

## Thanksgiving Civil or Religious/Pagan Holiday?

- The American Thanksgiving Holiday is not pagan in origins. It is a Civil Holiday meant for giving thanks to God and to pray for America. The first national Thanksgiving Proclamations were those issued by the Continental Congress between 1777 and 1784. From 1785 to 1788 there were no national Thanksgiving Proclamations. George Washington issued the first Presidential Thanksgiving Proclamation in 1789. Abraham Lincoln issued Thanksgiving Proclamations in the spring of 1862 and the spring of 1863; both proclamations gave thanks for victories in battle. These Thanksgivings are NOT regarded as the originators of the so-far unbroken series of presidential Thanksgiving proclamations because they are giving thanks for specific victories and not for more general "blessings of God." Jefferson Davis, likewise, issued a Thanksgiving proclamation giving thanks for victories in battle in 1862 and had, early in 1861, proclaimed a Day of Fasting & Humiliation (the only other President to proclaim a Day of Fasting & Humiliation was John Adams in 1798 & 1799). Abraham Lincoln's Thanksgiving Proclamation in the autumn of 1863 - the SECOND Thanksgiving Proclamation in that year, following his springtime proclamation giving thanks for victory in battle - gave more general thanks for the blessings of the year. This second 1863 Thanksgiving Proclamation, the first in the unbroken string of annual presidential Thanksgiving proclamations, is regarded as the true beginning of the national Thanksgiving holiday. Actually, it was a resurrection and not a beginning, since there had been earlier national Thanksgivings, beginning with those proclaimed by the Continental Congress during the Revolutionary War.
- THE PILGRIMS DID NOT OBSERVE THANKSGIVING IN NOVEMBER: The Pilgrims celebrated at Plymouth for three days after their first harvest in 1621. The event occurred between Sept. 21 and Nov. 11, 1621. The Pilgrims held a true Thanksgiving celebration in 1623 following a fast, and a refreshing 14-day rain which resulted in a larger harvest. This one took place in the summer.
- Only Canada, U.S., two Caribbean Islands, and LIBERIA celebrate Thanksgiving.
- There are other countries in Europe who have similar holidays that are religious in nature with pagan origins and dealing with the harvest. They are called Harvest Festivals and do not take place in November.
- American Thanksgiving is not a harvest festival. Fictitious traditions involving the pilgrims have been superimposed on Holiday.
- Only Pagan/religious holidays are forbidden in the Bible. I.E. Christmas, Easter, Valentine's Day, or any other non Biblical religious holiday. Civil Holidays just like voting are up to the individual.
- Jesus observed a civil holiday. Feast of Dedication. Purim is also a civil holiday in the Bible.
- THANKSGIVING DAY 1789 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 signal 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 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, which we experienced 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 hath been pleased to confer upon us.

- And also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations and beseech him to pardon our national and other transgressions – to enable us all, whether in public or private stations, to perform our several and relative duties properly and punctually – to render our national government a blessing to all the People, by constantly being a government of wise, just, and constitutional laws, discreetly and faithfully executed and obeyed – to protect and guide all Sovereigns and Nations (especially such as have shewn kindness unto us) and to bless them with good government, peace, and concord – To promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, and the increase of science among them and Us – and generally to grant unto all mankind such a degree of temporal prosperity as he alone knows to be best. Given under my hand at the City of New York the third day of October in the year of our Lord 1789. GO. WASHINGTON.
- THE FIRST IN AN UNBROKEN SERIES OF AUTUMN PROCLAMATIONS:  
THANKSGIVING DAY 1863 by ABRAHAM LINCOLN BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA – 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 can not fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the everwatchful 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 if, as soon as may be consistent with the divine purpose, to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquillity, 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.

- Regarding the Native Americans God wanted all the Canaanites exterminated by the Israelites. Therefore the genocide of the Native Americans may have been of God you don't know. God is in control of everything just like our slavery was punishment; the genocide of the Native Americans was allowed by God.
- Evacuation Day on November 25 marks the day in 1783 when the British Army departed from New York City on Manhattan Island, after the end of the American Revolutionary War. In their wake, General George Washington triumphantly led the Continental Army from his headquarters north of the city across the Harlem River, and south through Manhattan to The Battery at its southern tip. Before it was a national holiday, Thanksgiving was proclaimed at various dates by state governors – as early as 1847, New York held Thanksgiving on the same date as Evacuation Day, a convergence happily noted by Walt Whitman, writing in the Brooklyn Eagle. The observance of the date was also diminished by the Thanksgiving Day Proclamation by 16th President Abraham Lincoln on October 3, 1863, that called on Americans "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." That year, Thursday fell on November 26. In later years, Thanksgiving was celebrated on or near the 25th, making Evacuation Day redundant.

