

Once in a Lifetime: The Gratitude of Thanksgiving & the Renewal of Chanukah

Compiled by Rabbi Shawn Zevit

Hanukkah will begin the night before Thanksgiving in November, 2013 and this confluence will not happen again for centuries! I have compiled this material to help us explore the intersection of gratitude and rededication in Jewish life and the larger cultural celebration of American life. The material includes some of the diverse Jewish views on the intersection of Hanukkah and Thanksgiving and Christmas its more usual companion in the broader calendar as well as the ever evolving dialogue between Jewish life and the cultures in which the Jewish people live. I also explore some of the lesser-known roots of Hanukkah as an historic social, political and religious event and as an evolving Jewish-year cycle celebration.

1. Mi Yimalel/ Who Can Retell?

(Traditional)

Mee yi-ma-lel g'vur-ot yis-ra-el?
O-tan mee yim-neh?
Heh bi-chol dor ya-kum ha-gee-bor
Go-el ha-am!

Sh'ma! Ba-ya-meem ha-hem
bazman ha-zeh,
Ma-ca-bee mo-shee-ah oo-fo-deh,
Oo-v'ya-mey-nu kol am Yis-ra-el
Yi-ta-ched, ya-kum v-yi-ga-el.

Who can retell
the things that befell us?
Who can count them?
In every age a hero or sage
Rose to our aid.

Hark! At this time of year
in days of yore
Maccabees the temple did restore,
Now the people Israel must arise,
Redeem itself through deed
and sacrifice.

2. Ocho Candelicas (8 Candles)

(Ladino)

(Beautiful Hannukah is here- 8 Candles for me)

**CH: Una candelica, Dos candelicas
(Tres...Quatro, Cinco, Seish, Siete,
Ocho candela para mi**

v.1- Hannukah linda esta aqui
Ocho candela para mi (2x) CH
v.2 Muchas fiestas vo fazer,
Con alegrias y plazer (2x) CH
v.3 Los pastelicos vo comer
Con almandricas y lameil (2x) CH

3. Oh Hannukah, O Hannukah

(Yiddish Folk melody, F. Minkoff-

english)

Oy Hannukah, oy Hannukah
a yontif a sheyner
Alustiker a freylicher
Nito noch a zeyner
Alle nacht in dreydlech shplin mir
Zudik hesse latkes essen mir
Geshvinder tsindt kinder
Di Hannukah lichtelech on
Zol yeder bazunder

Bazingen dem vunder
 Un tantzen freylech in kohn (2x)
 O Hannukah O Hannukah
 Come light the menorah
 Let's have a party,
 we'll all dance the horah
 Gather round the table
 we'll give you a treat
 Dreydels to play with and latkes to eat
 And while we are playing
 The candles are burning so low
 One for each night,
 they shed a sweet light
 To remind us of days long ago (2x)

4. I have a Little Dreidel

(Deborah Kornfeld)

<http://jewishclimatecampaign.org/>

I have a brand new light bulb
 It's a miracle you see
 It lights the room completely
 Using half the energy

Oh compact fluorescent light bulb
 I really have to kvell
 It's just so energy efficient
 And it saves you gelt as well

My new fluorescent light bulb
 I think I just might plotz
 It's better for the environment
 Cause it uses fewer watts.

Oh compact fluorescent light bulb
 I really have to kvell
 It's just so energy efficient
 And it saves you gelt as well.

5. Light One Candle in the Dark

(c-Rabbi Shawn Zevit)

<http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/zevit5>

Huddled here the shadows
 dance against the wall,

The dark's embrace has come to call;
 We gather tightly in the inner space
 The prayer is whispered face to face...
 into the nightfall.

We will not stand
 for mindless tyranny
 To no stone throne
 would we bend a knee
 We take the sword
 into oppression's heart
 No callous threat
 can tear us apart
 from our God.

Chorus:

Light one candle in the dark
 for the miracles of old,
 Light one candle in the dark
 for the stories yet untold,
 Light one candle in the dark
 for the hope that will not die,
 For freedom's never-ending spark,
 Light one candle in the dark.

Today we stand blessed by being free,
 Protected by your wings of liberty;
 And yet there's places
 where the oil pours about;
 Cannot hide while others' lights go out...
 and still be free.

