

1630 AD – ‘WINTHROP’S VISION OF AMERICA: A CITY ON A HILL’

“**Say unto the King and Queen: ‘Humble yourselves, sit down: for your principalities shall come down, even the crown of your glory’.**” (Jer. 13 v 18)

EVENTS IN 1630 AD

In **1630** a ship of **Puritans** was on its way to the **Massachusetts Bay Colony**. On board the flagship a Puritan lay leader **John Winthrop** delivered a famous sermon ‘A Model of Christian Charity¹ in which he laid before the passengers a vision of a people living to the glory of God.

On board the ship were **Puritans** of all walks and stations in life. Some were farmers. Some were tradesmen. Some were wealthy men. **Winthrop** began his message with the words:

‘God Almighty in his most holy and wise providence, hath so disposed of the condition of mankind, as in all times some must be rich, some poor, some high and eminent in power and dignity; others mean and in subjection.’

Winthrop put forth a vision for **America** that it be a ‘City on a Hill for All the World to See’ – a paragon of **Christian** virtues. Specifically, the chief virtue of the Colony would be a spirit of love for one another and mutual service. **Winthrop** called upon the privileged classes to show love and mercy for the poor and called upon the lower classes to be obedient and patient with the ruling classes over them. His vision was for a closely bonded community:

‘every man might have need of others, and from hence they might be all knit more nearly together in the bonds of brotherly affection’.

Winthrop was clear in his message that God is the person in ultimate authority in the community, the love of God is the fountain of all charity, and the work of God is the burden of every member of the community, not just a certain few. He used the community of Jews that fled from Babylon as a model:

‘Likewise in their return out of the captivity, because the work was great for the restoring of the church and the danger of enemies was common to all, Nehemiah directs the Jews to liberality and readiness in remitting their debts to their brethren, and

¹ For the complete sermon see this link: http://winthropsociety.com/doc_charity.php

disposing liberally to such as wanted, and stand not upon their own dues which they might have demanded of them.'

Winthrop warns that if the community of the faithful do not continue to abide in the Covenant of Love that God will surely punish and make an the end to the work:

'For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us. If we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken, and so cause Him to withdraw His help from us, we shall be made a story and a by-word through the world.'

Quoting from Deuteronomy 30 the last words of Moses, **Winthrop** finishes his message:

'But if our hearts shall turn away, so that we will not obey, but shall be seduced, and worship other Gods, our pleasure and profits, and serve them; it is propounded unto us this day, we shall surely perish out of the good land whither we pass over this vast sea to possess it.'

'CITY ON A HILL' IN THE AMERICAN IMAGINATION

President John F Kennedy was inspired by the words of **Winthrop**, but the first light of his vision faded. **Kennedy** was from Boston, the very city founded by the **Puritans** in the ships carrying **Winthrop**, but **Kennedy** was a **Catholic**. The essence of **Winthrop** warning of the judgment of **God** is replaced in **Kennedy**'s mind by a warning of the judgment of 'history':

*'...I have been guided by the standard **John Winthrop** set before his shipmates on the flagship *Arbella* three hundred and thirty-one years ago, as they, too, faced the task of building a new government on a perilous frontier. "We must always consider", he said, "that we shall be as a city upon a hill—the eyes of all people are upon us". Today the eyes of all people are truly upon us—and our governments, in every branch, at every level, national, state and local, must be as a city upon a hill — constructed and inhabited by men aware of their great trust and their great responsibilities. For we are setting out upon a voyage in 1961 no less hazardous than that undertaken by the *Arbella* in 1630. We are committing ourselves to tasks of statecraft no less fantastic than that of governing the Massachusetts Bay Colony, beset as it was then by terror without and disorder within. History will not judge our endeavors—and a government cannot be*

selected—merely on the basis of color or creed or even party affiliation. Neither will competence and loyalty and stature, while essential to the utmost, suffice in times such as these. For of those to whom much is given, much is required...' (9 Jan 1961)

President Reagan also was inspired by the words of **Winthrop**, but instead of a calling to mind acts of Christian mercy in a community bonded in love under the fear of God, **Reagan** fixed on the **exceptionalism of America** as the place of freedom of industry: 'a tall proud city' – a city **God** was duty bound to bless, and never to judge: 'that hummed with commerce'.

...I've spoken of the shining city all my political life, but I don't know if I ever quite communicated what I saw when I said it. But in my mind it was a tall proud city built on rocks stronger than oceans, wind-swept, God-blessed, and teeming with people of all kinds living in harmony and peace, a city with free ports that hummed with commerce and creativity, and if there had to be city walls, the walls had doors and the doors were open to anyone with the will and the heart to get here. That's how I saw it and see it still...

