

Unit 4 from

Exploring America

by Ray Notgrass

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Unit 4



Revolution

The War for American Independence set this country on the political course that it maintains to this day. Key principles of political and personal freedom that Americans still cherish were established in the Declaration of Independence. The American victory in the war enabled the country to turn westward to settle new lands and to continue its growth. The Articles of Confederation was the first attempt at a national government and showed the need for a stronger union among the states. The American Revolution reminds us of the sovereignty of God over the affairs of men.

Lessons in This Unit

Lesson 16—The War Begins

Lesson 17—The Declaration of Independence

Lesson 18—The Revolutionary War

Lesson 19—Society and Government After the Revolution

Lesson 20—Bible Study: God Is Sovereign

Memory Verse

By the end of this unit, memorize the portion of Leviticus 25:10 that is inscribed on the Liberty Bell: “Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof” (King James Version).

Books Used

- The Bible
- *American Voices*

Writing

Choose one of the following writing assignments:

- Research the life of Patrick Henry and write a two-page report on his life. Henry (1736-1799) was largely self-taught. He was an attorney and member of the Virginia House of Burgesses, and he also served as governor of Virginia for a time. Henry was a leading proponent of independence for the colonies. During the debate in the House of Burgesses over the Stamp Act, Henry said, “Caesar had his Brutus, Charles the First his Cromwell, and George the Third — may profit by their example.” When loyalist members of the chamber cried, “Treason!” Henry replied, “If this be treason, make the most of it.” His speech that ended, “Give me liberty, or give me death,” was an important spark in the movement toward American independence. The fiery orator later opposed the Constitution because he believed it gave too much power to the central government. He was a leading advocate for a Bill of Rights, which was added to the Constitution soon after it was ratified.
- Write a one-page summary of the reasons Americans desired independence.
- Write a one-page summary of what the Christian’s relationship to the government should be in the United States today. Write another page on what it should be for a Christian living in Communist China today.

Lesson 16

The War Begins

“The New England colonies are in a state of rebellion,” declared King George III in late 1774. “Blows must decide whether they are to be subject to this country or independent.” Events in America showed how correct the king’s appraisal of the situation was.

Political Maneuvers

As the culmination of the colonies’ resistance to the laws and policies of the British government, the First Continental Congress convened in Philadelphia in September of 1774. Representatives of twelve colonies (Georgia did not participate at first) passed resolutions condemning British actions, organized boycotts of British goods, and discussed questions of political philosophy and human rights. In response, the British Parliament declared the colony of Massachusetts to be in rebellion. The British government forbade any trade by the American colonies with nations outside of the British Empire and prohibited American fishing in the North Atlantic.



Minute Men

Meanwhile, the colonies prepared for war. Each colony organized a militia. Minute Man units were formed that were prepared for quick action. More and more people clamored for war and independence. On March 23, 1775, Patrick Henry addressed the Virginia House of Burgesses and eloquently stated the patriot cause in his “Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death” speech. Throughout the growing crisis with the colonies, the British government consistently refused to consider any policy or gesture of a conciliatory nature toward the colonies. In their arrogance, the British believed that any military confrontation with the colonists would be minor and brief and would end decisively in Britain’s favor.

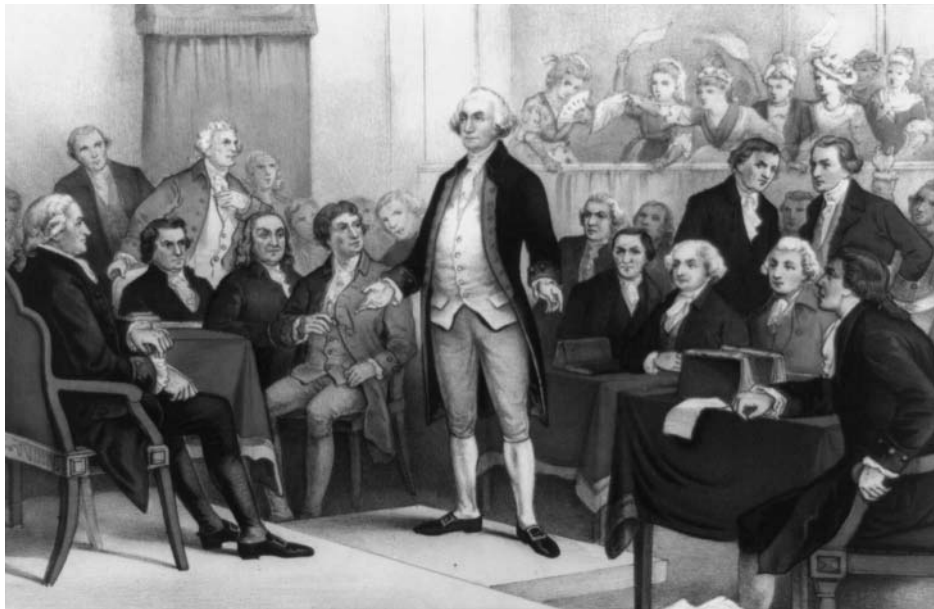
Lexington and Concord

In April of 1775, the royal governor of the colony of Massachusetts, Thomas Gage, received instructions from London to put an end to the rebellion that was taking place in the colony. The governor issued orders for troops to arrest Samuel Adams and John Hancock in the nearby town of Lexington and then to seize the patriot stockpile of weapons in Concord further away. British troops stationed in Boston left the city by boat during the evening of April 18, 1775, to carry out these orders. They landed outside of the city and started their march toward the nearby villages. Patriots learned of the British advance and sent Paul

Revere and William Dawes into the countryside to warn Adams, Hancock, and the local militias. Dr. Samuel Prescott joined the riders in Lexington. Revere and Dawes were stopped by British patrols, but Prescott got through to Concord.

In a confrontation in Lexington early on the morning of April 19, British soldiers killed several Minute Men. At Concord, however, the militiamen killed fourteen British troops and forced the British to withdraw toward Boston. As they did, patriots along the road, hiding behind rocks, fences, and barns, shot at the retreating soldiers. When the British finally returned to Boston, they had killed or wounded about one hundred Americans but had suffered about 250 casualties themselves. These skirmishes, especially the confrontation at Concord's North Bridge, came to be called collectively "the shot heard round the world." The American Revolutionary War, also known as the War for Independence, had begun. The British quickly realized that they were in for a hard fight.

