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## Thanksgiving

By Evangelist Russell Kiddman

Modern Thanksgiving holiday tradition In the United States is traced to the 1621 celebration at Plymouth in present-day Massachusetts. The 1621 Plymouth feast and thanksgiving was prompted by a good harvest. Pilgrims and Puritans who began emigrating from England in the 1620s and 1630s carried the tradition of Days of Fasting and Days of Thanksgiving with them to New England. Several days of Thanksgiving were held in early New England history that have been identified as the "First Thanksgiving", including Pilgrim holidays in Plymouth in 1621 and 1623, and a Puritan holiday in Boston in 1631. Thanksgiving proclamations were made mostly by church leaders in New England up until 1682, and then by both state and church leaders until after the American Revolution. During the revolutionary period, political influences affected the issuance of Thanksgiving proclamations. Various proclamations were made by royal governors, John Hancock, General George Washington, and the Continental Congress, each giving thanks to God for events favorable to their causes. As President of the United States, George Washington proclaimed the first nation-wide thanksgiving celebration in America marking November 26, 1789, "as a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal favours of Almighty God". 1Chronicals 16:34-36 O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever. (35) And say ye, Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, and glory in thy praise. (36) Blessed be the LORD God of Israel for ever and ever. And all the people said, Amen, and praised the LORD.

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