

Scripture Lessons for a Special Service of Thanksgiving Old Testament

Jeremiah 17:13-14 NIV O LORD, the hope of Israel, all who forsake You will be put to shame. Those who turn away from You will be written in the dust because they have forsaken the LORD, the Spring of living water. 14 Heal me, O LORD, and I will be healed; save me and I will be saved, for You are the One I praise.

Epistle

Galatians 5:16-24 So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. 17 For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under Law. 19 The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no Law. 24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.

Gospel

Luke 17:11-19 Now on His way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. 12 As He was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met Him. They stood at a distance 13 and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!" 14 When He saw them, He said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed. 15 One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. 16 He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked Him - and he was a Samaritan. 17 Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? 18 Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" 19 Then He said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."

A Thanksgiving Proclamation

It is the duty of nations as well as of men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God; to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy

Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations are blessed whose God is the LORD.

We know that by His divine law, nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world. May we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war which now desolates the land may be a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole people?

We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown.

But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own.

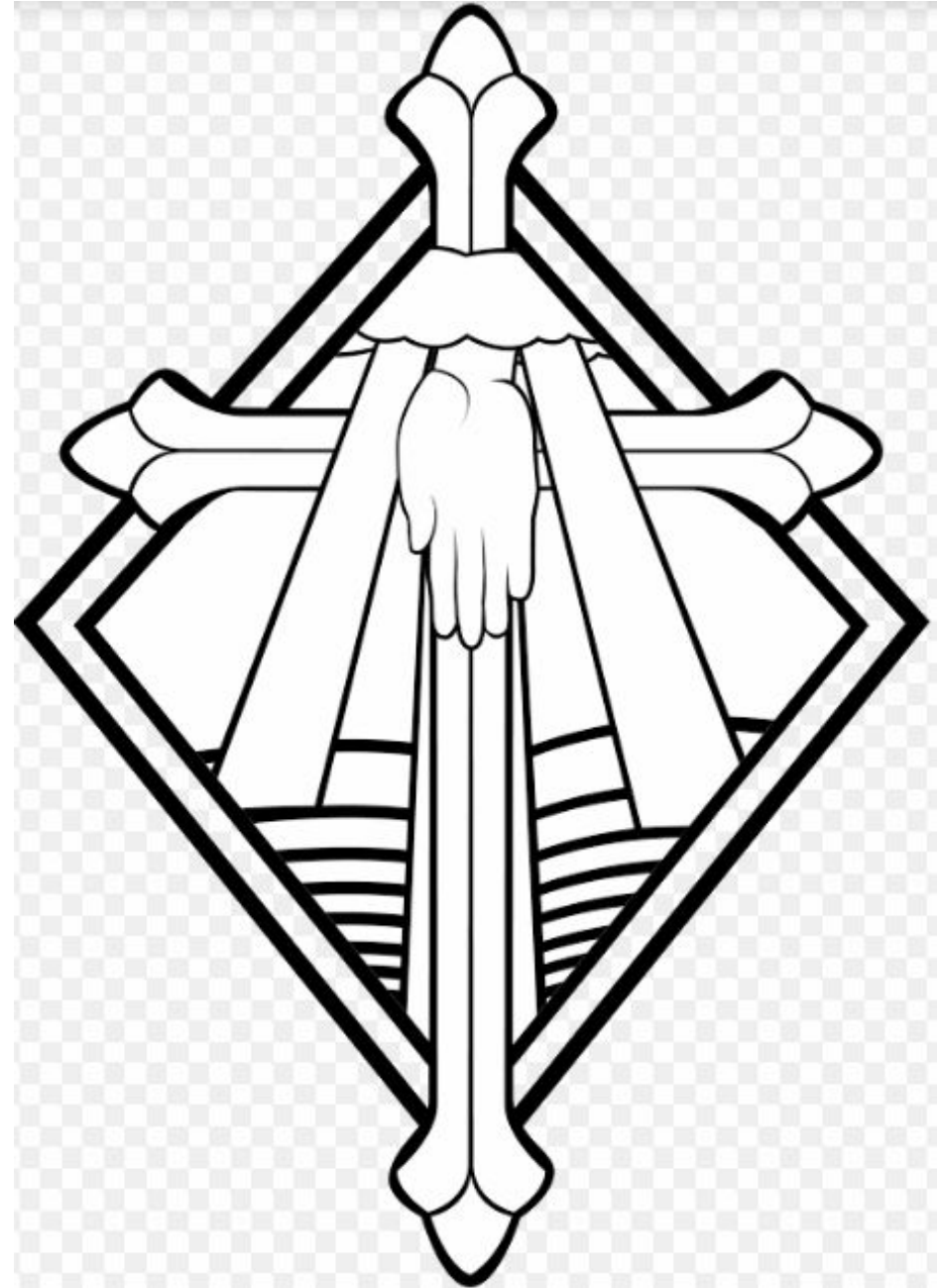
Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to, feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us.

