dream, and this dream was directly to Nebuchadnezzar. So, this

directly involves a leader of this world; the top leader at that time.

Verse 16: "Let his heart be changed from a man's and a beast's heart be given to him. And let seven times... [seven years] ...pass over him. **This matter is by the decree of the watchers...** [God knows what's going on in all the earth, all the time, everywhere] ...and the demand by the word of the **Holy ones...**" (vs 16-17)—*the angels in charge of the world!*

There are angels of God and also Satan's demons, and between the two of them the world is controlled by them. Though *men* are the ones whom everyone sees.

"...so that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He will, and sets up over it the basest of men" (v 17).

Daniel told him what the dream was; v 24: "This *is* the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king: That you shall be driven from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and you shall be made to eat grass like oxen..." (vs 24-25). **How much more humbled can a person be than this?** Think about it! *Seven years!*

"...And you shall be wet with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomever He will. And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots, your kingdom *shall be* sure to you after you shall have known that the heavens do rule. Therefore, O king, let my advice be pleasing to you, and break off your sins by righteousness... [God expects people in the world to obey in the letter of the Law] ...and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor, so there may be lengthening of your prosperity" (vs 25-27).

God gave him an opportunity to repent, which God always does. God always gives an opportunity to repent. Now let's see what happened. How quickly people forget the Word of God and want to do what they want to do.

Verse 28: "All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of twelve months he *was* walking on the roof of the royal palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king spoke and said, '*Is this not great Babylon that I have built for a royal residence by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?*'" (vs 28-30).

We're going to see that we have experienced a similar shift in attitude in America. Instead of relying on God, what have we've done? *We've said:*

- by *our* industriousness
- by *our* ability
- by *our* military
- by *our* institutions
- by *our* industry

we have done all these things! There are many lessons we can learn as we go along here.

Verse 31: "While the word was *yet* in the king's mouth, a voice fell from heaven, saying, 'O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken. The kingdom has departed from you. And you shall be driven from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. You shall be made to eat grass like oxen, and seven times shall pass over you **until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomever He wills**'" (vs 31-32).

Verse 33: "The same hour the thing was fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar. And he was driven from men, and ate grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of the heavens until his hair had grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws."

Imagine seven years and not clipping your nails and cutting your hair, out there eating grass. I don't know if he used his fingernails to cut the grass and pick it up and eat it, or if he was on all fours munching on it like a cow. We know one thing for sure, he didn't chew his cud.

Nevertheless, it's interesting because in Isa. 40, the message that was given, which was a prophecy of John the Baptist, 'What shall I cry? *All flesh is grass!*' So, here Nebuchadnezzar ate grass.

Notice the change of heart and attitude, though he wasn't converted. So, the Word of God still works and is affective with people even though they are not converted, if they believe certain aspects of it and follow certain of the laws.

Verse 34: "And at the end of the days, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me, and **I blessed the Most High**, and I praised and honored Him Who lives forever, for His dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the earth are counted as nothing..." (vs 34-35).

In other places it says that God sits on the circle of the earth and all people are like grasshoppers.

"...and He does according to His will in the

host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. And none can stay His hand, or say to Him, 'What are You doing?'" (v 35).

All atheists listen up! Your day of reckoning is coming up! If you can look at the heavens and look at the earth and look at yourself in the mirror and say that all of this came from nothing, *you are indeed ignorant and foolish* beyond any question.

Verse 36: "At that time my reason returned to me. And the glory of my kingdom, my majesty and splendor returned to me...."

In other words, he got a haircut, got his nails clipped and got bathed. He put on his royal clothes and came into his throne room and sat down.

"...And my advisers and my lords sought me out, and I was established in my kingdom, and surpassing greatness was added to me" (v 36)—*doing obeisance!* You can see them saying:

O king, you look so good after this experience. My, we are so happy to have you back.

'Kissing up'! I can just kind of visualizing it in my mind!

Notice the change in attitude compared to that big idol that he made in Dan. 3; v 37: "Now, I Nebuchadnezzar, **praise and exalt and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are Truth and His ways justice. And those who walk in pride He is able to abase.**" *He sure did there!*

Let's see that God says that this is ongoing always, *all the time!* When we look out at contemporary America today, we can understand what is happening. It is a spiritual and cultural war. God looks down and says after he told Jeremiah to go down to the potter's house and see what he does:

Jeremiah 18:6: "'O house of Israel...'" Understand that *the house of Israel* refers to the ten northern tribes that were taken off into captivity. And understand that in the end time, these are the descendants of Joseph: Ephraim and Manasseh. *It's talking to us today!* God's Word is forever, spiritual!

"...can I not do with you *even* as this potter?" says the LORD. 'Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hands, *so are* you in My hand, O house of Israel. If at any time I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck it up and to pull it down, and to destroy *it*; if that nation, against whom I have spoken, will turn from their evil..." (vs 6-8).

What do we see? *God always gives a chance of repentance!* We need to understand that that is given to us today. Also, we need to realize that as God looks down on this nation, as he does the world, we also need to understand that we are like the salt

of the earth. What the people of God do, who have the Spirit of God and are growing in grace and knowledge, God will consider them and spare even carnal people in the world because of what we do!

“...I will repent of the evil that I thought to do to them” (v 8). *Tie this in with the whole lesson the book of Jonah*, the only nation to truly repent as far as a Gentile nation is concerned. They repented and God held off the evil. A hundred and twenty years later they corrupted themselves and then the judgment was executed against them.

Verse 9: “And if at any time I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build it and to plant *it*; if it does evil in My sight, that it not obey My voice, then I will repent of the good with which I said I would do them good. Now, therefore, speak to the men of Judah, and to the people of Jerusalem, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD, “Behold, I am forming evil against you, and devising a plan against you. Return now, each one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good.”’ And they said, ‘There is no hope... [sounds like what we call politically *the extreme left*] ...but we will walk after our own ways, and we will each one do *according to* the stubbornness of his evil heart” (vs 9-12).

God gave warning when we got into the land. Let’s see the blessings, and relate this to today. We’re going to look at the blessings that were given to Joseph. What I want us to do is think of contemporary history going back 400-years plus at the beginning of the colonies of the United States.

Also, think about that it took from 1620 to 1776, 156 years before the Declaration of Independence was given. Think about the growth of England around the world, and think about the beginning of the grow of America when we read this blessing that God gave to Joseph, which would be in the last days. When it talks about Joseph, this is Ephraim and Manasseh, modern day England and modern day America. Ephraim was to become a company of nations, and America was to become a great nation.

Genesis 49:22: “Joseph *is* a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall. The archers have fiercely attacked him and have shot *at him*, and hated him. But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob...” (vs 22-24).

When we read the history of how England expanded and America grew strong, that is exactly what happened. We’re going to see and I’m going to read you some history and proclamations a little later that they’re not taught much in school anymore about how we came to be what we are as a nation.