So, the 'City on a Hill' vision became politically transformed in the American imagination into the very thing **Winthrop** warned against: '*so that we will not obey [the commandment to love one another], but shall be seduced, and worship other gods, our pleasure and profits...*'

PROPHECY OF JEREMIAH 13 V 18

“Say unto the King and Queen: ‘Humble yourselves, sit down: for your principalities shall come down, even the Crown of your glory’.” (Jeremiah 13 v 18)

In the first and foremost part, the year of **1618** is the year of the vision of **Winthrop**, the vision of a community of one people under **God**. This was the seed of republicanism in the minds of the **Puritans** that settled in **Boston**. That **America** did not need Kings and Queens to rule over the land – **God** was the ultimate ruler over **America** – for good or for evil.

Boston would become the very place at the center of the American rebellion to English monarchs. It was in **Boston** that the settlers dumped tea into the harbor. It was in **Boston** that Americans won significant battles against British forces. The victories all the more miraculous considering the **British Empire** was in its might and the thirteen colonies were a paltry force in comparison to it.

'Say unto the King and Queen: 'Humble yourselves, sit down'

We will go even farther to say, in the spirit of the entire 13th chapter of **Jeremiah**, that this was the turning point in time after which **God** was resolved to depose all the royal houses in Europe one after the other and replace them with other governments. The **English Civil War** in 1642-51 deposed the monarchy². The **French Revolution** deposed its monarchy. On and on: until even the **Russian Revolution** deposed its monarchy. (See our paper [1613 AD](#)).

SPIRITUAL NUMBER ANALYSIS

For a mind that has wisdom please read on. See truth from another perspective.

PART ONE

Chapter **13** of Jeremiah is the **82nd** chapter of The Prophets.

The spiritual number **82** means 'Throne of God'

Whether American presidents want to admit it – **God** is on the throne of the Universe and he will judge all nations, monarchies or republics.

God will severely punish rulers who neglect the poor and follow the selfish interests of their own lusts. Winthrop was right. The faith of the **Puritans** remains to this day a shining light of Christian testimony in the history of **America** – perhaps even in the history of the world.

PART TWO

Jeremiah **13 v 18** is the **19,285th** verse in the whole Bible starting at Gen **1 v 1**.

The number **19,285 = 133 x 145**

The spiritual meaning of **133** is 'Brotherly Love'

The spiritual meaning of **145** is 'Compassionate'

What a remarkable prophetic connection between the verse in the Bible describing **1618 AD** and the contents of the inspired sermon of **Winthrop**! Note that we arrive at **1618** by starting at Isaiah 1 v 1 is **1 AD**. (See our paper '[Come Away My Love](#)').

² It was later revived under severe limitations

PART THREE

Jeremiah **13 v 18** is the **1630th** verse of The Prophets starting at Isaiah **1 v 1**.

The number **1630 = 5 x 326**

The spiritual meaning of **5** is 'Life' or 'Weakness'

The spiritual meaning of **326** is 'Sorrow Turns to Joy'

The message of the gospel is counter to human logic. It is not logical for people with riches to spend them on the poor. It is not logical to deny oneself and be devoted to serve others ahead of one's own interests.

From outward appearances the Christian life is a folly. The fool says in his heart 'There is no God!' and spends himself for his own pleasures, regardless of the suffering or oppression of others.

This was the habit of royalty in Europe. They used their riches to build grand halls and castles. To spend weekends chasing foxes across their vast estates. The poor huddled masses were disenfranchised from the care of their overseers.

God who surveys all and judges all finally said 'Enough!' All you royalty can sit yourself down with the common man and cast your crowns from your brows.

The **Puritans** faced years of hardship to settle the wilderness of **America**. Many perished. But look how God blessed their land! The forefathers did not dream or even imagine how much **God** would bless **America**.

Yet today **America** has forsaken the vision and not heeded the warning of **Winthrop**. The divide between rich and poor has become enormous. The rich will not tolerate even to pay the poor a living minimum wage. So what will become of **America**?

Harken to the words of **God**, quoted by **Winthrop**:

'But if our hearts shall turn away, so that we will not obey, but shall be seduced, and worship other gods, our pleasure and profits, and serve them; it is propounded unto us this day, we shall surely perish out of the good land whither we pass over this vast sea to possess it.'