

Fall History & Heritage -- #6 (Oct. 21)

Sacred History --- (Kirk; *Roots of American Order*, pp. 38-50)

This kind of history, the kind conveyed by the Bible, centers on relations between God and man and the intersection of heaven and earth or time and eternity? As such it speaks in many images, symbols, parables—showing us things “as in a glass darkly”—yet against the backdrop of real men and real events in a real world. The other kind, secular history, focuses on ordinary events in this world—themselves pictures, however veiled, of things above—but often described with little if any imaginative sense.

To One's People and God Be True --- (Kirk; *Roots*, pp. 38-50)

This chief end of the ancient Israelite was founded upon his awareness, via revelation, of a timeless God who entered into time for His own and Israel's sake? The eternal God, notably in the Hebrew Exodus, manifested Himself as Supreme Actor in time—the One who redeems the helpless (His elect nation) and judges their enemies (the Egyptians). Granted such enlightenment, the Israelite's only rational choice, which he still spurned often enough, was to be true to his inherited identity.

Natural Law (or Law of Human Nature) --- (Kirk; *Roots*, pp. 38-50)

This higher order or set of duties—moral, social, and political in its principles and effects—seems to be reflected, however dimly, in all places and among all peoples? Such was the conclusion of C.S. Lewis (1898—1963), based on careful examination of mankind's many religions and philosophies and recorded in his *Abolition of Man*. What Lewis found everywhere was at least an awareness of the moral ABC's, like doing good to all men (but especially to one's brethren) or honoring parents, elders, and forebears.

Old Testament --- (Kirk; *Roots*, pp. 38-50)

This portion of sacred Scripture was more esteemed in early Christian America than it was even in Europe (so-called Christendom)? One reason for this had to do with the fact that the Anglo-American colonies were founded in the 1600s during an Old World renewal in Hebrew scholarship. A second, closely related to the first, was the presence of many Calvinists in the colonies, Calvin having stressed more than most Israel's legacy as the root of the Church and Israel's inspired writings as the Word of Christ.

New England Puritans --- (Kirk; *Roots*, pp. 38-50)

These Anglican dissenters settled in what became the northeast U.S. in the 17th-century and built a remarkable Christian commonwealth there? Devoted to the Bible, they saw themselves reliving in some sense Israel's Exodus and desert wanderings for the sake of righteousness in covenant with God. They also excelled in scholarship from the beginning (founding Harvard in 1636), setting the stage for their often less devout descendants to dominate the intellectual scene in America for generations.