PRAISE

Thanksgiving

Pilgrims, Please Pass the Pie!

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Pilgrims, Please Pass the Pie!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-2t_yijITHE

> *I give thanks to you, O Lord, with my whole heart... I bow down toward your holy temple and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness.*
>
> PSALM 138: 1-2

I used to think the Pilgrims invented Thanksgiving. I was wrong!

Most of us learned in grade school about the famous 1621 harvest gathering in Plymouth, Massachusetts, where Pilgrims and Native Americans shared a feast.

But the story of giving thanks reaches much further back than the early days of America.

The Pilgrims and other early American settlers drew inspiration from biblical traditions of thanksgiving, including the Old Testament's Feast of Tabernacles.

Under the Mosaic Law, God established a special peace offering specifically associated with thanksgiving.

Leviticus 7:12–15 describes how those bringing an offering of thanksgiving were to present unleavened cakes and wafers, along with leavened bread. The offering was shared as a communal meal, and the meat had to be eaten on the same day.

We've certainly strayed from the “leave none until morning” rule—and I'm so grateful for that! I truly love pumpkin pie for breakfast and a turkey sandwich for lunch the day after Thanksgiving. Add leftover stuffing, mashed potatoes, and gravy, and I'm in heaven!

But there's something even more remarkable about this ancient tradition. Unlike many celebrations of the ancient world that have disappeared, the Feast of Tabernacles, known in Hebrew as Sukkot, is still celebrated by Jewish people around the world.

Rooted in God's instructions to Israel more than 3,000 years ago, Sukkot is a joyful festival of thanksgiving and remembrance. It celebrates the harvest while recalling how God cared for His people during their wilderness journey after the Exodus.

What an extraordinary legacy of gratitude! Centuries later, King David expressed his own thanksgiving in Psalm 138:1–2:

“I give thanks to you, O Lord, with my whole heart…” He praised God for His steadfast love and faithfulness.

David's words remind us that thanksgiving is about far more than a bountiful harvest or a table filled with our favorite foods. It's about recognizing the One who provides, sustains, and loves us through every season of life.

In today's song, Elle Holcomb brings David's words to life as she sings: “I’ll sing praises up to thee among the nations. I’ll give thanks to thee oh Lord among the peoples. I’ll sing praises up to thee within my soul.”

As Thanksgiving approaches, may we remember the beautiful thread of gratitude woven throughout Scripture. Whether our tables are crowded with family, our plates are piled high with leftovers, or our hearts are carrying burdens no one else can see, we always have reasons to thank God.

And perhaps the sweetest tradition we can carry forward is this: to give thanks with our whole hearts —not just on Thanksgiving Day, but every day.

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