That is as important as understanding who we are spiritually as the people of God. *They won their wars!*

“...—from there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel—... [referring to the king of England and that’s a long story, too; quite interesting] ...by the God of your father... [Abraham, Isaac and Jacob] ...who shall help you. And may the Almighty bless you...” (vs 24-25).

In Disney World they have a 360° screen. They do a flying overview of America from sea to shining sea, and from north to south. They show all of the mountains and valleys, the fertile plains, the rivers, buildings, and it’s quite a spectacular thing to do that.

If you know about God’s way, you just think whoa! that is really something! This is what I want you to visualize when I read this.

“...And may the Almighty bless you with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lies beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb. The blessings of your father are greater than the blessings of my ancestors...” (vs 25-26).

This is saying that the blessings that God gave to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—his forefathers—is now going to expand through his descendants.

“...to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills. They shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him, the ruler, the leader who was separated from his brothers” (v 26).

Let’s read one more prophecy about Joseph. This becomes very important for us when I begin reading some of these proclamations and what we need to do.

All the way through the book of Deuteronomy, God warns, ‘Don’t turn from Me; keep My laws and commandments,’ and so forth. He also says that ‘when you get into the land that is blessed with milk and honey, a land where you will eat without scarcity. None of us have faced famine, going back generations. Just before we had services we ate something. *Eat bread without scarcity!*’

Again, I want you to think about England, all the Commonwealth nations, America, Canada altogether, and think for a minute: Where would the world be today if in the last over 400 years it wasn’t for the fact that God blessed England, beginning especially with Queen Elizabeth.

If you have a chance to watch any movies concerning Queen Elizabeth, most of them are pretty accurate. However, certain parts are not recommended for children. But it is really quite

instructive to see how God—beginning with Queen Elizabeth—because of the oppression of the Catholic and because of the things that took place...

Remember, this took place in the mid-1500s, and they were one of the poorest nations in the world. After she had reigned 42 years they ended up being the richest, because God gave them, in their warfare against the Spanish, victory after victory to break the back of the Catholics hold on England and the world. They actually had *The Privateer Sea Dogs*^[transcriber's correction]—“Elizabeth’s Pirates.” God transferred it to England. After her reign of 42 years it was the wealthiest nation on earth.

Since God rules in the kingdoms of men, that didn’t happen accidentally. God also destroyed the greatest naval armada of its day, right at the doorsteps of England: *the Spanish Armada!*

These prophecies had to be fulfilled. Let’s understand that necessity, not because of the righteousness of the people involved, but God prophesied that He would give His Word and Israel would come to a greater understanding of the Word of God. That’s why the printing of the Bible in English was so profoundly important, because this set the stage to break away from the slavery of the Catholic Church into the inheritance that we’re going to read of here, that God promised to give to Joseph.

Thankfully, when we began as a nation we were more in tune with God than we are today. But notice the blessing:

Deuteronomy 33:13: “And of Joseph he said, ‘Blessed of the LORD *be* his land, with the precious things of the heavens, for the dew, and for the deep...’—*where we get oil, gold, silver and precious stones!*”

As a matter of fact, the world’s greatest diamond mine is now up in Canada, and it’s an open-pit mine. There are so many diamonds there that they just have an open-pit mine they harvest them. Look at the gold, the silver and treasures of South Africa, but also look at what has happened to South Africa because they have turned their backs on God, which is instructive for us today.

To say nothing of oil. *God created oil!* Not by dinosaurs. It’s made by the heat from within the earth. The oil fields do replenish themselves, contrary to what the oil companies tell you.

Verse 14: “And for the precious things of **the fruits of the sun**, and with the precious things of **the yield of the months**. And with the chief things of **the ancient mountains**, and for the precious things of **the everlasting hills**, and for the precious things of **the earth and fullness of it**, and *for* the good will of Him Who dwelt in the bush. Let the

blessing come on the head of Joseph, and on the top of the head of him who was separated from his brothers. His glory *is like* the firstborn of his bull, and his horns are like the horns of the wild ox. **With them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth....** [that’s exactly what England and America have done to the world] ...And they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh” (vs 14-17). ***So, the blessing goes to Ephraim and Manasseh!***

Let’s also see something that are important for us to understand on how this nation began. I’m going to read from the book: *Ascent to Greatness* by Raymond F. McNair—all about the rise of the power of the United States. Then I’ll read some excerpts from *The Christian Life and Character of the Civil Institutions of the United States* by Benjamin F. Morris.

As I read these things, let’s understand that they had a view of God knowing that they had to follow God’s way. Let’s talk about the very first Thanksgiving. In Seattle they wanted to have Thanksgiving as a day of mourning so that all of the Indians wouldn’t feel bad as to what happened to their people, because the Anglo-Saxons conquered the Indians. If you go back and understand what God has said here, that He judges all nations and all peoples. How we expanded across America and how Britain expanded around the world, was God’s judgment against those nations who were sinning greatly against Him and He used the hand of Joseph to do it in both instances.

If you study what kind of religion they had, what kind of civilization they had, then you will understand why God did it. Here is what they signed before they could go on the Mayflower:

Mayflower Compact
{https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mayflower_Compact}

IN THE NAME OF GOD, AMEN. We, whose names are underwritten, the Loyal Subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King *James...*

He’s the one who had the King James Version Bible made!

....by the Grace of God, of *Great Britain, France, and Ireland*, King, *Defender of the Faith*, &c. Having undertaken for the Glory of God, and Advancement of the Christian Faith, and the Honour of our King and Country, a Voyage to plant the first Colony in the northern Parts of *Virginia*; Do by these Presents, solemnly and mutually, in the Presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil Body Politick, for our better

Ordering and Preservation, and Furtherance of the Ends aforesaid: And by Virtue hereof do enact, constitute, and frame, such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions, and Officers, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general Good of the Colony; unto which we promise all due Submission and Obedience.

Where did they get these laws? *Basically from the Bible!*

IN WITNESS whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names at *Cape-Cod* the eleventh of November, in the Reign of our Sovereign Lord King *James*, of *England*, *France*, and *Ireland*, the eighteenth, and of *Scotland* the fifty-fourth, *Anno Domini*; 1620.

When they got there they came into the midst of a terrible winter. They lost half of the people, they died. The next year they a very bountiful crop.

from *Assent to Greatness* by Raymond F. McNair

{<https://www.hwalibrary.com/cgi-bin/get/hwa.cgi?action=getrefbook&InfoID=1352211854&InfoType=AscentToGreatness>}

The First Thanksgiving

The Governor of the Plymouth colony, William Bradford, in grateful appreciation to the Great Provider of all blessings, decreed that a three-day thanksgiving feast be held.

