U. S. History From A Biblical Perspective

World War I and Internationalism

Study Pack 8

"We have to cast our minds back to the intellectual atmosphere of 1913, when the state, not only in the United States but in many other countries, was seen as a knight in shining armor, coming to the rescue of the poor and the weak and the victimized, and doing with objective benevolence what otherwise would be done selfishly by greedy aggregations of private wealth."

~~ Paul Johnson, *A History of the American People*, p. 637 ~~

I. THE ELECTION OF 1912.

In 1910, the Democrats gained control of the House of Representatives. Many Republicans, including Teddy Roosevelt, blamed Taft. In 1912, Roosevelt challenged Taft for the Republican nomination. Taft got the nomination, and many Republican Progressives formed a new party called the "_____" Party. Teddy Roosevelt accepted the Bull Moose Party nomination and split the Republican vote. The Democrats nominated Woodrow Wilson. Wilson was an interesting contrast. He talked often about his faith in the Bible, and he was considered to be a devout Christian. He wrote:

> "There are a good many problems before the American people today and before me as President, but I expect to find the solution to those problems just in the proportion that I am faithful in the study of the _____."

He also wrote:

> "The history of Liberty is a history of _____ of _____, not the increase of it. When we resist, therefore, the concentration of power, we are resisting the powers of death, because concentration of power is what always precedes the destruction of human liberties."

But Wilson also claimed to be a Progressive and an evolutionist, and he worked to expand the role of government in people's lives. He even advocated using the theory of evolution as the basis for government instead of the _____, _____, and _____. He wrote:

> "The trouble with the theory (of a Constitution based on natural law with checks and balances) is that government is not a machine, but a _____. It falls, not under the theory of the universe, but under the theory of organic life ... Living political constitutions must be Darwinian in structure and in practice.

> Society is a living organism and must obey the laws of life … All that progressives ask or desire is permission - in an era when "development," "evolution" is the scientific word - to interpret the Constitution according to the Darwinian principle; all they ask is recognition that a nation is a living thing and not a machine."

Both Wilson and Roosevelt campaigned as Progressives. Roosevelt had a financial plan for progress that he called the New Nationalism. Wilson had a similar plan called the New Freedom.

Wilson won an Electoral College landslide victory. The incumbent, President Taft, finished a distant third. Wilson had fewer popular votes than Bryan did in any of his three campaigns, but he won because the Republicans were so badly split

II. WILSON'S NEW FREEDOM.

Wilson worked hard to expand the role of the federal government. The Federal Reserve Act created the equivalent of a central banking system but left the banks under private ownership. It was regulated by a seven-person board appointed by the President and approved by the Senate.

_____ were greatly reduced, and the progressive (or graduated) income tax was used to make up for _____. A progressive (graduated) income tax is one where the percentage rates increase as income goes up. The first income tax was one percent on income between $20,000 and $50,000 and rose to six percent on incomes over $500,000.

Many other expansions of government took place under Wilson. In fact, his chief political advisor, Colonel Edward M. House wrote a novel called *Philip Dru: Administrator*. This novel described how much better life in America would be under a socialist dictatorship. House was considered the driving force behind Wilson's expansion of government.

The Federal Trade Commission Act formed a commission of five members. Its stated goal was to enforce "_____." The definitions of "fair" and "unfair" were left to government bureaucrats. This drew the government deeper and deeper into regulating the economy. Wilson's "New Freedom" was turning out to be "freedom from freedom."

III. FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Wilson appointed William Jennings Bryan as his first Secretary of State. The stated public goal was to avoid the kind of international intervention the nation had seen under McKinley, Roosevelt, and Taft. In reality, under the Wilson administration, the United States got involved in more foreign affairs, both diplomatic and military, than under any previous administration.

In 1915, the United States intervened in a bloody revolution in Haiti. Wilson sent in the United States Marines and took control of the country. Control was maintained for several years. The U.S. also sent Marines into the middle of a revolution in the Dominican Republic. The U.S. ended up maintaining a military government there for six years.

In 1914, the United States intervened in a civil war in Mexico. Wilson ordered the U. S. Navy to seize the port city of Vera Cruz in order to prevent the Germans from delivering an arms shipment to one group. In early 1916, one of the Mexican leaders, Pancho Villa, executed 16 American citizens. In March 1916, he crossed the border and attacked Columbus, New Mexico, killing 17 Americans. Wilson ordered General John J. Pershing to _____ Mexico and _____ Villa. Pershing's troops went deep into Mexico but failed to capture Villa

In 1914, war broke out in Europe. The Austro-Hungarian Empire declared war on the small Balkan country of Serbia. Russia came into the war on Serbia's side. Germany then declared war on Russia. France came into the war on Russia's side. Germany invaded Belgium in order to attack France. England came into the war on the side of Belgium and France. Eventually, the war drew in European colonies around the world. This drew nations near the colonies, like Japan, China, and Brazil into the war.

