

BRYAN STATION BAPTIST CHURCH

THE PIONEER BAPTIST

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THANKSGIVING

By: Dr. C. D. Cole

Genesis 3:1-5, “Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.”

Our salvation lies in the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush. Oh how dependent we are upon God! Oh how rich we are in His good will.

It was His good will that He sent us a Saviour. And what a Saviour! And at what terrible cost He saved us! And how grateful we ought to be for salvation!

It was His good will that opened our eyes to the benefits of Christ’s

redeeming grace. It was His good will that gave us an experience of grace. It was through His good will that we were made to realize, to take to heart, our lost condition. It was His good will that our eyes were opened to see Christ as the only way out; the only way of escape from condemnation and hell; the only way to heaven. James 1:18, *“Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.”* John 1:12-13, *“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”*

It was His good will that makes all things work together for our good. With His salvation and His promise of providential care, we ought to be a thankful people.

When Alexander was singing for Mr. Chapman the evangelist, one day he looked down upon a poor paralytic sitting in a wheel chair and said, “What is your favorite number?” Quick as a flash the

crippled man replied, “Count your Blessings.”

Let us count our blessings instead of listing our troubles. Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, pastor of Marble Collegiate Church, New York City, once had a man come to his study who was in utter despair. He had been trying to sum up enough courage to commit suicide. With a sob, he said, “Everything is against me, everything has gone to the dogs and I can’t take it.” Dr. Peale picked up his pencil, took a piece of paper and drew a line down the middle of it. He said here are two columns; we are going to list in the first column things that have

gone to the dogs and in the second column things that have not gone to the dogs. In the first column things gone to the

dogs, we will list, My wife has turned against me and has left me. No, said the man, she has not left me, she is true. Well, we will put it down in the column, things not gone to the dogs. Now we will put down here in the column of things gone to the dogs, My children have all gone

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to the dogs and are in jail. No, no, don't talk foolish, said the man, my children are not in jail, they are a fine group of children and love me. After a little more of this the man grinned and said, I've played the fool. I've got much to be thankful for. I'm ashamed of the way I have acted. Many a despondent man or woman would get a new grip on life if they would count their blessings, and see the good will and Him that dwelt in the bush.

NATIONAL THANKSGIVING

Deuteronomy 33:13-16, "*And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the LORD be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, And for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon, And for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills, And for the precious things of the earth and fulness thereof, and for the good will of him that dwelt in the bush: let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren.*"

Among the things charged against a fallen race is included the sin of ingratitude, of unthankfulness: Romans 1:21, "*Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful...*"

Colossians 3:15, "*And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.*"

Ephesians 5:20, "*Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*"

I Thessalonians 5:18, "*In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*"

Hebrews 13:15, "*By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is,*

the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name."

Philippians 4:6, "*Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*"

A minister was expressing his grief and that of his wife concerning one of their sons, to a confidential friend. This son was a young fellow of 19 or 20 years of age. He had just graduated from college and had found a good position yielding an income of between two and three thousand dollars; a good salary several years ago. This son still lived at home. He still sat at his father's table. And this father said, "It never seems to occur to him that for many years his mother and I economized, did everything we could to give him and the other children a reasonably good education and a fair start in life. Now he is earning a salary equal to mine, but it never occurs to him to offer his mother one dollar. Of course we charge him no board. He still lives under the parental roof, and eats at his father's table, but he keeps all his income to himself. It is not that we want money so much; we manage to get along; but we are grieved that all our years of sacrificial ministry seemingly have wrought in him no gratitude at all" How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child.

But what about our heavenly Father? What must be his thoughts and feelings towards his thankless children, and towards his thankless creatures? And besides this, think of His rebellious children and his rebellious creatures. Oh, what multitudes are in rebellion against their Maker! True saints have grounded their arms of rebellion, they still sin, but they do not want to, it is through the infirmity of the flesh, for which they judge

themselves with grief.

We are approaching the day of national thanksgiving. But the majority of people of this country on that day will do everything but give thanks to God. Many, instead of giving thanks, will use the day for pleasure; hunting, fishing, golfing, and many other pleasures; all ignorant of the God who is the source of all genuine pleasure.