The Second Continental Congress met in Philadelphia in May of 1775 and began functioning as a national government. It appointed George Washington of Virginia to be commander of a yet-unformed Continental Army. Washington had military experience from the French and Indian War, and he had gained wide respect as a person and as a leader.



George Washington Appointed Commander of the Continental Army

Bunker (Breed's) Hill

Meanwhile, British troops had taken control of the city of Boston. Patriot forces outside of Boston laid a siege against the city. On the day Washington was commissioned by Congress, British forces moved against the patriot siege position on Breed's Hill (near Bunker Hill) outside of Boston. The American commander, Israel Putnam, ordered his troops not to fire until they could see the whites of the British soldiers' eyes. In other words, they were to use their scarce ammunition carefully and only shoot at the British at close range.

The British mounted three assaults against the colonists and finally ousted them from their position, but the victory came at a cost of over 1,000 British casualties. The British won the Battle of Bunker Hill, as it became known; but British General Sir Henry Clinton realized that "another such [victory] would have ruined us." Scattered fighting took place in southern Canada and in other parts of the colonies over the course of the next year.

Declaration of Causes

On July 5 and 6, 1775, the Continental Congress approved two resolutions, both written largely by John Dickinson. The first, called the “Olive Branch Petition,” assured the king of the colonies’ continued loyalty and pleaded for no further hostile action until the standing issues could be resolved. It said in part:

Attached to your Majesty’s person, family, and Government, with all devotion that principle and affection can inspire; connected with Great Britain by the strongest ties that can unite societies, and deploring every event that tends in any degree to weaken them, we solemnly assure your Majesty, that we not only most ardently desire the former harmony between her and these Colonies may be restored, but that a concord may be established between them upon so firm a basis as to perpetuate its blessings, uninterrupted by any future dissensions, to succeeding generations in both countries, and to transmit your Majesty’s name to posterity, adorned with that signal and lasting glory that has attended the memory of those illustrious personages, whose virtues and abilities have extricated states from dangerous convulsions, and by securing the happiness to others, have erected the most noble and durable monuments to their own fame.

The second resolution, entitled the “Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking Up Arms,” took a different tone. It explained why the colonies were justified in standing up for their rights while resisting the actions of the British government:

Our cause is just. Our union is perfect. Our internal resources are great, and, if necessary, foreign assistance is undoubtedly attainable. We gratefully acknowledge, as signal instances of the Divine favour towards us, that his Providence would not permit us to be called into this severe controversy, until we were grown up to our present strength, had been previously exercised in warlike operation, and possessed of the means of defending ourselves. With hearts fortified with these animating reflections, we most solemnly, before God and the world, declare, that, exerting the utmost energy of those powers, which our beneficent Creator hath graciously bestowed upon us, the arms we have been compelled by our enemies to assume, we will, in defiance of every hazard, with unabating firmness and perseverance, employ for the preservation of our liberties; being with our mind resolved to dye Free-men rather than live Slaves.

In response to this declaration, King George III issued an official proclamation of rebellion and declared the colonies to be “open and avowed enemies.” He began hiring German mercenary soldiers, most of whom came from the Hesse-Kassel region. This is why the German mercenaries came to be called Hessians.

The military situation in the colonies worsened for the British over the next few months. Under the threat of possible American attack, British troops withdrew from Boston to Nova Scotia in March of 1776. At this point no significant area of the thirteen American colonies remained under British control.

Thus far, the conflict constituted a civil war. Many Americans merely wanted to obtain more recognition of their rights as British citizens. A growing number, however, had a different goal in mind: complete separation from the British government.

*They have healed the brokenness of My people superficially,
Saying, "Peace, peace," but there is no peace.
Jeremiah 6:14*

Assignments for Lesson 16

History

- Read Patrick Henry's "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death!" speech (*American Voices*, pages 36-37).

English

- Read "Paul Revere's Ride" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (*American Voices*, pages 139-142). This poem, written in 1860, had much to do with increasing the reputation of Paul Revere and his role in the Revolution, despite its historical inaccuracies.
- Read "Concord Hymn" by Ralph Waldo Emerson (*American Voices*, page 137). This poem was published in 1837 and gave us the phrase "the shot heard round the world."

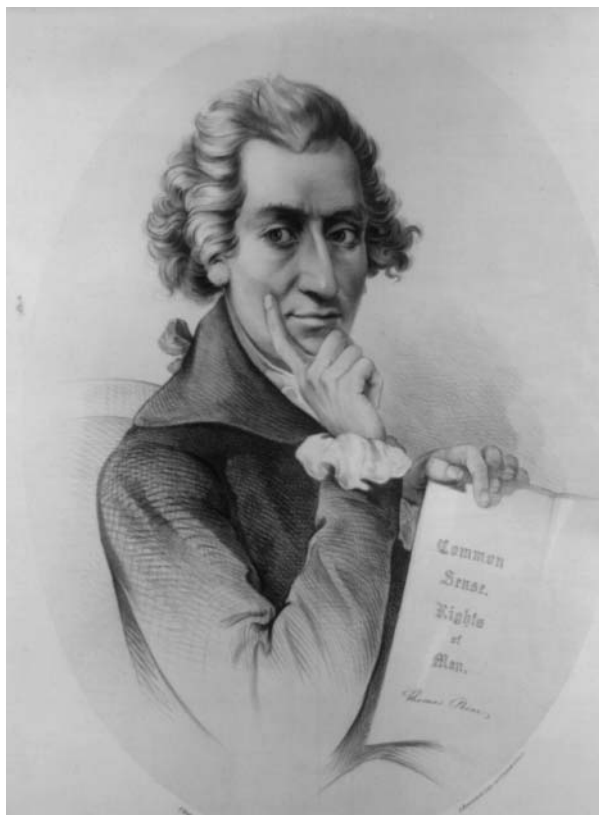
Bible

- Write a 100-word paragraph that expresses your view on the legitimacy of the American Revolution from God's point of view. Were the American colonies right to rebel against the British monarch? Should they have remained loyal to the king and tried to work out something like the commonwealth status that developed later in the British Empire? Was Lutheran minister Dietrich Bonhoeffer right in participating in a plot against Adolph Hitler in Nazi Germany? Would Christians in Communist China be right to take part in an attempt to overthrow the Communist government there? What is the proper role of American Christians toward our own government that often takes actions that are counter to the Christian faith? Did God use the wrong of the American revolution to bring about the good things that our country enjoys? Does God ever bring good out of something bad?
- Begin memorizing the portion of Leviticus 25:10 inscribed on the Liberty Bell (see the introduction to this unit for the text).