Turkey and Bulgaria came into war on Germany's side. While the biggest battles took place in Europe, fighting literally took place _____.

In the beginning of the war, the official position of the Wilson Administration was one of neutrality. Many American citizens sympathized with England because of our common culture and heritage. Trade increased with England and France and fell off with Germany. The government of Germany warned American citizens not to travel on ships bound for England and France. German warships and submarines were sinking ships bound for those two countries. The German government even took out ads in American newspapers asking Americans not to travel in these ships. Many Americans did anyway, and some were on ships that were sunk by German submarines. Every time an American citizen was killed, the American public became angrier with the Germans.

On May 7, 1915, a British ship, the *Lusitania*, was sunk by a German submarine. Many passengers were killed, including 128 Americans (37 women and 21 children among them). The American people were furious, but a majority were not ready to go to war in Europe. Germany defended its action with the claim that even though the *Lusitania* was a passenger ship, it also carried military supplies. Both England and the United States denied this, but it has since been proven to be true.

President Wilson demanded that the German government safeguard the lives of _____ _____. Secretary of State Bryan understood that such a demand would involve the United States in the war, and he resigned in protest.

IV. THE ELECTION OF 1916.

The Germans felt they were nearing the victory in Europe. They temporarily agreed not to sink any more merchant ships without warning. Wilson ran for reelection using the slogan, "_____." Roosevelt abandoned the Bull Moose Party and ran for the Republican nomination. He failed to get it, and the Republicans nominated Supreme Court Justice Charles Evans Hughes. Wilson won a narrow victory.

Following his election Wilson tried unsuccessfully to negotiate peace in Europe. The tide of battle turned against Germany, and the German navy increased its attacks on neutral shipping. The Germans specifically promised to sink any ship, without warning, that came near to England or France.

V. AMERICA DECLARES WAR.

The United States began to arm merchant ships with guns manned by navy crews. These gunners were ordered to shoot at submarines on sight.

The German foreign minister (named Zimmerman) wrote a note to Mexico. This note asked Mexico to declare war on the United States if Germany did. This note promised to return Texas, Arizona and New Mexico to Mexico after the war. The Zimmerman note fell into American hands and was widely published. Again the American people were furious. On March 13, 1917, the Germans sank an American merchant ship. On March 19 1917, they sank three more.

On April 2, 1917, President Wilson asked Congress to declare war on Germany. In his address to Congress he said:

> *... property can be paid for; the lives of peaceful and innocent people cannot be. The present German submarine warfare is a warfare against all mankind.*

Wilson also promised the American people that this could be the last major war. He promised to "_____." The Congress voted overwhelmingly to declare war.

VI. PREPARING FOR WAR.

The United States was far from ready for war in Europe. Our entire military forces totaled 200,000. The war effort would eventually place four million men in the military. President Wilson asked for the authority to "_____." The Congress passed the Selective Service Act. Ten million young men were registered for the draft. Over one million men volunteered and another 2.8. million were drafted.

The income tax was increased to raise money for the war. This covered about one-third of the cost of the war effort. The other two-thirds of the cost were covered by borrowing.

An organization called the War Industries Board was created. This organization, headed by Bernard Baruch, was given control over large areas of the economy. A Food Administration, headed by Herbert Hoover, limited the amount of food available for private purchase. Many other organizations were formed to regulate the economy and private life. After the war, restrictions and regulations were eased, but the United States never returned to the _____ from government intervention that existed before the war.

VII. THE NAVAL WAR.

The United States Navy immediately began to attack German shipping. Soon German warships did not venture out on the high seas. The German submarines were still very effective in sinking many British and American ships. American destroyers began to accompany merchant shipping, and by 1918, they had drastically cut losses to the German submarines.

VIII. THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

Seven months after the declaration of war, the first American ground troops arrived in France. These first troops took the motto "_____." Their commander was General Pershing. The expeditionary force joined the British and the French in fighting the Germans at the Battle of Chateau-Thierry, at the Battle of Belleau Wood, and the Second Battle of the Marne. The German army lost battle after battle. Additional American troops kept arriving. The battle of St. Mihiel saw over one million American troops in battle. By November, the Germans were in full retreat. On November 11, the Germans agreed to lay down their arms and demobilized.

IX. PEACE.

President Wilson offered a 14-point plan for peace. They included:

*the abolition of secret diplomacy,
*freedom of the seas for all,
*freedom of trade,
*reduction of additional militaries among all nations,
*the defeated powers must give up their colonies, and
*the formation of a League of Nations.