A contemporary of the time, Edward Winslow (in letter of December 11, 1621) gives a vivid description of that first Thanksgiving Day celebration:

“Our harvest being gotten in, our Governor sent four men on fowling, that so we might after a more special manner rejoice together, after we had gathered the fruit of our labours. They four in one day killed as much fowl as, with a little help beside, served the Company almost a week. At which time, amongst other recreations, we exercised our arms, many of the Indians coming amongst us, and amongst the rest their greatest king, Massasoit with some 90 men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted. And they went out and killed five deer which they brought to the plantation and bestowed on our Governor and upon the Captain and others.”

The Indians brought both wild turkeys and venison. And the men of the colony provided geese, ducks and fish.

It took many days to prepare this food for the coming feast. The women spent days preparing for the Thanksgiving Feast. The children also helped by turning roasts on spits on the open fires.

The women of the colony served the meat and fish with journey cake, nuts and corn meal bread, and with succotash. The food was served outdoors at large tables which were built. For days the colonists and Indians feasted and engaged in entertainments.

They even had sports! That’s the first Thanksgiving!

It will be a little lengthy in reading some of these things, but it is, I think, going to be important for us to hear how we started.

This is by George Washington, a proclamation by the President. We didn’t hear anything like this. What was the proclamation by Pres. Bush this year? I didn’t hear his radio program, but I did see that he pardoned the turkey from being killed for dinner, which was done in jest. But I think he should have given a proclamation more like George Washington, considering the state of our nation.

[From Sparks's Washington, Vol. XII, p. 119.]

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 and signal favors of Almighty God, especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness.

I heard Glen Beck give a commentary on how the United States can saved itself from the problems that we have: *We the people!* That can only be true if the people are righteous. That was the whole key for the beginning of this nation. There weren’t many books, and the textbook they had was the Bible.

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...

The governor of Georgia was ridiculed by agnostics and atheists when he publicly prayed that God would send rain on Georgia, because of the drought, recognizing that it is the hand of God for their sins, and humbly ask God to forgive them for their sins. He was railed upon; it was something!

...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...

Quite different from what we have today! Freedom in America was really established as freedom to be law abiding, freedom to worship God, freedom to have self-government with the Laws of God as a guide. Then *we the people* can work to a good degree. But when it's otherwise, and there's no repentance, *we the people* become evermore corrupt.

...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.

Given under my hand, at the city of New York, the 3d day of October, A.D. 1789.
G. WASHINGTON.

Quite different from today! How do they start off Thanksgiving today? Not by a proclamation like this, but by a parade down Fifth Ave. in New York City. Everyone goes out in madness and lust an shopping for so-called Christmas things.

Now let's see how they looked to God and the difficulties that they were going through. These proclamations are a little tedious, but I think it's important that we hear the words of our initial politicians, rather than the ones that we hear today. They can't even get men out of office who have openly bribed and asked for bribes and got caught with thousands of dollars in the freezer. Who openly fiddle around being open homosexuals, forcing upon the nation terrible and abhorrent practices.

This Proclamation was given January 1795, this must have been in the last part of Washington's office:

WHEN WE review the calamities which afflict so many other nations, the present condition of the United States affords much matter of consolation and satisfaction. Our exemption hitherto from foreign war, an increasing prospect of the continuance of that exemption...

I want you think about what we are involved in today, and where our troops are today and what we are doing today.

...the great degree of internal tranquillity we have enjoyed, the recent confirmation of that tranquillity by the suppression of an insurrection which so wantonly threatened it. the happy course of our public affairs in general, the unexampled prosperity of all classes of *our* citizens, are circumstances which peculiarly mark our situation with indications of the Divine beneficence toward us. In such a state of things it is in an especial manner *our* duty as a people, with devout reverence and affectionate gratitude, to acknowledge our many and great obligations to Almighty God and to implore Him to continue and confirm the blessings we experience.

Quite a tremendous proclamation to the people!

...for the prosperous course of our affairs, public and private; and at the same time humbly and fervently to beseech the kind Author of these blessings graciously to prolong them to us; to imprint on our hearts a deep and solemn sense of *our* obligations to Him for them; to teach us rightly to

estimate their immense value: to preserve us from the arrogance of prosperity, and from hazarding the advantages we enjoy by delusive pursuits; to dispose us to merit the continuance of His favors by not abusing them; by *our* gratitude for them, and by a correspondent conduct as citizens and men; to render this country more and more a safe and propitious asylum for the unfortunate of other countries; to extend among us true and useful knowledge; to diffuse and establish habits of sobriety, order, morality, and piety, and finally, to impart all the blessings we possess, or ask for ourselves, to the whole family of mankind....

What are we exporting today to the whole family of mankind?

- they had a sense of God's way
- they had a sense of what it was that this nation needed
- they understood that *it came from God*

(go to the next track)

Now let's compare the proclamations of our current President (George W. Bush) and the current War on Terror that we are in. Consider the attitude of the nation when compared to what Abraham Lincoln did when he sought to ask God to help win the Civil War. March 30, 1863, just before there was the victory, which did not come until July.

A PROCLAMATION by Abraham Lincoln

WHEREAS the Senate of the United States, devoutly recognizing the supreme authority and just government of Almighty God in all the affairs of men and of nations, has by a resolution requested the President to designate and set apart a day for national prayer and humiliation...

We still have days of prayer proclaimed without very much zeal and force.

...and Whereas it is the duty of nations...

I want you to listen to how they understood about God, and how we, as a nation, understood why we were going through the things that we were going through.

...as well as of men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God, to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon, and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord;

Psa. 127—think of this in any endeavor in your life, whether you're trying to build your life, your family, build a home, build a business, build a nation, whatever!

Psalm 127:1: "**Unless the LORD builds the house...**" How does He do it when you exert the labor to do it? *By blessing you in your efforts and thoughts!*

"...they labor in vain who build it; unless the LORD keeps the city, the watchman stays awake in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of toil... [sounds like what we do in America today] ...for He provides for His beloved *even* as they sleep. Lo, children are the inheritance of the LORD; the fruit of the womb is a reward" (vs 1-3).

Yet, we kill 50-million before they're born, yet, we're to uphold the pursuit of happiness and life.

Verse 4: "As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man, so are the children of one's youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them; they shall not be ashamed, when they speak with their enemies in the gate" (vs 4-5). *In other words, they will be victorious!*

Here we have Lincoln's proclamation and let's continue on with it:

...And, insomuch as we know that by His divine law nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world, may we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war which now desolates the land may be but a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole people?

We ought to think about that with the War on Terror!

We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven: we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us. and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that

made us. It behooves us, then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.

Deut. 8 was a warning to the Israelites before they went into the 'promised land.' But let's project this forward to the warning to Ephraim and Manasseh today as to why the calamities are happening to us. Did you know that more people are killed per year—twice the number—in Washington, D.C., the nation's capital, which has a ban on handguns by the way, than the casualties in Iraq.

There is one city—I think it's New York City—that for the first time in 20 years they're going to have less than 500 murders.