If you are using the optional Quiz and Exam Book, answer the questions for Lesson 16.

Lesson 17

The Declaration of Independence



Thomas Paine

“Common Sense”

He was an Englishman who had failed in just about everything he had attempted in his adult life. At thirty-seven years of age, he had come from England to the colonies to get a new start. When he came, he brought with him a letter of recommendation from Benjamin Franklin, who was in England at the time. This man planned to edit a magazine in Pennsylvania. He had been in America for less than a year when, in January of 1776, he anonymously published a pamphlet in Philadelphia which sold a phenomenal 100,000 copies in three months. His identity was eventually revealed; and the man's name, Thomas Paine, became widely known.

Paine had a skill for picking up an idea and expressing it in memorable terms. The pamphlet, “Common Sense,” was an eloquent and moving call for the independence of the American colonies from Great Britain. Paine said that the king had acted as a brute toward the colonies and that everything in reason and nature declared “‘Tis time to part.”

Paine focused his attention on the actions of the king instead of Parliament. Although the resolutions adopted by Congress in July of 1775 gave assurances that the colonies did not want to separate from Britain, Paine's words increased the desire of many Americans for the colonies to declare their independence.

“These Colonies Ought to Be Free”

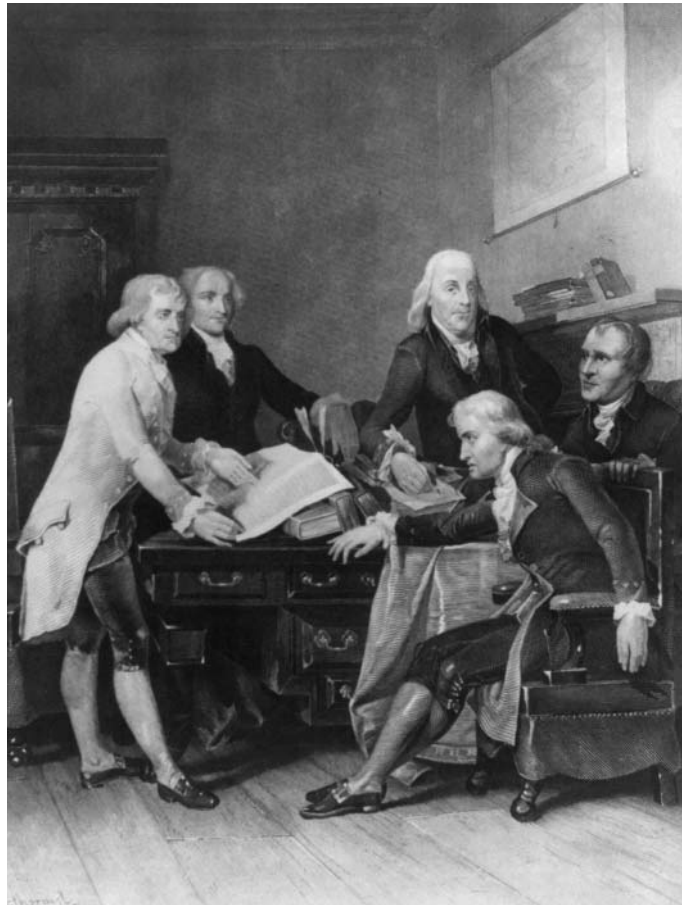
Paine's pamphlet both reflected and furthered the growing sentiment for independence. On June 7, 1776, Richard Henry Lee of Virginia proposed a resolution in the Continental Congress which stated that “these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states.” The resolution was debated, and then a committee was named to draft a formal declaration of independence. The committee was composed of Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Robert Livingston of New York, and Roger Sherman of Connecticut. Jefferson and Adams were asked to produce the draft, and Adams deferred to Jefferson for the task because Adams thought Jefferson was the better writer. Jefferson completed his first draft in a matter of a few days.

Then Jefferson's draft was debated and edited by the Congress. Lee's original resolution passed Congress on July 2, 1776. Rejoicing over the vote, John Adams predicted that July 2 would become the most remembered date in American history. Actually, that honor was given to July 4, 1776, when Jefferson's Declaration, as amended by the delegates, was adopted by the Congress. Representatives from all thirteen colonies signed the Declaration.

"We Hold These Truths To Be Self-Evident"

In the Declaration, Jefferson provided the best statement to that point of the political philosophy that led the colonial leaders to declare the colonies' independence from Britain. It is a classic statement of Enlightenment thinking, appealing to "the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God" and enumerating truths that rational men held to be "self-evident." The Declaration gives a long list of wrongs committed by George III against the colonies. The colonists' grievances were against the actions of the king as head of the government and not against Parliament. Even with the growth of the powers of Parliament in previous decades, the king was still the head of the British government. The document concludes with a declaration of the United States' independence from Britain taken from Lee's original resolution. The signers, relying on "the protection of Divine Providence," pledged to each other "our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."

Jefferson's closing words were not just flowery eloquence. When the colonies embarked upon this course, they did indeed risk everything. The British government considered colonial leaders to be rebels and traitors. If the cause for independence failed, they could expect to be treated as such and face execution. As Benjamin Franklin put it, the colonists had to hang together or they would hang separately. Despite the dangers they faced, the patriots had great confidence in the strength and correctness of their cause.

