

Thanksgiving

A RICH HERITAGE

Most of us think of Thanksgiving as a traditional American holiday, and it certainly is that. But the idea of a holiday in which to give thanks is quite old. In fact back in the Old Testament God told Moses to have the Israelites celebrate a **harvest festival**, which was called the **Feast of the Tabernacles**. During this festival that lasted for seven days everyone lived in booths and tents in memory of the years the children of Israel spent wandering in search of the promised land. They did this in response to the command of God in Deuteronomy 16:13,14:

“And you shall rejoice in your feast, you and your son and your daughter and your male and female servants and the Levite and the stranger and the orphan and the widow who are in your towns. Seven days you shall celebrate a feast to the Lord your God in the place which the LORD chooses, because the Lord your God will bless you in all your produce and in all the work of your hands, so that you will be altogether joyful.”

Moving forward several centuries we find a custom which developed in eastern Europe around the year 1500. The reaper who cut the last sheaf of grain during the harvest was crowned as the “**Corn Mother**,” dressed up in a gown made of sheaves of grain, and rolled through the village in a wheel barrow, followed by laughing crowds as part of the harvest celebration.

There was also a “**Harvest Home Supper**” that was a tradition in England beginning in the early 1500’s. The servants of the land baron would gather around a large table in his home. The table was piled with roast beef and canisters of ale. The servants ate and drank with the land owner and his family in joyful celebration of the bountiful harvest. Then after dinner everyone was required to join in joyful singing as the table was filled with foaming brown jugs and bright brass candlesticks.

The pilgrims undoubtedly brought memories of the English “**Harvest Home**” celebrations with them when they came to the new world and celebrated that first harvest in 1621. It was not, however, until 242 years later in 1863 that Thanksgiving became an annual event. But that first pilgrim holiday in 1621 found the colonists in a mood for rejoicing. They shared their bounty with the Indians and let their weary spirits soar in three days of feasting and sport with little emphasis on religion.

The man whose help and devotion contributed most to making that day one of

thankfulness rather than despair was a Patuxet Indian named **Squanto**, the Indian saint of Plymouth. In 1605, 16 years earlier, an English exploring party had landed on the coast of New England in the region later settled by the pilgrims. They captured several Indians, of whom Squanto was one, and took them back to England as souvenirs of the voyage. Apparently Squanto was well treated in England and in 1614 he joined an expedition that was setting sail for the new world. This provided Squanto an opportunity to return home. The fleet landed at Plymouth and Squanto returned to his tribe, though not for long.

One of the ships in the fleet remained behind to trade with the Indians when the others set sail on the return voyage to England. In the course of this trading the captain lured some of the Indians on board ship where he had them thrown into the hold. Guess who was among them? Squanto. The captain then set sail for Spain and sold the Indians in the slave market. Squanto's homecoming was short-lived and he soon found himself back across the ocean once again. Squanto was most fortunate in that he was bought by some local friars who treated him well and trained him in the Christian faith. Some years later he left the friars and worked his way to England where the treasurer of the Newfoundland Company discovered him and took him into his home. Knowing that Squanto longed to return home, this kind gentleman arranged passage for him.

In 1619 Squanto once again arrived home on his native soil, but his happiness was once again short-lived. While he was in England a plague had exterminated the entire tribe. It was probably measles or smallpox which were brought from Europe by the early settlers and the Indians had no immunity to them. Such diseases were as deadly as the black death. Squanto went to live among a neighboring tribe, the **Wampanoag**, who had also been decimated by the disease, but not wiped out. They were, however, not his people and Squanto was restless and unhappy.

Six months later the pilgrims arrived. The Indians kept their distance from the colonists for some time but finally decided they needed to make contact. So an Indian by the name of Samoset made the first overture toward the white men by walking right down the main street of the little village while the other Indians remained in the woods. He knew some broken English that he had picked up from earlier explorers and boldly addressed the new colonists. However, he addressed them in an undressed condition. He was "*stark naked.*" They hurriedly covered him with a sheet pretending they wanted to protect him from the cold. He spent several days with them and enjoyed the hospitality so much that the colonists had to drive him away, for they could not afford to entertain him any longer with white bread and "strong waters." He returned a week later, however, with about 60 men including Squanto. After a few days all left except for Squanto who adopted the pilgrims as his own people and never left them until his death two years later.

Can't you just see God preparing the way here for the protection and care of these first Puritan Pilgrims? If it hadn't been for Squanto the Pilgrims could not have survived. And had it not been for the cordial treatment Squanto received by the British on both his trips abroad, he probably wouldn't have adopted the Pilgrims when they arrived in America.

