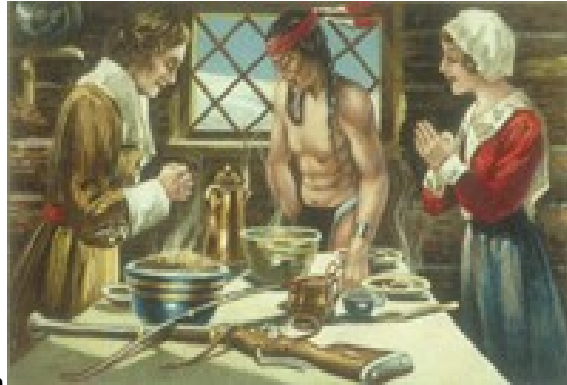


## Thanksgiving

***"Thus saith YAHWEH,  
Stand ye in the ways, and see,  
and ask for the old paths,  
where is the good way,  
and walk therein,  
and ye shall find rest for  
your souls" (Jeremiah 6:16).***



**"Always give thanks to Yahweh the Father for everything for this is Yahweh's will for you in Messiah YahShua." (I Thessalonians 5:18).**

As I sit at the computer this Thanksgiving morning and smell the food Sis. Marlene is cooking; I am overwhelmed at a sense of thanksgiving. Yahweh has been so very good to me. I am in need of nothing. He continues to show me great mysteries from His Word and I feel His presence everyday.

But as I sit free to express my personal relationship with Yahweh I am indebted today to the pioneers of the Messianic Movement in America, men who wanted only to share the full message with their neighbors sometimes in peril of their life.

**"And this full message of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. (Matthew 24:14)**

All who are familiar with American history remember that in 1620 the Puritans landed at Plymouth Rock, Massachusetts, coming to the New World primarily to escape religious persecution which prevailed in Europe. They sailed from Plymouth, England and aboard were 44 Pilgrims that the crew began to call Pilgrims because they had wandered to find a home first to Holland and then to the New World. The Puritans were divided into two groups: 44 Separatists who called themselves the "Saints", and 66 others, who called themselves the "Strangers". The long trip was cold and damp and took 65 days. There was always the danger of fire on the wooden ship, so food had to be eaten cold. Many passengers became sick and one person died and one person was murdered by the time land was sighted on November 10th. The long trip led to many disagreements between the "Saints", the "Strangers" and the crew.

**"Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—that at that time you were without Messiah, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without Yahweh in the world. But now in Messiah YahShua you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Messiah. (Ephesians 2:11-13)**

The Puritans were a group of people who grew discontented in the Church of England and decided that the Church was beyond reform.

**"We would have healed Babylon, but she cannot be healed; let us leave her and each go to his own land, for her judgment reaches to the skies, it rises as high as the clouds.' Yahweh has vindicated us; come, let us tell in Zion what Yahweh our Elohim has done.' (Jeremiah 51:9, 10)"**

Here's what the Separatists believed concerning Holy Days, "From the beginning

of the Reformation to this present year of our Lord 1618, the Kirk (Church) of Scotland has diverse ways condemned the observation of all holy days (Lev. 23), the Lord's Day (7<sup>th</sup> day Sabbath) only excepted. In the first chapter of the First Book of Discipline penned anno 1560, the observation of holy days to Saints, the feast of Christmass, Circumcision, Epiphany, Purification, and other fond feasts of our Lady are ranked amongst the abominations of the Roman religion, as having neither commandment nor assurance in the word. It is further affirmed that the obstinate maintainers and teachers of such abomination should not escape the punishment of the civil magistrate. The book aforesaid was subscribed by the Lord's of secret Council." (David Calderwood's (1575-1651) *Perth Assembly* (1619))

This document was printed and circulated by William Brewster in 1619. William Brewster had mortgaged his house in Holland to purchase a printing press. This document, as Brewster must have known was viewed by the King of England as the crime of high treason punishable by death. The King of England pressured Holland, a land long known for religious tolerance, to confiscate the press and deport Brewster to England to stand trial. Dutch authorities got the printing press but Brewster stowed away on the Mayflower for the famous voyage of 1620.

The Puritans believed that the Holy Scriptures was Yahweh's true law, and that it provided a plan for living. The Church described access to Yahweh as monastic and possible only within the confines of "church authority". Puritans stripped away the traditional trappings and formalities of Christianity which had been slowly building throughout the previous 1500 years. Theirs was an attempt to "purify" the Assembly and their own lives. The laws for the new colony were an outgrowth of their religion, very much based on the theocracy of the Hebrews.

