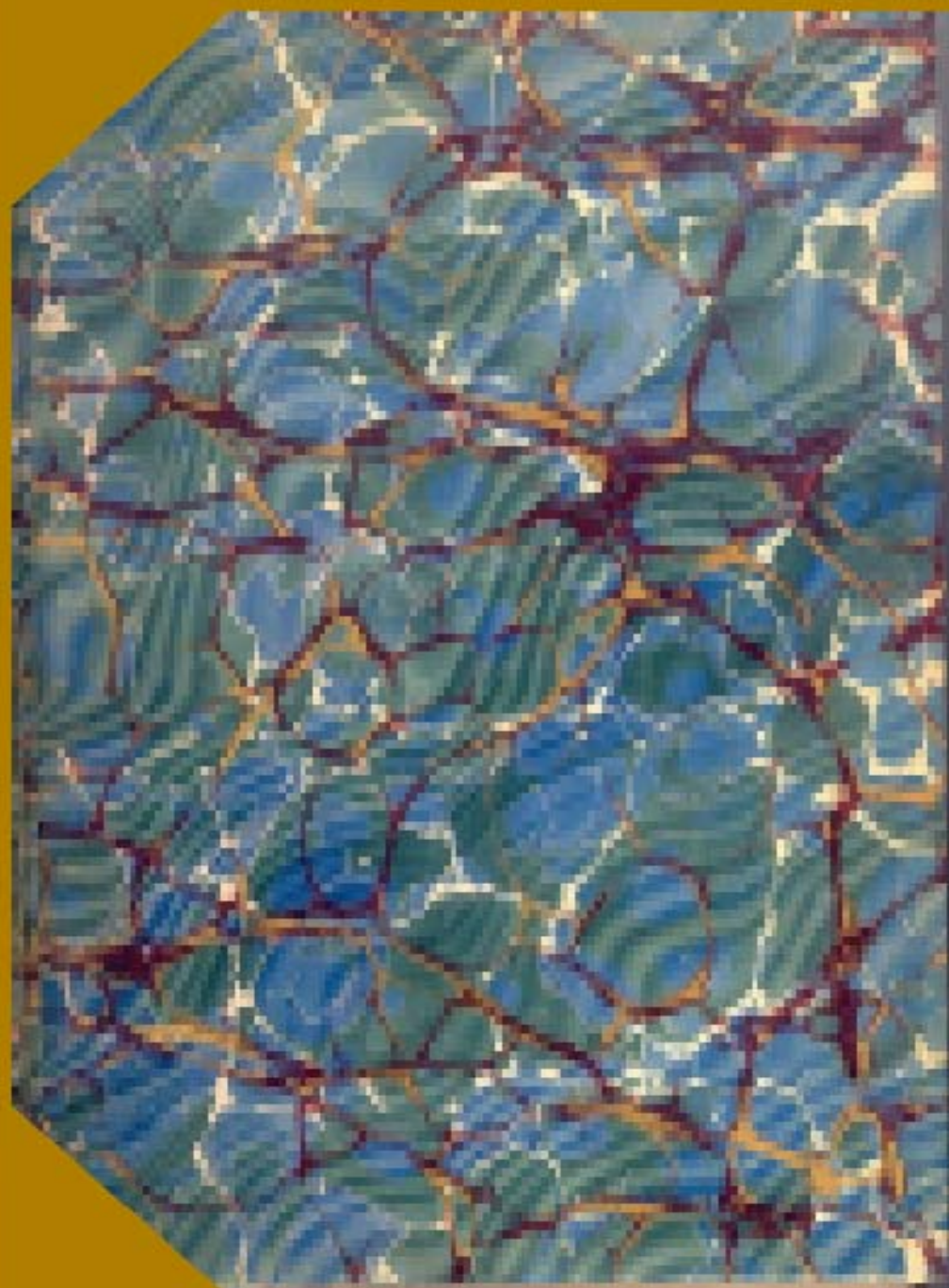


An  
**Anthology**  
of **Graces**

Lionel Hartley



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An Anthology of Graces

Lionel D C Hartley

Philadelphia Publications

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# Preface

**Psalms 92:1 says, “It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord.”**

**In the late 1800s Maltbie Babcock penned these words:**

*Back of the loaf is the snowy flour,  
And back of the flour the mill,  
And back of the mill is the wheat and the  
shower,  
And the sun and the Father’s will.*

