

the document titled Mour's Pilgrimage. There is a Jewish connection to this celebration. The Pilgrims would have been steeped in Bible. Many scholars, regardless of religious affiliation, believed that there was a connection between the Jewish festival of Sukkot and Thanksgiving. The Pilgrims were devout Puritans and Calvinists who came from Holland. In Holland, they would not only have known their bible succinctly, but would have been exposed to the Jewish population of that country, who were living there in relative freedom. The Pilgrims took many motifs from Jewish biblical history, including considering themselves "New Israel" and by moving to this new continent that they were moving to a "Promised Land". They defined their move to America in the same terms as the Exodus in the Bible. Although steeped in Christianity, the Pilgrims most likely thought of Thanksgiving as a new kind of Sukkot, a new world harvest festival.

Although established as a celebration by President Washington, it was Lincoln who fixed the day in November, instead of October, and made it an annual national holiday. (No – it was not the National Football League!) In the American Jewish world this led to a debate as to if Jews should celebrate Thanksgiving, as it was created by a Christian group. Should Thanksgiving be considered a type of religious holiday? The majority of the commentary indicates that it is no problem for Jews to celebrate this holiday as it is considered secular not religious. Further, there is no problem in the activities (parades) or foods (turkey) that would prevent a Jew from participating. Written opinions