God made the Israelites go through the wilderness, made them hungry and thirsty for this very reason:

Deuteronomy 8:1—Moses reiterating what God told him: "All the commandments which I command you..."—***because Sunday-keeping has been the Achilles' Heel of Protestantism, because God never chose that day!*** And you can go on with all the Holidays, etc., too.

"...this day shall you be diligent to observe and to do that you may live and multiply and go in and possess the land, which the LORD swore to your fathers.... [that's this land of America today; he swore to give it to them] ...And you shall remember all the way, which the LORD your God led you these forty years in the wilderness in order to humble you, to prove you, to know what is in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. And **He humbled you and allowed you to hunger...**" (vs 1-3).

The trials, tests and difficulties that we go through are so that we draw close to God to look to Him to give us the solution. Many people who do that—even those not in the Church of God—God delivers them.

"...and then He fed you with manna, which you did not know, neither did your fathers know it, **so that He might make you know...**" v 3). ***This is the everlasting lesson that we are to learn today***

- as nations and as individuals
- as converted and unconverted

"...that man does not live by bread alone; but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD does man live" (v 3). *That is the key, right there!* Then Moses says that there was special blessing:

Verse 4: "Your clothing did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years."

There were no shoe and clothing stores! Plus they had manna!

Verse 5: "And you shall consider in your heart that as a man chastens his son, *so* the LORD your God chastens you. And you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God to walk in His ways and to fear Him, for the LORD your God brings you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills, a land of wheat and barley and vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey" (vs 5-8).

Sidebar: I saw a special on honeybees, and it was done in Wisconsin. The man who owned this particular honey company—the hives and the bees—said that Wisconsin was truly a land of milk and honey! They have the most dairies, and the way that the vegetation is, and because they're far enough north, in the summer they have bounteous blossoms and things like this for the bees. The bees thrive up there. He runs organic bees, not like the other commercial ones. He doesn't stress them by taking them too far. They produce overwhelming amounts of honey. He says, 'Truly, it's a land flowing with milk and honey!'

Verse 9: "A land in which you shall eat bread without scarceness.... [just walk into to a supermarket] ...You shall not lack any *thing* in it. *It is* a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you may dig copper."

Read the history of America! Spread this all the recipients of Israel, Ephraim and Manasseh and add in there Canada, Australia, New Zealand and So. Africa, and all the resources that they were able to take out of the colonies. The colonies were better off when the British ruled them than after they left. Witness the difference between Rhodesia under British rule and Zambia under native rule.

Then Moses gives a warning; v 10: "**When** you have eaten and are full..." *We have to say that we have done that!* We have everything we need physically. But if you don't have God's spiritually, all the physical things in the world will only corrupt you. If you don't live by the Word of God, as He says, it's going to turn upon your heads in the problems and difficulties that we are facing today.

So, we as Christians, are faced with the prospect that because the society is going to get so bad that we may be just driven into our homes and that's the only safe place to worship God. What a terrible calamity that is going to be!

"...**then** you shall bless the LORD your God... [not take it for granted] ...for the good land, which He has given you. **Beware** that you do not

forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments, and His judgments, and His statutes, which I command you today, **lest when** you have eaten and are full and have built goodly houses and lived in *them*” (vs 10-12).

Don't we have that all across Israel, wherever it is today? England? America? Canada? Australia? New Zealand? South Africa? wherever Israel is? *Yes!* Compare that to Pakistan, the Palestinians, Egyptians, sub-Sahara nations, India, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos and China.

Verse 13: “And **when** your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied, **then** you become haughty of heart, and you forget the LORD your God Who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt from the house of bondage” (vs 13-14)—**and gave you this land!**

Isn't that something? *Now we have a growing number of Atheists!* Of course, whenever it's on television, they have to get a man who is handsome and a woman who is beautiful and they can persuade with persuasive words!

God wants everyone to know this. He did these things in the trials and difficulties that we go through, and the wars that we are going through right now, and the war I'm going to read you of, and the proclamation I will finish here of Abraham Lincoln, for the end of the Civil War. They have forgotten this:

Verse 15: “**Who led you** through the great and terrible wilderness *with* fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where *there was* no water, **Who brought forth** water for you out of the rock of flint, Who fed you in the wilderness with manna, which your fathers did not know, **so that He might humble you and that He might prove you to do you good in your latter end**” (vs 15-17).

God is not against anybody *unless* you're an enemy of God. He wants to do you good!

Verse 17: “**Beware** lest you say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of *my* hand has gotten me this wealth.’.... [sounds like Nebuchadnezzar, where we started] ...**But you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He Who gives you power to get wealth...** [He created it all] ...so that He may confirm His covenant, which He has sworn to your fathers as it is this *very* day.... [then He gives one more warning]: ...And it shall be if you do at all forget the LORD your God and walk after other gods serving them and worshiping them, I testify against you this day that **you shall surely perish—yes, perish.** As the nations whom the LORD destroys before your face, **so you shall perish because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God**” (vs 17-20).

In everything that we thank God for, we need to look at the other side of the coin and realize that as there are blessings that God has given, and also additional blessings for loving God and obeying Him, so there are also troubles, cursings and wars that He has promised that would come upon us (Deut. 28).

(continuing the proclamation of Abraham Lincoln beseeching God for the end of the war):

But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious band which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts...

Sounds like he read Deut. 8!

...that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us....

Imagine the near riot that would take place if the President of the United States said that today!

...It behooves us, then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.

Now, therefore, in compliance with the request, and fully concurring in the views of the Senate. I do by this my proclamation designate and set apart Thursday, the 30th day of April, 1863, as a day of national humiliation, fasting, and prayer. And I do hereby request all the people to abstain on that day from their ordinary secular pursuits, and to unite at their several places of public worship and their respective homes in keeping the day holy to the Lord and devoted to the humble discharge of the religious duties proper to that solemn occasion.

The closest we ever came to that was right after 9/11 and soon forgotten!

All this being done in sincerity and truth, let us then rest humbly in the hope authorized by the divine teachings that the united cry of the nation will be heard on high and answered with blessings no less than the pardon of our national sins and the restoration of our now divided and suffering country to its former happy condition of unity and peace.

They were right on the brink at this point of losing the Civil War! But it turned at Gettysburg, and it turned in Tennessee right after this. I don't think it's any coincidence that it turn right afterward.

In witness 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 30th day of March, A.D. 1863, and of the Independence of the United States the eighty-seventh. ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Amazing! Absolutely amazing! We don't have that today—do we?

Lincoln had many proclamations of public humility and prayer and fasting to draw the people back to God. I will read the Gettysburg Address, which was one of the turning points, the other turning point was Vicksburg, Mississippi on July 4th!

(continuing from author of Assent to Greatness):

It was decided to dedicate a cemetery on a portion of the Gettysburg battlefield. The date set for the ceremonies was November 19, 1863. Edward Everett, one of America's greatest orators was scheduled to be the principal speaker at the ceremonies. Everett spoke for two solid hours. President Lincoln was asked to say a few words. And that is exactly what he did. He spoke for only three minutes, but his words continue to echo down through time like thunder claps.