**Gratitude at the table will turn the humblest meal into a banquet and the most modest abode into a mansion.**

**Gratitude will not only acknowledge God as the source of all things, it will demonstrate an**

**appreciative heart toward all who contributed to the preparation and presentation of the meal.**

**It is my prayer that these ‘Graces’ will enrich your giving of thanks at mealtimes.**

**This edition has been expanded from the 1969 edition to include more entries, some illustrations and some sheet music.**

**— Lionel Hartley, 1984**



# **An Anthology of Graces**

**“Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel,  
Who only doeth wondrous things.  
And blessed be his glorious name for ever:  
And let the whole earth be filled with his glory;  
Amen, and Amen.”**

(Source: Psalm 72:18, 19)

**-o0o-**

**Thank you for the world so sweet,  
Thank you for the food we eat.**

**Thank you for the birds that sing,**

**Thank you God for everything.**

**-o0o-**

**For what we are about to receive, may the Lord  
make us truly thankful. Amen.**

**-o0o-**

**“ Behold, how good and how pleasant it is, for  
brethren to dwell together in unity. The Lord  
commanded the blessing, even life for  
evermore, Amen” (From Psalm 133).**

**-o0o-**

**Thank you for the world so sweet.**

**Thank you for the food we eat.**

**Thank you for the birds that sing.**

**Thank you, Lord, for everything. Amen.**

**-o0o-**

**O Lord, we are grateful**

**For every yummy plateful.**

**For giving us meals so wholesome and good**

**And giving us someone to prepare our food.**

**For giving us mouths to enjoy the taste**

**And plumbing to take it down to our waist.**

**And for bodies that use the food You give**

**So we can grow and not just live.**

**Amen.**

**-o0o-**

**Thank you, God, for this gracious food. In  
Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

**-o0o-**

**For food in a world where many walk in  
hunger;**

**For faith in a world where many walk in fear;**

**For friends in a world where many walk alone;**

**We give you thanks, O Lord.**

**Amen**

**-o0o-**

### ***Illustration:***

**A certain farmer was asked to dine with a  
gentleman.**

**The farmer, according to his custom, gave thanks to God.**

**Whereupon his host jeered him, “That is old-fashioned; it is not customary nowadays for well-educated people to pray at the table.”**

**The farmer stated that it was customary with him but not with some members of his household.**

**“Oh, then,” said the gentleman, “they are sensible and enlightened. Who are they?”**

**“They are my pigs,” answered the farmer.**

(Source: Anonymous)

-o0o-

**Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest**

**May this food by you be blessed.**

**Amen.**

**-o0o-**

**God is great,**

**God is good,**

**Thank You God,**

**For this food. Amen**

**Or:**

**God is great, and God is good,**

**And we thank him for our food;**

**By His hand we all are fed;**

**Give us, Lord, our daily bread.**

-o0o-

**“Blessed be the LORD for evermore. Amen,  
and Amen.”**

(Source: Psalm 89:52)

-o0o-

**“Thank you for this meal we share,  
Bless this food, it shows You care.  
Nourish our bodies, heart and soul,  
With gratitude, our hearts console.  
Amen.”**

-o0o-

**Bless this food to our use, and us to thy service.  
Fill our hearts with grateful praise. Amen.**

-o0o-

**Bless the food before us**

**The family beside us**

**And the love between us**

**Amen.**

-o0o-

**God, we thank you for this food. For rest and home and all things good. For wind and rain and sun above. But most of all for those we love.**

