

# Squanto and the First Thanksgiving

Adapted from *Squanto and the Miracle of Thanksgiving*, by Eric Metaxas

## Pre-reading

### Questions:

- When you first came to America, what were some things that were hard for you?
- In your culture, do you have a special day set aside for giving thanks?



### Definitions:

- to hunt – to find and kill a wild animal
- pilgrim – someone who travels a long way to visit a holy place
- slave – someone who is owned by another person
- Spain – a country in Europe
- thankful – feeling or showing happiness for some kind act

## Reading

Squanto was a young, Indian boy. He lived a long time ago, before America became the United States. His family lived by the Atlantic Ocean. His father **hunted** turkeys for food. His mother cooked the food and made clothing.

One day, Squanto saw a big ship on the ocean. Some of the men on the ship came to shore. They looked different. They wore different clothes, their skin was white, and they had hair on their faces. But they looked friendly. The men gave Squanto some food. When he reached out his hand to accept the food, the men grabbed him and hit him on the head.

The bad men took Squanto across the ocean to **Spain** and sold him as a **slave**. A kind man bought Squanto to make him free. The man taught Squanto to read. He learned to read the Word of God and how to pray. Squanto was happy living with the kind man. But, he missed his family. The kind man helped Squanto return to his family.

When Squanto returned to his home, no one was there. His family and their whole tribe had died from a bad sickness. Squanto was sad and lonely. But he remembered God's Word –

*God in heaven is a father to the fatherless...God gives the lonely a family.* Squanto prayed and asked God to help him.

After some time, Squanto returned again to his old home. He was surprised to see people from Europe living there. The people were **pilgrims**. They came to America for religious freedom. They wanted freedom to read God's Word and obey Him.

Squanto saw how difficult it was for the **pilgrims** to live in a new country. He helped his new neighbors. He taught them how to catch fish, grow corn, and hunt turkeys. These new friends became his family.



At harvest time, the **pilgrims** decided to have a big feast to give thanks. They invited Squanto and their Indian neighbors. They ate together and thanked God for the food, Squanto's help, and their freedom. Squanto thanked God for his new family. This was the first Thanksgiving.

## Understanding

1. Why does Squanto go to Spain?

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2. What does the word **pilgrim** mean in the story?

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3. How do the pilgrims give thanks?

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## Writing/Oral Telling

Choice A: Retell the story in your own words.

Choice B: What are you **thankful** for?