

Globalism (Part Four): Israel Pushes The Nations

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As we saw last month, America's foreign policy in the 19th century was generally isolationist, one of "masterly inactivity," toward foreign powers. And, for good reason! America was in the thick of working out her "Manifest Destiny," busy building a nation. She generally shunned temptations to become involved in international matters, that is, to "overclimb the wall" (Genesis 49:22) by becoming entangled with other nations' affairs. With the coming of the 20th century, a number of powerful forces converged to change America's isolationist stance. Two are noteworthy here.

The Globalist Bandwagon

America, by the last quarter of the 19th century, was becoming nothing short of a stunning industrial powerhouse. Indeed, by about 1890, just one American steel company, the Carnegie group, "produced more steel than Britain, France, and Germany combined."¹ The American powerhouse needed raw materials and laborers, as well as markets. Recognizing this, America found common cause with Britain in promoting a policy of international economic integration, which, we saw earlier, became "the first age of globalization."² After all, Americans could see a good thing when it came their way, and globalization, as led by Britain, seemed a successful strategic tool for producing national wealth. America, then, jumped on the British "bandwagon" of globalism.

American forays into economic integration just before and after 1900 were essentially complementary to, rather than competitive with, the British drive toward globalization. America's first real global engagement came during the presidency of William McKinley (1897-1901), who conquered the Spanish colony of Cuba, and then rode out this wave of imperialism to seize Puerto Rico, Wake Island, the Philippines and Hawaii.³ For the first time, an American president led his people into Gentile lands, outside the nation's God-ordained boundaries, with the obvious intent of *staying* there.

It is instructive to compare the leadership of McKinley with that of James K. Polk (1845-1849), arguably the greatest American president. The indefatigable Polk led America into war with Mexico over Texas. American troops occupied the Mexican capital until the proper treaties had been signed, and then withdrew. McKinley, serving about 50 years later, took a completely different course of action. He too invaded Gentile lands, but with the obvious intent of building colonies. McKinley, an out-and-out imperialist, did not just occupy these lands for a short time to stabilize them or to build a regime amicable to American interests. He moved in to stay. (The U.S. is still in some of them.) Working hand-in-glove with the British-led globalism and imperialism of his day, he articulated an open-door policy with China and secured the passage of the Gold Standard Act in 1900.

His successor, Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909), implemented an even more assertive internationalist policy, militarily and economically.⁴ Roosevelt came to see Americans as "effete" because they had become "isolated from the struggles of the rest of the world, and so immersed in [their] material prosperity."⁵ How enticing was his argument to a nation now no longer young, but in late adolescence, strong enough to carry a big stick, ready to flex its muscles. Roosevelt wrote,

A nation's first duty is within its borders, but it is not thereby absolved from facing its duties in the world as a whole; and if it refuses to do so, it merely forfeits its right to struggle for a place among the people that shape the destiny of mankind.⁶

He believed that it was the moral responsibility of every American citizen to better civilization worldwide. This belief conveniently coincided with his ideas of gunboat diplomacy, "the fact that the gunboat, however puny, symbolized national might and the readiness to use it."⁷ A committed internationalist who easily acceded to the Ephraimite globalism of his day, he worked diligently to build a global economy. By hook—and a whole lot of crook involving France and Colombia—America acquired Panama. In that narrow isthmus, Roosevelt built an ocean-connecting canal, thereby facilitating trade between Orient and Occident. America, in her presumption, did not merely come to "possess the gates of those who hate" her (Genesis 24:60)—she created the gate.

It was a golden age.

The existence of empires and the gold standard had made the world's economies more 'globalized' than they are today. . . . [T]he interests of the great powers—above all, their economic interests—were so closely linked that war no longer made sense.⁸

The world looked forward to a continuation of prosperity and peace, the *Pax Britannica*—with America not far behind. The Panama Canal, touted as the towering achievement of the first age of globalization, opened in 1914. It was to make the world one, joining east and west. America was in the middle, primed to enrich herself.

But something else happened in 1914 to change all that.

Vast and Senseless Dying

If the truth be told, it was not America's industrialization—her search for markets, laborers and resources—which led her to forsake isolationism and overclimb her walls. No, it was the dominant event of the 20th century, the First World War, the Great War, that ended the first age of globalism. As with the force of a cannonball, that war propelled America onto the world scene, eventually driving her to abandon whatever isolationist leanings she still possessed.