-o0o-

**Some have meat and can not eat,**

**Some can not eat that want it,**



**But we have meat and we can eat,**

**Sae let the Lord be thankit!**

(Source: Scottish Poet Robert Burns, 1759-1796)

-o0o-

**O Thou, the Sustainer of our bodies, hearts,  
and souls,**

**Bless all that we thankfully receive.**

(Source: Sufi prayer by Inayat Kahn)

-o0o-

**“O Christ God, bless the food and drink of Thy  
servants, for holy art Thou, always, now and  
ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.”**

(Source: Anonymous - Eastern Orthodox).

-o0o-

**OLD HUNDREDTH**  
*LM*

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'Old Hundredth'. It consists of four staves of music, all in treble clef and G major. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 3/4 time signature. The melody is written in a simple, hymn-like style. The second, third, and fourth staves provide accompaniment, with the fourth staff ending with a double bar line. The title 'OLD HUNDREDTH' and the initials 'LM' are centered above the first staff.

**Be present at our table, Lord;**

**Be here and everywhere adored;**

**Thy creatures bless, and grant that we**

**May feast in paradise with Thee.**

**We thank Thee, Lord, for this our food,  
For life and health and every good;  
By Thine own hand may we be fed;  
Give us each day our daily bread.**

**We thank Thee, Lord, for this our good,  
But more because of Jesus' blood;  
Let manna to our souls be giv'n,  
The Bread of Life sent down from Heav'n.**

Source: English clergyman John Cennick (1718-1755), 1741)

**John Cennick was born of Quaker parents, raised in the Anglican Church, worked within the Methodist movement under John Wesley (which is why this particular 'Grace' is often**

attributed to Wesley) Cennick left Wesley to work with George Whitefield and finally, in 1845 joined the Moravian Brethren.

-oOo-

**Father, we give our thanks**

**For food that stays our hunger**

**For rest that brings us ease**

**For homes where memories linger**

**We give our thanks for these**

**Amen.**

-oOo-

**Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,**

**Make thee a bed, soft, undefiled,**

**Within my heart, that it may be  
A quiet chamber kept for Thee.**

**My heart for very joy doth leap,  
My lips no more can silence keep,  
I too must sing, with joyful tongue,  
That sweetest ancient song,**

**Glory to God in highest heaven,  
Who unto man His Son hath given  
While angels sing with pious mirth.  
A glad new year to all the earth!**

(Source: Martin Luther, A Christmas Dinner  
Prayer)

-o0o-

**Lord God and Giver of All Good Gifts, we are grateful as we pause before this meal, for all the blessings of life that You give to us.**

**Daily, we are fed with good things, nourished by friendship and care, feasted with forgiveness and understanding.**

**And so, mindful of Your continuous care, we pause to be grateful for the blessings of this table.**

**(Pause for silent reflection)**

**May Your presence be the “extra” taste to this meal which we eat in the name of Your Son, Jesus. Amen**

-o0o-

**“The eyes of all wait upon Thee, O Lord, and**

**Thou givest them their meat in due season;  
Thou openest Thine hand and satisfied the  
desire of every living thing.**

**Our Father... Lord God, Heavenly Father, bless  
us and these Thy gifts which we receive from  
Thy bountiful goodness, through Jesus Christ,  
our Lord. Amen.”**

(Source: Martin Luther)

-o0o-

### **Johnny Appleseed Grace**

**The Lord is good to me**

**And so I thank the Lord**

**For giving me the things I need**

**The sun, and the rain, and the apple seeds**

**The Lord is good to me!**

**I owe the Lord so much,  
For everything I see  
I'm certain if it weren't for Him  
There'd be no apples on this limb  
Yes He's been good to me**

**And every seed that grows,  
Shall grow into a tree  
And one day soon  
There'll be apples there  
For everyone in the world to share  
The Lord is good to me**



