

November 24, 2019

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The Grateful One Called on the Name of the LORD

Psalm 116

The Mayflower, carrying the European religious separatists who would become known as Pilgrims, landed in Plymouth, Massachusetts on December 18, 1620. They had spent 66 days crossing the Atlantic and were in trouble! The winter was harsh, provisions scant, and 50 of the 102 passengers died before spring. No wonder survivors held a 3-day feast following the first harvest in the fall of 1621 to call on the Name of the Lord in thanksgiving!

- I. Call on God in time of TROUBLE, v. 4.
 - A. When facing soul DISTRESS, v. 3.
 - B. When facing SORROW, v. 8.
 - C. When facing DANGER, v. 8.
 - D. When facing UNRELIABLE MEN, vv. 10-11.
- II. Call on God to present a TESTIMONY, vv. 12-13.
 - A. I will testify about God's CHARACTER, vv. 1-2; 5-6.
 - B. I will testify about God's PROTECTION, v. 6.
 - C. I will testify about God's DELIVERANCE, vv. 6; 8-9; 16
- III. Call on God to offer THANKSGIVING, v. 17.
 - A. Thanksgiving is a PROMISED SACRIFICE, vv. 17-18.
 - B. Thanksgiving is a PUBLIC PRAISE, vv. 18-19.
 - C. Thanksgiving includes a SETTLED PEACE, v. 7.

Thanksgiving for the Psalmist was not a day of feasting, not merely a holiday, but a matter of lifelong, declared love for God in light of His goodness (vv. 1-2). What is thanksgiving to you?



Do a bit of research (Google works) on the "first Thanksgiving" celebrated by the surviving Pilgrims in 1621. What are winters like in New England (they landed in December)? What troubles would they have faced that winter, and what impact would this have on their giving of thanks to God when they gathered the first harvest the next fall? How conscious are you as a family of survival only by God's provision? Read together Deuteronomy 8:11-20. What besides verbal "thanks" does God want from us in recognition of who he is?

For Further Study, Thought, and Discussion:

1. The follower of Jesus should expect trouble in this world, on the authority of Jesus Himself (John 16:33).
 - When and how have you experienced deliverance from trouble as you have "called on the Name of the LORD"?
 - What has God provided so the believer may experience peace in the midst of trouble (John 14-16)?
 - Are you in some distress now? Will you call on the Name of the LORD? Will it be the first thing you think to do?
2. What aspects of God's character as noted by the Psalmist (Psalm 116), or elsewhere in Scripture, give rise to thanksgiving? Name some characteristics and state why they lead you personally to give thanks.
3. Read Psalm 116:7. In what ways has the Lord "dealt bountifully with you"? When you are in distress or anxious, can you speak these words to your soul?
4. Have you ever made promises to the LORD related to His deliverance? See the very real prayer from a place of trouble in Jonah 2. What did Jonah promise? Did he seem to have developed a lifelong heart of thanksgiving (read chapter 3)? Has your experience with the Lord's salvation and deliverance led to a lifelong, declared love for God and heart of thanksgiving?

NEXT WEEK: Psalm 138, I Called on the Name of the LORD.