

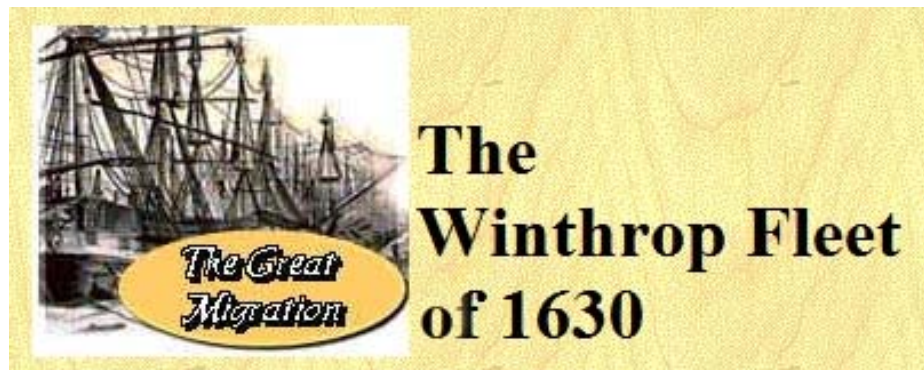
**#1425 The United States of America as the New Jerusalem/New Israel – At its founding, the land of America was looked upon by many as representing a New Jerusalem and/or a City Upon a Hill and/or a New Israel, part 8, John Cotton in 1630 speaking of the land and people of America as representing a New Israel**

A brief outline of the Cottons and the Mathers (John Cotton, Richard Mather, Increase Mather, and Cotton Mather) was given in Unsealing [#597](#) in the series Salem Rebellion, Salem Witchcraft.



**John Cotton.** John Cotton (*left*) was born on December 4, 1584 (some sources say 1584; other sources say 1585), in Derby, England. He served as the vicar (Church of England minister) of St. Botolph's Church in Boston, Lincolnshire, England, from 1612 to the early 1630's. Although persecuted by the Church of England authorities for his non-conformist preaching, he was a hugely influential figure and attracted great numbers to his congregation including prominent people who were later to help found the town's namesake in New England. Cotton was in large part responsible for the growing urge among many local citizens to leave their native shores and begin new lives across the Atlantic. He encouraged membership of the Massachusetts Bay Company and inspired a group of Lincolnshire men who led in the founding and development of Boston, Massachusetts, in 1630.

**The Great Puritan Migration.** On March 4, 1629, the Massachusetts Bay Company was granted its charter by King Charles I. Although a commercial company interested in making a profit by cultivating trade in the new colony, the leading promoters of it were also intent on establishing a state in which a Puritan church would be free from all outside interference. On August 26, 1629, a dozen shareholders from Lincolnshire, including John Winthrop and Thomas Dudley, signed a contract to inhabit and develop New England given that they would be allowed to govern the new colony



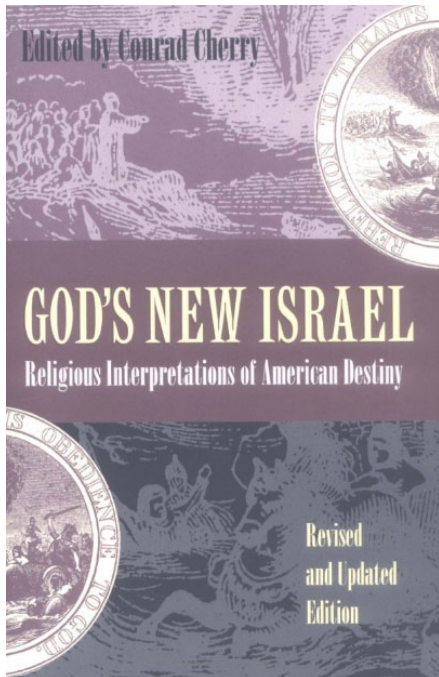
themselves from Massachusetts. John Winthrop was made governor of the colony. They then set about the enormous task of organizing a fleet of eleven vessels with all the equipment and supplies that would be needed for the migration. Puritan society received news of the venture with great excitement. Many licenses to migrate were applied for and granted. By April 1630, John Winthrop's great fleet was ready to sail from Southampton, England, carrying the first

Lincolnshire contingent aboard the *Arbella*. Although suffering from ill-health, John Cotton traveled from Boston, Lincolnshire, to see them off, giving what became a famous sermon for the whole company.

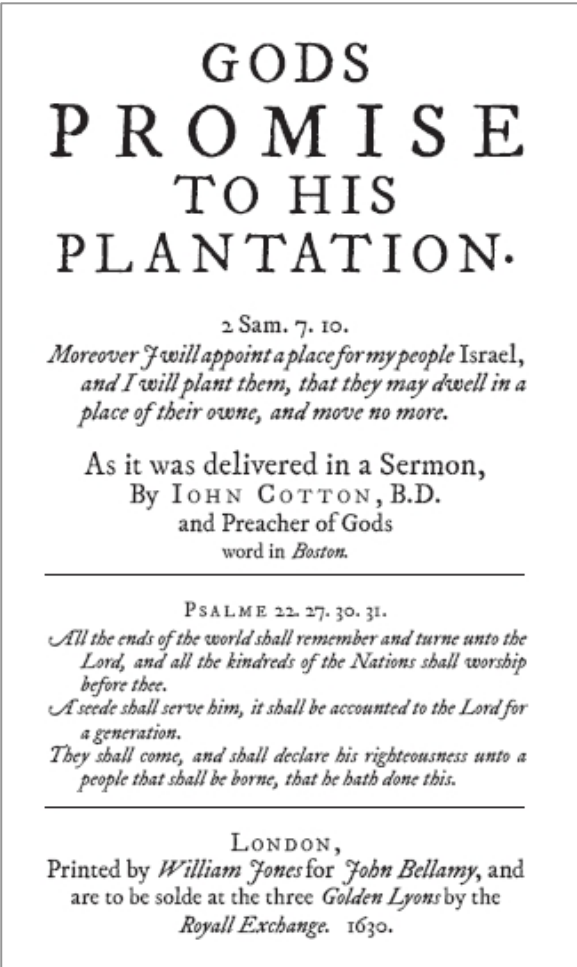
**John Cotton’s famous sermon “God’s Promise to His Plantation” centered on the theme of the Puritans’ divine right to occupy the land. The sermon cast America in the role of a land of New Israel for the Lord’s chosen people Israel.** The sermon was given by John Cotton to John Winthrop and others ready to set sail for America. In the speech, Cotton emphasized the parallel between the Puritans and the Lord’s chosen people in the Old Testament. The sermon begins with 2 Samuel 7:10 as the chief text, comparing the soon taking of the land of America by the Puritans to the land of Canaan being taken by the Israelites. Included was the understanding of the likely necessity of casting out the enemies of God through lawful warfare.