(Chorus)

Ma-oz tzur yeh-shu-a-tee
 L'cha na-eh li-sha-bey-ach.
 Tee-kon beyt ti-fil-a-tee
 Vi-sham to-dah ni-za-bey-ach.

Rock of Ages, let our song
 Praise your saving power;
 You amid the raging thron
 Were our sheltering tower.

Light one candle in the dark...

The Ballad of Thanksgivukkah

<http://www.davidpaskin.com/thanksgivukkah.html>

by Rabbi David Paskin with help from Ayelet Paskin and Dana Reichman Gitell

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I have a New Menorah, verses by composers of Hanashir and Rabbi Shawn Zevit, 2013

I have a new menorah

It looks like a turkey

We light our candles in it

We call it a "menurkey"

Chorus: Oh, menurkey, nurkey, nurkey

You are so very quirky

Menurkey, nurkey, nurkey

The table looks confusing

Something's weird with this display

It's only once a life-time

This 'wrong food' holiday

CHORUS

I had a little turkey

And then I had some more

And later someone found me

A-sleepin' on the floor

CHORUS

I have a little potato

I don't know what to do

Mash it or make latkes

Make both so give me two

CHORUS

Next year it's back to normal,

Not again for quite a while

Turkey's with menorahs

Civic and Religious Civilization gone wild!!

CHORUS

Why I Will Not Be Celebrating 'Thanksgivukkah'

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rabbi-daniel-brenner/why-i-will-not-be-celebra_b_4221034.html

Posted: 11/05/2013 9:53 pm Rabbi Daniel Brenner

In 1970, when one of the descendants of the Wampanoag tribe was asked to speak at Plymouth Rock, he said to the assembled crowd:

Today is a time of celebrating for you -- a time of looking back to the first days of white people in America. But it is not a time of celebrating for me. It is with a heavy heart that I look back upon what happened to my people.

Although I must admit that second graders in 17th century costumes are certainly worthy of a BuzzFeed photo series, anyone who has studied the history of Thanksgiving knows that it is far from a cute holiday. Take a look at these words excerpted from President Lincoln's proclamation of the national holiday in 1863:

While offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him... with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to his tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers...

Thanksgiving was born from a "national perverseness and disobedience" that took place during the bloody Civil War that turned Americans against one another. Afterwards, those who sought to popularize the holiday drew on symbols of another era of perverseness -- the cruel conquest of the new world that took place during the pre-colonial era. As a national holiday, Thanksgiving asks us to ritualize the mythic unity of Indian and White man, Confederate and Union soldier. In the rituals of the fall harvest, we all become "Americans" overcoming the divisions that separate us by uniting through connection to the land itself. Partaking in a shared harvest, we overcome ethnic and political division. It is a powerful and much needed message in a nation that is still, in many ways, divided.

Hanukkah is the opposite -- it does not mark unity of disparate parties but celebrates the fiercely independent Hasmoneans who sought control of their land in the shadow of a foreign oppressor. Hanukkah's message is not unity, peace, cooperation or diplomacy -- but defiance, independence, and the spiritual renewal that comes with reasserting political control of a sacred land. The Maccabees were not known for their tolerance, but they were praised for their conviction to fight against a larger armed force. If Hanukkah were to be paired with an American holiday, it would be a much better fit with the 4th of July.

And that is why the mash-up of Hanukkah and Thanksgiving is so disconcerting. Turkey themed menorahs and pumpkin kugels are all wonderful -- but diluting both festivals and forcing a shared message of "gratitude" or "spirit" is irresponsible. Thankfully, alternative voices are being heard, and the folks over at Heeb Magazine lauded the [Anti-Thanksgivukah song](#) on their website. May this be one of many efforts to help convince the public that both holidays have distinct histories, and that American Jews -- and those who celebrate with them -- should value both Thanksgiving day and Hanukkah night.

were able to overcome the radical Jewish Hellenizers, supported by the military might of the Syrian Greeks. This more accurate and morally ambiguous version of the story was first brought to my attention by my graduate school professor, Saul Wachs, who challenged us, as future Jewish educators, to think about how to teach the complete story of Hanukah, including the intra-Jewish dimension of the conflict.