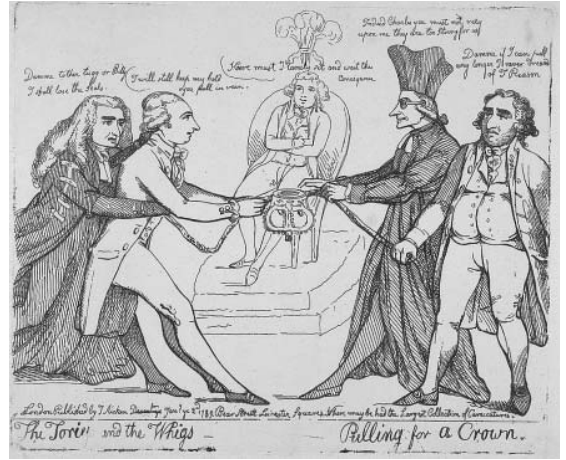


Drafting the Declaration of Independence

Divided Colonies

The colonists as a whole, however, were not united in a desire for independence. Many members of the upper class, for instance, saw great dangers in independence; and they decided to remain loyal to Britain. Although exact numbers cannot be known, John Adams estimated that perhaps one third of the colonists strongly favored independence, one third favored remaining a part of the British Empire, and the other one third was open to being

The names of the two largest political parties in England at the time came from derogatory labels given to them by their opponents. The Tory party generally supported the king. The word Tory comes from the Irish Gaelic word *toraidhe*, which means a robber or a pursued man. It was first used for the supporters of King James II, who were largely the land-owning aristocrats. The term came to be applied to anyone who supported the throne, and it has since developed the broader meaning of a conservative. The opposition party was called the Whigs. The term Whig is from the Scottish word *whiggamore*, which means cattle driver. It was applied to Scottish dissenters in the 17th century and later came to be used for the land-owning gentry that supported Parliament against the throne. In relative terms the Whigs were the more liberal party. Two things that English political leaders did not want to be called were Irish robbers and Scottish cattle drivers, so that is precisely what their opponents called them. The terms came to be used in the colonies as well: people loyal to Britain were called Tories, while patriots were often called Whigs.



Political Cartoon Showing "The Tories and the Whigs Pulling for a Crown"

persuaded one way or the other. As time went on, that critical third portion of the colonial population developed the desire to become independent. This gave the independence movement the public support it needed to grow from being a small band of revolutionaries to being the majority of the colonists.

When independence was declared, almost 170 years had passed since the first English colony had been established in North America. What began as a few tiny outposts had become a strong nation. A growing sense of American identity, a history of insensitive policies by the British government, and the widespread acceptance of Enlightenment thinking on the nature of civil government led to the colonists declaring their independence. Now they had to fight the strongest army in the world to defend that declaration.

*Then all the people said to Samuel, "Pray for your servants
to the Lord your God, so that we may not die,
for we have added to all our sins
this evil by asking for ourselves a king."
1 Samuel 12:19*

Assignments for Lesson 17

History

- Read “Common Sense” (excerpts) by Thomas Paine (*American Voices*, pages 38-42).
- Read the Declaration of Independence (*American Voices*, pages 43-46).

English

- Read the poems by Phillis Wheatley in *American Voices*, pages 34-35.

Bible

- Continue developing your ideas about the correctness of the American Revolution according to the Bible.

If you are using the optional Quiz and Exam Book, answer the questions for Lesson 17.

What Was Happening In the World?

1774—Joseph Priestley discovers oxygen. He calls it dephlogisticated air.

1775—The Barber of Seville debuts featuring the famous character Figaro.

1776—The book *The Wealth of Nations* by Adam Smith promotes capitalism by encouraging governments to allow private citizens to pursue business unhindered by regulations.

1783—The first manned balloon flight takes place in Paris.



Lesson 18

The Revolutionary War

Great Britain was the most industrialized nation in the world. Its strong economy was growing in large part because of its overseas trade and its colonies, primarily the American colonies. The British navy ruled the waves; its army was experienced, used to winning, and in fact won several major battles during the Revolutionary War. At one time or other during the war, British forces controlled the cities of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Charleston, and Savannah.

On the other hand, the population of the American colonies was a fraction of Britain's. The American colonies had no standing army, a tiny navy, colonial militias that received little professional training, and limited resources for conducting a war. The Continental Congress was not a strong central government, and many of the individual colonial governments were also weak. The new nation did not have a unified national currency. Many soldiers were paid only with the promise of receiving land grants after the war—if the colonies proved to be victorious.

On this basis, the American David took on the British Goliath. As we shall see, the outcome of the Revolutionary War was the same as the outcome of that Biblical confrontation.

Nathan Hale was a captain in the Continental Army who served as a spy behind British lines on Long Island, New York. He was captured by the British on September 21, 1776, and hanged the next day. His last words were, "I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country."



The Execution of Nathan Hale

Initial Actions

The Americans embarrassed the British at Lexington and Concord and inflicted severe losses on the Redcoats at Breed's Hill. Soon British forces withdrew completely from Boston. Following these initial events, only scattered military activity took place for a time. Colonial forces invaded Canada in the hope of bringing it into the conflict on their side, but the attempt stalled and came to nothing.

The two-part British strategy for defeating the revolution called for (1) seizing the largest American cities and (2) dividing New England from the rest of the colonies. One place that accomplished both these ends for the British was New York City. On July 2, 1776, a British force of 32,000 men began landing in New York harbor. George Washington led a force of about 19,000 Continental Army soldiers and militiamen to oppose them. Successful British advances forced Washington to withdraw from the area, and the American commander led his army to a position near Philadelphia. British forces controlled New York City for the rest of the war.

“The Crisis”

The outlook for the Americans in the latter half of 1776 was bleak. One of the volunteers in Washington’s colonial army was the writer Thomas Paine. In late 1776 he composed a new pamphlet, “The Crisis,” that was published in December of that year. The pamphlet encouraged Americans to stay the course and to believe in the justness of their cause.