Squanto had become a Christian while in Europe and his gifts as an interpreter, his understanding of the attitudes of the Indians, his knowledge of the techniques of hunting, fishing, and farming in that environment were invaluable to the colonists. It was largely due to Squanto that the pilgrims were able to establish and preserve peace and friendly trade with their native American neighbors. Governor Bradford records that he was “*a special instrument sent by God for their own good beyond expectation.*”

This devout band which had landed on Plymouth Rock in December 1620 were a courageous and hardworking lot, but they were ill-equipped, both personally and materially for making a livelihood from a formidable wilderness. They were for the most part townsfolk, shopkeepers, and craftsman. Only a handful of them had any experience at all with farming or building. They hadn't brought adequate tools for cutting timber, or lines and hooks for fishing. They had been drawn to the new world, not by the lure of the new lands to exploit, but by their enthusiasm for serving the Lord in their own way, and they expected Him to give them strength. They had faith in the words of Jesus in both Matthew 21:21 and John 14:12-14:

“Truly I say to you, if you have faith, and do not doubt, you shall not only do what was done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and cast into the sea,’ it shall happen.”

“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these he shall do; because I go to the Father. And whatever you ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in My name, I will do it.”

It does seem that God was most certainly looking after these pilgrims, for despite all their hardships they did manage to survive and to found a permanent colony, which would have been impossible if certain fortunate circumstances had not combined to aid them. If Squanto's tribe, the Patuxet had not been wiped out by the plague of small pox or measles, they probably would have massacred the new arrivals as soon as they landed in December of 1620. Without Squanto's help they would have had no corn crop to be thankful for in the autumn of 1621, and they could not have established peaceful trade relations with the Indian tribes from surrounding areas.

Their third piece of good fortune was finding a hidden supply of Indian corn. This happy event happened right after the **Mayflower** had made its first landing at Cape Cod, in what is now Provincetown Harbor. Here on November 13, 1620, this small group of pilgrims who had been shut up in the storm-tossed little ship for over 2 months at last felt solid ground under their feet. The children wild with joy, ran shouting up and down the beaches. The women brought out great bundles of dirty clothes and did a gigantic laundry in the fresh streams. Hungry for fresh food, the young people waded into the chill waters and dragged out oysters, mussels, and crabs, which were devoured by all. During all this activity the sentries kept an anxious watch, for none knew when savages might come

swooping over the dunes.

Captain Miles Standish organized a scouting party to explore the territory to see whether or not it was desirable for settlement. In spite of the fine harbor and prepared fields, they determined to look farther, for there wasn't an adequate supply of fresh water on the sandy cape. They encountered only one small party of Indians, who fled at the sight of them. The Pilgrims noticed the harvested corn fields and soon discovered the Indian village. The huts having been vacated quickly by the Indians were still filled with fresh venison, earthenware pots, and baskets made from crab shells and woven fiber. They simply helped themselves to some of the best things.

Close by, hidden under hills of sand they found a large woven basket containing about 4 bushels of seed corn, which had been stored there by the natives for spring planting. They took all they could with them and a few days later returned for the rest and while gathering that found other similar hiding places for additional corn. They hauled away about ten bushels in all and gave not a thought to the fact that they were stealing that corn from the Indians who also needed it. We've no doubt, however, that the Indians had additional corn stashed elsewhere or they would have probably attacked the Pilgrims to keep from starving to death.

These stores of seed corn would not however have been enough to save the colonists from starvation the following winter if they had also not had the vacant corn fields of the Patuxet in which to plant the crop. The labor of clearing fields and building houses that first winter would have been more than they could do. Nor would the fields have been enough if they had not had Squanto to teach them how to handle the crop. *"The time for planting corn,"* Squanto said, *"was when the leaves of the oak tree were the size of a squirrel's ear."* I wonder if the modern agronomist is aware of this scientific technique. He also helped them to build fences in the brooks to catch fish. We're reminded of the verse in Nehemiah 9:15 referring to the Israelites when they were wandering in the desert:

"For their hunger you gave them bread from heaven, and for their thirst you brought water for them out of the rock, and you told them to go in to possess the land that you swore to give them."

God provided for these brave Pilgrims in much the same way, and these pilgrims felt they had much to be thankful for that first autumn in the new world, even though 50 of the original 100 had died during that first horrible winter. Half of the original colonists lay under unmarked, plowed over graves, so as not to let the savages know how many of their number were gone. Many died from malnutrition, scurvy, and pneumonia caused by exposure and a weakened physical condition.

