

When God's People Give Thanks (Isaiah 12)

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Introduction

What is the significance of Thanksgiving? (1) Many view Thanksgiving as a time of family, food, fun and football. (2) Others observe Thanksgiving as a celebration of diversity: eliminating the spiritual significance of the day, they would rather focus on the fact that Pilgrims and Indians sat down together in peace. (3) For those who posit that Western civilization is the cause of all the world's ills, the first Thanksgiving was a harbinger of doom, disease, death and destruction. (4) The Pilgrims, the founding fathers of our country, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln all felt the need to set aside a time to offer thanksgiving to God. This is the true heritage of Thanksgiving Day.

With Thanksgiving just around the corner let us consider the subject of being thankful, not just on one particular day, but throughout the entire year. This lesson touches on the characteristics of thanksgiving. When God's people give thanks, what happens? Four things. Let us examine Isaiah 12 to find the characteristics of thanksgiving. The first twelve chapters of Isaiah contain prophecies of condemnation directed against Judah for her waywardness and sin. Yet, this section closes on a positive note — the song of the thankful remnant (Isaiah 12:1-6).

Isaiah 12:1-6 ... 1 Then you will say on that day, "I will give thanks to You, O Lord; For although You were angry with me, Your anger is turned away, And You comfort me. 2 "Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; For the Lord God is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation." 3 Therefore you will joyously draw water From the springs of salvation. 4 And in that day you will say, "Give thanks to the Lord, call on His name. Make known His deeds among the peoples; Make them remember that His name is exalted." 5 Praise the Lord in song, for He has done excellent things; Let this be known throughout the earth. 6 Cry aloud and shout for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, For great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel. (NASB95)

They Are United

They are United (v.1) — True thanksgiving comes from all the faithful, not just a select few (Ps. 30:4-5; Rom.15:5-6).

Isaiah 12:1 ... 1 Then you will say on that day, "I will give thanks to You, O Lord; For although You were angry with me, Your anger is turned away, And You comfort me. (NASB95)

Psalm 30:4-5 ... 4 Sing praise to the Lord, you His godly ones, And give thanks to His holy name. 5 For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for a lifetime; Weeping may last for the night, But a shout of joy comes in the morning. (NASB95)

Romans 15:5-6 ... 5 Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus, 6 so that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (NASB95)

They Are Trusting

They are Trusting (v.2) — True thanksgiving comes from trusting (having confidence) in God, not in self (Isa. 26:1-3; Phil. 4:4-7).

Isaiah 12:2 ... 2 “Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; For the Lord God is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation.” (NASB95)

Isaiah 26:1-3 ... 1 In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah: “We have a strong city; He sets up walls and ramparts for security. 2 “Open the gates, that the righteous nation may enter, The one that remains faithful. 3 “The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace, Because he trusts in You. (NASB95)

Philippians 4:4-7 ... 4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! 5 Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. 6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (NASB95)

They Are Joyful

They are Joyful (v.3) — True thanksgiving is an expression of joy, not a mere mechanical duty (Isa. 35:8-10; Acts 2:46-47).

Isaiah 12:3 ... 3 Therefore you will joyously draw water From the springs of salvation. (NASB95)

Isaiah 35:8-10 ... 8 A highway will be there, a roadway, And it will be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean will not travel on it, But it will be for him who walks that way, And fools will not wander on it. 9 No lion will be there, Nor will any vicious beast go up on it; These will not be found there. But the redeemed will walk there, 10 And the ransomed of the Lord will return And come with joyful shouting to Zion, With everlasting joy upon their heads. They will find gladness and joy, And sorrow and sighing will flee away. (NASB95)

Acts 2:46-47 ... 46 Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and

sincerity of heart, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved. (NASB95)

They Are Expressive

They are Expressive (vv.4-6) — True thanksgiving is something to be spoken, not just silently considered. Therefore, let us give thanks to the Lord (Ps. 92:1-4; Rev. 4:9-11), making known His deeds among the peoples (Ps. 105:1-3; Col. 1:24-29), manifesting praise in the midst of the assembly (Zeph. 3:14-17; Col. 3:15-17).

*Isaiah 12:4-6 ... 4 And in that day you will say, “**Give thanks to the Lord, call on His name. Make known His deeds among the peoples; Make them remember that His name is exalted.**” 5 Praise the Lord in song, for He has done excellent things; **Let this be known throughout the earth.** 6 Cry aloud and shout for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, For great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel. (NASB95)*

*Psalm 92:1-4 ... 1 A Psalm, a Song for the Sabbath day. **It is good to give thanks to the Lord** And to sing praises to Your name, O Most High; 2 To declare Your lovingkindness in the morning And Your faithfulness by night, 3 With the ten-stringed lute and with the harp, With resounding music upon the lyre. 4 For You, O Lord, have made me glad by what You have done, I will sing for joy at the works of Your hands. (NASB95)*

Revelation 4:9-11 ... 9 And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11 “Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.” (NASB95)

*Psalm 105:1-3 ... 1 **Oh give thanks to the Lord, call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples.** 2 Sing to Him, sing praises to Him; Speak of all His wonders. 3 Glory in His holy name; Let the heart of those who seek the Lord be glad. (NASB95)*

Colossians 1:24-29 ... 24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions. 25 Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, 26 that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, 27 to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. 28 We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. 29 For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me. (NASB95)

Zephaniah 3:14-17 ... 14 Shout for joy, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! 15 The Lord has taken

*away His judgments against you, He has cleared away your enemies. The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; You will fear disaster no more. 16 In that day it will be said to Jerusalem: "Do not be afraid, O Zion; Do not let your hands fall limp. 17 "**The Lord your God is in your midst**, A victorious warrior. He will exult over you with joy, He will be quiet in His love, He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy. (NASB95)*

Colossians 3:15-17 ... 15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. 17 Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father. (NASB95)

Conclusion

Unity, trust, joy and expression – are these characteristics found in your thanksgiving? To the lost, will you unite yourself with other Christians in obedience to the gospel? Then you will have something to be truly thankful for this week. To the saved, will you review your thanksgiving to see if you are walking the highway of holiness? You too will have something to be truly thankful for this week.