1. 2 Chronicles 36:11-23 (Gentile leaders can make decrees of God and be used by God)
2. Ezra 1:1-2
3. Isaiah 44:28
4. Isaiah 45:1-3
5. Jeremiah 27:6-8
6. Daniel 6:26
7. Jonah 1:1-6 (Above precept the whole world has always had access to knowledge of the God of Israel. Here the shipmaster made a decree that everyone pray to his God which included the God of Israel for their safety. Whichever God was real might answer their prayer and protect them.)
8. John 10:22-24 (Jesus observing/participating in a civil holiday. See our Feast of Dedication lesson)
9. Judges 11:30-40 (Examples of civil holidays in the Bible)
  - Verse 31=This dude was off his bean. You can't sacrifice anything you want. What if an unclean animal like a dog had come out.
10. Esther 9:20-32
  - Decree made to commemorate a historical event. Like 4th of July or Thanksgiving. Maccabees did the same with Feast of Dedication.
11. Jeremiah 29:4-7
12. Exodus 20:12 (Father's day/Mother's day)
13. Ephesians 6:2
  - Father's Day was inaugurated in the United States in the early 20th century to complement Mother's Day in celebrating fathers, fathering, and fatherhood. Father's Day was founded in Spokane, Washington at the YMCA in 1910 by Sonora Smart Dodd, who was born in Arkansas. Its first celebration was in the Spokane YMCA on June 19, 1910. Her father, the Civil War veteran William Jackson Smart, was a single parent who raised his six children there. After hearing a sermon about Anna Jarvis's Mother's Day at Central Methodist Episcopal Church in 1909, she told her pastor that fathers should have a similar holiday honoring them. Although she initially suggested June 5, her father's birthday, the pastors of the Spokane Ministerial Alliance did not have enough time to prepare their sermons, and the celebration was deferred to the third Sunday of June. It did not have much success initially. In the 1920s, Dodd stopped promoting the celebration because she was studying in the Art Institute of Chicago, and it faded into relative obscurity, even in Spokane. In the 1930s Dodd returned to Spokane and started promoting the celebration again, raising awareness at a national level. She had the help of those trade groups that would benefit most from the holiday, for example the manufacturers of ties, tobacco pipes, and any traditional present to fathers. Since 1938 she had the help of the Father's Day Council, founded by the New York Associated Men's Wear Retailers to consolidate and systematize the commercial promotion. Americans resisted the holiday during a few decades, perceiving it as just an attempt by merchants to replicate the commercial success of Mother's Day, and newspapers frequently

featured cynical and sarcastic attacks and jokes. But the trade groups did not give up: they kept promoting it and even incorporated the jokes into their adverts, and they eventually succeeded. By the mid-1980s the Father's Council wrote that "(...) [Father's Day] has become a Second Christmas for all the men's gift-oriented industries." A bill to accord national recognition of the holiday was introduced in Congress in 1913. In 1916, President Woodrow Wilson went to Spokane to speak in a Father's Day celebration and wanted to make it official, but Congress resisted, fearing that it would become commercialized. US President Calvin Coolidge recommended in 1924 that the day be observed by the nation, but stopped short of issuing a national proclamation. Two earlier attempts to formally recognize the holiday had been defeated by Congress. In 1957, Maine Senator Margaret Chase Smith wrote a proposal accusing Congress of ignoring fathers for 40 years while honoring mothers, thus "[singling] out just one of our two parents". In 1966, President Lyndon B. Johnson issued the first presidential proclamation honoring fathers, designating the third Sunday in June as Father's Day. Six years later, the day was made a permanent national holiday when President Richard Nixon signed it into law in 1972. ***Consumer Rites: The Buying & Selling of American Holidays By Leigh Eric Schmidt & USA.GOV/LOC History of Father's day***

