

## #596 Salem Rebellion, Salem Witchcraft – City on a Hill, but Habitation of Devils



In recent Unsealings, the city of Boston, Massachusetts, has been the focus, as the key points surrounded (a) Ronald Reagan (from the Cold War) and (b) Boston, Massachusetts, (from the Revolutionary War), both reflecting (i) a *City on a Hill* and (ii) *The Exorcist* “habitation of devils.” We are turning our attention from Boston, Massachusetts, to nearby Salem, Massachusetts. Our new series is **Salem Rebellion, Salem Witchcraft.**

**Salem, City on a Hill.** Actually Salem and Boston can be seen as ‘twin cities’ as concerns their roles in the dualism of *City on a Hill* vs. “habitation of devils.” Salem, like Boston, was meant to be a *City on a Hill*, as the founding seat of government of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Roger Conant established the first settlement on the site of Salem in 1626. In 1628, John Endicott (also spelled Endecott) led about 50 people from England to Salem, establishing the Massachusetts Bay Colony there. He had been deputized by the Massachusetts Bay Colony to govern the little colony of Salem in subordination to the main governor and company in London. John Winthrop was elected governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony on October 30, 1629. The decision was made to transfer the whole government to American soil, and Winthrop was made governor to effect and carry out the transfer. In June 1630, John Winthrop and the Winthrop Fleet of 11 ships landed in Salem with the charter. A few days later he went to what is now called Charlestown, and soon afterward to the site and settlement of Boston. Since it was the Massachusetts Bay Colony in general that was to be a *City on a Hill*, the settlement of Salem as well as Boston was hoped to be such.



Statue of Roger Conant, founder of Salem, Massachusetts

**Matthew 5:14 (KJV) YE ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. A CITY THAT IS SET ON AN HILL cannot be hid.**

**Salem, Habitation of Devils.** The stridency toward making or keeping Salem as a *City on a Hill* led to the Salem Witch Trials (also referred to as the Salem Witchcraft Trials) of 1692. Descendants of both **John Winthrop** and **John Cotton** were prominent figures in the Salem trials. John Winthrop's grandson, **Wait Still Winthrop**, was one of the judges who sat in the court of judgment in the trials. **Cotton Mather**, named after his grandfather John Cotton, was quite involved in the matter. As we will cover, Increase Mather, the father of Cotton Mather, was also a significant figure in the Salem Witchcraft Trials.



*Revelation 18:2 (KJV) And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, **BABYLON THE GREAT IS FALLEN, IS FALLEN, AND IS BECOME THE HABITATION OF DEVILS,** and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.*

**Key Understanding: Salem: City on a hill, yet a habitation of devils.** The city of Salem, Massachusetts, directly brought together the two themes of a *City on a Hill* and the “*habitation of devils,*” for the desire of the Puritans to keep Salem holy led to the Salem Witch Trials of 1692. Whereas John Winthrop and John Cotton were directly involved in the establishment of Boston, Massachusetts, as a hoped-for *City on a Hill*, roughly sixty years later their grandsons, Wait Still Winthrop and Cotton Mather, were directly involved in attempting to keep Boston and Salem as *Cities on a Hill*.

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