The gunfire of Sarajevo resounded for four years in Europe. The vast dying shook the continent. To be a French boy anywhere in his teens in 1910 "meant a one in four chance of dying in battle."⁹ More than fifty percent of late-teenaged German boys would die in the hideous war. The German war effort, which seemed to grow each day more vigorous and vicious, unrelentingly inflicted huge losses on French and British forces. When Germany escalated her submarine activity in the Atlantic, seriously undercutting America's commitment to supply the Allied forces, Wilson came to believe "that the business of neutrality is over. The nature of modern war leaves no state untouched."

Thus, an isolationist-minded professor-president led America into the fray in 1917. At its conclusion, this same isolationist appeared mutated into a thoroughgoing internationalist, the chief proponent of the League of Nations (see sidebar). Through Wilson, America turned thoroughly internationalist. Today, she even considers herself a *European* power.

Europe has flourished [in recent decades] because the United States has essentially become a European power—and Europe did not flourish, as in the first half of this century, when American power was not part of the balance.^{1 0}

See how America has overclimbed the wall!

America—the Example

Like Henry Clay and John Calhoun before him, Wilson was an exemplarist. In the King James' rhetoric he knew so well, he stated his belief that America was a divinely-appointed nation, established by God to "in truth show the way," "to show the way to the nations of the world how they shall walk in the paths of liberty. . . . It was of this that we dreamed at our birth."^{1 1} He praised God that Americans were *different* from other folk. In America, the whole world would find "those moral inspirations which lie at the base of all freedom."^{1 2}

Years later, George Kennan, the architect of America's Cold War policy, articulated these same ideas, calling American international responsibilities a God-given responsibility. In an amazing essay published in 1951, "America and the Russian Future," he argues that American victory over her communist enemies will be the result of what we *are*, not of what we *do*. Here, from the pen of an internationalist *par excellence*, is perhaps the best statement of American exemplarism—the idea that America should lead the world by her example:

Any message we may try to bring to others will be effective only if it is in accord with what we are to ourselves, and if this is something sufficiently impressive to compel the respect and confidence of a world which, despite all its material difficulties, is still more ready to recognize and respect spiritual distinction than material opulence. Our first and main concern must still be to achieve this state of national character. We need worry less about convincing others that we have done so. In the lives of nations, the really worthwhile things cannot and will not be hidden.^{1 3}

Would that true Christians everywhere understood the nature and power of example as well as Kennan did! Elsewhere, he writes that Americans should feel a

certain gratitude to a Providence, which by providing [them] with this implacable challenge [that is, the Soviet challenge in the Cold War], has made their entire security as a nation dependent on pulling themselves together and accepting the responsibilities of moral and political leadership that history plainly intended them to bear.^{1 4}

Calhoun, with his advice that we "keep our lamp burning brightly on this western shore as a light to all nations," and Clay, with his admonition that we maintain a "masterly inactivity" toward Europe, and Roosevelt, speaking softly but carrying a big stick, and Wilson, with his belief that America would "show the way to the nations of the world how they shall walk in the paths of liberty"—probably none of these would have seen eye-to-eye with the communist containment strategies worked out by Kennan. Nevertheless, at one level, all these American leaders have been painted with the same brush—the idea that America is destined to be an *example* to other nations.

Their differences lie in the question of means, not goals. Some are "exemplarists," while others are "vindicators." Exemplarists, represented by Clay, Calhoun and Kennan, believe in setting an example—and that is all. Vindicators, represented by McKinley, both Roosevelts, Hamilton, Wilson, and all American presidents after Eisenhower, believe that "human nature is too recalcitrant for mere example to have much lasting effect and . . . military might, even if it doesn't necessarily make right, certainly can restrain wrong."^{1 5}

Exemplarists to a lesser extent, and vindicators to a greater, have led America to "overclimb the wall," deeply entangling herself in foreign affairs. No longer distant, isolated morally or geographically, America extends herself militarily, economically and culturally into Gentile areas.

America—the Nations' Pusher

The prophet Moses recognized in Joseph this proclivity to overextend. Deuteronomy 33:17 records God's prophecy of Joseph's *world* leadership:

His glory is like a firstborn bull,
And his horns are like the horns of the wild ox;
Together with them
He shall push the peoples
To the ends of the earth.

