

## **GQ: How should we characterize the motivations of the Puritan colonists? Were they selfish or selfless?**

### **Document A: “City upon a Hill” (Modified)**

The only way to provide for our future generations is to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God. We must be knit together in this work as one man; we must take care of each other with brotherly affection.

We shall be united in the bond of peace, the Lord will be our God and delight to dwell among us, so that we shall see much more of his wisdom, power, goodness and truth.

We shall be as a City upon a Hill, the eyes of all people are upon us; so that if we shall [behave badly] and cause God to withdraw his help from us, we shall [invite] the mouths of enemies to speak evil of the ways of God, and cause their prayers to be turned into curses upon us.

Therefore let us choose life, that we, and our [children], may live; by obeying his voice, for he is our life, and our prosperity.

*Source: John Winthrop (1588–1649), lawyer and leader of the 1630 migration of English Puritans to Massachusetts Bay Colony, delivered this famous sermon aboard the Arbella to settlers traveling to New England.*

### **Questions for Document A:** (Answer on a separate sheet of paper)

- 1. Sourcing:** Who was John Winthrop speaking to in this sermon? What do you think is the purpose of this sermon?
- 2. Contextualization:** Imagine what his audience might have been thinking and feeling as they listened to him on the ship. Describe it.
- 3. Close reading:** What is the main idea of this speech? What do you think Winthrop means when he says, “We shall be as a City Upon a Hill?”

## Document B: 'The Divine Right to Occupy the Land' (Modified)

The Bible says: "I will appoint\* a place for my people Israel, and I will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more."

The settling of a people in this or that country is the Lord's decision.

Now, God makes room for a people in three ways: First, He drives out the heathens\* before them by waging war on the inhabitants.

Second, He gives a foreign people favor in the eyes of any native people to come and sit down with them.

Third, He makes a country empty of inhabitants where the people will live. Where there is an empty place, the sons of Adam and Noah are free to come and live there, and they neither need to buy it nor ask permission.

*Source: Puritan leader John Cotton gave the following sermon to members of his congregation who were immigrating to America in 1630. Cotton became a respected and influential clergyman in the Massachusetts Bay Colony.*

### \*Vocabulary:

**Appoint:** Assign, decide on

**Heathen:** A term used to describe a person who doesn't have the same religious beliefs.

### Questions for Document B: (Answer on a separate sheet of paper)

1. **Sourcing:** Who was John Cotton speaking to in this sermon? Why is he speaking about settling in a new land?
2. **Contextualization:** In this sermon, who are the 'inhabitants' in the new land? Who are the 'foreign people'?
3. **Close reading:** What does Cotton say that God will do for the foreign people when they arrive in the new land?

### Homework

Using evidence from Document A and Document B, answer the question below:

*How should we characterize the Puritans' motivations? Were the Puritans selfish or selfless?*

Your response should be a well written body paragraph that answers the question using information from the documents as well as any relevant outside knowledge you have.