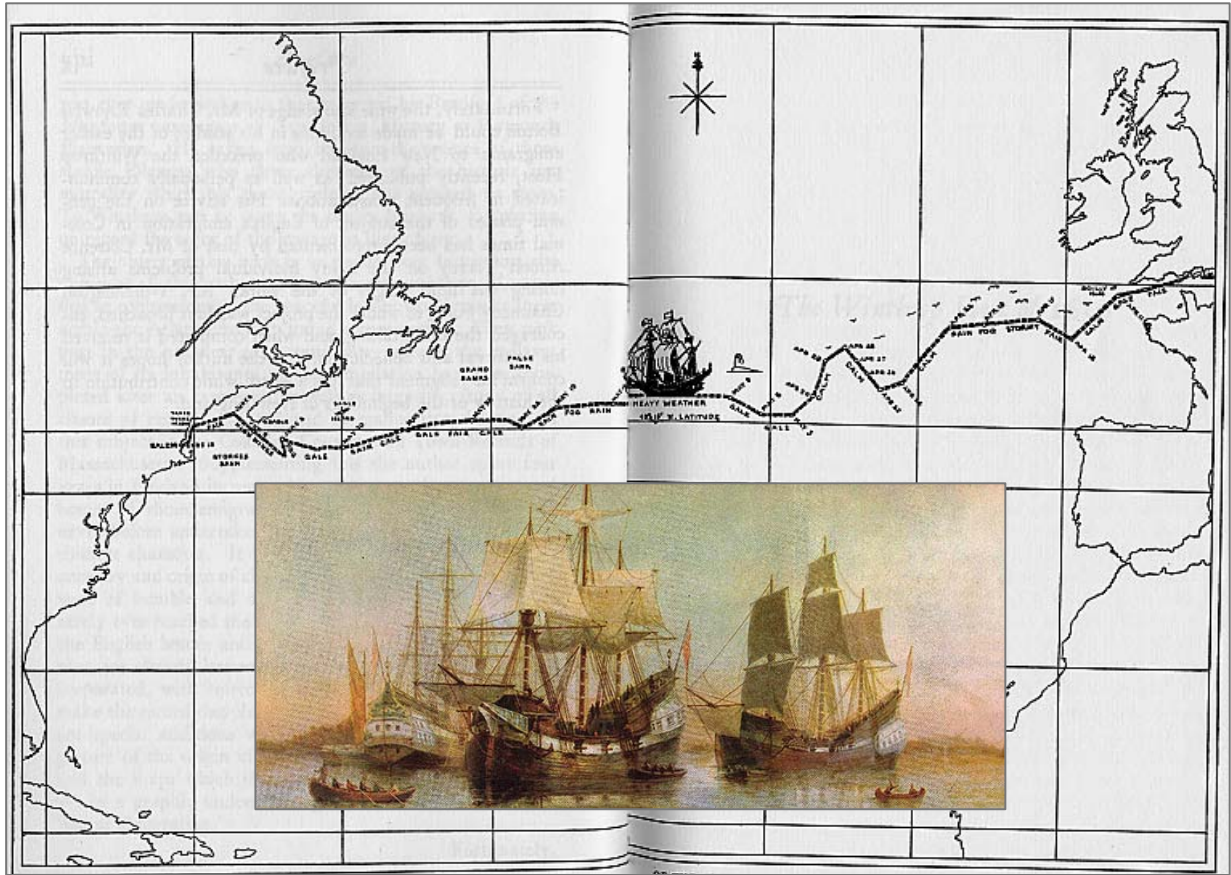
*2 Samuel 7:10 (KJV) Moreover I will appoint a place [referring to the village of Salem and particularly the land America] for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no*

*more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime,*



**Key Understanding: America as the new Israel through Cotton’s sermon. John Cotton’s famous sermon “God’s Promise to His Plantation” was given to those who were beginning the Great Puritan Migration. It was centered on the idea of the Puritans’ divine right to occupy the land, as if savage America in New Testament times was akin to the land of Canaan in Old Testament times, and as if America was meant to be a New Israel in New Testament times, just as the land of Canaan would become the land of the twelve tribes of Israel in Old Testament times.**





**The route of the Winthrop Fleet.** The fleet of 11 ships carrying the residents of the Massachusetts Bay Colony landed at Salem and Charlestown in 1630. John Winthrop, aboard the *Arbella*, landed at North River near Salem on June 12, 1630.

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