- Mother's Day in the United States is an annual holiday celebrated on the second Sunday in May. Mother's Day recognizes mothers, motherhood and maternal bonds in general, as well as the positive contributions that they make to society. It was established by Anna Jarvis, with the first official Mother's Day celebrated in Grafton, West Virginia, on May 10, 1908. Internationally, there are a large variety of Mother's Day celebrations with different origins and traditions. American Mother's Day is not directly related to the many traditional celebrations of mothers and motherhood that have existed throughout the world over thousands of years, such as the Greek cult to Cybele, the mother god Rhea, the Roman festival of Hilaria, or the Christian Laetare Sunday celebration (associated with the image of Mother Church). In these other countries, Mother's Day is still synonymous with these older traditions. Remember people the United States separated from Europe. Our civil holidays are different from their holidays. Those countries do not have separation of church and state really. So for example: Mothering Sunday is 'a day in praise of mothers' celebrated in the British Isles and elsewhere in the commonwealth on the fourth Sunday in Lent since the Middle Ages. Constance Adelaide Smith revived its modern observance beginning in 1913 to honour the Mother Church, 'mothers of earthly homes', Mary, mother of Jesus, and Mother Nature. It gained popularity in response to the American Mother's Day and its narrowly biological definition of motherhood. The American Mother's Day holiday arose in the 1900s as a result of the efforts of Anna Jarvis, daughter of Ann Reeves Jarvis. Following her mother's 1905 death, Anna Jarvis conceived of Mother's Day as a way of honoring the sacrifices mothers made for their children. Attempts were also made after the civil war.

14. Exodus 34:12-15 (Civil holidays are up to the individual to participate in. Followers of Christ should not participate in religious holidays dedicated to other god's. That would be eating food or celebrating unto idols. For example Halloween, Valentine's Day, Christmas, Easter, etc... Fourth of July, Veterans day, Thanksgiving, etc... are Civil holidays.)
15. Numbers 25:1-5
16. Acts 15:20\_29
17. Galatians 4:8-11
18. Revelation 2:14-23
19. Jeremiah 10:1-5
20. 2 Peter 3:15-16
21. 1 Corinthians 8
22. 1 Corinthians 10:14-31
23. Romans 14:15-23
24. 1 Timothy 4:4-5

**25. CHURCH POLICY ON HOLIDAYS:**

- **OBSERVED BY CHURCH/COMMANDMENT OF GOD:**  
Passover\*, Feast of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Feast of Trumpets, Day of Atonement, & Feast of Tabernacles/8th day
- **ISRAELITE CULTURAL HOLIDAYS (UP TO INDIVIDUAL):**  
Feast of Dedication & Purim
- **CIVIC HOLIDAYS (UP TO INDIVIDUAL):**  
MLK DAY, PRESIDENT'S DAY, MEMORIAL DAY, JULY 4TH (Sirius star conjunction is usually July 5th or 6th not 4th and can fall between 4th and 7th. Depending on your latitude anywhere from July to August. See 4th of July note below), LABOR DAY, MOTHER'S DAY, FATHER'S DAY, VETERAN'S DAY, & THANKSGIVING ETC...
- **PAGAN/RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY (NOT ALLOWED)**  
Christmas, New Year's, Valentine's, Easter, Halloween, and any other religious holiday such as a Saint's day, Lent, Ash Wednesday, Mardi Gras etc...
- **When the initial battles in the Revolutionary War broke out in April 1775, few colonists desired complete independence from Great Britain, and those who did were considered radical. By the middle of the following year, however, many more colonists had come to favor independence, thanks to growing hostility against Britain and the spread of revolutionary sentiments such as those expressed in the bestselling pamphlet "Common Sense," published by Thomas Paine in early 1776. After voting on independence on July 2, the Continental Congress then needed to draft a document explaining the move to the public. It had been proposed in draft form by the Committee of Five (John Adams, Roger Sherman, Robert Livingston, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson) and it took two days for the**

Congress to agree on the edits. Once the Congress approved the actual Declaration of Independence document on July 4, it ordered that it be sent to a printer named John Dunlap. About 200 copies of the “Dunlap Broadside” version of the document were printed, with John Hancock’s name printed at the bottom. Today, 26 copies remain. That is why the Declaration has the words, “IN CONGRESS, July 4, 1776,” at its top, because that is the day the approved version was signed in Philadelphia. On July 8, 1776, Colonel John Nixon of Philadelphia read a printed Declaration of Independence to the public for the first time on what is now called Independence Square. (Most of the members of the Continental Congress signed a version of the Declaration on August 2, 1776, in Philadelphia. The names of the signers were released publicly in early 1777.) <https://constitutioncenter.org/>

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