Twitter Thread by Mr. Spock ■ (Commentary)

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From the very beginning in America, Christian nationalism was branded extremism. Particularly Massachusetts Puritanism. All churches were branded dens of sin and ungodly if they didn't belong to Massachusetts Puritanism. The story can be traced back to Boston, England.

A loose-living minister was tired of being hauled before the towns strict Puritan magistrates. This minister believed he could behave how he wanted, and didn't want to conform to the Churches rules. He believed individual churches should be autonomous and preach whatever they

like. He was asked to questioned by the law of the Church of England. He went into hiding and didn't attend the hearing. 76 ministers who believed they should teach whatever they wanted left England for New England before 1640. In these churches in New England, the sermons

were like lectures as opposed to readings from the Bible. They were based on what these ministers believed should help shape the country. They were political. Massachusetts was raw and new. They could shape the country based on their beliefs. They wanted extremism. They didn't

start Christianity based upon the gospels. They wanted a Christianity based on the laws of the Old Testament??? They banned smoking in public places. Households were told to destroy dice and cards, they policed the Sabbath, instituted the death penalty for adultery and

punished those who were drunk or swore. Basically, behaviors they would not have been allowed in England. But what really appealed was the unprecedented political innovations that they would yield. They would be the ONLY people allowed to vote. They made themselves

unanswerable to the people and the people fell under tyranny. They created a government that ran through the churches. Members of these churches would be required to prove themselves saintly. You also had to have the outward appearance of a saint. Any adult male accepted would

become a freeman of the Massachusetts Bay Company and have the right to vote. The appearance of a saint was to be white. They made up the General Court, the colony's supreme judicial court and legislative body. This was a quasi-Republican government first and by the saints.

As time went on, suddenly there was an upsurge of lay ministers. Inexperienced and if no knowledge of the Bible. They would prepare sermons based on their limited understanding of the Bible. This led to the preaching of taking the Bible literally. Reading Revelation literally.

Not understanding that the Gospel of John was not one of the synoptic gospels. One has to understand that at this time was also around the time that they started to accuse women of being witches. Anne Hibbens, a strong quarrelsome widow was accused to be a witch purely for

asking why two of her enemies were talking about her. They accused her of being a witch for knowing that they were talking about her and was hanged. Corruption in the church began to rise as they knew that they could use religion to accuse anyone of anything with which they

didn't agree. This spread all over New England with places like Rhode Island writing religious liberty into their charter. Quakers, missionary's or anyone of any other religion were targeted. Punishments of whippings and ear slicing for what they saw as heretics.

It is this Puritan past that led to what we know as American exceptionalism. America was a chosen nation and Americans were a chosen people. These Puritans saw themselves as undertaking a political mission. Exceptionalism describes the perception of Massachusetts Bay colonists

that as Puritans they were charged with a special spiritual and political destiny. To create in the New World that Americans are special, exceptional, because they are charged with saving the world from itself. Neoconservatives today believe that the Puritans were "global

revolutionaries." This is what has led to the Make America Great Again. Where religion ruled and purity to the Puritans means being saintly white. Puritanism is the seedbed from which all American history sprouted. As time went on, new settlers elsewhere in America were

promoting their ideals. Virginia was conceived as an extension of God's chosen England. The Puritans sought to create a "New English Jerusalem." Philip Freneau's poem in 1772, "The Rising Glory of America" writes America as "a New Jerusalem sent down from heaven" the belief

that there is a continuity between a vision of "Zion" or "the Promised Land." This vision has been a tendency in American History from its very outset. The religio-politico founding being truly exceptional. But the interesting thing begins with the religion itself. As I mentioned

it wasn't based upon the gospels. It also only based its religion on the laws if the Old Testament. In 1762, Jean-Jacques Rousseau called it a "civil religion" that the American people can find a national identity and social cohesion. Even the Founding Fathers saw their new

republic as a grand political experiment rather than a divine country. John Adams states, "we may boast that we are a chosen people, we may even thank God that we are not like other men, but, after all, it would be but flattery, and delusion, the self-deceit of the Pharisee."