-o0o-

**God our Father, Lord, and Saviour**

**Thank you for your love and favor**

**Bless this food and drink we pray**

**And all who share with us today.**

**Amen.**

-o0o-

**“Come Lord Jesus, our Guest to be and bless  
these gifts bestowed by Thee. Amen”**

(Source: Moravian Prayers)

-o0o-

**Loving Father, we thank You for the family  
gathered around the table, the friends who**

**extend your goodness, the food which nourishes our bodies and the Faith that strengthens our souls. Keep us ever mindful of these blessings, and may this food inspire us to bring these blessings to those who go without family, friends, food and faith. We ask all of this through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

(Source: Leo E. Patalinghug, Grace Before Meals)

**-oOo-**

**Aham Vaishvaanaro Bhutva**

**Praaninaam Dehamaashritha**

**Praanaapaana Samaa Yuktaha**

**Pachaamyannam Chatur Vidam”**

**“Becoming the life-fire in the bodies of living beings, mingling with the upward and downward breaths, I digest the four kinds of food.”**

(Source: Hindustani prayer from the Bhagavad  
Gita Ch15 V14)

-o0o-

**The day is coming to a close, and, like the  
disciples on the road to Emmaus, we pause to  
break bread together.**

**May our eyes be opened, and, in this act of  
common sharing, may we see the risen Lord in  
one another.**

**May we see the Lord of Life in our food, our  
conversation and lives shared in common.**

**May these gifts strengthen us to continue your  
work in our world.**

**May the blessing of God, His peace and love,  
rest upon our table. Amen**

(Source: Anonymous)

-o0o-

**“After this manner therefore pray ye:**

**Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.**

**Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread.**

**And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.**

**And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.”**

(Source: Matthew 6:9-13)

-o0o-

**We thank you Lord for giving,  
The things we need for living  
For food and fun and friendship  
And so we thank you Lord**

(Source: Girl Scouts Guidebook)

-o0o-

**(Grace Before Meat) “Gracious God, we have sinned against Thee, and are unworthy of Thy mercy; pardon our sins, and bless these mercies for our use, and help us to eat and drink to Thy glory, for Christ’s sake. Amen.”**

**(Grace After Meat) “Blessed God, in Thee we live, move and have our being; make us thankful for Thy mercies; and as we live by Thy providence, help us to live to Thy praise**

**looking and waiting for a better life with  
Thyself above, through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.”**

(Source: Presbyterian Handbook)

-o0o-

### ***Illustration:***

**A large family sat around the table for  
breakfast one morning. As the custom was, the  
father returned thanks, blessing God for the  
food.**

**Immediately afterward, however, as was his  
bad habit, he began to grumble about hard  
times, the poor quality of the food he was  
forced to eat, the way it was cooked, and much  
more.**

**His little daughter interrupted him saying,  
“Father, do you suppose God heard what you**

**said a little while ago?"**

**"Certainly," replied the father with the confident air of an instructor.**

**"And did He hear what you said about mum's cooking?"**

**"Of course," the father replied, but not as confidently as before.**

**Then his little girl asked him, "Then, Father, which did God believe?"**

**(Source: Anonymous)**

**-o0o-**

**Dear Lord, bless this bunch**

**As we munch on our lunch.**

**Amen.**

**(Source: Anonymous)**

-o0o-

**We thank you, our God, for the food you have given us.**

**Make our sharing this bread together lead to a renewal of our communion with you, with one another, and with all creatures.**

**We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen**

(Source: Anonymous)

-o0o-

***Illustration:***  
***The Example of Jesus***

**Jesus said grace before He fed 5,000 people:**

**“And he commanded the multitude to sit down**



**on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude”**

(Source: Matthew 14:19).

**Jesus said grace before He fed 4,000 people:**

**“And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake them, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude”**

(Source: Matthew 15:36).