President Wilson was unable to realize many of these goals. The victorious nations demanded that Germany admit guilt, give up territory to France, and pay heavy reparations. A few leaders protested. They were concerned that treating Germany so harshly would only guarantee another war down the road. French military leader Marshall Foch said, "This is not peace; it is an armistice for twenty years."

He would prove to be exactly right; World War II would break out in exactly 20 years.

X. LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

The cornerstone of President Wilson's plan was the League of Nations. This international organization was supposed to maintain peace and promote international cooperation. It was assumed that organizing nations into one organization would _____ lead to _____The European nations responded enthusiastically to Wilson's plan. An international covenant to unite the nations of the world into a League of Nations was soon reached.

In the United States, the Socialists, the Progressives, and other groups based upon faith in big government were thrilled. The federal Council of Churches called the League of Nations "_____ _____." This liberal church council campaigned among member churches for support for the League.

However, the _____ people opposed the League of Nations and put pressure on the Senate not to ratify it. A group of Senators called the "_____" tried to rally opposition to the League (which required approval of the two-thirds of the Senate). These Senators made it clear that they saw the "internationalism" of Wilson as a threat to the national interests of the United States. Senator Henry Cabot Lodge said:

> *"You may call me selfish if you will, conservative or reactionary, or use any other harsh adjective you see fit to apply; but an American I was born, an American I have remained all my life. I can never be anything else but an American, and I must think of the United States first. And when I think of the United States first in an arrangement like this I am thinking of what is best for the world; for* ***if the United States fails the best hopes of mankind fail with it.*** *I have never had but one allegiance - I cannot divide it now. I have loved but one flag, and I cannot share that devotion and give affection to the mongrel banner invented for a league. Internationalism, illustrated by the Bolshevik and by the men to whom all countries are alike provided they can make money out of them, is to me repulsive. National I must remain, and in that way I, like all other Americans, can render the amplest service to the world*
>
> *The United States is the world's best hope, but if you fetter her in the interests and quarrels of other nations, if you tangle her in the intrigues of Europe, you will destroy her power of good and endanger her very existence. Leave her to march freely through the centuries to come as in the years that have gone.* ***Strong, generous, and confident, she has nobly served mankind.*** *Beware how you trifle with your marvelous inheritance, this great land of ordered liberty, for if we stumble and fall, freedom and civilization everywhere will go down in ruin."*

Senator William Borah also was an outspoken critic of the proposals concerning the League of Nations. Among his many important statements were:

"What we need is the fostering and strengthening of the national spirit. [A league is] the first step in internationalism and the sterilization of nationalism."

"God pity the ideals of this Republic if they shall have no defenders save the scum of the nations organized into a conglomerate international police force, ordered hither and thither by the most heterogeneous and irresponsible body or ***court that ever confused or confounded the natural instincts and noble passions of a people."***

"Your League will not bring peace. The causes of war cannot be removed by the writing of a covenant…"

The Senate voted twice on the Covenant for the League of Nations. It failed to pass both times.

XI. RESULTS OF WORLD WAR I.

The treaty of Versailles did little to settle the long-disputed boundaries of Europe. It was virtually assured that another conflict would engulf Europe.

In 1917, the government of the Czar in Russia collapsed and was replaced by a free republic. Within a few months, the free republic was overthrown by Communist revolutionaries. A similar attempt to set up a Communist government in Hungary failed. The challenge of Communism was to become a major issue for American foreign policy.

In the United States, the principles of freedom were deeply affected. The economy was regulated as it never had been before. Food production and distribution was regulated. The _____ of 1918 made it _____ to interfere with the draft or use "abusive language" about the government. This attack on free speech led to over 1500 persons being arrested. The law was allowed to expire, but a horrible precedent had been set.

XII. A NEW NATIONAL HERO.

A new national hero arose from the violence of World War - _____, from the "backwoods" of Tennessee.

Baptist historian William Grady describes his accomplishment:

> "A little over a month before signing of the armistice on November 11, 1918, a solitary, born-again Christian from the hills of Tennessee caused quite a stir in the battle of the Argonne Forest. Described by General "Black Jack" Pershing as "the outstanding civilian hero in the World War," Corporal Alvin Cullum York single-handedly killed 28 German soldiers, captured 35 machine guns, and, with the assistance of half a dozen dough boys, "rounded up" 132 prisoners - *all to the*

> *glory of God!* When Colonel Richard Wetherill exclaimed to York, "It is not human for a man to do what you have done," the humble mountaineer simply replied, "I believed in God, and I done know He watched over me."
>
> ~~ *What God Hath Wrought*, p.408-409 ~~

York would turn down over a million dollars in advertising offers. He did not believe that it was "proper" for a soldier to profit that way from serving his country.