Lincoln's Gettysburg Address is considered one of the finest masterpieces of English prose ever written! In the three short minutes Lincoln said the words every school boy has heard or recited since:

President Lincoln delivered the 272 word Gettysburg Address on November 19, 1863 on the battlefield near Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and it's part of our history.

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, on this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war...

I want you to think about the War on Terror that we have!

- *fear* everywhere
- *crime* everywhere
- *occultism* everywhere
- *atheism* everywhere
- *rejecting and destroying God* everywhere

And officiated by the government! Instead of having speeches and proclamations like these to bring the people back to God, they are determined to drive them away from God.

...testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived, and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war....

Right there at Gettysburg! More men were killed in that battle than any other battle during the entire war!

...We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives, that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say, here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they have, thus far, so nobly carried on.

It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain - that this nation, under God, ~hall have a new birth of freedom and that this government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

After two hours of someone else speaking, that's what Lincoln said. I will read some of the other proclamations so that you can read them all. When you listen to them, I want you to listen carefully! I want you to ***examine your life*** and ***examine the nation and see how far we have gone from God, from that time until this!***

Then I want you to think about all of the self-indulging pleasures, demands, and spoiled things that we live our lives in and put our children through, and everything like that. Realize how far we have gone from God and that we are truly, ***truly***, Laodicean, 'rich and increased with goods' and in great need of repentance!

Psa. 100 is a Psalm of thanksgiving, and this is how Thanksgiving should be. We do have sports and games. ***But wouldn't it be absolutely wonderful***

if at halftime—instead of having displays like they have at the Superbowl with near nakedness and sex orgies—to **have a real prayer dedicated to God and showing people how they need to get close to God?** To show why this nation is great and why we're able to have the freedom to have these games and do these things and the purpose of it? Wouldn't it be nice if they were taught the kindness and love of God so much that in the games—though they are competitive and things they have to fight for to win—that they don't try and kill the other person? That they don't try to maim, hurt, injure, bash and destroy? So, here is a great, *great* Psalm for Thanksgiving:

Psalm 100:1: “Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth.... [this is what's going to happen during the Millennium; it will be a continuous Thanksgiving] ...Serve the LORD **with gladness**; come before His presence **with singing**. Know that the LORD, **He is God. He has made us**, and we are His; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture” (vs 1-3). *There's a great confidence and hope that comes with that!*

Verse 4: “Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise; give thanks unto Him and bless His name, for the LORD is good; His steadfast love is everlasting; and His faithfulness endures to all generations” (vs 4-5). *That includes all the New Testament; all down through time, all down through the Millennium.*

Psa. 103—this is what we need to remember of God. When you read and hear some of these proclamations that Presidents Washington and Lincoln have given, it helps you to realize that these men read the Bible. Whether they're converted or not, **God knows!** But there is with the nations a level of behavior that God expects. So, here's part of the Thanksgiving that we need to thank God for, and realize that if we do, we can be a blessing to other people that we don't even realize that we are a blessing to, because we are the salt of the earth. God looks down and sees our heart, mind and attitude, and yes, it does affect everything that God does.

Psalm 103:1: “Bless the LORD, O my soul...” [a reflection of being thankful] ...and all that is within me, bless His Holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits” (vs 1-2).

When you're lying in bed trying to go to sleep, think about all the good things that God has blessed you with. Think about everything that is just at your fingertips. We have:

- water
- electricity
- heat
- food

All of those things right there at our fingertips!

Verse 3: “Who forgives all your iniquities... [that's why we are to ask God to forgive our sins daily] ...Who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction... [helps you in every trial and intervenes with every difficulty] ...Who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies” (vs 3-4)—*That's what God does! He's done that to this nation!*

When I was at Ambassador College, we made a trip down to Mexico, and as soon as you cross the border, you knew you were out of Israel. There is a reason that they are cursed down there. All you have to do is read the Ten Commandments.

Verse 5: “Who satisfies your desires with good things; your youth is renewed like the eagle's. The LORD executes righteousness and judgment for all who are oppressed” (vs 5-6). *God will lift you up out of your trial and difficulty!*

Verse 7: “He made known His ways unto Moses, His acts unto the children of Israel.”

This is what we need to do this Thanksgiving Day as a nation! Go to God and repent, like we read in the Proclamation by Abraham Lincoln.

Verse 8: “The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in mercy. He will not always chasten, nor will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins...” (vs 8-10).

Stop and think about all that's going on in the nation. God has not dealt with us. He has corrected us, He's chastised us, He wants us to repent. There's a repentance in the world that God will accept for people living in nations. There's a repentance within those children of God who have His Spirit who are His, that God expects from us, both ways.

Verse 11: “For as the heavens are high above the earth, so is His mercy toward those who fear Him.” *And how much more of those who love Him! Who believe Him! Who obey His voice!*

Verse 12: “As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion upon his children, so the LORD has compassion upon those who fear Him, for He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust” (vs 12-14). *God's mercy continues forever and ever!*

Those are the things that we need to really keep in mind! The Psalms are **filled with thanksgiving! filled with praise to God!**

Psalm 50:1: “The mighty God, God, the

LORD, has spoken and called the earth from the rising of the sun to its going down. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God has shined forth” (vs 1-2).

Think about this is relationship to the Church, and to the resurrection.

Verse 3: “Our God shall come, and He shall not keep silent; a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous all around Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, so that He may judge His people: **‘Gather My saints unto Me...** [these the ones who are in the Church; this is the resurrection] **...those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.**’.... [the sacrifice of Jesus Christ] ...And the heavens shall declare His righteousness, for God Himself is judge. Selah” (vs 3-6).

Then God talks to the nation of Israel—Ephraim and Manasseh; v 7: “Hear, My people, and I will speak, O Israel, and I will testify against you; I am God, even your God. I will not reprove you for your sacrifices, or your burnt offerings, which are continually before Me. I will take no bull out of your house, nor he-goats out of your folds, for every beast of the forest is Mine and the livestock upon a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are Mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world is Mine, and all the fullness of it. Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? **Offer to God thanksgiving...** [from the heart; that’s what God wants] ...and pay your vows to the Most High; and **call upon Me in the day of trouble; and I will deliver you,** and you shall honor Me” (vs 7-15).

Want to know how to stop the War on Terror:

- close down every abortion clinic
 - outlaw abortion
- have the whole nation*
- repent of that
 - turn to God
 - keep His commandments in the letter of the Law

then God would stay His hand for a time, and the final judgment against us would be held off for a time. **But not unless...**

Verse 16: “But **to the wicked** God says, ‘What right have you to declare My statutes, and to take up My covenant in your mouth? Yea, you hate to be taught, and you cast My words behind you’” (vs 16-17).

