

THANKSGIVING SABBATH SCHOOL CLASS

- Say - Welcome to Sabbath School. Let's bow our head for opening prayer and ask God for understanding as we focus on the holiday of Thanksgiving in our Sabbath School lesson today.
- Say - We all know a great deal about the Thanksgiving celebration in the United States today. It is a time for family and friends to gather for feasting and entertainment of all kinds and of course Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.
- Say - We also know a great deal about what is referred to in history as the "First Thanksgiving" which was celebrated in 1621 among Pilgrims and Natives of the land as they thanked God for their blessings.
- Say - As the story goes, the Pilgrims had endured many hardships through the long Mayflower voyage and the first winter. Sickness, hunger and death took its toll on their families. In spite of their hardships, history reveals they relied on God and gave Him thanks for the new land of opportunity.
- Say - God did provide for them and soon they were introduced to corn from the Natives and life changed for the better. To the Pilgrims it fed their families and what was left over they were able to sell and or use as a medium of exchange for supplies from England. Today we all reap the benefit of the blessings from corn. What would we do without popcorn?
- Say - We also know, almost 240 years later, a very special President, President Lincoln, proclaimed Thanksgiving Day a national holiday in 1863. For the reader's convenience, I have printed his proclamation expressing his thankfulness to God during a time when our nation was in the midst of a great Civil War.
- Say - However the Bible speaks of the Thanksgiving Harvest Festivals of God established long before 1621. God's festivals found in Lev. 23 lay out the "Path of Life" for all mankind. God's Harvest festivals reveal the character of Christ, our example of a humble, thankful servant. Why did God want His people to be "thankful servants"?
- Say - The Bible says, being thankful is the nature of true worship; God desires sincere, heartfelt thanks to Him, Ps. 50:1, 14, Phil. 1:9-11 I Pet. 2:1-2. Being thankful is part of the pure spiritual garment we must "put on" to be one of His followers, Matt. 22:11, Rev. 3:5.

Say - When we give thanks to our Creator, we are saying we know from whom all our blessings come. When we give thanks to God, we acknowledge that He is the true God; there is no other God we worship, praise and adore, Ps. 95:2-5, 104.

Say - When we give thanks to God, we are saying we know it is from the power of God that we are given an abundance of food and water. We are telling Him we know who has provided the seasons for our needs and the needs of the animals of the land. He provides trees as shade and homes for birds and animals; it is our Creator who provides green grass for cattle and sends the rain to nourish all, Ps. 104.

Say - When we give thanks to God, we are saying we recognize His majesty in the mighty seas He created and all that are in them is from His divine miraculous power, Ps. 93:1, 97, 104.

Say - When we give thanks to God, we are saying, "He supplies all our needs", we are admitting our total dependence is on Him, that He is the one who gives life and He is our "deliverer from all wickedness", Ps. 97:10, Philippians 4:19.

Say - The Bible tells us, "In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you", I Thes. 5:18. Why does He teach us to be thankful in all things, it is because when we are busy giving thanks to God, we will not be complaining or thinking evil thoughts.

Say - Another reason God wants His people to give sincere thanks is because, when we give thanks to God, "we bring pleasure to Him" by declaring who brought us to the Truth of God, Deut. 4:32-34, Ps. 47:11, 147:7, 11, Matt. 11:25.

Say - Being thankful is a sign we are "firmly rooted" in the truth of God for then we will abound with sincere "Thanksgiving" towards one another and to God who is the author of all blessings "being knit together in love" lifting one another up and comforting each other, Col. 2:2, 7, Ps. 96:2-3.

Say - Paul gave us some final instructions by telling us, "Continue (be persistent, be diligent) in prayer and... Thanksgiving", Col. 4:2 and David tells us why, "Offer unto God thanksgiving; ... call upon me in the day of trouble: and I will deliver thee..." Ps. 50:14, 15.

Say - We can be especially thankful for how "...the LORD God, (is) merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth," and how He "commended his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us", Rom. 5:8, Ex. 34:6.

Say - And finally, God's teaches us when we are unthankful we deny Him and His power. God's people must be thankful to be in the Kingdom of God. "Whoso offers praise (thanksgiving) glorifieth me: and to him ... will I show the salvation of God" (Psalms 50:23).

Say - Our memory verse expresses being truly thankful is an external expression of what is in our heart on a daily basis. In other words EVERY day is Thanksgiving Day! It is what exposes our faith in God to all mankind and we will be able to say:

MEMORY VERSE

"So we thy people and sheep of thy pasture will give thee thanks for ever: we will show forth thy praise to all generations".

Psalms 79:13

MEMORY VERSE FOR TOTS

"... we will give thee thanks forever...

Psalms 79:13

BELOW IS THE SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON FOR
TOTS.

THANKSGIVING

I LIKE GOD'S SPECIAL HARVEST FESTIVALS,
DESIGNED BY MY CREATOR AND KING.
I WILL GIVE THANKS TO HIM EACH DAY,
AND WITH PRAISES TO HIM I WILL SING.

(LEV. 23, PS.50:23)

I WILL THANK HIM FOR HIS POWER AND MIGHT,
FOR SEASONS OF LIFE AND SNOWFLAKES;
OH WHAT A BEAUTIFUL SIGHT!!

(PSALMS 97, 104)

I WILL MAKE GOD HAPPY WHEN I THANK HIM
FOR THE TRUTH HE GAVE TO ME;
FOR I WILL TELL HIM, IN ALL CREATION,
IT IS HIM I TRULY SEE!

(PSALMS 47:11)

MEMORY VERSE:

...I WILL GIVE THANKS FOREVER...PSALMS 79:13

PLEASE FIND AN APPROPRIATE PICTURE TO COMPLEMENT THE BIBLE STORY AND BELOW ARE THE MEMORY VERSES TO BE CUT OUT AND PLACED WITH THE APPROPRIATE PICTURE FOR THE CHILDRENS' SABBATH SCHOOL NOTEBOOKS.

MEMORY VERSE

"SO WE THY PEOPLE AND SHEEP OF THY PASTURE WILL GIVE THANKS FOR EVER: WE WILL SHEW FORTH THY PRAISE TO ALL GENERATIONS".
PSALMS 79:13

MEMORY VERSE FOR TOTS

"WE... WILL GIVE THANKS AND PRAISE TO THEE FOR EVER..."
PSALMS 79:13

Proclamation Establishing Thanksgiving Day

October 3, 1863

The year that is drawing towards 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 even 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 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 theatre of military conflict; while that theatre 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 defence, have not arrested the plough, the shuttle, or the ship; the axe had 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 battle-field; 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 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 it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes 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 third day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the independence of the United States the eighty-eighth.

A. Lincoln