General Washington appreciated Paine’s pamphlet and ordered that it be read aloud to his discouraged troops. Soon the fortunes of the American forces improved. On Christmas night, 1776, Washington led his men across the icy Delaware River and made a surprise attack on 1,500

Hessians at Trenton who were not expecting any military activity that night. The attack was a decisive victory for the patriots. Washington’s men then pushed back Redcoat regiments at Princeton, New Jersey, and made winter camp in northern New Jersey.

The next major engagements took place in the fall of 1777. British troops moved on Philadelphia and captured that city. Washington led his men from New Jersey to counterattack, but the Americans’ efforts failed. The British controlled Philadelphia and enjoyed a comfortable winter in the city. Meanwhile, the Continentals set up camp in Valley Forge, just outside of Philadelphia, and endured the harsh winter of 1777-1778 with insufficient food and scant clothing. Washington feared that his army might starve or disband, so he requested immediate assistance from the Continental Congress, which had fled from Philadelphia before the advancing British forces.

Saratoga

Meanwhile, the turning point of the war occurred further north. British General John “Gentleman Johnny” Burgoyne led a force south from Canada with plans to invade the Hudson River valley and thus sever New England from the rest of the colonies. However, the



Burgoyne Surrenders at Saratoga

Until the American Revolution, the traditional way to fight a battle was to have soldiers line up and advance toward the enemy while shooting and reloading. As troops were killed or wounded, the line reformed and made another advance. This led to huge numbers of casualties. The American forces introduced a different way of fighting. They preferred making surprise attacks and firing from behind trees, rocks, and other cover. The British thought this was an unmanly way to fight, but it was an effective way to win battles.

British invasion bogged down in the dense New York woods. The mobile Americans launched several successful attacks and forced Burgoyne to surrender at Saratoga on October 17, 1777. It was a decisive and embarrassing defeat for the British.

The American victory at Saratoga was important for patriot morale and for international relations. News of the victory led the French government to recognize the United States as a sovereign



John Paul Jones

In September 1779, American Commodore John Paul Jones led a small fleet to England where he approached a British ship, the Serapis. The British attacked Jones' fleet and demanded that he surrender, but Jones replied, "I have not yet begun to fight." His own ship sank, but Jones escaped to another vessel and captured the Serapis. This is considered one of the greatest naval victories in American history.

nation and to enter the war on America's side. France had already provided a small amount of assistance; but the formal alliance brought more money, ammunition, and even some troops to the American cause. The French government enjoyed the opportunity to embarrass and potentially to defeat the British forces that had defeated them in the French and Indian War a few years earlier.

Action in the West

During 1778, Americans achieved several victories on the western frontier. British forces had made alliances with Indian tribes in an attempt to control the region west of the thirteen colonies. American frontiersman George Rogers Clark led successful surprise attacks on British positions at Kaskaskia (in present-day Illinois) and Vincennes (in what is now Indiana). The next year, American General John Sullivan led a decisive attack on the Iroquois at what is now Elmira, New York. Daniel Boone held off several British-backed Indian attacks against American settlements in Kentucky. These victories dissolved any effectiveness of the British-Indian alliance in the West and enabled more rapid settlement of the region after the war.

Southern Battles

As the war worsened for the British, they concentrated greater efforts on the Southern colonies. The

British hoped that influential Southerners would feel loyalty to England and stem the tide of American success. The invading army also tried to play on racial divisions in the South by enlisting blacks into the king's forces.

The British took control of Charleston and Savannah, then moved inland to seize additional areas. A British force under General Lord Charles Cornwallis decisively defeated an American army at Camden, South Carolina. Then on October 7, 1780, at the battle of King's Mountain on the border of North and South Carolina, American forces defeated the British in what was the turning point of the war in the South. The British lost again at Cowpens in South Carolina in early 1781. In addition, the loyalist uprising in the South for which the British had hoped did not materialize.

Benedict Arnold was a general in the Continental Army. He served the colonial cause with distinction and developed a close relationship with George Washington. However, he was prideful and undisciplined and received a reprimand from Washington. Needing money to support his extravagant lifestyle, Arnold initiated contact with the British and offered to help them in exchange for a large sum of money. In 1780 Arnold was commander of the American post at West Point, New York, north of New York City. He planned to turn the post over to the British, but his scheme was discovered. Arnold escaped to the British side and became a general in the royal army. The British officer who served as Arnold's contact, John Andre, was captured by the Americans and hanged as a spy.

British Surrender

Cornwallis retreated to the Chesapeake Bay, hoping to gain control of that strategic area. To counter his move, Washington led his army south from New York, linked up with a new French force, and moved toward Cornwallis' position. Meanwhile, a French naval fleet sailed into position off the Virginia coast. Cornwallis knew that his army was trapped; and on October 19, 1781, he surrendered his army to Washington. At the surrender, American army musicians joyfully played "Yankee Doodle," while the British band mournfully played an English tune, "The World Turned Upside Down." The British government realized that further military efforts would be futile and in early 1782 agreed to negotiate a treaty of peace. America had defeated Britain.

The Treaty of Paris begins:

In the name of the most holy and undivided Trinity.

It having pleased the Divine Providence to dispose the hearts of the most serene and most potent Prince George the Third, by the grace of God, king of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, defender of the faith, duke of Brunswick and Lunebourg, arch-treasurer and prince elector of the Holy Roman Empire etc., and of the United States of America, to forget all past misunderstandings and differences that have unhappily interrupted the good correspondence and friendship which they mutually wish to restore. . . .

The Outcome of the War

The Treaty of Paris, signed in 1783, formally ended the war that had begun in 1775. Great Britain recognized the existence of the United States of America as a new and separate nation. The Mississippi River was agreed to as the nation's western border. The United States was interested in obtaining Canada; but Britain decided to keep it, and the United States backed off and recognized British control of Canada. Britain wanted the return of loyalist property in the U.S. to British subjects and the settlement of American debts owed to British individuals, but the treaty made no guarantees about these issues.

France used its influence in the treaty negotiations to weaken England as much as possible. The French government had hopes of one day regaining some of the territory in North America that it had lost to England as a result of

the French and Indian War. Because of Spain's alliance with France on behalf of the United States, Spain eventually received Florida back from Britain. Spain also continued its control of the area of Louisiana which lay west of the Mississippi.