But with the coming of spring in 1621 there were wild greens, berries, and fruits; and the fish and game were plentiful. With the warm weather and a balanced diet the health of the colonists improved and there were no more deaths. When the Mayflower sailed for England that summer, not a single colonist chose to turn from the rigorous life in the new

world and go back with the ship. The pilgrims could face the coming winter of 1621-22 with the knowledge that they would have adequate shelter. They had built houses and community buildings. Their first homes weren't log cabins as many believe, but were made out of poles interwoven with branches and covered with a soft adhesive matter which hardened like plaster. They had steeped thatched roofs like those they had known in England. Can you imagine living in nothing more than a grass shack through a New England winter with heavy snows and sub zero temperatures?

The colonists had cause for thanksgiving in the autumn of 1621 in that they had established friendly relations with their Indian neighbors. That spring the colonists had made a treaty with the Indians and their chief, **Massasoit**, with Squanto setting the stage.

Though this was an oral treaty, with puffs upon Massasoit's peace pipe, it stands as one of the most successful non-aggression pacts in history, wrought by a handful of white men with one of the most powerful chieftains of New England. Bradford, in recording these events 24 years later, said that this treaty had never been broken. That shows you what people of different colors, backgrounds, and nationalities can do to foster friendly relationships without the interference of government. They simply respected one another's rights and treated one another as they would like to be treated. Sound familiar? That's the exact formula Jesus taught for living a good life. When asked what was the greatest commandment in the Law, Jesus answered:

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22: 37-39).

Jesus repeats this concept again in John 13:34:

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you."

The pilgrims after months of semi-starvation now felt that they could afford to give a true harvest feast like those that they celebrated in England. Game, fish, and fruits were plentiful in the autumn season. Edward Winslow wrote an account of the harvest feast in a letter he sent back to England:

"Our harvest being gotten in, our governor (**William Bradford**) sent four men on fowling so that we might after a more special manner rejoice together. They killed as much fowl in one day that served the Company for a week. The colonists had invited Massasoit and expected that he would bring two or three of his top lieutenants. He brought 90 of his braves with him. During the celebration, as a form of recreation, the Indians and the colonists arm wrestled. The Indians went out and killed five deer which they gave to our governor and **Captain Miles Standish.**"

In addition to the five deer contributed by the Indians, the menu included turkeys, wild geese, ducks, lobsters, eels, clams, oysters, and fish. The wild fruits of the summer: gooseberries, strawberries, plums, and cherries had been dried, a practice the Pilgrims learned from the Indians, for there was no sugar for making the customary jams or jellies. The nearby bogs abounded in cranberries, which the Pilgrims may have gathered and dried as the Indians did, though there is no mention of the bitter berries (cranberry sauce) which now grace every Thanksgiving table. They sweetened their lips with wine made from the grapes which grew plentifully in the New England countryside. It was brought out by the gallon for the feast, supplemented and perhaps spiked with the “*strong waters*” from their English stores.

There were biscuits and bread of English wheat, and corn in various forms; parched corn, roasted corn, hoe cakes and ash cakes, and Indian pudding made of corn meal and molasses boiled in a bag. It is even speculated that the children could have munched on popcorn balls because we know the Indians of the region used popcorn before the coming of the white man.

Cooking was done largely in the open, with venison and turkeys and geese turning on the spits, lobsters and oysters roasting in the coals, and clam chowder and venison stew simmering in iron kettles over the fire. One can imagine the weariness of the women during those festive three days. There were only five women that had survived that first winter, and with a few young girls and a handful of children they cooked and served about 130 men. Other forms of recreation other than arm wrestling during the celebration included marksmanship with bows and arrows; leaping, jumping, and racing. There were also games of “stool ball,” in which a ball was batted through wickets, a sort of rough and tumble croquet. Miles Standish marched around with his little band of soldiers. They discharged blank volleys and blew their bugles to the delight and wonderment of their Indian guests.

These few days of abandonment to worldly pleasures were a wholesome release for the colonists, whose lives had been meager and severe. To share what they had in lavish hospitality with their Indian neighbors gave them a sense of well-being, and though they paid for their generosity with shortages of supplies the following winter, they had no regrets. But the next few years were equally difficult for the colonists, especially due to additional ships bringing more settlers but no provisions. The winter of **1623** was a grim one, and in the spring a drought set in which lasted from the third week in May until well into July. The precious crops withered and the colonists were in despair.