I offer the following as one way of trying to meet this challenge.

For most of the American Jewish community and, I would argue, for many Israelis as well, the classical version of the Hanukah story, as well as the more complete version described above, contain thematic elements that create cognitive dissonance or even undermine the cultural messages that our communities are attempting to cultivate through the observance of this holiday. This is so because most Jews today are culturally closer to the moderate or even radical Hellenizers, vis-à-vis Western civilization, than we are to the rejectionist Maccabees whom we honor as heroes. Our current Jewish reality, in other words, is highly resonant with the Hanukah narrative, but it is a more uncomfortable resonance than most Jews acknowledge.

However, because of the unique perspective on modern Jewish life first articulated by Mordecai Kaplan and developed over time by the Reconstructionist movement, we are in a better position to integrate fully the complete story of Hanukah and to offer our fellow Jews an approach to its celebration that not only dissolves the cognitive dissonance, but actually draws inspiration from and builds on the intra-Jewish dimension of the story.

The true story of Hanukah describes the challenge of living in multiple civilizations. While we are not caught in the same political web of intrigue that confronted our ancestors, we are surely facing a similar type of cultural cross-pollination and similarly challenging questions about how to respond to it. Hanukah teaches, as does Reconstructionism, that balancing the influences between our respective civilizational inheritances brings us to an area more gray than black and white.

Historically, most approaches to "hyphenated" identities have taken one of two directions: giving one's loyalty definitively to one or the other civilization, or compartmentalizing one's respective identities so that each is assigned its own areas of influence, but neither significantly affects the other.

Reconstructionist Judaism has tended to view our multiple cultural identities as dynamic, interactive and growth-producing. as such, the true story of Hanukah becomes a perfect context for looking deeply into our own psyches to explore the evolving relationship between our Jewish and American selves, and to gather together to evaluate what our respective cultures have things to say to one another. Under what circumstances do we feel tension between these voices within? Which situations produce harmony between them? This perspective creates an extremely rich environment for both individual and collective spiritual work, and moves us beyond the familiar intercultural anxiety over the superficial connections between Hanukah and Christmas that normally hold our attention.

THE CULT OF SYNTHESIS IN AMERICAN JEWISH CULTURE

by: **Jonathan D. Sarna, Brandeis University**

Charles Liebman, in his discussion of the "major ideas, symbols, and institutions arousing the deepest loyalties and passions of American Jews," summed up the values underlying the "cult of synthesis" in two crisp sentences: There is nothing incompatible between being a good Jew and a good American, or between Jewish and American standards of behavior. In fact, for a Jew, the better an American one is, the better Jew one is. The roots of this idea are easily traced all the way back to the Puritans, who, for their own reasons and within a definite supersessionist framework, linked their experiences with those of the Israelites of old, and over time helped to define

America in terms drawn from the Hebrew Bible. The compatibility that they found between themselves and the Jews ("New England they are like the Jews! as like as like can be" was largely typological in nature with the Jews representing the past, and their conversion the promise of the future. Still the nexus between America and Jew had been established⁹

Noah also linked the Puritans to the Jews. In a letter inviting Daniel Webster to a Jewish charity dinner, for example, he reminded the Massachusetts senator that "your Puritan ancestors lived, a hundred years ago, under the Mosaic laws and flourished under the same government to which David and Solomon added power, glory and splendor."¹¹

Taken together, and stripped of their many layers of hyperbolic excess, Noah's writings provide early examples of the political use of synthesis both to legitimate Jews' place in America and to demonstrate their patriotism and sense of belonging. Noah seized upon and Judaized America's founding myths, placing "Jews"- the "Lost Ten Tribe Indians," and the Hebraic Puritans- at their center. Later, Jews would also lay claim to Christopher Columbus, insisting that he too was a Jew. ¹² Of all the many ethnic and religious groups that have demanded shares in America's founding myths, Jews are apparently unique in attempting to insert themselves into so many. This bespeaks their eagerness for acceptance, to be sure, but also their deep-seated insecurity.