Factors in the Conflict

The American David defeated the British Goliath because of several factors. George Washington's leadership, especially his character and courage, inspired the army and the nation. Washington defeated the British forces primarily by wearing them down over time instead of forcing confrontations which the Americans might well have lost. The American forces fought better than the British and had the advantage of fighting on their own soil. The developing consciousness of

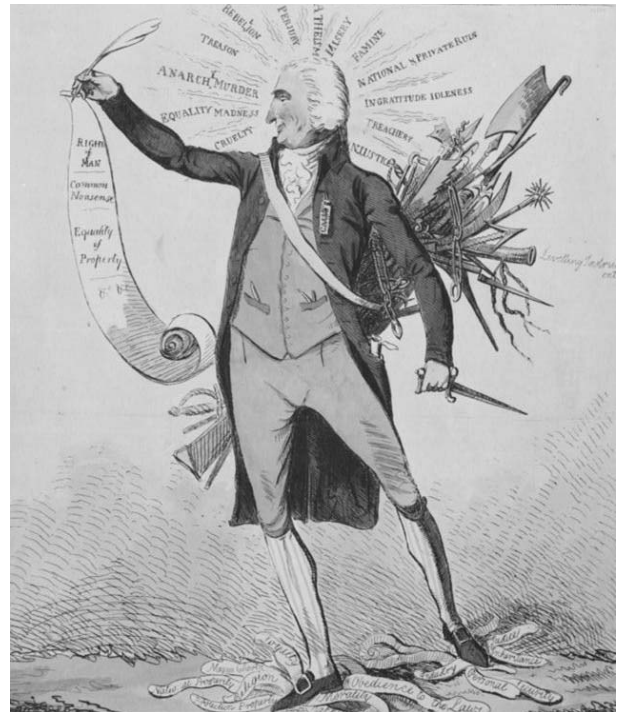
The American Revolution was a landmark event in the history of the world. It established the principles of individual freedom and government by the consent of the governed. It inspired revolutions in France a few years later, in Europe and South America in the first half of the 1800s, and in Africa in the twentieth century.

The war for American independence took on some aspects of a world conflict. Spain began helping France in 1779, and the Netherlands allied itself with the United States in 1780. A Prussian, Baron von Steuben, helped train and discipline American troops at Valley Forge in the spring of 1778. The Marquis de Lafayette of France was commissioned a major general by the Continental Congress at the age of twenty and served on Washington's staff. Lafayette served with distinction in several military campaigns and also used his influence in France to encourage the French government to provide more assistance to the Americans. Casimir Pulaski of Poland fought with the Americans as a brigadier general. He was killed in a British attack on Savannah, Georgia, in October of 1779.

Americans as a separate people gave them a cause for which they were willing to fight. Assistance from France proved to be a major help to the American effort.

On the other hand, Britain's military suffered from poor leadership from its generals. In addition, fighting a war on several fronts far from home proved difficult. To maintain their supply lines, British forces had to stay close to the Atlantic coast. But perhaps the major failing of the British was in its overall political relationship with the colonies. When questions arose involving control of the colonies, the British answer was usually to crack down. This did not win much loyalty from the Americans. The British have used this approach many times in dealing with their colonies, in places such as India and Ireland. The American colonies simply decided not to put up with it any longer.

*Following his significant influence during the American Revolution, Thomas Paine left the U.S. for Europe in 1787. He divided his time between Britain and France, mostly working on inventions. He supported the French Revolution of 1789, and his book *The Rights of Man* (1791-1792) was an eloquent statement of the philosophical basis for the overthrow of the French monarchy. Paine hoped for such a revolution in Britain as well, and his stance made him an outcast in that country. In 1792 Paine became a French citizen and was elected to the French National Assembly, even though he could not speak French. However, he condemned the execution of Louis XVI. This and his alignment with one of the factions in the revolution caused him to become suspect by another faction, and he was imprisoned in late 1793 for almost a year. During his imprisonment, he worked on his next significant book, *The Age of Reason* (1794-1795). This book announced his rejection of Christianity and the church, his denial of the authority of Scripture, and his proposal for the adoption of Deism. This stance cost Paine much of what popularity he had left. Later, Paine criticized Napoleon for his dictatorial rule. President Thomas Jefferson invited Paine to return to the U.S., which he did in 1802. Paine died in 1809.*



In this illustration, Thomas Paine is shown holding a "Rights of Man" scroll. Around his head are written injustices such as "treason" and "cruelty." He is standing on words suggesting moral and righteous acts.

*Through God we shall do valiantly,
And it is He who will tread down our adversaries.
Psalm 60:12*

Assignments for Lesson 18

History

- Read “The Crisis” (excerpts) by Thomas Paine (*American Voices*, pages 47-48).

English

- Thomas Paine was an expert in the style of writing known as persuasive argument. Persuasive writing includes appealing to emotion, building a case by stating certain facts, presenting one’s own side as just and right, and casting one’s opponent as ignorant or evil. Write a paragraph that is a persuasive argument for a cause in which you believe strongly.

Bible

- Do Paine’s Biblical references in “Common Sense” affect how you see the American Revolution in light of the Bible?

If you are using the optional Quiz and Exam Book, answer the questions for Lesson 18.

Revolutionary War dates:

Fighting began in 1775.

Independence was declared in 1776.

The British surrendered in 1781.

The Treaty of Paris was signed in 1783.

Lesson 19

Society and Government After the Revolution

Any war causes hardships for the people affected by it, whether the people are civilians or enlisted in the fighting forces. This is especially true for those who live where the fighting takes place. Many Americans suffered greatly during the war that secured their independence. The British were merciless about destroying property in the cities and towns they occupied. Farms were ruined both from fighting and from troop movements. Thousands of families suffered hardships when husbands and sons left for the war, and many of those loved ones did not return.

The Revolutionary War was in some ways a civil war that created deep divisions in American communities and families. Many Americans found it difficult to decide whether to remain loyal to England or to become patriots. Most colonial government office-holders and Anglican clergy, some businessmen, and many small farmers remained loyal to England. During and after the war, about 100,000 British loyalists left the United States to live in Canada, Britain, or the West Indies. They took with them a great deal of money and individual talent that could have helped the new nation.