The Puritans had zealously endeavored to purify the Church of England, with the result that those who felt they could no longer remain with the established church went afterwards by such names as Non-Conformists and Separatists. They were not a small group of people. In England many Puritans sat in Parliament.

**"Therefore come out from them and be separate, says Yahweh. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you. (2 Corinthians 6:17 see Isaiah 52:11; Ezek. 20:34, 41)"**

There was also widespread excitement about Scriptural prophecy, and many anticipated the imminent return of the Messiah. One group, called the Fifth Monarchists (after Nebuchadnezzar's dream of Daniel 2, in which Yahweh's Kingdom is portrayed as the fifth and greatest of a prophesied series of empires), stressed the literal millennial reign of Messiah on earth. The most radical Fifth Monarchists hoped to pave the way for that reign by overthrowing the King. So great was the struggle that England's Civil War pitted the Puritans against the Crown Forces. Though the Puritans won the fight with Oliver Cromwell's ceasing control of the Government, making England a republic and leading the Commonwealth of England and executing the King, their victory was short-lived with Cromwell struck by a sudden bout of malarial fever, the Puritans were hunted down and the Crown restored; hence their displacement to America. In 1661, Oliver Cromwell's body was exhumed from Westminster Abbey, and was subjected to the ritual of a posthumous execution. Finally, his disinterred body was thrown into a pit, while his severed head was displayed on a pole outside Westminster Abbey until 1685. Afterwards the head changed hands several times, before eventually being buried in the grounds of

Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, in 1960.

Puritans held the Ten Commandments in very high regard. Applying that the Sabbath commandment to be observed strictly as a day of rest, rather than merely being a day on which to hold worship services. Given the Puritan respect for the Torah and the Protestant belief that the Holy Scriptures should be the ultimate source of belief and practice, it was inevitable that some would respond to the Sabbath controversy by adopting the *scriptural* seventh day Sabbath. And indeed, that is what happened.

**"Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to Yahweh your Elohim. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. For in six days Yahweh made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore Yahweh blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. (Exodus 20:8-11)"**

"It is the privilege of God's power to appoint a day of rest, and to sanctify it to his honor... In the book of Ecclesiasticus (cap. 33: 7, 8) it is demanded, *Why doth one day excel another, when as the light of every day of the year is of the Sun? It is answered, By the Knowledge of the Lord they were distinguished, and he altered seasons and feasts. Some of them hath he made high days, and hallowed them; Some of them he hath made ordinary days.* ... The Papists will confess that one day is not holier than another in its own nature, no not the Lord's Day: for then the Sabbath might not have been changed from the last to the first day of the week ." (David Calderwood's *Perth Assembly*)

During the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, groups of Sabbatarians sprang up in various parts of England and Wales; more than sixty congregations that either met on Saturday or included Sabbatarians, they have been identified by historian Bryan W. Ball. Many of these groups lasted only a generation or two, but some survived much longer---***one of them for over three hundred years.*** Moreover, the majority of the Sabbatarian Believers in the world today can trace their spiritual lineage, directly or indirectly, to these brave and determined people.

The decision to observe the seventh day Sabbath was not one to take lightly. Those who made this choice placed themselves conspicuously outside of the mainstream of society. In the seventeenth century, people who adopted practices different from those of the Church of England were placed under close scrutiny and could be subjected to fines or imprisonment. For example, in the 1660s and 1670s, local churchwardens kept careful records of all "Nonconformists", including anyone who worked or didn't attend church on Sunday, refused to have infants baptized, or kept the seventh day Sabbath. (These records have provided historians with valuable clues about the identities and locations of Sabbath keepers.) Sabbath keepers were often labeled as "Jews," and this label was not intended as a compliment. In England, the anti-Semitism of the time was exacerbated by ignorance. All Jews in England had been expelled from the country in 1290 CE.

