

"Thanksgiving",

Ten minute talk for Sacrament Meeting,

Sunday, November 24, 1996

Pleasant View First Ward

I appreciate the opportunity for being asked to give a talk about Thanksgiving. Researching the subject became a spiritual experience for me as I was led to more fully understand the extraordinary faith of the Puritan Pilgrim Fathers.

It may have been some time since you have read the title page of the Bible so I will tell you some of what it says :

TO THE MOST HIGH AND MIGHTY PRINCE

JAMES

BY THE GRACE OF GOD

KING OF GREAT BRITAIN, FRANCE, AND IRELAND,

DEFENDER OF THE FAITH, ETC.

The translators of the Bible wish Grace, Mercy, and Peace,
through JESUS CHRIST our LORD

James reigned 1509-1547

Henry the eighth was responsible for having the bible published in the native English tongue which opened the the doors to widespread study of the bible by scholars of that time.

As the English Church evolved, it was made a department of state.

Queen Elizabeth I loved pomp and power more than the Christian Faith and named herself "Supreme Governor of the Church".

A basic concern of the Puritans who were sometimes called Separatists was reform of the anglican ministry. The queen and her archbishop resisted efforts of reformers to worship on their own. Worse still, George Cotton was cast in to prison without trial for twenty-seven months because he listened to a reading from the Bible by the Puritan John Greenwood in the home of a friend.

A law was passed in 1593 that any person who tried to dissuade anyone from attending the Established church would be committed to prison. Intellectuals John Greenwood and Henry Barrowe, who dared to separate from the Established Church, were hunted down and locked up for years until they were finally hanged on April 6, 1593. John Penry another Separatist, was arrested by Archbishop Whitgift. A few days after the execution of Barrowe and Greenwood, Penry was hanged, drawn, and quartered.

Spies were employed by the Crown to trick Separatists citizens into saying something that could be of evidence against them and arrest them for it.

The little ninety foot square- rigger carried 102 passengers and a crew of 30. ,The voyage lasted sixty six days, It was winter and the seas were rough. There was sea sickness and raging scurvy and no one was sure of their destination.

Only one Pilgrim, Wilford Button died at sea, but a child, Oceanus Hopkins, was born so the compliment of passengers remained the same.

They did not know where they were when they moved into what is now the Provincetown harbor on November 20th seeking a haven from another storm.

They were exhausted, undernourished and near panic. There was unrest from some of the passengers and "mutinous speeches" were heard, so the wiser heads drew up the Mayflower Compact before they landed.

After exploring what is now Cape Cod for a month, they decided to go ashore at Plymouth. On December 21,1620 they anchored the Mayflower in the harbor and the shallop carried on advance company to the Rock on the sand near Town Brook.

On Christmas Day they cut down the first tree to make the first planks to frame the first cottage at Plymouth plantation.