American Society and Economy

American government and society remained relatively stable through the war and in the years immediately following. This was true because, by the time of the revolution, America had a strong tradition of self-government and local responsibility. People were used to governing themselves; so when the colonies became an independent nation, Americans largely continued the same forms of local and state governments they had known.

The war caused serious economic disruption throughout the new nation. Because of the need to supply the army and the interruption to the American economy caused by the war, prices for food and other items rose significantly. Some businessmen took undue advantage of the situation and made large profits when they sold supplies to the Continental Army. Some poor farmers and shopkeepers resented the hardships they faced while people in the upper class were faring much better. However, the



The State House in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1778

war also brought about some positive changes in the American economy. New industries developed, especially those associated with war. The loss of trade with England spurred the development of new trading relationships with other countries.

The single most important factor in determining wealth and status in America was the ownership of land. The more land a person owned, the greater was his wealth and social status. Large landowners continued to exert considerable influence after the Revolution. However, America offered people a chance at upward mobility. Indentured servants, for instance, who were lowest on the social ladder except for slaves, became landowners after fulfilling their indenture requirements.

The settlements just west of the Appalachian crest in the region controlled by North Carolina (the area that later became the eastern part of Tennessee) felt some insecurity about their status during the 1780s. North Carolina found it difficult to govern and protect the area, but it had not ceded the land to Congress. Land speculators were interested in developing the area, but figuring out who actually controlled land rights was difficult. In 1784 a government formed in the area under the name of the State of Franklin. Neither Congress nor North Carolina recognized the new government, which proved to be ineffective and largely powerless. The State of Franklin fizzled out and disbanded in 1788.



The Mountains of East Tennessee

Although American society was strongly influenced by English society, it was not an exact reproduction of it. English royalty and nobility, an influential factor in the homeland, did not migrate to America. Landowners in England who could afford to migrate to the colonies became some of the wealthiest and most influential families in America. The Byrd, Randolph, Rolfe, and Mason families, for instance, were some of the earliest settlers in Virginia; and even today descendants of these families are leading figures in Virginia.

Tradesmen with needed skills were much in demand in the colonies. On the other hand, the colonies had fewer household servants than were found in England. Opportunities for owning land and building wealth were so much greater in the colonies than in England that few people in America were willing to spend much time as other people's servants. This possibility for personal advancement was an important dynamic in American society and in the American economy.

One major difference between English and American societies was the greater number of slaves in the colonies. Plantation owners in the southern colonies wanted a large supply of cheap labor, and slavery provided this for them. In 1750 slaves outnumbered whites in South Carolina 39,000 to 25,000. Southern whites often lived in great fear of slave uprisings, and colonial legislatures (later state governments) passed slave codes that restricted the movements and activities of slaves. African-American slaves had an active and rich culture of their own, but it was largely ignored by whites. Despite all the high-sounding talk of personal freedom, government by the consent of the governed, and new opportunities in America, slaves were one group that did not enjoy opportunities for personal advancement.

Settlement of the West

The revolution encouraged more rapid settlement of the lands west of the Appalachian Mountains, especially

in the areas that would become Ohio, Tennessee, and Kentucky. Traders from the English colonies of Pennsylvania and Virginia entered Ohio sometime after 1730. The first English settler in what would become Tennessee arrived in 1769, and thousands followed over the next several years. Nashville (first called Nashborough) was settled during the war, in 1779-80. Daniel Boone oversaw the carving out of the Wilderness Road through the Cumberland Gap in 1775, and through it Boone led thousands of settlers into Kentucky.

The western region witnessed many conflicting land claims by the French, the English who controlled Canada, Native American tribes, and American settlers. The Northwest Ordinance passed by Congress in 1787 helped bring order to the area.

Articles of Confederation

The Continental Congress began as a meeting of representatives from the several independent colonies to discuss what actions they might take against British policies. When fighting broke out, Congress began functioning as a central government even though it had little power. Americans were highly suspicious of a strong central government. This mistrust, after all, was why they were breaking away from Britain. While the Continental Congress was relatively weak, it did manage to hold the new nation together.

Work began on a governing document for the new nation soon after the Declaration of Independence was adopted. However, writing the Articles of Confederation for the new states took more than a year; and the process of having the Articles ratified by all thirteen states

The individual states wrote new constitutions during the 1780s, since their previous governing documents had been written when they were colonies of England. Many of these new state constitutions were experiments in expanded rights for the people. They included bills of rights and broader voting rights. Before the revolution, the vote was generally given to free males who owned a certain amount of property. After the revolution, property qualifications were lowered. Slaves and women, however, were still not allowed to vote.

took even longer. One major point of contention was the handling of western lands. States such as Virginia, New York, and Connecticut, which had claims to trans-Appalachian lands, wanted to keep them so that they could get revenue from the sale of those lands. States with fixed borders, such as Maryland, Delaware, and New Jersey, wanted the territories to be given to the central government so that all the states could profit from land sales. States that had western land claims finally agreed to cede their lands to the national government, and the Articles of Confederation went into effect after Maryland ratified them in early 1781.

The Articles of Confederation provided the foundation for much of the phrasing and many



*Replacing the British Flag
with the American Flag as the British Fleet
Leaves New York Harbor, 1783*

of the provisions of the Constitution that came later. However, the Articles were different in significant ways. Each state was declared to be sovereign. Each state had one vote in Congress regardless of population. The Articles made no provision for either a national executive or a national judicial system. Congress could declare war but had no power to tax. Its revenues came from requests made to the states, and the states could ignore the requests if they wished. The colonies had been independent entities for their entire existence, and the new state governments were reluctant to cede significant powers to a national government.

This first attempt at national self-government by the United States under the Articles of Confederation was not a resounding success, as we will see in the next unit. However, it was an important step toward creating the system of government we now enjoy in the United States.