The "wild ox," rendered *unicorn* in the King James Version, is an emblem for strength.^{1 6} Moses goes on to tell what Joseph will do with his strength: "push the people, all of them, to the ends of the earth" (*The Amplified Bible*). Here, the force of the word rendered "together" is inclusiveness: Joseph will push *all* of the nations. *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Lexicon* defines the verb *push* as to "thrust, gore, hence, succeed, attain, make progress, figuratively, wage war with." So strong are its overtones of force and violence that the Hebrew word carries the meaning of the verb *butt*.^{1 7} Here are a few biblical examples of the use of "push":

1. In I Kings 22:11, a false prophet speaks to Ahab, who wants God's blessing in his war against Syria (in which Ahab subsequently dies). "Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made horns of iron for himself; and he said, 'Thus says the Lord: "With these you shall gore [*push*, KJV] the Syrians until they are destroyed.'" This refers clearly to war-making.

2. Daniel 8:4: "I saw the ram *pushing* westward, northward, and southward, so that no beast could withstand him. . . ." Notice, an animal with horns—as an ox—is doing the pushing.

3. Psalm 44:5: "Through You we will *push* down our enemies; through Your name we will trample those who rise up against us."

4. Daniel 11:40: "At the time of the end the king of the south shall attack [*push at*, KJV] the king of the north.

5. Ezekiel 34:21: In context, the verb *push* here seems to refer to economic coercion on the part of false ministers.

In summary, the word *push* connotes the use of force and violence typical of warfare, or the use of economic power to gain one's ends. Fenton's seems the most accurate translation of Deuteronomy 33:17. Joseph is

Like a noble and splendid prince—
His horns are the horns of a bull:
With them he will conquer nations
And unite the Land into one.

Fenton combines the words "push" and "together" to form the verbs "conquer" and "unite." To unite is to push together!

Joseph Pushes Today

But when did Joseph ever do that?

» Deuteronomy 33:17 certainly does not refer to the time of Joseph's conquering Palestine. Neither ancient Israel at large, nor Joseph particularly, sought to unite her enemies! Furthermore, ancient Israel's efforts were *local*; it pushed the nations off the land—and that not fully, but it certainly did not push all the nations of the earth at that time.

» Nor does this passage refer to America's conquering the various Indian nations in the 19th century and before, uniting the continent. This interpretation rings hollow because America's suppression of the North American aborigines was *local*, never entailing a worldwide pushing.

It is not in past events, but in current ones, where we find fulfillment of Deuteronomy 33:17. *God is surely referring to Israel's ambition to build and rule a global village, a world government, pushing all the nations of the world together.* Today, America works assiduously to build "permanent alliances"—military (e.g., NATO), economic (e.g., the IMF and the WTO), financial, cultural, educational, scientific and technological (many through the auspices of the United Nations). Americans today speak of NAFTA rather than of "manifest destiny"; not content to limit their marketplace to the lands God fixed for them, they have jumped the wall, striking complex business and economic deals with Gentile nations, all for financial gain.

America today aspires to lead a global village. She uses her almost inestimable economic clout to that end, and enforces her aspirations through extensive, virtually worldwide, military ventures. Is there any better way to describe America's activities today than by saying she has *overclimbed* the wall, *pushing* peoples together around the globe?

Yes, indeed, God planned that 21st century globalism would be "made in America." He knew that America, which properly should serve as an example to the world though the "masterly inactivity" of her "national character," would eventually come to *push* the nations of the world to adopt her system of government (democracy) and her economic structure (capitalism).

Next month, we will look at the teeth Manasseh bares as she pushes the nations together—its warrior culture.

[To Be Continued]

Inset: Great Men and God's Sovereignty

Let no one ever tell you that history turns on the will of a few great men—the so-called "great man" theory of history. *History turns on the will of God.* The story of Woodrow Wilson and the First World War well illustrates that truth.

Woodrow Wilson, a university professor, came to occupy the White House on an essentially isolationist ticket. He was as committed an isolationist as his predecessor, Theodore Roosevelt, was an internationalist. From his first day, Wilson exuded isolationism, even where it was "too late." He issued a formal apology to Colombia for Roosevelt's underhanded tactics in acquiring Panama. The last thing on Wilson's mind was America's involvement in a European war; his first Secretary of State, William Jennings Bryan, was an avowed pacifist. History would undoubtedly have remembered Wilson as a quiet, almost self-absorbed isolationist had it not been for the "war to end all wars."