An equally long tradition links the American holiday of Thanksgiving with Jewish themes. As early as Thanksgiving Day of 1844, Isaac Leeser, then serving as hazan at Mikveh Israel in Philadelphia, reminded his congregants that "as Israelites we have an additional cause of thanksgiving," and discussed America's special meaning for the Jew. Some two dozen additional Jewish Thanksgiving Day sermons were published in America to 1900, many of which (like the sermons of Sabato Morais and Henry Leipziger quoted earlier) included standard cult of synthesis themes.¹⁰ "America and the Jew: A Pageant for Thanksgiving Day," first performed by Sunday School children in Temple Israel of Boston in 1922, went further. The play first recounted the story of Ancient Israel's "joyful harvest," based in part on the Book of Ruth. Then the narrator, "Spirit of Israel," abruptly shifted focus to the New World:

But not alone in days of old did Israel thus bestow, Nor yet to distant lands to see her labors must we go. There is a land- bright, blessed land- the Promised Land, in truth, Where Freedom, Plenty, Wisdom, Love - all beckon to our youth. O Spirit of America, I bid you speak and tell Of all the wondrous miracles thou hast performed so well "America" proudly recounted its story "of Liberty- of Harvest- and the Jew," emphasizing the nation's "beauties" and "full abundance." The final "Tableau"- a remarkable paean to synthesis- concluded the performance: Children carrying fruit and flowers, grouped as convenient. In center, Israel raises aloft a Scroll of the Law. America, center back, poses with large flag. Autumn, at left, holding garland of leaves. Ruth and Naomi, right, embracing. Two large American flags slowly unfurled from left and right balconies, if possible.

According to Temple Israel's Rabbi Harry Levi, more than twelve hundred people witnessed "America and the Jew" in Boston, making its "emotional appeal and religious effectiveness" beyond compare. Promptly published by the educational arm of the Reform movement's Union of American Hebrew

Congregation, the pageant also played in other cities, spreading its patriotic message of cultural synthesis far and wide. 51 Those who witnessed the pageant understood that Thanksgiving was not only for the Children of the Mayflower. The "Spirit of Israel" extended its welcome to "America" as well - and then happily united with it.

Text 1 Book of Maccabees I, 4:36-58

[Written in Hebrew in Judah circa 120 BCE, 50 years after the events it describes.]

Then said Judah to his brothers, "Behold, our enemies are crushed; let us go up to cleanse the sanctuary and dedicate it." So all the army assembled and they went up to Mount Zion. And they saw the sanctuary desolate, the altar profaned, and the gates burned. In the courts they saw bushes sprung up as in a thicket, or as on one of the mountains. They saw also the chambers of the priests in ruins. Then they rent their clothes, and mourned with great lamentation, and sprinkled themselves with ashes. They fell face down on the ground, and sounded the signal on the trumpets, and cried out to Heaven. Then Judah detailed men to fight against those in the citadel until he had cleansed the sanctuary. He chose blameless priests devoted to the law, and they cleansed the sanctuary and removed the defiled stones to an unclean place. They deliberated what to do about the altar of burnt offering, which had been profaned. And they thought it best to tear it down, lest it bring reproach upon them, for the Gentiles had defiled it. So they tore down the altar, and stored the stones in a convenient place on the temple hill until there should come a prophet to tell what to do with them. Then they took unhewn stones, as the law directs, and built a new altar like the former one. They also rebuilt the sanctuary and the interior of the temple, and consecrated the courts. They made new holy vessels, and brought the menorah, the altar of incense, and the table into the temple. Then they burned incense on the altar and lighted the lamps on the menorah, and these gave light in the temple. They placed the bread on the table and hung up the curtains. Thus they finished all the work

they had undertaken. Early in the morning on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month, which is the month of Kislev, in the one hundred and forty-eighth year, they rose and offered sacrifice, as the law directs, on the new altar of burnt offering which they had built. At the very season and on the very day that the Gentiles had profaned it, it was dedicated with songs and harps and lutes and cymbals. All the people fell on their faces and worshiped and blessed Heaven, who had caused them to succeed.. So they celebrated the dedication of the altar for eight days, and offered burnt offerings with gladness; they offered a sacrifice of celebration and thanksgiving. They decorated the front of the temple with golden crowns and small shields; they rededicated the gates and the chambers for the priests, and furnished them with doors. There was very great gladness among the people, and the reproach of the Gentiles was removed. Then Judah and his brothers and all the assembly of Israel determined that every year at that season the days of dedication of the altar should be observed with gladness and joy for eight days, beginning with the twenty-fifth day of the month of Kislev.

