

Thoughts From The Heart
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Thanksgiving A Day
That Belongs To Everyone
PART II

ON THAT OCCASION IN THEIR CUSTOMARY PLACES OF WORSHIP, AND IN THE FORMS APPROVED BY THEIR OWN CONSCIENCE RENDER THE HOMAGE DUE TO GOD AND TO INVOKE THE INFLUENCE OF HIS SPIRIT TO SUBDUCE THE ANGER WHICH HAS PRODUCED SO LONG SUSTAINED A NEEDLESS AND CRUEL REBELLION. IN THE LATE 1930S, THE BY NOW "OLD AMERICAN TRADITION" WAS FINALLY WRITTEN INTO LAW. AFTER A DEBATE ABOUT WHETHER IT SHOULD BE CELEBRATED ON THE LAST OR FOURTH THURSDAY IN NOVEMBER, FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT TALKED TURKEY TO THE CONGRESS, HOPING TO STIMULATE THE DEPRESSION ECONOMY, HE ASKED FOR AND GOT THE FOURTH THURSDAY, THEREBY ADDING AN EXTRA WEEK TO THE CHRISTMAS SHOPPING SEASON THAT YEAR. 1942. THE DARKEST PART OF WORLD WAR II. THE COUNTRY FROM WHICH THE PURITANS HAD FLED THREE CENTURIES EARLIER WAS FIGHTING DESPERATELY FOR ITS OWN SURVIVAL. THAT YEAR AMERICANS BEGAN COMING TO ENGLAND TO JOIN THE WAR

EFFORT, ON THANKSGIVING IN THAT FATEFUL YEAR SEVERAL THOUSANDS WOULD GO TO PLYMOUTH, ENGLAND TO CELEBRATE. AND FOUR THOUSAND SERVICEMEN PACKED WESTMINSTER ABBEY, BUILT A THOUSAND YEARS BEFORE THE NEW WORLD WAS DREAMT OF, TO GIVE THANKS TO GOD. ALL THROUGHOUT THE SECOND WAR, ON BOTH FRONTS, THANKSGIVING WAS CONSIDERED SO IMPORTANT THAT HOLIDAY DINNERS WERE PACKED IN PLASTIC POUCHES AND SENT TO THE MEN AT THE FRONT. EACH YEAR OF THE 'WAR' THE ARMY MADE GOOD ON ITS FAMOUS PROMISE, "NO ONE GETS CANNED TURKEY." OF ALL THE AMERICAN HOLIDAYS, SOCIOLOGISTS HAVE STATED, THANKSGIVING IS THE LEAST STRESSFUL. THERE ARE NO GIFTS TO GIVE, OR BE DISAPPOINTED AT NOT GETTING, THERE ARE NO CARDS, NO MORIBUND CUSTOMS TO OBSERVE. THERE IS NO CYNICISM OR CANT. IT IS SIMPLE, INNOCENT, UNMIXED WITH DOGMAT AND DOCTRINE. AND JUST AS AMERICANS COME FROM EVERYWHERE, THIS SIMPLE, CUSTOM "BELONGS TO EVERYONE"

"APACHES (NATIVE AMERICANS), BAPTISTS, BUDDHISTS, CATHOLICS, EPISCOPALIANS, IROQUOIS, JEWS, MORMONS, PRESBYTERIANS, QUAKERS, SHAKERS, UNITARIANS, BLACK, WHITE, JEWISH,

LATIN AMERICANS, ASIA AMERICANS, ^{AND} MUSLIMS.
EACH YEAR, ON THE FOURTH THURSDAY
IN NOVEMBER, AMERICANS GATHER TO-
GETHER AND FEAST. AND HOWSOEVER
THEY ARE MOVED TO DO SO, WITH
QUIET REMEMBRANCE OR ELOQUENT
WORDS, THEY THANK GOD, (HASHEM)
FOR HIS BLESSINGS ON THE LAND
AND IN THEIR LIVES.