One well-known example of the persecutions faced by early English Sabbatarians is the story of John and Dorothy Traske. John Traske (1585-1636) was a controversial and apparently rather colorful traveling preacher whose words and actions repeatedly got him into trouble with the authorities. What exactly he taught is difficult to determine, because the available sources on his life are largely hostile ones. It is also not certain how

many followers he attracted; only the names of a few have come down to us, including Hamlet Jackson, Returne Hebdon, and Christopher Sands. We do know that in 1617, Traske was in London teaching that one should obey the fourth commandment by resting on the seventh day and working on each of the other six days. He also taught obedience to Scriptural dietary laws and is said to have advocated Christian observance of the Days of Unleavened Bread.

Traske's preaching was too radical to go unnoticed for long. By late 1617, Traske and several associates had been arrested, and on June 19, 1618, he was charged with "having a fantastical opinion of himselfe with ambition to bee the Father of a Jewish faction" and making "the people of God, his majesty's subjects, little better than Jews." Traske was whipped and pilloried, and his forehead was branded with a letter "I" (for "Iew", as "Jew" was written at that time). He was also sentenced to life in prison, where he subsisted on a meatless diet (rather than eat the pork prescribed by the court) until he recanted his "Jewish" views and was released in 1619. He published an account of his changed beliefs in "*A Treatise of Libertie from Judaisme*" (1620) and apparently never taught seventh-day Sabbath keeping after that. However, two of his associates refused to recant and eventually died in prison---Returne Hebdon in 1625, and Traske's wife Dorothy in 1645. The example of Dorothy Traske, who remained steadfast over many years in prison, was a great inspiration to other seventeenth-century Sabbatarians.

John Traske was by all accounts very eccentric, and he was threatened with arrest and imprisonment both before and after he advocated observance of the Sabbath. However, one didn't have to be as provocative as Traske to face persecution; *a thoroughly orthodox Christian who wrote or spoke in favor of the Sabbath was also in danger in the early seventeenth century*. Such was the case with Theophilus Brabourne (1590-1662), an Anglican clergyman who hoped to persuade the Church of England to adopt the seventh day Sabbath in two books that he wrote in 1628 and 1632. In 1634 and early 1635, Brabourne was imprisoned, repeatedly examined by church officials, and threatened with excommunication and a fine of 1000 pounds before his carefully-worded recantation was accepted on April 30, 1635. (Brabourne claimed that he never recanted anything of any substance, and in the more tolerant climate of the 1650s he wrote again in favor of the Sabbath.)

Were any Sabbatarians on the Mayflower which brought the Puritans to America? "Strange as it may seem in the early history of America there was an attempt at suppression of the Christmas spirit. The stern Puritans at Plymouth, imbued with the rigorous fervor of what they called the Old Testament, abhorred the celebration of the worldly holidays. "I say there is no power either civil or ecclesiastical can make a holy day: no King, no Kirk (Church): only the Lord that made the day, and distinguished it from the night: he hath sanctified the seventh day. If the special sanctification of a day to an holy use depends upon God's commandment and institution, then neither King nor kirk representative may make a holy day."...In the Assembly held in April anno 1577, it was ordained that the Visitor with the advice of the Synodal Assembly, shall admonish ministers preaching or ministering the communion at Pasche (Passover – they favored the Seder over communion), Yule (Christmass), or other like superstitious times, or Readers reading, to desist, under the pain of deprivation. ... It was a part of the idolatry of the golden calf to *proclaim a holy day*. It is numbered among one of Jeroboams sins that he ordained a feast after the devise of his own heart (1 Kings 12:33). Musculus (Loci

Communes Praec. 4.) says, *If any man shall attempt to make holy at his pleasure the things that God has not sanctified*, is not only superstitious, but challenges unto himself that which belongs only to God. When God blesses and sanctifies a day, then may man look for a blessing in sanctifying it. . . . Nay let us utter the truth, December-Christmas is a just imitation of the December Saturnal of the ethnic Romans, and so used as if Bacchus, and not Christ were the God of Christians. . . . Of the ancient kirks (Churches) I have spoken before. Some excuse the ancients with good intention, because to win the Gentiles they converted their days into Christian holy days. Others excused them with the circumstance of time, that dwelling among pagans, they made profession before their eyes of Christ's birth, passion, resurrection, etc., by observing such days. But the wisdom of their intention has proven folly, as the seventh reason makes manifest. The like circumstance of time is not offered: therefore we may not be excused. It is gross ignorance to say that holy days were so many hundred years before Papistry. For Papistry has been in the kirk ever since the days of Apostles; yea the mystery of iniquity was working in their times. The errors of the Orthodox Kirk were the beginnings of Papistry, at length they grew to a great mass. . . ." (David Calderwood's *Perth Assembly*) Their worship was on the Sabbath (Saturday), rather than Sunday, and Christmas in particular they considered a pagan celebration. Later immigrants attempted to observe Christmas as a time of joy, but were suppressed. Governor Bradford, Elder Brewster, Miles Standish and other leaders were firm against the yuletide spirit as we know it today (Hugh Sprague, editor of the *St. Joseph Gazette* (Missouri), December, 1934)." Instead they kept only the Scriptural Holy Days.