That war was costing France and England dearly. Reluctantly, Wilson committed the United States to providing materiel support. The Germans responded by inflicting heavy damage on North Atlantic shipping. The carnage on the Continent escalated. In the end, the President came to recognize the imperative to intervene with personnel.

Wilson, deeply religious, came to believe that the war was "a product of divine agency," and was convinced that the world would surely look to the United States "for those moral inspirations which lie at the base of all freedom. . . . [A]ll shall know that . . . her flag is the flag not only of America, but of *humanity*."

That is internationalist rhetoric pure and simple! Wilson came to back up his rhetoric with his proposal that the United States join the League of Nations.

The peaceful intentions of the leader of the world's most powerful nation could not forestall God's will from being done in Europe. In the end, Wilson was forced by circumstances to turn from passive non-involvement to active participation in the war. From peace, to war, from isolationism to internationalism—a change totally against his will and adverse to his personality. God, not the occasional "great man," rules history. Wilson simply did what God wanted done.

(See William Pfaff, "The Question of Hegemony," *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2001; Charles W. Maynes, "Contending Schools," *The National Interest*, Spring 2001.)

Endnotes

1 *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language*, Third Ed., "tribalism."

2 Avinash Persaud, "The Knowledge Gap." *Foreign Affairs*. March/April 2001, p. 107. Persaud is Managing Director of Global Markets Analysis and Research at State Street Bank. *Foreign Affairs* is the principal organ of the Council on Foreign Relations.

3 Paul J. Saunders, "Why 'Globalization' Didn't Rescue Russia." *Policy Review*. February /March 2001, p. 27. Saunders is director of the Nixon Center. *Policy Review* is the

principal organ of The Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank based in Washington D.C.

4 Saunders, *ibid.*, p. 29.

5 Persaud, *ibid.*, p. 107.

6 Quoted by Andrew J. Bacevich, "Policing Utopia: The Military Imperatives of Globalization," *The National Interest*, Summer 1999, p. 5. Bacevich is professor of International Relations at Boston University. (Emphasis added)

7 Saunders, *ibid.*, p. 37.

8 Quoted by G. John Ikenberry, "Getting Hegemony Right," *The National Interest*, Spring 2001, p. 17.

9 Kenneth N. Waltz, "Globalization and American Power," *The National Interest*, Spring 2000, p. 46.

10 See Nathan Glazer, "Two Cheers for 'Asian Values,'" *The National Interest*, Fall 1999, p. 27. Reading this article is vital for anyone concerned about the fall of distinctive cultural values to the influence of global marketing. His conclusions:

Globalization undoubtedly affects social and cultural features, and, yes, undermines them. But the rate of undermining is surprisingly slow, and the difference in the rates of change in these key social and cultural characteristics between East and West still give the East an advantage. . . . Tradition maintains itself even in the face of so many aspects of globalization.

11 Quoted from Samuel Huntington by Jacob Heilbrunn. See "Globalization's Boosters and Critics," *The National Interest*, Fall 1999, p. 118. Huntington argues that, "[T]he essence of Western civilization is the Magna Carta not the Magna Mac."

12 Kenneth N. Waltz, "Globalization and American Power," *The National Interest*, Spring 2000, p. 46. Waltz is a research associate of the Institute of War and Peace Studies and adjunct professor at Columbia University. On page 49, Mr. Waltz quotes Paul Krugman: "The United States is still almost 90 percent an economy that produces goods and services for its own use." Citing Linda Wiess (*The Myth of the Powerless State: Governing the Economy in a Global Era*), Waltz continues: "For the world's three largest economies—the United States, Japan, and the European Union taken as a unit—exports account for 12 percent or less of GDP. The world, then, is less interdependent than is usually supposed."

13 Robert J. Samuelson, "The Spirit of Capitalism," *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2001, p. 205.

14 Richard Falk and Andrew Strauss, "Toward Global Parliament," *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2001, p. 212.

15 Falk and Strauss, *ibid.*, p. 213.

16 Bruce R. Scott, "The Great Divide in the Global Village," *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2001, p. 160.

17 Hernando de Soto, *The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Succeeds in the West and Fails Everywhere Else*, New York: Basic Books, 2000.