It has seemed to me fit and proper that God should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged, as with one heart and one 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 as a day of

Thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens.

--Abraham Lincoln - October 3, 1863

Our Savior Lutheran Church  Lakeland, FL  ELS
Thanksgiving Eve Worship  *Christian Thanksgiving*
Ten Lepers  November 23rd, 2016, 4:30pm





The Service of Vespers ✠ ELH p.120



11/23 SPECIAL THANKSGIVING EVE 4:30pm WELCOME to Worship

Please rise. INVOCATION, CONFESSION OF SINS & THE ABSOLUTION

OPENING HYMN "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come" ELH #461 ST. GEO'S

1. Come, ye thankful people, come; - Raise the song of Harvest-home.
All be safely gathered in - Ere the winter storms begin;
God, our Maker, doth provide - For our wants to be supplied,
Come to God's own temple, come; - Raise the song of Harvest-home.
2. All the world is God's own field, - Fruit unto His praise to yield;
Wheat and tares together sown, - Unto joy or sorrow grown;
First the blade and then the ear, - Then the full corn shall appear.
LORD of harvest, grant that we - Wholesome grain and pure may be.
3. For the LORD, our God, shall come - And shall take His harvest home;
From His field shall in that day - All offences purge away;
Give His angels charge at last - In the fire the tares to cast,
But the fruitful ears to store - In His garner evermore.
4. Even so, LORD, quickly come - To Thy final Harvest-home;
Gather Thou Thy people in, - Free from sorrow, free from sin,
There, forever purified, - In Thy garner to abide.
Come with all Thine angels, come, - Raise the glorious Harvest-home.

The VERSICLES & The GLORIA PATRI ELH, p.120

PRAYER FOR THANKSGIVING

LECTION: SCRIPTURE LESSONS for Thanksgiving (printed on back page)

RESPONSORY

MAIN HYMN For the Beauty of the Earth ELH #463 FRED TIL BOD

1. For the beauty- of the earth, - For the glory of the skies,
For the love which- from our birth - Over and around us lies,
LORD of all,- to Thee we raise - This our hymn of grateful praise.
2. For the beauty- of each hour - Of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale, and- tree and flow'r, - Sun and moon and stars of light,
LORD of all,- to Thee we raise - This our hymn of grateful praise.
3. For the joy of- human love, - Brother, sister, parent, child,
Friends on earth, and- friends above, - Pleasures pure and undefiled,
LORD of all,- to Thee we raise - This our hymn of grateful praise.
4. For Thy Church that- evermore - Lifts her holy hands above,
Off'ring up on- ev'ry shore - Her pure sacrifice of love,
LORD of all,- to Thee we raise - This our hymn of grateful praise.