THE BLESSING OF JOSEPH

I have read to you the blessings of Moses upon Joseph; a blessing which all of God's people have been the recipients. Even those who are not His by redemption and a surrendered life receive of his bounty, for he left not himself without witness, in that he did good and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness, sending his rain on the just and the unjust alike.

AN ANALYSIS OF ALL MATERIAL GOOD

This is a most comprehensive analysis of material good. Nothing seems to be omitted from this list of material benefits which God confers upon His creatures.

The land is to be blessed. The land must be blessed of God if it is to yield food for his creatures.

It is to be blessed by the precious things of heaven. This earth is wonderful but it is not independent. This earth cannot do without the precious things of heaven. Let the rain cease and the dew cease to be distilled, and there will be a famine in the land. Without these precious things of heaven the earth becomes parched and unlovely.

"*For the dew and for the deep that coucheth beneath.*" The deep refers here to the sea of waters. The sea is the home of all the waters. Ecclesiastes 1:7, "*All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full*

[no danger of the sea running over for it is never ever full]; *unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return to go.*" From the deep beneath the waters ascend and descend again, returning to the place whence they came. It is somewhat as the blood of our veins is sent on its errand of life by the heart, and returns again to be sent again upon its circuits. So these vitalizing forces of nature are sent by God to bless the land. When God made the earth he made three fourth of it water. This water ascends in moisture, forming the clouds, the clouds empty their rain upon the earth to bless it; this water fills the rivers and they run into the sea to be sent again, as God orders, back into the heavens to fall again upon the earth to bless the land. How wonderful is nature, or rather how wonderful is nature's God.

Fruits brought forth by the sun. For the precious fruits are brought forth by the sun. How dependent this earth is upon the sun. It is the sun that gives beauty and color to the things of earth. Without the sun there would be no flowers. Try growing some in the shade. A man said, "I will have some flowers under the trees without the sun." But the sun said, "No you won't" and the sun was right. Some friends sojourning in Europe, and they wanted to take some colored pictures of the scenery. But the natives said, "It's no use, the sun is too low; too far gone to give color." We must have sunlight in its fulness if we are to have color.

WHERE DOES OUR FOOD COME FROM?

You say, it comes from the earth; from the ground; from the soil. Not altogether. What brings it forth from the soil? It is God's sunlight. And there is no substitute for it, any gardener will tell you that. When you eat a radish just

remember you are eating sunlight. No matter what you have to eat they are precious things brought forth by the sun. What if God who said, Let there be light, should reverse the order and say, Let there be darkness, perpetual darkness. Why that would be a plague as it was in the days of Moses. We ought to thank God every morning that the sun rises; thank him for another day of sunshine.

PRECIOUS THINGS PUT FORTH BY THE MOON

I'm not a scientist, but I know that we need the moon. God created two great lights; one to rule the day, and the other to rule the night. We need the sun by day and the moon by night. It is the moon that puts forth tidal attraction that causes the flowing and ebbing of the tides.

CHIEF THINGS OF THE ANCIENT MOUNTAINS

What blessings come from the mountains? Well, for one thing rivers always have their springs in the hills somewhere. Back in 1929 some of us were traveling in southwest Texas. Along the highways there would be small depressions in the surface of the road, usually only two or three feet deep. Most of the time they are dry but we were warned to be watchful, for a flash flood miles up in the hills or mountains would cause water to rush down these small depressions with such power as to sweep a car away and people were sometimes drowned.

The irrigation projects in the west are to hoard these waters and let them down on the arid plains as they are needed for the crops.

And think of the precious metals God has put in mountains and hills. How rich God has made this earth in things for human use. Gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, and now they are discovering new metals; metals the

average person knows little about.

FOR THE PRECIOUS THINGS OF THE EARTH

God made this earth to be inhabited. He made it for man. He provided for a tenant. He placed the things here that man could use. When the earth is blessed by the precious things of heaven treated fairly by man the tenant, it will yield all that man needs for his existence.

THE GOOD WILL OF HIM THAT DWELT IN THE BUSH

Reference is to the bush which burned with fire and was not consumed when God talked to Moses out of the bush. The good of him that dwelt in the bush is to be seen in every bush.