A lawless grace has bred the attitude so that we now have abortion, murder and adultery just sweeping the land.

Verse 18: “When you saw a thief, then you

were pleased to be with him, and you have taken part with adulterers. You give your mouth to evil, and your tongue frames deceit. You sit; you speak against your brother; you slander your own mother’s son. These things you have done, and I have kept silence; you thought that I was like yourself, but **I will rebuke you, and set them in order before your eyes.** Now, **consider this, you who forget God...** [tie in with Deut. 8] ...lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver. **Whoever offers praise glorifies Me; and he who sets his conduct aright, I will show him the salvation of God”** (vs 18-23).

There we have encapsulated in that Psalm everything to do with the basis and the way we have these Presidential proclamations that we read of.

Col. 3 gives us the things that we need to look to, the way we need to be growing, changing and overcoming. This is what God wants in our lives. On this Sabbath, during the Thanksgiving week, let’s look at these things as it applies to us.

Colossians 3:10: “And have put on the new man, who *is* being renewed in knowledge **according to the image of Him Who created him.**”

We’re being renewed in knowledge to be the very sons and daughters of God at the resurrection!

Verse 11: “Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian *nor* Scythian, slave *nor* free; but Christ *is* all things, and in all.” *Then Paul tells us what to do:*

Verse 12: “Put on then, as *the* elect of God...” *Our conversion is a special calling from God,* above and beyond the requirement of the letter of the Law that God requires of nations.

“...Holy and beloved, deep inner affections, kindness, humility, meekness *and* long-suffering... [**vs** the pride, arrogance and hate that’s in the world] **...forbearing one another, and forgiving one another** if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so also you *should* forgive. And above all these things **put on love...** [that’s where it begins, loving God with all your heart, mind, soul and being, loving your neighbor as yourself, loving the brethren as Christ has loved us] **...which is the bond of perfection”** (vs 12-14).

This is how we grow in grace and knowledge continually!

Verse 15: “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which you were called into one body, **and be thankful.** Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

And *in* everything—whatever you do in word or in deed—***do all in the name of the Lord Jesus***, giving thanks to God and *the* Father by Him” (vs 15-17).

While this nation is unique and it has a day of Thanksgiving. Let us go beyond that and ***make it a day of spiritual thanksgiving***, especially on this sabbath during the Thanksgiving week, and thank God for all the physical things, all the spiritual things, ***and especially God’s Spirit and His Word***, which He wants to be in our heart and mind so that we love God and serve Him and glorify Him in everything that we do.

(go to the next track)

I’m taking extra time to read some speeches and other proclamation given by Americans in our history at the founding of the nation. How at the beginning of the founding of this nation it was a Bible oriented nation. The men who helped found the nation and helped write the Constitution were well aware of the power of God.

They turned to God for help and strength. Let’s understand how important that this is, and why even today that there are four Bibles for every household in America.

I’m going to read from *Accent to Greatness* by Raymond F. McNair, published in 1976:

One of History's Most Impassioned Speeches

One of the most impassioned and eloquent speeches ever given by mortal man was that of Patrick Henry's, given at the second patriotic convention of Virginia (March, 1775). Those who heard it were left stunned!

Following is a reconstruction of portions of that speech from actual witnesses who heard it! Mr. President...

president of the assembly there

...it is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope....

Talking about false hope that everything will go well if you do nothing to resist evil!

...We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth and listen to the song of that siren, till she transforms us into beasts. Is this the part of wise men, engaged in a great and arduous *struggle for liberty*? Are we disposed to be of the number of those who, having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not, the things which so dearly concern their temporal salvation? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst and to provide for it....

I ask gentlemen, sir, what means this martial array (of British forces), if its purpose be not to force us to submission? Can gentlemen assign any other possible motives for it? Has Great Britain any enemy in this quarter of the world, to call for this accumulation of navies and armies? No, sir, she has none. They are meant for us; they can be meant for no other. *They are sent over to bind and rivet upon us those chains which the British ministry have been so long forging...*

Sir, we have done everything that could be done to *avert the storm* which is now coming on. We have *petitioned* we have *remonstrated* - we have *supplicated* we have *prostrated* ourselves before the throne, and have implored its interposition to arrest the tyrannical hands of the ministry and parliament. Our petitions have been slighted; our remonstrances have produced additional violence and insult; our supplications have been disregarded; and we have been spurned with contempt from the foot of the throne. In vain, after these things, may we indulge the fond hope of *peace* and *reconciliation*.

“We Must Fight!”

There is no longer any room for hope; if we wish to be free if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained *we must fight!* I repeat it, sir, *we must fight; an appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all that is left us!*

They tell us, sir, that we are weak, unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? *Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance by lying supinely on our backs and hugging the delusive phantom of hope*, until our enemy shall have bound us hand and foot?

Sir, *we are not weak*, if we make a proper use of those forces which the *God of nature* hath placed in our power....

Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. *There is a just God who presides over*

the destinies of nations, and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, sir, we have no election. If we were base enough to desire it, *it is now* too late to retire from the contest. There is *no retreat but in submission and slavery!* Our chains are forged. Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable and let it come! I repeat, sir, let it come!

“*Liberty or ... Death!*”

It is in vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry, peace, peace, but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? *Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death!*

This helps us to understand that even in the wars that they fought, that they looked to God ***to guide them, to help them, to raise them up!***

When they were debating the constitution and were having difficulties in coming to agreement with them, Benjamin Franklin gave this following suggestion to overcome the impasse that they were in. I'll read the whole thing, because this shows a very important mindset that helped to establish this nation. It actually shows the fulfillment of God's promise at the beginning of modern day Israel in America; the fulfilling of the promise of God to Manasseh.

Benjamin Franklin:

Mr. President, the small progress we have made after four or five weeks close attendance and continual reasonings with each other our different sentiments on almost every question, several of the last producing as many noes as ayes is, me thinks, a melancholy proof of the imperfection of the human understanding.

What they realized was that the Constitution was imperfect. There were flaws and difficulties in it. Now, at this stage in our history, those flaws and difficulties are greatly magnified. We will see that the term *we the people* they understood to be people who believed God. People who were trained or taught in the Bible. Not necessarily to a point of conversion, but to a point of relying on God and looking to God.

Yes, the blessing of God was coming upon Manasseh, and God's Spirit was obviously with them to lead them to fulfill the promise that He gave to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and that Jacob himself prophesied of and Moses himself prophesied of that would be upon Joseph in the latter days. But this does not necessarily mean a call to salvation.

We indeed seem to feel our own want of political wisdom, since we have been running about in search of it. We have gone back to *ancient history for models of government*, and examined the different forms of those republics which, having been formed with *seeds of their own dissolution*, now no longer exist. And we have viewed modern states all round Europe, but find none of their constitutions suitable to our circumstances.