In a private conversation between Elder A. N. Dugger (who became a pioneer in the Sacred Name Movement) and Editor Hugh Sprague, after this editorial appeared, the latter stated that he was a member of the "Mayflower Association" meaning the Puritan Colony were his direct ancestors, and that he very well knew their religious beliefs and practices. And in addition, he stated that all his grandparents and great-grandparents knew that the Puritans of the Mayflower days were strict Sabbath keepers on the seventh day of the week instead of Sunday.

When the Puritans crossed the Atlantic Ocean in 1620, they landed, December 11, on the rocky shores of a territory that was inhabited by the Wampanoag (Wam pa NO ag) Indians. The small band of Puritans passed the harsh winter filled with sickness and hardships. Forty-seven of the 103 Mayflower passengers died.

We can only guess what the Wampanoags must have thought when they first saw the strange ships of the Puritans arriving on their shores. But their custom was to help visitors, and they treated the newcomers with courtesy. It was mainly because of their kindness that the Puritans survived at all. The wheat the Puritans had brought with them to plant would not grow in the rocky soil. They needed to learn new ways for a New World, and the man who came to help them was called "Tisquantum" (Tis SKWAN tum) or "Squanto" (SKWAN toe).

Squanto was originally from the village of Patuxet (Pa TUK et) and a member of the Pokanokit Wampanoag nation. Patuxet once stood on the exact site where the Pilgrims built Plymouth. In 1605, fifteen years before the Puritans came, Squanto went to England with a friendly English explorer named John Weymouth. He had many adventures and learned to speak English. Squanto came back to New England with Captain Weymouth. Later Squanto was captured by a British slaver who raided the

village and sold Squanto to the Spanish in the Caribbean Islands. A Spanish Franciscan priest befriended Squanto and helped him to get to Spain and later on a ship to England. Squanto then found Captain Weymouth, who paid his way back to his homeland. In England Squanto met Samoset of the Wabanake (Wab NAH key) Tribe, who had also left his native home with an English explorer. They both returned together to Patuxet in 1620. When they arrived, the village was deserted and there were skeletons everywhere. Everyone in the village had died from an illness the English slavers had left behind. Squanto and Samoset went to stay with a neighboring village of Wampanoags.

One year later, in the spring, Squanto and Samoset were hunting along the beach near Patuxet. They were startled to see people from England in their deserted village. For several days, they stayed nearby observing the newcomers. Finally they decided to approach them. Samoset walked into the village and said "welcome," Squanto soon joined him. The Puritans were very surprised to meet two Indians who spoke English.

The Puritans were not in good condition. They were living in dirt-covered shelters, there was a shortage of food, and nearly half of them had died during the winter. They obviously needed help and the two men were a welcome sight. Squanto, who probably knew more English than any other Indian in North America at that time, decided to stay with the Puritans for the next few months and teach them how to survive in this new place.

By the time fall arrived things were going much better for the Puritans, thanks to the help they had received. The corn they planted had grown well. There was enough food to last the winter. They were living comfortably in their Native American-style wigwams and had also managed to build one European-style building out of squared logs. This was their Sanctuary. They were now in better health, and they knew more about surviving in this new land. The Puritans decided to have a thanksgiving feast to celebrate their good fortune. They had observed thanksgiving feasts in the fall High Holy Days as religious obligations in England for many years before coming to the New World. That first Thanksgiving was actually a Feast of Tabernacles celebration.