The governor appointed a day of fasting and prayer and after 9 hours of supplication before God clouds moved across the sky from the sea and blotted out the burning sun. By morning a gentle rain was falling, reviving the scorched fields and also the spirits of the colonists. A similar event occurred in the Old Testament in **1 Kings 18:42-45**, where Elijah prays for rain:

“But Elijah climbed to the top of Mount Carmel and fell to the ground and

prayed. Then he said to his servant, 'Go and look out toward the sea.' The servant went and looked, but he returned to Elijah and said, 'I didn't see anything.' Seven times Elijah told him to go and look, and seven times he went. Finally the seventh time, his servant told him, 'I saw a little cloud about the size of a hand rising from the sea.' Then Elijah shouted, 'Hurry to Ahab and tell him, Climb into your chariot and go back home. If you don't hurry, the rain will stop you!' And sure enough, the sky was soon black with clouds. A heavy wind brought a terrific rainstorm."

A few days later Captain Miles Standish, who had gone off on a journey to find food, returned, bringing not only fresh supplies but the news that the *Anne* was approaching, a ship bearing many of the friends who had been left behind in Leyden when there was not room for them on the **Mayflower**. In view of these blessings, the governor proclaimed July 30, 1623, as a day of prayer and Thanksgiving for the entire colony. **This is considered the first real Thanksgiving Day**, since it was the first time that a day was appointed officially by the governor for both religious and social celebration.

Thanksgiving celebrations were not held every year nor were they held on a specified date. Some colonies declared different Thanksgiving celebrations on different days and some just established a day of feasting and celebration when they felt it was warranted. We would like to read for you some selected pieces from the diary of one Julianna Smith of Massachusetts recounting the joy experienced on their thanksgiving Day in 1779 in the midst of the Revolutionary War:

“The tables were set in Uncle Simeon’s Dining Hall and even that big room had no space to spare when we were all seated. There were four old ladies who no longer have homes or children of their own and so came to us. They were invited by my mother, but Uncle and Aunt Simeon wished it so.

“The day was bitter cold and when we got home from Meeting (church), which father did not keep over long by reason of the cold, we were glad for the fire in uncle’s dining hall. By the time dinner was one-half over those of us who were on the fire side of one table were forced to get up and carry our plates with us around to the far side of the other table, while those who had sat there were as glad to bring their plates around to the fire side to get warm. All but the old ladies who had a screen put behind their chairs.

“Uncle Simeon was in his best mood, and you know how good that is! He kept both tables in a roar of laughter with his droll stories of the days when he was studying medicine in Edinborough, and afterwards he and father and uncle Paul joined in singing hymns and ballads. You know how fine their voices go together. Then we all sang a hymn and afterwards my dear father led us in prayer, remembering all absent friends before the throne of grace, and much I wished that my dear Betsey was here as one of us, as she has been of yore.

“We did not rise from the table until it was quite dark, and then when the dishes had been cleared away we all got round the fire as close as we could, and cracked nuts, and sang songs and told stories. You know nobody can exceed the two grandmothers at telling tales of all the things they have seen themselves, and repeating those of the early years in New England, and even some in the old England, which they had heard in their youth from their elders. My father says it is a goodly custom to hand down all worthy deeds and traditions from father to son, as the Israelites were commanded to do about the Passover and as the Indians here have always done, because the word that is spoken is remembered longer than the one that is written.”

God gave these same instructions to the Israelites in Genesis 12:24-27:

“Remember, these instructions are permanent and must be observed by you and your descendants forever. When you arrive in the land the Lord has promised to give you, you will continue to celebrate this festival. Then your children will ask, ‘What does all this mean? What is this ceremony about?’ And you will reply, ‘It is the celebration of the Lord’s Passover, for he passed over the homes of the Israelites in Egypt. And though he killed the Egyptians, he spared our families and did not destroy us.’ Then all the people bowed their heads and worshiped.”

Julianna Smith continues:

“For the youngsters there were after dinner games. One of which was the Cranberry contest. The players, each supplied with a large needle and a long coarse thread, stood around a big bowl of raw cranberries. At a given signal all pitched in and threaded as many cranberries as they could in the allotted 3 minutes. The one who strung the most received a prize and the privilege of hanging his ruby necklace around the neck of their chosen one with the accompaniment of a kiss.