The VERSICLE, then HYMN 464 for the CANTICLE

CANTICLE HYMN Sing to the LORD of Harvest ELH #464 (3v) WIE LIEBLICH IST

1. Sing to the LORD- of- harvest, - Sing songs of love and praise;
With joyful hearts- and- voices - Your alleluias raise:
By Him the rolling- seasons - In fruitful or-der- move;
Sing to the LORD- of- harvest - A song of happy of love.
2. By Him the clouds- drop- fatness, - The deserts bloom and spring;
The hills leap up- in- gladness, - The valleys laugh and sing:
He filleth with His- fullness - All things with large- in-crease;
He crowns the year- with- goodness, - With plenty, and with peace.
- 3 Heap on His sa-cred- altar - The gifts His goodness gave,
The golden sheaves- of- harvest, - The souls He died to save:
Your hearts lay down be-fore Him, - When at His feet- ye- fall,
And with your lives- a-dore Him - Who gave His life for all.

KYRIE ELEISON

LORD'S PRAYER (Pastor prays/chants, Congregation join if comfortable)

C: ♪ Our Father, Who art in Heaven, Hallowèd be- Thy Name--;
Thy Kingdom come-, Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven;
Give us this day our dai-ly bread,
and Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against
us; And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil; For Thine is
the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory forever and ever, A- -men.

The (Evening) COLLECT (Pastor prays, Congregation Amen) C: ♪ A- -men.

The BENEDICAMUS P: ♪ Let us bless the LORD. C: ♪ Thanks be to God.

The BENEDICTION P: ♪ The Grace of our LORD Jesus Christ, And the Love of God,
And the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. C: ♪ A- -men.

CLOSING HYMN "Now Thank We All Our God" #63 NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT

1. Now thank we all our God - With heart and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things hath done, - In whom His world rejoices;
Who from our mother's arms - Hath blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love, - And still is ours today.
2. Oh, may this bounteous God - Through all our life be near us,
With ever joyful hearts - And blessed peace to cheer us;
And keep us in His grace - And guide us when perplexed
And free us from all ills - In this world and the next.
3. All praise and thanks to God - The Father now be given,
The Son, and Him who reigns - With them in highest heaven:
The one eternal God, - Whom earth and heaven adore!
FOR THUS IT WAS, IS NOW, - AND SHALL BE EVERMORE. AMEN.

HARVEST THANKSGIVING Luke 17:11-19 "ALWAYS BE THANKFUL" 11.23.16 OS

INTRODUCTION Since tomorrow is actually a national holiday and not the commemoration of a specific event or teaching of the Bible, there is wide leeway as to which readings we can choose for this day. Over the years, the **account of the Ten Lepers has become one of the traditional readings for a national day of Thanksgiving.**

The facts of the miracle are clear enough. Jesus was still in Galilee, but He was en route to Jerusalem with His disciples. As they traveled, they encountered ten lepers. Jesus instructed the lepers to present themselves to the priests in Jerusalem according to the Law of Moses. While they were en route, they noticed that the leprosy was gone. One of the lepers returned to worship Jesus in thanksgiving. The Holy Spirit inspired Luke to emphasize the fact that the leper who returned was a Samaritan. Jesus wondered what happened to the other nine who were also healed.

Luke informs us that Jesus and His disciples were traveling along the border between Galilee and Samaria. Although there was a much more direct route straight south through Samaria, Passover Pilgrims could not take it. This was because the Samaritans and the Jews hated one another, and the Samaritans simply refused passage to anyone who was headed for Jerusalem. If it weren't for the Roman occupation, Samaria and Judea would probably be at war, but because of the Romans, the Samaritans had to be satisfied with this token gesture of their hatred. It is interesting to note that the hatred and violence that we see in the Middle-East still today has been around **a long, long time.**

The Samaritan hatred meant that Passover Pilgrims like Jesus and His disciples had to detour around Samaria to get south to Jerusalem. Jesus had traveled south in Galilee until He reached the border with Samaria. Now He was traveling along the border with Samaria until He arrived at the Jordan River and the eastern border of Samaria. Then He would travel south until He arrived at the border of Judea where He could turn back toward the west and head for Jerusalem.