**Jesus said grace twice during Last Supper:**

**“And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed**

**for many for the remission of sins.”**

(Source: Matthew 26:26-28).

**Jesus said grace on Resurrection Sunday with  
the two disciples at Emmaus:**

**“And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with  
them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake,  
and gave to them”**

(Source: Luke 24:30).

**-oOo-**

**“The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest  
them their meat in due season.**

**Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the  
desire of every living thing.”**

(Source: Psalm 145:15-16)

**“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.”**

(Source: Philippians 4:6)

-o0o-

### ***Illustration:***

**Abraham Lincoln in the midst of the American Civil War in 1863 established the annual (American) celebration of Thanksgiving.**

-o0o-

**Dear Lord, we thank You for Your love and for this meal.**

**Please bless our conversation as we enjoy food and one another's company.**

**Please guide our words and lead us toward fruitful discussion.**

**We thank You and love You.**

**In the name of Your son Jesus we pray, Amen.**

**-o0o-**

**“Blessed be the LORD God of Israel for ever and ever. And all the people said, Amen, and praised the LORD.”**

(Source: 1 Chronicles 16:36)

**-o0o-**

**“Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen.”**

(Source: Psalm 41:13)

**-o0o-**

## *Illustration:*

Once, it came to the ears of King Alfonso XII of Spain, that the pages at his court forgot to ask God's blessing on their daily meals, and he determined to rebuke them. He invited them to a banquet, which they all attended. The table was spread with every kind of good food, and the page boys ate with evident relish; but not one of them remembered to ask God's blessing on the food.

As secretly planned in advance by the king, during the feast a beggar entered, dirty and ill-clad. He seated himself at the royal table and ate and drank to his heart's content. At first the pages were amazed, and they expected that the king would order him away. But Alfonso said never a word.

When the beggar had finished he rose and left without a word of thanks. Then the boys could keep silence no longer, "What a despicably

**mean fellow!” they muttered among themselves. But the king silenced them, and in clear, calm tones he said, “Boys, bolder and more audacious than this beggar have you all been. Every day you sit down to a table supplied by the bounty of your Heavenly Father, yet you ask not His blessing nor express to Him your gratitude.”**

(Source: Anonymous)

-o0o-

**“He is God! Thou seest us, O my God, gathered around this table, praising Thy bounty, with our gaze set upon Thy Kingdom. O Lord! Send down upon us Thy heavenly food and confer upon us Thy blessing. Thou art verily the Bestower, the Merciful, the Compassionate.”**

(Source: Baháí Guidebook)

-o0o-

To the tune, “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star”:



**A, B , C , D , E , F , G**

**Thank you, God for Feeding me.**

(Try singing this as a ‘round’.)

-o0o-

**An attitude of gratitude is no platitude. Here are some suggested rules for grace at meals: be intentional, be sincere, be creative and be consistent with the practice but varied with the words.**

(Source: Lionel Hartley, Beatitudes, The Philadelphia Publications, 1977)

-o0o-

**“O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good:  
for his mercy endureth for ever.**

**O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his  
mercy endureth for ever.**

**O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his  
mercy endureth for ever. ...**

**Who giveth food to all flesh: for his mercy  
endureth for ever.**

**O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his  
mercy endureth for ever”**

(Source: Psalm 136:1-3 and 25-26).

-o0o-

**Lord, you have fed us from your gifts and  
favours; fill us with your mercy, for you live  
and reign for ever and ever. Amen**



-o0o-

**Lord, you feed every living thing.**

**We have eaten together at this table; keep us in your love.**

**Give us true concern for the least of our sisters and brothers, so that as we gladly share our food with them, we may also sit down together with them at the table of the kingdom of God.**

**We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen**

-o0o-

**“Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye the LORD.”**

(Source: Psalm 106:48)

-o0o-

**Bless, O Lord, this food we are about to eat;  
and we pray You, O God, that it may be good  
for our body and soul; and if there be any poor  
creature hungry or thirsty walking along the  
road, send them into us that we can share the  
food with them, just as You share your gifts  
with all of us.**