In this situation of this Assembly, groping as it were in the dark to find political truth; and scarce able to distinguish it when presented to us, how has it happened, Sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of lights, to illuminate our understandings? In the beginning of the contest with Great Britain, when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayer in this room for the divine protection. Our prayers, Sir, were heard, and they were graciously answered.

All of us who are engaged in the struggle must have observed frequent instances of a superintending Providence in our favor. To that kind Providence we owe this happy opportunity of consulting in peace on the means of establishing our future national felicity.

And have we now forgotten that powerful friend? Or do we imagine that we no longer need his assistance? ·

“*God Governs*”

I have lived, Sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth *that God governs in the affairs of men*. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, *is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid?*

We have been assured, Sir, in the sacred writings, that 'except the Lord build the house they labor in vain, that build it.' I firmly believe this; and I also believe that without his concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel. We shall be divided by our little partial local interests; our projects

will be confounded; and we ourselves shall become a reproach and by-word down to future ages. And what is worse, mankind may hereafter, from this unfortunate instance, despair of establishing governments by human wisdom, and leave it to chance, war and conquest.

“Prayers ... Every Morning”

I therefore beg leave to move that henceforth *prayers imploring the assistance of Heaven*, and its blessings on our deliberations, be held in this Assembly *every morning* before we proceed to business, and that one or more of the clergy of this city be requested to officiate in that service.

That was quite a speech! Even though it was given, they finally tabled it without a vote, because they had no money to pay the preacher to come and pray. Yet, in spite of that, God looked to the intent of it. God looked to the thought of it. He helped them, blessed them, and overlooked a lot of the things that took place. It was because God intended America to rise!

Also, as the other prophecies that we see in the Old Testament, *it is destined to fall!* Here we are all these years later—232 years after this speech—we see the decline setting in.

We have read some of the proclamations of President George Washington, crying out for days of prayer, humiliation and thanksgiving, and likewise Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War that so ravaged this nation. Just before the war ended, on October 3, 1863, Abraham Lincoln gave this proclamation for the day of Thanksgiving, which established for America relatively the last Thursday of November for a day of national Thanksgiving.

This is a day that no other nation in the world has; where they set aside to thank God. In today's world everyone is so interested in things, sports and self that many have lost the meaning of and the importance of Thanksgiving, and the very fact that it was based upon the need to thank God Almighty.

Surely those of us in the Church ought to know even more about that and be in thanksgiving to God for everything that we have and do. Here's the proclamation that established Thanksgiving:

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA—Abraham Lincoln, October 3, 1863

A PROCLAMATION.

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.

In the midst of a civil war of unequalled magnitude and severity, which has sometimes seemed to foreign states to invite and to 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 fields of 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 heretofore. 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 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 they do also, with humble penitence 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. Done at the city of Washington, this 3d day of October, A.D. 1863, and of the Independence of the United States the eighty-eighth.

Now let's turn attention of the subject of the Bible, and the Bible in the First Congress of the United States. That began during the War of Independence.

They were dependant upon Britain to supply Bibles to the United States. So, we find that the very first Congress did something that was really interesting. They authorized the publishing of the Bible. So, those who say that there is an absolute wall of separation between church and state are completely at odds with the history of the United States.

Every one of the *knew that we the people* could not succeed unless they were law-abiding and God-fearing.

from the book: *Christian Life and Character of the Civil Institutions of the United States* by Benjamin F. Morris:

The Bible and the First Congress:

The above article, coming from the officers of the present Congress, leads us to subjoin a brief account of the doings of the first Congress in regard to the same divine book as given in Rev. Dr. Strickland's history of the American Bible Society.

As early as the beginning go the last century, laws existed in some of the colonies requiring every family to be furnished with a Bible.

Imagine what that would do today!

This supply continued to be kept up by individual exertion until the meeting of the first Congress in 1777...

So, this was done by the colonies before the Congress was established. They knew when they came over here for religious freedom, that they wanted to live by the Word of God have that for part of their civil law and the way that people are instructed in this sort of thing is to have a Bible. It

actually served a second purpose: educating the population through reading the Bible, because they didn't have the school systems such as we have today. This was just one year after the Declaration of Independence.

In the early formation of our government, those who looked upon the experiment with jealousy, yes anticipated a speedy dissolution, from the fact that it made no provision for the establishment of religion....

In the government; that is to have a government church like the Church of England.

...Although the legislative power of our country is prohibited from making laws prescribing and enforcing the observance of any particular faith or form of worship, yet it is equally powerless in prohibiting the free exercise thereof; while at the same time it extends its protecting aegis over the rights of conscience. The Government has never been unmindful of the great interests of religion, but has from the beginning adhered to and carried out the language of Washington, that 'religion and morality are indispensable supports of political existence and prosperity.'

The Congress of 1777 answered a memorial on the subject of Bible-distribution in this country, by appointing a committee to advise as to the printing an edition of thirty thousand Bibles. The population of the country then was only about three million, and all the Bibles in the entire world at that period did not exceed four million. Thus it will be seen that its circulation in this and all other countries at that time was exceedingly limited.

The report of the committee appointed by Congress forms one of the brightest epochs in the history of our republic, and sheds a clear and steady light over every subsequent eventful period. The public recognition of God in that act was a infinitely greater importance in giving stability to the times, securing the permanency of our institutions, than all the imposing and formidable array of legal enactments ever made for the establishment of religion.

The committee, finding it difficult to procure the necessary material, such as paper and types, recommended. Congress, 'the use of the Bible being so universal, and its importance so great,' to direct the Committee on Commerce to import, at the expense of Congress, twenty thousand

English Bibles from Holland, Scotland, or elsewhere, into the different parts of the States of the Union....

Very important! That was when it came from Holland, Scotland and other parts, that means that it was the Geneva Bible that they brought in.

...The report was adopted and the importation ordered.

In 1781, when, from the existence of the war, no English Bible could be imported, and no opinion could be formed how long the obstruction might continue, the subject of printing the Bible was again presented to Congress, and it was on the motion referred to a committee of three.

The Committee, after giving the subject a careful investigation, recommended to Congress an edition printed by Robert Aitken, of Philadelphia; whereupon it was "Resolved, that the United States, in Congress assembled, highly approved the pious and laudable undertaking of Mr. Aitken, as subservient to the interests of religion; and being satisfied of the care and accuracy of the execution of the work, recommend this edition to the inhabitants of the United States."

How interesting is church a history of the early circulation of the Bible in this country! What moral sublimity in the fact, as it stands imperishably recorded and filed in the national archives! Who, in view of this fact, will call in question the assertion that *this is a Bible nation?* Who will charge the government with indifference to religion, when the *first* Congress of the States assumed all the rights and performed all the duties of a *Bible Society long before such an institution had an existence in the world!*

There you have it right from the history of the United States. Now let's see some of the comments of some of the leaders of the nation concerning Aitken's Bible.