“The *pumpkin race* was another Thanksgiving sport. The contestants lined up, each with a small pumpkin and a wooden spoon. The prize in this case was awarded to the one who could roll their pumpkin to the finish line first. Since the pumpkin is a lopsided fruit and the contestants could use only the spoon to guide it, the wobbling course provided much hilarity.

“A favorite Thanksgiving custom among the youngsters was the practice of dressing in costumes, putting on masks or painting faces, and parading through the streets on Thanksgiving morning begging from passers-by. Sounds more like Halloween, doesn’t it? But this tradition started as a re-enactment of the coming of the Indians to the Pilgrim feast. Simple pleasures we no longer seem able to enjoy.”

These simple pleasures can be more fun and provide for more family bonding than sitting in front of a big screen TV watching a bunch of grown men pushing each other around from one end zone to the other fighting over the possession of a little ball.

It wasn't until the thirteen colonies had been united by the Revolution that a general day of Thanksgiving was proclaimed. Congress sent a resolution to President Washington that he establish

“a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many favors of Almighty God, especially by affording them an opportunity to establish a Constitution of government for their safety and happiness.”

After some debate the resolution was adopted by both houses and President Washington issued the first national Thanksgiving Proclamation setting Thursday, November 26, 1789, as the day. The proclamation reads as follows:

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

“Now, therefore I do recommend and assign Thursday, the twenty-sixth 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; for the manifold mercies, and the favorable interpositions of his providence, in the course and conclusion of the late war; for the great degree of tranquility, 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; 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 transgressions; to enable us all, to perform our several and relative duties properly and punctually; to render our National

Government a blessing to all the people, by constantly being a government of wise, just, and constitutional laws, discreetly and faithfully executed and obeyed; to protect and guide all sovereigns and nations (especially such as have shown kindness to us), and to bless them with good governments and peace; 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 God alone knows to be best.”

Don't you wish with all your heart that we could be a nation with such an attitude today?

Thanksgiving did not actually become a national holiday with the *Washington Proclamation*. Later presidents viewed the custom with indifference, or, as in the case of Thomas Jefferson, with disapproval. Jefferson declared that such proclamations were a “monarchical practice” and ignored this festival during his 8 years in office. Many Americans clung to the Puritan belief that Thanksgiving should be inspired by the beneficence of the Deity rather than the dictates of politicians and ignored such proclamations for a specific date. Since these groups were unwilling to compromise, Thanksgiving continued to be a regional holiday in spite of the efforts of the governors of the various states. However, although the date could not be agreed upon, the Thanksgiving feast had now become a strong American tradition.

Sentiment was continually growing, however, toward making Thanksgiving an annual holiday on which Americans of all faiths and backgrounds could join in offering thanks to the Creator for their homes in this free and bounteous land. The most energetic worker toward this goal was **Mrs. Sarah Josepha Hale**. She wrote the following:

“Thanksgiving like the fourth of July should be considered a national festival and observed by all our people. There is a deep moral influence in these periodical seasons of rejoicing in which whole communities participate. They bring out, and together, as it were, the best sympathies of our nature.”

In 1846 she became editor of the then widely read *Godey's Lady's Book of Philadelphia*, and it was then that she began her full scale campaign to make Thanksgiving a national holiday. During the 17 years between 1846 and the issuing of the Lincoln Proclamation in 1863, Mrs. Hale wrote hundreds of letters to prominent people in all walks of life, urging her cause. Each Autumn, **Godey's** carried impassioned editorials on this subject, as well as recipes for succulent dishes to supplement the turkey: “*Indian Pudding with Frumenty sauce; ham soaked in cider 3 weeks, stuffed with sweet potatoes, and baked in maple syrup.*” On October 3, 1863, in the midst of the Civil War, Lincoln issued a national Thanksgiving Proclamation, the first since that of Washington in 1789. It reads as follows in the best of Lincoln's dignity and faith:

“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 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 provoke their aggressions, 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.

“The ax has enlarged the borders of our settlements. The mines of iron, coal, and precious metals have yielded even more abundantly than heretofore. Population has steadily increased, notwithstanding the waste that has been made on the battlefield; and the country, rejoicing in the consciousness of augmented strength and vigor, is permitted to expect a 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 mercy 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 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 intervention 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.”

The wide span of time we have covered in this brief time this morning should indicate to us that human nature is such that there is a need to express gratitude to God for the bounty of the earth. There is a joy in coming together for feasting and sharing this bounty with those we hold dear. Let us take just a few moments now to share with one another and thank God for the many blessings he bestows on us. Would some of you share with us something that you have to be thankful for as we look forward to this day of celebration and thankfulness.