(Source: Irish Grace)

-o0o-

**Blessed art Thou, O Lord our G-d,**

**King of the Universe,**

**Who creates many living**

**beings and the things they need.**

**For all that Thou hast**

**created to sustain**

**the life of every living being,  
blessed be Thou,  
the Life of the universe.**

(Source: Ha Motzi, a Hebrew/Yiddish prayer  
giving thanks for food, specifically bread)

**-o0o-**

**God bless this food**

**We are about to receive.**

**Give bread to those who are hungry,**

**And hunger for mercy and justice**

**To us who have food.**

**Amen.**

(Source: Anonymous)

-o0o-

**Thank you God for yummy meals,**

**For fruit and bread and cheese.**

**Thank you God for this great world,**

**For trees and fields and bees.**

**Thank you Lord for families,**

**For laughter and for fun,**

**Thank you now for this fine food,**

**Please bless it for our tum!**

(Source: Anonymous)

-o0o-

**“And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”**

(Source: Acts 2:46-47)

-o0o-

**Blessed are you, O Lord God, King of the Universe, for you give us food to sustain our lives and make our hearts glad; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

(Source: Book of Common Prayer [Anglican])

-o0o-

**“Lord God, almighty and everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day: Preserve us with your mighty power, that we**

**may not fall into sin, nor be overcome by  
adversity; and in all we do, direct us to the  
fulfilling of your purpose; through Jesus Christ  
our Lord. Amen.”**

(Source: Book of Common Prayer [Anglican])

**-o0o-**

**“For of him, and through him, and to him, are  
all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.”**

(Source: Romans 11:36)

**-o0o-**

**Our dear Heavenly Father,**

**we thank thee for this food.**

**Feed our souls on the bread of life**

**and help us to do our part in kind words and  
loving deeds.**

**We ask in Jesus' name.**

**-o0o-**

**“Brahmaarpanam Brahma Havir**

**Brahmaagnau Brahmanaa Hutam**

**Brahmaiva Tena Gantavyam**

**Brahma Karma Samaadhinah”**

**“The act of offering is God (Brahma), the  
oblation is God,**

**By God it is offered into the fire of God,**

**God is That which is to be attained by him who  
sees God in all.”**

**-o0o-**

**“He is God! How can we render Thee thanks, O  
Lord? Thy bounties are endless and our**

**gratitude cannot equal them. How can the finite utter praise of the Infinite? Unable are we to voice our thanks for Thy favours and in utter powerlessness we turn wholly to Thy Kingdom beseeching the increase of Thy bestowals and bounties. Thou art the Giver, the Bestower, the Almighty.”**

(Source: Bahá'í Notes)

-o0o-

### ***Illustration:***

**In America, in the year 1623, William Bradford\*, the governor of the Plymouth Colony, made the following proclamation: “Inasmuch as the great Father has given us this year an abundant harvest of Indian corn, wheat, beans, squashes, and garden vegetables, and has made the forests to abound with game and the sea with fish and clams, and inasmuch as He has protected us from the ravages of the**



savages, has spared us from pestilence and disease, has granted us freedom to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience; now, I, your magistrate, do proclaim that all ye Pilgrims, with your wives and little ones, do gather at ye meeting house, on ye hill, between the hours of 9 and 12 in the day time, on Thursday, November ye 29th of the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred and twenty-three, and the third year since ye Pilgrims landed on ye Pilgrim Rock, there to listen to ye pastor, and render thanksgiving to ye Almighty God for all His blessings.”

-oOo-

“And we shall serve the LORD our God,

And he shall bless our bread, and our water;

And I will take sickness away from the our midst.”

Amen.