Text 2 Book of Maccabees II, 10:1-8

[Written in Greek during the second half of the first century BCE, more than 100 years after the events it describes. Appears to be written for the benefit of the Diaspora Jews in Egypt, primarily to inform them about the restoration of the Temple and to encourage them to make the yearly pilgrimage to Jerusalem]

Now Maccabeus and his followers, the Lord leading them on, recovered the temple and the city; and they tore down the altars which had been built in the public square by the foreigners, and also destroyed the sacred precincts. They purified the sanctuary, and made another altar of sacrifice; then, striking fire out of flint, they offered sacrifices, after a lapse of two years, and they burned incense and lighted lamps and set out the bread of the Presence. And when they had done this, they fell prostrate and besought the Lord that they might never again fall into such misfortunes, but that, if they should ever sin, they might be disciplined by him with forbearance and not be handed over to blasphemous and barbarous nations. It happened that on the same day on which the sanctuary had been profaned by the foreigners, the purification of the sanctuary took place, that is, on the twenty-fifth day of the same month, which was Kislev. And they celebrated it for eight days with rejoicing, in the manner of the feast of booths, remembering how not long before, during the feast of booths, they had been wandering in the mountains and caves like wild animals. Therefore bearing ivy-wreathed wands and beautiful branches and also fronds of palm, they offered hymns of thanksgiving to him who had given success to the purifying of his own holy place. They decreed by public ordinance and vote that the whole nation of the Jews should observe these days every year.

Text 3 HaNerot Hallalu [Declaration recited during candle lighting on Chanukah]

We kindle these lights because of the miracles, wonders, salvation, and battles that You performed on behalf of our ancestors in those days at this time, through your holy priests. During all eight days of Chanukah these lights are holy, and we are not permitted to make any use of them, but rather, only to observe them. This is in order to express thanks and praise to Your great name, for Your miracles, Your wonders, and Your salvation.

Text 4 Al HaNissim

[Prayer recited on Chanukah in the Amidah and Birkat HaMazon prayers]

[We are grateful] for the miracles, the salvation, the mighty deeds, the victories, and the battles that You performed for our ancestors in those days, at this time. In the days of Mattityahu ben Yochanan, the High Priest, the Hasmonean, and his sons, when the evil Greek kingdom arose against your people Israel to make them forget Your Torah and to cause them to transgress the laws that You willed, in Your great mercy, You stood by them in their time of distress: You fought their struggle, judged their claim, and retaliated on their behalf; You delivered the strong into the hands of the weak, the many into the hands of the few, the impure into the hands of the pure, the evil into the hands of the righteous, and the wanton into the hands of those who were occupied with the study of Your Torah; and for Yourself You made a great and sanctified name in Your world; and for Your nation, Israel, You wrought a great victory and deliverance even this very day. Afterwards, your children entered the precincts of Your house, cleared out Your sanctuary (from the idols that had been placed there), purified Your Temple, and kindled lights in the courtyards of Your holy place, and they designated these eight days of Chanukah to offer thanks and praise to Your great name.

Text 5: Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 21b [Compilation of teachings of 3-6th century scholars in Babylonia (Amoraim); final redaction in the 6-7th centuries]

What is the reason for Chanukah? As our Rabbis taught: On the twenty-fifth day of Kislev, the eight days of Chanukah begin, during which it is forbidden to eulogize the dead or to fast. For when the Greeks entered the sanctuary of the Temple, they defiled all of the oil. When the Hasmoneans overpowered them and were victorious, they searched but could find only 5 one cruse of oil that was intact with the seal of the High Priest. It contained only sufficient oil [to kindle the menorah] for one day, but a miracle occurred, and they were able to light with it for eight days. The next year, they designated these days as a festival with the recitation of hymns of praise and thanksgiving.