This little fact that Jesus was traveling along the border between Galilee and Samaria reminded the reader of the animosity between the Samaritans and the Jews. Nevertheless, in spite of this animosity, Jesus gave His healing to one of those Samaritans. That Samaritan even came back to give praise and thanks to Jesus. Here we see that **Salvation in Jesus Christ is NOT JUST for Jews, but it is for ALL people.**

The demonstration of grace for all people is a **wonderful Gospel nugget in this account, but there is another Gospel nugget** in Jesus' response to the other nine who did not return. While He seemed disappointed, He did not take back their healing. Here we learn that **Jesus does not take back His gifts** just because we are not as thankful as we should be. This is of great comfort to me because I know that I am not as

thankful to God as I should be. If God took back His gifts because I took them for granted, I could not even exist.

The **Bible does not tell us what happened to those other nine** healed lepers. They probably finished their trip to Jerusalem and showed themselves to the priests according to Jesus' instructions. It is even possible that the Holy Spirit worked saving faith in them at a different time. Since we don't have a clear word on what happened to them; we turn our focus back to the Samaritan.

The Samaritan returned and fell at Jesus feet with his face to the ground. This is actually more than simple thanksgiving. This is the posture of worship. The returning, the glorifying God, and the thanking of Jesus added up to a confession that this Samaritan believed that Jesus was the Lord. He confessed that, in Jesus, he was looking at the Son of God. The one who had been dying not only in his leprosy, but also in his sin was now alive in Jesus. The Holy Spirit had given him the gift of faith, and that faith received the gifts of God in Christ Jesus.

Jesus had told the ten lepers to show themselves to the priests. By the power of the Holy Spirit, the Samaritan leper understood that there was no priest of a higher order than the one who had healed him. He believed that Jesus was the true High Priest not just for Israel, but for all people everywhere. This leper now understood that we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God. ([Hebrews 4:14](#)) The one leper who returned understood. Jesus is the High Priest. The priests in Jerusalem are shadows by comparison. They are shadows who point forward to Jesus our Great High Priest.

Jesus dismissed the leper and said to him, "*Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well.*" ([Luke 17:19](#)) There are some scholars who wonder if the Holy Spirit led this healed Samaritan to go his way by remaining with Jesus and the disciples. Perhaps when Jesus released the Samaritan to go his way, the Holy Spirit led the Samaritan to join the other Passover Pilgrims walking with the Eternal High Priest. Perhaps He joined the other Passover Pilgrims with Jesus as they journeyed to Jerusalem. We don't know.

If he did walk with Jesus to Jerusalem, he would have seen a very different high priest. Jesus is the High Priest who not only offered up the sacrifice, but He Himself is the sacrifice. The priests in Jerusalem offered lambs, goats, and other animals for the forgiveness of sins. These were shadows that pointed forward to the sacrifice that God Himself would offer – the sacrifice of his only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ. If the healed Samaritan would have walked with Jesus, he would have witnessed his great high priest taken up from the earth on a Cross.

It is **on that Cross that Jesus performed a miracle much greater** than the healing of a leper. Because on that Cross, He offered Himself up to endure the full wrath of God's punishment against sin. He satisfied God's

justice so that the Samaritan leper could not only receive cleansing for his leprosy, **but also cleansing for his sin.**

The Samaritan is not the only one who can receive cleansing for the sake of the sacrifice Jesus made on the Cross. That cleansing is available to all people in all times and places. For the Holy Spirit inspired the Apostle John to write, “He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.” ([1 John 2:2](#)) Are you included in the whole world? Then this cleansing is for you.

Salvation came first to the Children of Israel, as Jesus was born of their people and He proclaimed the Gospel first to them, but this evening’s reading from Luke proclaims that **this Gospel is for all people in all times and all places.** There is no distinction: For **all** have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus, Whom God put forward as a Propitiation by His Blood, to be received by faith. ([Romans 3:22–25](#))

You need this cleansing even though you don’t have leprosy. We **all** have something that is much worse – (the leprosy of) sin. We may not need cleansing of the body, but we all need the cleansing of our sins. We all need the gifts that Jesus earned for us with His suffering and death on the Cross. That’s the reason the forgiveness of sins is such good news.

