

## Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving – What a beautiful word summoning forth a medley of the finest emotions. It raises us to the level of acknowledgement of all the gifts we receive on a daily basis, and so rarely confess. So much is this the case, that we are compelled to set aside a day, a holiday to be sure, in which we are supposed to say thank you, and really mean it.

Yes L-rd, thank you for the turkey and stuffing and cranberry sauce. O L-rd, did I leave out the mashed potatoes and gravy? Well, thank you for that too. And, by the way, O L-rd, I really mean it. And now let me get back to the rest of my meal, because I left out the dessert.

Thanksgiving – it does raise a host of aromas in these times. Do we pause to hear the cries of young lives cut down by knives and perverse bullets fired – G-D help us – in the name of religion? Do we smell the burning flesh in this Age of 9/11 when it seems every demon has been released from Hell to torment and provoke a riddled humanity forced to confront an apocalyptic evil that blasphemes the Face of G-D even as it dares to invoke His Name? Strange times, strange fruit, strange Thanksgiving at the banquet table flecked with blood.

And yet we dare to hope. We dare to gather. We dare to call for and summon forth a vision, at least a vision, of finer better things. We gather in the name of a humanity that we hope and pray and affirm has not lost its capacity to realize that vision with which we were all endowed by the Creator that raised us from the dust and made us the custodians below of this most precious blue green dot in the vastness of space.

We call this vision Building Bridges – connections of hope and reason and beauty. Unlike the benighted, bloody, warped fools so wrapped in the garment of self-assurance that they are blinded to the light, we seek the common radiance that dwells within all of us - men, women,

children of G-D. We pray that we are not cursed with the scourge of absolute certainty, a self righteousness that can brook no dissent. We know our limitations. We walk humbly with every ounce of that phrase that tells us that we do not know it all and cannot do it all. Yet, we try and in that effort we, individually and collectively, achieve meaning and nobility, even grandeur. For that, O G-D, L-rd of this most mortal and vulnerable flock, we give You Thanksgiving:

For this blessed land.

For our sacred freedoms.

For our human dignity.

For striving to build, if not a perfect world, then a better place right here on our small island in this America, still the beacon of hope and liberty for so many locked away in dungeons of despair.

Blessed are You, L-rd of the universe, Who awakens us to the better angels of our condition and summons us to realize Your vision and endowment in the arts of goodness, justice, love, mercy, righteousness and peace.

For this we give thanks.

Amen

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