Captain Miles Standish, the leader of the Puritan Settlement, invited Squanto, Samoset, Massasoit (the leader of the Wampanoags), and their immediate families to join them for a celebration, but they had no idea how big Native American families could be. As the Thanksgiving feast began, the Puritans were overwhelmed at the large turnout of ninety relatives that Squanto and Samoset brought with them. The Puritans were not prepared to feed a gathering of people that large for three days. Seeing this, Massasoit gave orders to his men within the first hour of his arrival to go home and get more food. Thus it happened that the Indians supplied the majority of the food: Five deer, many wild turkeys, fish, beans, squash, corn soup, corn bread, and berries. Captain Standish sat at one end of a long table and the Clan Chief Massasoit sat at the other end. For the first time the Wampanoag people were sitting at a table to eat instead of on mats or furs spread on the ground. The Indian women sat together with the Indian men to eat. The Puritan women, however, stood quietly behind the table and waited until after their men had eaten, since that was their custom.

For three days the Wampanoags feasted with the Puritans. It was a special time of friendship between two very different groups of people. A peace and friendship agreement was made between Massasoit and Miles Standish giving the Puritans the clearing in the forest where the old Patuxet village once stood to build their new town of

Plymouth.

What does appear evident is that among the Puritans, first in England, and then in America, were conscientious Sabbatarians. The earliest Sabbath keeping congregations in America were not formally incorporated or organized into conferences, but merely local congregations going by various designations or names, such as: Sabbatarians, Church of God, Church of Christ, Seventh Day Baptists, and even Independents. The Seventh Day Baptists were among the earliest to effect a General Conference organization (1802).

Arthur Elwell Main, D.D., in *Seventh Day Baptists in Europe and America*, Volume 1, says as early as 1646 Sabbath-keeping was the occasion of much earnest discussion in New England, this dates the Sabbath debate twenty-six years after the Puritans arrived in 1620, and about eighteen years prior to the London Seventh Day Baptists' sending of Stephen Mumford to America. Since Sunday observers would not have advocated seventh-day Sabbath observance, it appears evident that it came about by the Pilgrim descendants. The situations of those times may also be ascertained from Felt's *Ecclesiastical History of New England*, Volume 1, p. 593.

As far as documented written historical records go, it appears that the first local organization of Sabbath keeping Christians in America was that of the congregation at Newport, Rhode Island, in 1671. Mumford attended the first-day Baptist Church, and for several years taught the Sabbath truth among them. As a result, a number of them embraced the Sabbath in 1665 and in 1666, but the intention was not to sever their connection with the Baptist Church. They soon learned, however, that even in the church of Roger Williams, where liberty of conscience was supposed to prevail, it was not possible to have close communion on such drastic differences in beliefs as the Sabbath and Sunday brought about. Accordingly, the seventh-day observers left the Baptist Church on December 7, 1671, and sixteen days later, on the 23rd of December, they covenanted together in a congregational organization.

As the Puritans immigrated and formed individual colonies, their numbers rose from 17,800 in 1640 to 106,000 in 1700.

Journals of the Puritans that settled New Salem, Massachusetts, record that they were so moved by the stories of the ancient Israelites that they saw themselves fulfilling a similar role seeing America as their Zion and New Salem as their Jerusalem. They wanted to build a Torah based society.

Other Sabbath keeping centers established shortly after the Newport group was formed were the group near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, through the labors of Able Noble, who came from England about 1684; and the group at Piscataway, New Jersey. From these centers streams of Sabbatarian emigration flowed westward and southward until there were not less than twenty congregations and settlements of Sabbath keepers in nine of the ten colonies or states when the General Conference of Seventh Day Baptists was organized in 1802. Their headquarters is at Plainfield, New Jersey.

There also is in the state of Pennsylvania a small body of German Seventh Day Baptists, who have a very interesting Sabbath keeping heritage. It dates approximately from 1728 when Conrad Beissel, a native of Germany, became the real leader of an independent Sabbath keeping group established in the Ephrata community. In those years it was largely a monastic movement, comprised of the "Brotherhood of Zion" and the "Spiritual Order of the Roses of Saron," one of the most celebrated establishments of its kind in the country. Because of their unusual manner of life, and because it was feared

that through their influence the whole state of Pennsylvania would be affected with their Sabbatarian teachings, they were at times persecuted. They also established and successfully maintained a Sabbath school at Ephrata, its headquarters, forty years before Robert Raikes of England introduced the system of Sunday schools.

Because of the circumstances of the times, the German Seventh Day Baptists had some associations with William Penn, Benjamin Franklin, and George Washington. Franklin did some of Beissel's printing. Peter Miller, a member of the colony, was a close friend of the Penn family. He was also personally acquainted with George Washington. When the Continental Congress sought a trustworthy and loyal man to conduct its diplomatic correspondence with the governments of Europe, it was this Sabbath keeper of the Ephrata Community who translated the Declaration of Independence into seven different languages.

