



"The devil is always the governor where God's government is rejected."

—Richard Baxter

03-Jan-03

'Like All the Nations'

American schools used to teach history. When they did, they taught about the founding fathers and the principles they stood for. They taught the uniqueness and nobility of America's founding documents, as well as the rights and responsibilities of her citizens to uphold their contents. Except in a few private and home schools, such teaching is, well, history.

Along with the ideals of the Revolutionary War period, history teachers taught the important concepts of Manifest Destiny and American Exceptionalism. They might not have called them by these terms, but the ideas were surely impressed upon their students. The former concept, Manifest Destiny, names the visceral feeling among Americans that this country was ordained to open up and inhabit all the land between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and go on to do great things in [the world](#). And so she has.

The latter concept, American Exceptionalism, describes how different the United States is from other nations, particularly the European states from which most Americans derive. As the premier nation of the New World, the U.S. was a grand experiment in government, economics, and culture. She

was a nation founded on principles of freedom, equality, and brash self-reliance. The idea is that, by their own sweat and ingenuity, Americans can accomplish anything they set their minds to do, and who is going to stop them?

Another facet of this exceptionalism is America's generous spirit, which has revealed itself in political, military, social, and economic forms. U.S. soldiers have fought to preserve nations around the globe, while her average citizens have given billions, maybe trillions, of dollars in charity to the needy here and abroad. By far, she has been an example to the world in missionary activity, sending Bibles, preachers, and aid wherever they were needed. Americans always seemed to be willing to lend a hand, and unlike others, have frequently not demanded payment for their services.

That was then, and perhaps some of that spirit still survives. Lately, however, things have begun to change in America's approach to the world, and many have begun to take notice. Once the United States defeated the Soviet Union, becoming the world's sole superpower, she took on a role for which her exceptionalism left it ill-prepared. America is finding it difficult to be a benevolent hegemon amidst a gaggle of competing and sometimes belligerent wannabe powers, not to mention having to fend off terrorists and madmen.

Thus, the U.S. has had to be firm in its approach, and this has raised the cry of "Imperialism!" in foreign lands and even within her own borders. Though America has never aspired to empire—she has occupied some nations, but in most cases, quickly returned them to native rule—her similarity to the Roman Empire of old is striking. The U.S. has not conquered the world with its legions, but she controls it to an unprecedented degree through threat of military defeat and economic ruin. Yet, this is antithetical to all the principles of liberty she proclaims!

The Bible, particularly the books of Joshua, Judges, and the first seven chapters of I Samuel, describes another exceptional people, the children of Israel. [God](#) established them with a peculiar form of government in which He ruled directly through a leader called a "judge." No other people on earth

had the advantages of having God as their King. However, after about four hundred years, the Israelites no longer wanted to be exceptional: "Now make for us a king to judge us like all the nations" ([1 Samuel 8:4](#)).

God's answer to this is insightful. He tells Samuel, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them" (verse 7). He tells the prophet to warn them about the kind of king they would get in His place: Their human king would take, take, take from them, and they would get nothing but oppression in return (verses 11-18)! And even after this dire warning, the people said, "No, but we will have a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles" (verses 19-20).

If we take the example of Israel as our guide, America's rejection of her exceptionalism will have grave consequences. In effect, it is a repudiation of her means to greatness, and America will lose her power and herself in a vain attempt to be like all the others. Americans have already lost many of their freedoms—are they willing to lose their self-respect too?

- Richard T. Ritenbaugh

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

[We Are Unique!](#)

by John W. Ritenbaugh

To someone who has been called, there is a unique difference in the understanding and thinking processes not available to most of mankind. Without revelation from Almighty God, the heart becomes calloused and insensitive, having an enmity to the truth of God. Our responsibility is to freely choose to follow the revelation He has given us, overcoming the baggage and the doubtful resistance we have absorbed from the world's cultures. Until God removes the blinders from our eyes, we cannot use our free moral agency to develop the character, resisting the flood of deception spewed out by the deceiver.

From the Archives: Featured Article

[Globalism \(Part Three\): America Runs Over the Wall](#)

by Charles Whitaker

Yes, globalism is a big movement, energized by the ideologies of many Shemitic nations—Israelite and non-Israelite alike, the European and North American nations that constitute the Occident. Clearly though, the epicenter of current globalism is Israel, specifically Manasseh. Today, 'globalization is made in America.'

If you would like to subscribe to the C.G.G. Weekly newsletter, please visit our [Email Subscriptions page](#).
