

# THE GOSPEL PROJECT – CHRONOLOGICAL

## JESUS SAVES

### JESUS THE RISEN KING

#### *A Song of Thanksgiving*

On this Thanksgiving weekend we pause in our chronological study to contemplate and express our thankfulness to Almighty God for His goodness which He has lavished upon us – most specifically His free gift of eternal salvation. Simply put the redeemed are privileged to sing the Song of God’s Great Salvation since as children of the King of Glory our inheritance is eternal life!

The original American thanksgiving celebration was held by the Pilgrim settlers in Massachusetts during their second winter in America in 1621. The first winter had killed 44 of the original 102 colonists. At one point their daily food ration was down to five kernels of corn apiece and from the earthly standpoint, they did not have much to be thankful about. Yet they had the promise of God’s Word. ***Philippians 4:19 (ESV)***<sup>19</sup> *And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.* An unexpected trading vessel arrived and they were able to swap beaver pelts for much needed grain. The next summer’s crop brought hope, and Governor William Bradford decreed that December 13, 1621, be set aside as a day of feasting and prayer to show gratitude to God that they were still alive.

From that time forward, Thanksgiving in America has been celebrated as a day to give thanks to God for His gracious and sufficient provision. However, as our nation becomes increasingly secular, the actual “giving of thanks to God” during our annual Thanksgiving holiday is often overlooked, leaving only the feasting with a focus on Black Friday and Cyber Monday sales involving Americans’ frantic search to acquire ‘more stuff.’

Thanksgiving to God is biblical. Individuals offered up sacrifices out of gratitude in the first book of the Bible. Moses sang a song of thanksgiving as they were delivered from Pharaoh's army after the crossing of the Red Sea. Moses said on behalf of the people in ***Exodus 15:2 (ESV)***<sup>2</sup> *The LORD is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father’s God, and I will exalt him.*

Later, the Mosaic Law set aside three times each year when the Israelites were to gather together in Jerusalem for feasting and thanksgiving.

***Read Deuteronomy 16:15-16 (ESV)***<sup>15</sup> *... keep the feast to the LORD ... because the LORD your God will bless you in all your produce and in all the work of your hands, so that you will be*

*altogether joyful.*<sup>16</sup> “...appear before the LORD your God ... at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Booths. They shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed.

These times of feasting were to be times of rejoicing. Notice they were to come before the LORD with joy in celebration of God’s provision and grace.

We also find songs of thanksgiving in the book of Psalms.

**Read Psalm 100:4 (ESV)**<sup>4</sup> *Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name! Psalm 69:30 (ESV)*<sup>30</sup> *I will praise the name of God with a song; I will magnify him with thanksgiving. Psalm 95:2 (ESV)*<sup>2</sup> *Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!*

Adrian Rogers reminds us “we need to do more than just offer thanksgiving to God. We need to do some **thanks-living** for God.” **1 Corinthians 13:1 (ESV)**<sup>1</sup> *If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.*

In the New Testament, thanksgiving remains in the forefront of God’s Word.

**Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (ESV)**<sup>16</sup> *Rejoice always,*<sup>17</sup> *pray without ceasing,*<sup>18</sup> *give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

Joy takes the burden out of service. **Nehemiah 8:10 (ESV)**<sup>10</sup> *... And do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.”* Every family and every church family and every workplace has whiners and complainers. Don’t allow the whining of others or the whining from your own mouth rule the day! **Psalm 47:8 (ESV)**<sup>8</sup> *God reigns over the nations; God sits on his holy throne.* Always remember this and you will possess His joy! Worry should not be our agenda!

**Philippians 4:6 (ESV)**<sup>6</sup> *do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.*

Here Paul tells us to give thanks in all circumstances. We are to model the heart of Job. **Job 1:21 (ESV)**<sup>21</sup> *And he said, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.”*

Now we come to our focal passage taken from Isaiah’s Song of Salvation. Isaiah's name means ‘Jehovah is salvation,’ and salvation is a key theme in his song.

Isaiah begins by thanking the Lord for His mercy and comfort.