THE FIRST THANKSGIVING PROCLAMATION - JUNE 20, 1676: "The Holy [Yahweh] having by a long and Continual Series of his Afflictive dispensations in and by the present Warr with the Heathen Natives of this land, written and brought to pass bitter things against his own Covenant people in this wilderness, yet so that we evidently discern that in the midst of his judgements he hath remembered mercy, having remembered his Footstool in the day of his sore displeasure against us for our sins, with many singular Intimations of his Fatherly Compassion, and regard; reserving many of our Towns from Desolation Threatened, and attempted by the Enemy, and giving us especially of late with many of our Confederates many signal Advantages against them, without such Disadvantage to ourselves as formerly we have been sensible of, if it be the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed, It certainly bespeaks our positive Thankfulness, when our Enemies are in any measure disappointed or destroyed; and fearing the Lord should take notice under so many Intimations of his returning mercy, we should be found an Insensible people, as not standing before Him with Thanksgiving, as well as lading him with our Complaints in the time of pressing Afflictions: The Council has thought meet to appoint and set apart the 29th day of this instant June, as a day of Solemn Thanksgiving and praise to [Yahweh] for such his Goodness and Favour, many Particulars of which mercy might be Instanced, but we doubt not those who are sensible of [Yahweh's] Afflictions, have been as diligent to espy him returning to us; and that the Lord may behold us as a People offering Praise and thereby glorifying Him; the Council doth commend it to the Respective Ministers, Elders and people of this Jurisdiction; Solemnly and seriously to keep the same Beseeching that being perswaded by the mercies of [Yahweh] we may all, even this whole people offer up our bodies and soulds as a living and acceptable Service unto [Yahweh] by [Messiah YahShua]."

----- The First Thanksgiving Proclamation (June 20, 1676) On June 20, 1676, the governing council of Charlestown, Massachusetts, held a meeting to determine how best to express thanks for the good fortune that had seen their community securely established. By unanimous vote they instructed Edward Rawson, the clerk, to proclaim June 29 as a day of thanksgiving, our first. That proclamation is reproduced here in the same language and spelling as the original. [Sacred Names Restored]

During the American Revolution, the Continental Congress set several Thanksgiving Days for the people to rejoice in their homes and churches for victories

won. In 1778, George Washington proclaimed a day on which to give thanks for the treaties just concluded with France. Three years after the War of 1812, President Madison proclaimed a special thanksgiving for peace. Later, there were scattered observances at varying dates in some states, mostly in the North. In 1817, New York State had adopted Thanksgiving Day in the Autumn as an annual custom.

By the middle of the 19th century many other states also celebrated Thanksgiving Day. Gradually, the feeling grew all over the land that we should have a uniform national Thanksgiving Day. Sarah Josepha Hale, the editor of the popular magazine, Godey's Lady's Book, was the chief sponsor of this idea for forty years. After the victory at Gettysburg, there was great rejoicing that the Civil War would soon be over. President Lincoln issued a proclamation and named the last Thursday in November as the date for our national Thanksgiving Day after the tally of the Gross National Product was in.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S THANKSGIVING PROCLAMATION OCTOBER 3, 1863: "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, tranquillity and Union. It is the duty of nations 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 are blessed whose God is the Lord."

Thanksgiving Day is the only American holiday birthed by the need of our country to give thanks to the Heavenly Father for our abundance.

**“Give thanks to Yahweh, for he is good; His love endures forever. Let the Redeemed of Yahweh say this— those he redeemed from the hand of the foe, those he gathered from the lands, from east and west, from north and south. Some wandered in desert wastelands, finding no way to a city where they could settle. They were hungry and thirsty, and their lives ebbed away. Then they cried out to Yahweh in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress...Others went out on the sea in ships; they were merchants on the mighty waters. They saw the works of Yahweh, His wonderful deeds in the deep. For He spoke and stirred up a tempest that lifted high the waves...They were glad when it grew calm, and he guided them to their desired haven. Let them give thanks to Yahweh for His unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men. Let them exalt him in the assembly of the people and praise him in the council of the elders. (Psalms 104: 1-6 ;23-25;30-32)”**

