

Celebrating Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving

The Pilgrims, who sailed to America aboard the Mayflower ship, were originally members of an English Church. They had earlier fled from their home in England and sailed to Holland to escape religious **persecution**. There they enjoyed more religious freedom, but they eventually became uncomfortable with the Dutch way of life thinking it was ungodly. Seeking a better life they set off on the Pilgrimage Journey to America.

The Pilgrims set ground at **Plymouth Rock** on 11th December **1620**. Their first winter was hard. They were cold and starving. At the beginning of the following fall, 46 of the original 102 Pilgrims who sailed on the Mayflower had died from the harsh conditions. However, the harvest of 1621 was successful and very bountiful.

The remaining Pilgrims decided to celebrate with a feast including 91 Indians who had helped the Pilgrims survive their first year. It is believed that the Pilgrims would not have made it through the year without the help of the natives. The celebration lasted for three days.

Governor Williams Bradford sent four men fowling after wild ducks and geese. It is not certain that wild turkey was part of their feast. However, most people today eat turkey during Thanksgiving celebrations.

This Thanksgiving feast was not repeated the following year. But in 1623, during a severe drought, the Pilgrims gathered in a prayer service praying for rain. When a long steady rain followed the very next day, Governor

Bradford proclaimed another day of Thanksgiving, again inviting their Indian friends. It wasn't until June of 1676 that another Day of Thanksgiving was proclaimed.

In 1941, Thanksgiving was finally sanctioned by Congress (in America) as a legal holiday celebrated on the third Thursday in November each year.

Thanksgiving is a special kind of attitude and action that demonstrate appreciation. The main purpose of our celebration of Thanksgiving is to demonstrate appreciation to God for His provisions and protection.

Bahamians must thank God for His material provisions. Bahamians should thank God for the right of women to vote, majority rule, and for helping us to become an independent nation in 1973. They must also thank God for His protection.

Even though The Bahamas lies in a hurricane zone and has experienced several devastating hurricanes, the loss of life has been minimal. In addition, God has protected the Bahamas from internal and external wars which have destroyed so many lives and **ravaged** countries around the world.



1. Before arriving in America, where did the Pilgrims go to worship in freedom? [1]

They went to _____.

2. The name of the Pilgrims' ship was __ [1]

(a) Mail Boat (b) Celebrations (c) Marcella (d) Mayflower

3. Did the Pilgrims have an easy time upon arriving in America? Write yes or no. [1]

4. Support your answer from the passage. [2]

The first winter was _____. Many of the Pilgrims _____.

5. The Pilgrims settled in America. When did they arrive and where did they settle? [2]

They arrived in the month of _____ in the year _____.

6. Complete the chart comparing the Pilgrims years in America. [6]

	1621	1623
Persons who help		
Type of weather		
Number Days of celebration		

7. According to the passage, list THREE things that Bahamians must thank God for. [3]

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____