**Read Isaiah 12:1-2 (ESV)** <sup>1</sup> *You will say in that day: “I will give thanks to you, O LORD, for though you were angry with me, your anger turned away, that you might comfort me.”* <sup>2</sup> *“Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the LORD GOD is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation.”*

Isaiah is not always an easy book to understand. He is known for looking through the telescope of time while visualizing the first and second comings of Jesus the Messiah as one. *In that day* refers to the day of Israel’s re-gathering under the righteous reign of the Lord Jesus Christ when surviving Jews who come through the time of great tribulation on earth will worship Jesus as their promised Messiah along with the redeemed of all nations throughout the ages. Those who come into Christ’s reign will be those who have recognized Jesus as their Messiah, repented, and received Him by faith.

This is a hymn of unabashed praise to God. Consider it! Salvation brings with it as a consequence the absence of fear of God's wrath. Notice how Isaiah’s words in verse 2 reflect Moses’ song in **Exodus 15:2**. As Moses and the children of Israel sang a song of praise to the glory of God so will the people of God do in that day when Jesus, the root of Jesse will stand as the desire and joy of all nations.

Sometimes, we may wonder about the program of worship before a particular Sunday or special event day. Isaiah has already revealed the words for the Millennium Festival! It will be a time of thanksgiving! *God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid*. Note that the people will not say that God provided salvation but that God **is** salvation. Salvation is a Person, not a program. The focus of praise then will be the Lord Jesus Christ just as He should be the focus of our praise now. **Hebrews 13:8 (ESV)** <sup>8</sup> *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*

Take joy together in the Lord’s promise of salvation.

**Read Isaiah 12:3 (ESV)** <sup>3</sup> *With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.*

Just as God puts an end to all fear, so also He puts an end to all want. Water is symbolic for God’s salvation. **Isaiah 55:1 (ESV)** <sup>1</sup> *“Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.*

At His First Coming, Jesus proclaimed in **John 7:38 (ESV)** <sup>38</sup> *Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’”* Also recall His conversation with the woman at the well. **John 4:10 (ESV)** <sup>10</sup> *Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him,*

*and he would have given you living water.*” Isaiah in his day understood the true joy that comes from drinking the living water.

When Christ reigns on earth, it will be a time of great joy, which is what the Lord wants for His own now. Our salvation should cause us to rejoice and sing praises to the Lord.

Proclaim the glory and greatness of God all over the earth.

**Read Isaiah 12:4-6 (ESV)** <sup>4</sup> *And you will say in that day: “Give thanks to the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the peoples, proclaim that his name is exalted.* <sup>5</sup> *“Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done gloriously; let this be made known in all the earth.* <sup>6</sup> *Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.”*

Through Isaiah of long ago we find that the experience of our own salvation should prompt the redeemed to make known God’s deeds. The story of the Old Testament is the same as the story of the New Testament – come see and then go and tell.

How do we praise the LORD? It begins with words of prayer: *call upon his name*. Our Father in heaven wants to hear from us! We need to focus on coming to Him with a grateful heart – with a desire to make Him glad. We are made in the image of God; therefore, that tells us that He does not like to be ignored anymore than we do. We don’t like to hear the moaning and complaining of others all day long. We love to be around people with grateful joyful hearts. Just like those kind of people please us, grateful joyful people please God.

The second way to praise the LORD is to speak His name and tell of His goodness to others. So what if you are not a Bible scholar? You can tell what the Lord has done for you beginning with His great and free gift of salvation. But don’t stop there! Verbalize your praise of God to others about the beauty of His creation – the glory of His sunset or sunrise, the flowers blooming in a field, the beauty of a bird in flight. Even though the earth has been cursed with sin, it is still beautiful. Just think how beautiful it will be when the curse is removed.

*Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion...* Zion is used by biblical writers in a variety of ways. Sometimes it is a reference to the City of David (Jerusalem). Sometimes it is used as a reference to the people of God. However, the most common usage of Zion refers to the city of God yet to be. **Isaiah 28:16 (ESV)** <sup>16</sup> *therefore thus says the Lord GOD, “Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion, a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation...’* Jesus is The Precious Cornerstone of our faith – our sure Foundation – our reason for thanksgiving – our Blessed Hope for His return!

Jesus Saves! That is the Song of Thanksgiving! Amen and Amen!