Text 6: Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Laws of Chanukah 3:3

[Acronym for Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon (English: Moses Maimonides); 12th century philosopher and codifier in Spain and Egypt]

For this reason, the Sages of that generation instituted that these eight days beginning on the twenty-fifth day of Kislev are to be days of rejoicing and praise [to God]. We are to kindle lights at evening time at the entrances to [our] houses on each of these eight nights in order to show and reveal the miracle

Text 7: Washington's Proclamation of Thanksgiving [New York, 3 October 1789]

Whereas it is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore his protection and favor-- and whereas both Houses of Congress have by their joint Committee requested me to recommend to the People of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of

Almighty God especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness.

Now therefore I do recommend and assign Thursday the 26th day of November next to be devoted by the People of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being, who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be-- That we may then all unite in rendering unto him our sincere and humble thanks--for his kind care and protection of the People of this Country previous to their becoming a Nation--for the signal and manifold mercies, and the favorable interpositions of his Providence which we experienced in the course and conclusion of the late war--for the great degree of tranquility, union, and plenty, which we have since enjoyed--for the peaceable and rational manner, in which we have been enabled to establish constitutions of government for our safety and happiness, and particularly the national One now lately instituted--for the civil and religious liberty with which we are blessed; and the means we have of acquiring and diffusing useful knowledge; and in general for all the great and various favors which he hath been pleased to confer upon us.

and also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations and beseech him to pardon our national and other transgressions-- to enable us all, whether in public or private stations, to perform our several and relative duties properly and punctually--to render our national government a blessing to all the people, by constantly being a Government of wise, just, and constitutional laws, discreetly and faithfully executed and obeyed--to protect and guide all Sovereigns and Nations (especially such as have shewn kindness unto us) and to bless them with good government, peace, and concord--To promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, and the encrease of science among them and us--and generally to grant unto all Mankind such a degree of temporal prosperity as he alone knows to be best. Given under my hand at the City of New York the third day of October in the year of our Lord 1789.

Go: Washington

Text 8 Lincoln's Proclamation of Thanksgiving
Washington, D.C. October 3, 1863

This is the proclamation which set the precedent for America's national day of Thanksgiving. During his administration, President Lincoln issued many orders similar to this. For example, on November 28, 1861, he ordered government departments closed for a local day of thanksgiving.

Sarah Josepha Hale, a 74-year-old magazine editor, wrote a letter to Lincoln on September 28, 1863, urging him to have the "day of our annual Thanksgiving made a National and fixed Union Festival." She explained, "You may have observed that, for some years past, there has been an increasing interest felt in our land to have the Thanksgiving held on the same day, in all the States; it now needs National recognition and authoritative fixation, only, to become permanently, an American custom and institution."

Prior to this, each state scheduled its own Thanksgiving holiday at different times, mainly in New England and other Northern states. President Lincoln responded to Mrs. Hale's request immediately, unlike several of his predecessors, who ignored her petitions altogether. In her letter to Lincoln she mentioned that she had been advocating a national thanksgiving date for 15 years as the editor of Godey's *Lady's Book*. George Washington was the first president to proclaim a day of thanksgiving, issuing his request on October 3, 1789, exactly 74 years before Lincoln's.

The document below sets apart the last Thursday of November "as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise." According to an April 1, 1864, letter from John Nicolay, one of President Lincoln's secretaries, this document was written by Secretary of State William Seward, and the original was in his handwriting. On October 3, 1863, fellow Cabinet member Gideon Welles recorded in his diary how he complimented Seward on his work. A year later the manuscript was sold to benefit Union troops.

By the President of the United States of America. A Proclamation.

<http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/thanks.htm>

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 defense, have not arrested the plough, the shuttle or the ship; the axe has 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 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 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, tranquility 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.

By the President: Abraham Lincoln
State

William H. Seward, Secretary of

ONE HUNDRED FORTY: Thanksgiving Day By Debbie Perlman, z"l

How easy to praise You, Beloved One,
For abundance, for cups brim filled;
How can we not delight in Your majesty,
Your endless blessings to us.
How simple our thanks, Beloved One,
For laden tables, for gathered families,
Shoulders touching in the intimacy of the meal
You have spread before us.

Teach us to thank and bless Your name,
When cups are empty and thirst is great;
Put our hands together to replenish,
Finding blessing in tiny sips.
Beloved One, to thank and bless You,
We find hope in uncertainty
And triumph in shaky steps.
We recreate abundance for Your sake.