(Source: Adapted from Exodus 23:25)

-o0o-

**In a world where so many are hungry,  
may we eat this food with humble hearts;  
in a world where so many are lonely,  
May we share this friendship with joyful  
hearts.**

-o0o-

**“Segne, Vater, diese Gaben” (Bless Father,  
these gifts).**

(Source: Anonymous German 20th-century round)

-o0o-

**For these and all his mercies, God’s holy Name**

**be blessed and praised; through Jesus Christ  
our Lord. Amen.**

(Source: Book of Common Prayer [Anglican])

**-o0o-**

**Bless us, O God. Bless our food and our drink.**

**Since you redeemed us so dearly and delivered  
us from evil,**

**As you gave us a share in this food**

**So may you give us a share in eternal life.**

**Amen**

**-o0o-**

**For each new morning with its light,**

**For rest and shelter of the night,**

**For health and food,**

**For love and friends,**

**For everything Thy goodness sends. [Amen]**

(Source: Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1803-1882)

**-oOo-**

**Father God, we have been blessed by you in more ways than we can understand.**

**We thank you for the food you have given us and thank you for the hands that prepared it.**

**We ask that you would bless everyone around the table.**

**Help us to grow in our faith and know your love for us.**

**Fill our home with your love and grace.**

**Watch over us all and keep us safe from harm.**

**We pray in the name of Jesus, Amen.**

**-o0o-**

**When you arise in the morning, give thanks for the morning light, for your life and strength. Give thanks for your food, and the joy of living. If you see no reason for giving thanks, the fault lies with yourself.**

(Source: Shawnee Native American Chief Tecumseh)

**-o0o-**

**“Thank You Lord that You have promised, ‘I will abundantly bless [this] provision: I will satisfy [the] poor with bread’.” Amen.**

(Source: Based on Psalm 132:15)

**-o0o-**

**“Allahumma barik lana fima razaqtana waqina athaban-nar. “**

**“O God! Bless the food You have provided us and save us from the punishment of the hellfire.”**

(Source: Islamic Prayers for the Faithful)

**-oOo-**

**May this food restore our strength,**

**Giving new energy to tired limbs,**

**New thoughts to weary minds.**

**May this drink restore our souls,**

**Giving new vision to dry spirits,**

**New warmth to cold hearts.**

**And once refreshed,  
May we give new pleasure to You,  
Who gives us all things. Amen**

**-o0o-**

**Lord Jesus, stay with us, for the evening is at hand and the day is past; be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts, and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.**

(Source: Book of Common Prayer [Anglican])

**-o0o-**

**“Aller Augen warten auf dich”**

**“All eyes are waiting for you”**

(Source: A German prayer by Heinrich Schütz,

after Psalm 145:15 “The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season.”)

-o0o-

**Lord Jesus, our brother, be with us today.**

**Bless our happy gathering, and bless this meal that we share.**

**Protect us all, and help us to grow in your love.**

**Lord Jesus, we praise your holy name for ever.**

**Amen**

-o0o-

**The next Grace was written to be sung to the tune “Jesus Loves me” by the American composer William Batchelder Bradbury (1816-1868).**



Music: William Bradbury

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of four staves. The top two staves are for a vocal line, with the upper staff in treble clef and the lower staff in bass clef. The bottom two staves are for a piano accompaniment, also with the upper staff in treble clef and the lower staff in bass clef. The music is in 4/4 time and features a simple, hymn-like melody with block chords in the accompaniment.

**Hold hands children, Bow your Head  
Thank the Lord for this good Bread  
Thankful children sing with glee  
Thanks oh Lord, Our thanks to Thee.  
Amen**

**-o0o-**

**Make us worthy, Lord, to serve our fellow men  
throughout the world who live and die in  
poverty and hunger.**

**Give them through our hands this day their**

**daily bread, and by our understanding love,  
give peace and joy.**

(Source: Mother Teresa of Calcutta)

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**“Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and  
thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and  
might, be unto our God for ever and ever.  
Amen.”**

(Source: Revelation 7:12)

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