Chancellor Kent of New York states the results and influence of the Bible on society as follows:

Can you imagine that coming from any college today? Can you imagine any leading professor in the great universities of America saying what I'm about ready to read. Here's what Chancellor Kent said:

The general diffusion of the Bible is the most effectual way to civilize and humanize mankind...

As we leave the Bible, what is happening? *We are becoming uncivilized, selfish, narcissistic and barbarian!*

...to purify and exalt the general system of the public morals; to give efficacy to the just precepts of international and municipal law; to enforce the observance of prudence, temperance, justice, and fortitude, and to improve all the relations of social and domestic life.

Whoa! Wouldn't that be something? Don't have anything like that today. Look at the state of New Jersey today and how liberal and God-rejecting it is, and let's compare this to Chief Justice Hornblower of New Jersey. Here's his remarks:

Let this precious volume have its due influence on the hearts of men, and our liberties are safe, our country blessed, and the world happy. There is not a tie that binds us to our families, not a virtue that endears our country to us, or us to our country, not a hope that thrills our bosoms in the prospects of future happiness, that has not its foundation in the Holy Book. It is the charter of nations, the palladium of liberty, the standard of righteousness. Its influence can soften the heart of the tyrant, can break the rod of oppression, and exalt the humblest peasant to the dignified rank of an immortal being, and heir of eternal glory.

You don't hear words spoken or written like that anywhere in the government of America or any of the states' governments. Here in California they are now outlawing, or describing married people as husband and wife anymore.

Look at the difference from where we started, and where we are now, it is almost totally insane as to what is happening!

- ***We are no longer a God-fearing nation!***
- ***We are no longer a nation to look to Almighty God to lead us and guide us!***

We're all wrapped up in our own selves, and even in the Church of God we've got people who are so narcissistic and Laodicean it is incredible!

I want to read one more passage concerning the Bible. This is taken from the Journals of Congress, October 12, 1778, and this shows 'the high appreciation of the morality of the Bible as a necessary qualification for the discharge of public duties.' Why don't we apply this test to all who are running for government today?

Whereas true religion and good morals are the only solid foundations of public liberty and happiness: Resolved, That it be, and it

hereby is, earnestly recommended to the several States to take the most effectual measures for the encouragement thereof, and for the suppressing theatrical entertainments, horseracing, gaming, and such other diversions as are productive of idleness, dissipation, and a general depravity of principles and manners.

Can you imagine what the ACLU would do with that today?

Resolved, That all officers in the army of the United States be, and hereby are, strictly enjoined to see that the good and wholesome rules provided for the discountenancing of profaneness and vice, and the preservation of morals among the soldiers, are duly and punctually observed.

How about that! Wouldn't that be something for all of those running for Congress and all of those who are running for President to adhere to those things, Think about it! **How far have we gone from God?**

What they say as to what Mr. Giddings said concerning religion:

Continental Congress, a Christian Body

These facts show the religious sentiments and make us acquainted with the religious feelings of the members of the Continental Congress. That body of statesmen paid respect to religion by system, on principle, and in their official acts. Their state papers do not merely contain general references to the superintending Providence and a supreme Creator and Governor of the world, but they usually contain sentiments unequivocally Christian. Their journals disclose various circumstances which indicate the personal interest taken by the members in the stated and occasional religious services.

"Thus our republic," said Mr. Giddings, in Congress, "was founded on religious truth, and it was thus far emphatically a religious government. It has ever been sustained by the religious sentiment of the nation, and it will only fail when this element shall be discarded by the people. The Philadelphia Convention (the Continental Congress) will be remembered in coming time as the first, in the history of political parties of our nation, to make religious truths the basis of its political action, and first to proclaim the rights of mankind as universal, to be enjoyed equally by princes and people, by rulers and the most humble. It was the first to proclaim the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man."

Quite profound words! This book *The Christian Life and Character of the Civil Institutions of the United States* is long out of print but greatly needed for the morality of the country. {can be found at amazon.com}

On this Thanksgiving day, and future ones, we need to remember that we have got to come before God with thanksgiving, knowledge, joy and understanding, that ***all of the physical and political things that we have all derive from God!***

Whenever we come to God, we need to give thanks always. Whenever we have a day like the day of Thanksgiving, we alone in the Church of God can set it aside as a real day of thanksgiving unto God in the way that it should be in this nation. We are still citizens of the United States of America, and we should honor that, and also help set the example of what it should be.

Psalm 95:1: "O come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before His presence **with thanksgiving**... [always giving thanks] ...and make a joyful noise to Him with psalms, for the LORD is a great God and a great King above all gods. In His hand are the depths of the earth; the peaks of the mountains are also His. The sea is His, and He made it, and His hands formed the dry land. **O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD our Maker, for He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand....**" (vs 1-7).

Then He gives a warning, and here is the reason why Protestantism is going down, and the nation is going down because they didn't acknowledge the Sabbath of God!

"...Today, if you would but hearken to His voice... [which is contained in the Word of God] ...'Harden not your heart as in the rebellion, as in the day of temptation in the wilderness when your fathers tempted Me, tried Me, even though they saw My work. For forty years I was grieved with that generation, and said, "It is a people who go astray in their hearts, and they have not known My ways"; to whom I swore in My wrath that they should not enter into My rest'" (vs 7-11).

They didn't enter into it—did they? ***Because they didn't believe God!*** So, when Thanksgiving comes,

- let's remember how this nation began
- let's remember that this is a unique day, peculiar to the United States of America

Remember that the founding fathers, though they were not converted, had the highest degree of knowledge and understanding of the Word of God in

such a way as to know that the Word of God and the Bible is necessary to have a stable and great society.

This also ought to inspire us to understand why we need to learn the Word of God and understand the Word of God, We are going to bring about not only the religious things to be taught when Christ returns and the Millennium is on the earth and the Kingdom of God is here, but we are also going to establish the civil, religious and every aspect of society. It will be totally based upon:

- the Word of God
- the love of God
- the Truth of God
- the morality of the people

from the greatest unto the least!

This gives us greater insight into the holiday of Thanksgiving in the United States of America!

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Daniel 4:1-3, 16-17, 24-37
- 2) Jeremiah 18:6-12
- 3) Genesis 49:22-26
- 4) Deuteronomy 33:13-17
- 5) Psalm 127:1-5
- 6) Deuteronomy 8:1-20
- 7) Psalm 100:1-5
- 8) Psalm 103:1-14
- 9) Psalm 50:1-23
- 10) Colossians 3:1-17
- 11) Psalm 95:1-11

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Daniel 3
- Isaiah 40
- Deuteronomy 28

Also referenced: Books:

- *Ascent to Greatness* by Raymond F. McNair
{<https://www.hwalibrary.com/cgi-bin/get/hwa.cgi?action=getrefbook&InfoID=1352211854&InfoType=AscentToGreatness>}
- *The Christian Life and Character of the Civil Institutions of the United States* by Benjamin F. Morris {amazon.com}

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