Jesus has given us a promise that is much greater than the healing of leprosy. Jesus has conquered death. Jesus has promised that there will come a day when He will raise all the dead. Some of those who sleep in death will awaken to shame and everlasting contempt, but those who believe in Jesus for the forgiveness of sin will awaken to everlasting life.

CONCLUSION We are gathered here this evening because the leaders of our nation have declared tomorrow to be a national day of thanksgiving. The activities tomorrow will cover the spectrum of human behavior. Some will just stuff their face and watch football and be happy for a day off. Others will at least try to at least keep the spirit of the holiday even if they are confused about who should receive their thanksgiving. Their thanks will consist mostly of a fuzzy warm feeling with family and friends.

In fact, only **those who believe in Jesus for the forgiveness of sins can give true thanks.** They can give thanks to Almighty God for the physical blessings of this earth. Most especially, they can give thanks for the **Forgiveness, Life, and Salvation** that they receive by faith in Jesus Christ. Christians are the only one who can give true thanks. Those who do not know Christ can even give thanks in prayer, but their thanks will go to a false god – a god who does not exist. Only Christians give thanks to the true God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They can give thanks for life today and life forever.

*“O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good,
for His Mercy endures forever.” **IJ’N, Amen. SDG***

*The Peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds
in Christ Jesus, to Life Everlasting. **Amen.***

PRAYER FOR HARVEST THANKSGIVING

God our Father, You have created the universe in great wisdom, and sustain it by Your powerful word. You are good to everyone, and have compassion on all that You have made. We enter Your house of prayer with thanksgiving, and come before You with songs of joy. We thank You for the many blessings and joys You lavish on our lives. We thank You for soil and seed, sunlight and rain, health and strength, machinery and technology, and every other blessing by which You give us our daily bread. You have given us a plentiful land, rich in resources for agriculture, mining, and industry. You have blessed us with education and skills to use these resources for the good of our country and its people. Although You do not always spare us from severe weather and dark days, we still must confess that our cup of blessing is overflowing, and so we praise Your Name. Make us continually aware of Your goodness, O Lord. Increase our trust that in all things You are working for our good.

But, Lord, You not only care for our bodies; Your richest love is reserved for the salvation of our souls. Because You have revealed Yourself to us in Your Word, we know You in Your limitless grace, and live in the light of Your truth and love. We thank You especially for Your greatest of gifts: Jesus Christ our Savior, and for all the blessings of the Gospel and the Church. Help us to appreciate fully these choicest gifts, and to produce in our lives a rich harvest of faith, goodness, and love.

Free us from every temptation to trust in uncertain things like **material wealth.** Free us from covetousness, envy, and jealousy. Increase our joy in what You provide, and make us content. Make us more sensitive to what others need. Give us compassion to help those who have too little, and the opportunities to share Your blessings. Let our service to others pave the way for witness to the Gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ Your Son. Teach us to use wisely the things You place at our disposal.

Bless and strengthen the poor and the hungry, those who cannot work, the lonely, the depressed, and especially those who are suffering because of their Christian faith. Give them all the generous help of friends, but, above all, strong trust in Your presence and care.

Guide the nations on earth, and particularly those countries whose people are desperately poor. Grant that all who look up to You for material blessings may find Your kingdom, and Your righteousness. Bless our country America with a united spirit and godly goals. Teach our leaders and people to know, believe, and do Your Will. Remove from us things that are unwise and harmful.

Continue to supply the spiritual needs of our families, so that truth, love, and high morals may bless our homes.

We offer You our prayers and our songs of praise, heavenly Father, in the Name of Your dear Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and honor forever. **Amen.**