*The rich and the poor have a common bond,
The Lord is the maker of them all.
Proverbs 22:2*

Assignments for Lesson 19

History

- Read the Articles of Confederation (*American Voices*, pages 49-54).

English and Bible

Many people believe that the United States is God's new chosen people. Certainly God has richly blessed America, and we can see His guiding hand in our history. However, no one has ever received a revelation from God stating that He has made a covenant with the United States the way He did with Israel or the way He did for all believers through Christ. God made a covenant with Abraham and his descendants, the twelve tribes of Israel (Genesis 15:1-6 and 35:9-12). God offered a new covenant to everyone who puts their faith in Jesus (Hebrews 9:6-12). A better understanding of God's relationship with the United States is the realization that God has blessed and guided our country and that Christians have a stewardship from God to use well the blessings He has given us. We have a responsibility to take advantage of our freedom to live for Him and to communicate His word.

- Write one page on your thoughts about God's relationship to the United States.

If you are using the optional Quiz and Exam Book, answer the questions for Lesson 19.

Lesson 20—Bible Study: God Is Sovereign

In 1776 representatives of thirteen British colonies in America declared that the colonies were now a separate nation, the United States of America. They declared their independence from Britain “with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence” and on the basis of “self-evident truths” about man and government. After a protracted and costly war, Great Britain recognized the status of the United States as an independent nation. People usually give credit for the creation of the new nation to the courageous and intelligent leadership provided by the men who are often called the Founding Fathers. From the perspective of the Bible, however, the real credit for the establishment of the new nation and government belongs to God.

God is the ultimate and sovereign Power who guides history. Paul said that God “made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation” (Acts 17:26). Boundaries of habitation have changed as people have migrated to or invaded other countries. The appointed times for nations and kingdoms have come and gone as rulers and governments have risen and fallen throughout history. The Bible says that all of this is ultimately the work of God.

When Mary glorified the Lord on her visit to Elizabeth, she sang,

*He has brought down rulers from their thrones,
And has exalted those who were humble.
He has filled the hungry with good things;
And sent away the rich empty-handed.*
Luke 1:52-53

Human history may record that one king or country defeated another, but faith sees what happened as the work of God. History books say that a military leader invaded another country to control it or to exact revenge for a wrong done to him. From God’s perspective, however, such events took place to fulfill His divine purpose.

Bible Examples

Many times in the Old Testament, the writers of Scripture provide God’s point of view regarding the military and political events being described. Here are a few examples:



*Library of Congress Officials with a Copy of
the Declaration of Independence, 1921*

- When Rehoboam rejected the advice of his older counselors, the Northern Kingdom of Israel rebelled against him and against the dynasty of David's house. On the surface, it appeared to be a problem caused by the generation gap; but the inspired writer of Chronicles says that, "The king did not listen to the people, for it was a turn of events from God that the Lord might establish His word" (2 Chronicles 10:15).
- Later, Shishak of Egypt attacked Israel "because they (Rehoboam and the nation of Judah) had been unfaithful to the Lord" (2 Chronicles 12:2). Shishak himself was probably not aware of this divine impetus behind his actions. No doubt he saw his actions as motivated by a desire for conquest and control. The perspective of faith, however, revealed what God was doing through Shishak.
- After the Babylonians conquered Judah, God raised up the Persian leader Cyrus to punish the Babylonians. In Isaiah 44:28-45:1, the Lord called Cyrus His shepherd and His anointed. This passage gives God's perspective on what might otherwise be seen as merely political-military maneuvering.
- Daniel interpreted the dreams of Nebuchadnezzar as the predictions of the rise and fall of successive empires in the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern world. Daniel said of God:

*It is He who changes the times and the epochs;
He removes kings and establishes kings;
He gives wisdom to wise men
And knowledge to men of understanding.
Daniel 2:21*

The rise and fall of kingdoms that were predicted through Nebuchadnezzar's dreams were the work of God, whether or not the people involved in those events recognized it as such.

Government Is from God

The Bible teaches that government itself is a work of God. Paul wrote that, "Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God" (Romans 13:1). God established governmental authority among men for our well-being. Sometimes leaders come to power who work against God, but even they are within His sovereign will.

Paul wrote Romans while he was under the political authority of the Roman emperor. Today, although someone might seize power in a country and rule as dictator, most governments in the world are formed by popular vote. Nevertheless, governmental authority is still from God. If God can create monarchies, He can create republics and democracies. In His sovereignty, God guides, uses, and works through the actions and decisions of people to accomplish His will.

Seeing God's Hand in Current Events

We can see most clearly how the hand of God has worked in human events when inspired prophets or the inspired writers of Scripture tell us God's meaning for certain events, as in the Old Testament passages cited above. When it comes to post-Biblical and contemporary events, God's meaning is less clear because we do not have inspired interpreters explaining God's meaning to us. God's hand has been cited as being behind such events as floods and hurricanes, the defeat of Nazi Germany, the fall of Communism in Europe, and the election (or defeat) of certain political candidates. We should interpret these and other events humbly and with the recognition that our fallible minds might be in error. At the same time we should resist the temptation in today's world to attribute these events only to weather patterns, military strategy, and political or economic forces. We must interpret both history and current events by the precedents and principles in Scripture and by believing that God is still in charge.



God is indeed in charge. We must realize that God either is in control of the world or He is not. He is in control even though some things happen which we do not like or understand. If everything that happened in the world had to meet with our approval and be within our understanding, we would be sovereign instead of God.

The psalmist said,

*The Lord nullifies the counsel of the nations;
He frustrates the plans of the peoples.
The counsel of the Lord stands forever,
The plans of His heart from generation to generation.*

Psalm 33:10-11

As we study American history, we need to remember that God causes the rise and fall of nations and that "My times are in Your hand" (Psalm 31:15a). We should remember Biblical principles such as, "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people" (Proverbs 14:34). As we continue our study of American history, we will examine other Biblical principles that will help us see American history through eyes of faith.

*Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!
How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!*
Romans 11:33

Assignments for Lesson 20

English

- Write a poem that expresses the Bible's teachings about God's sovereignty over nations and persons.
- Finish the writing assignment you chose for unit 4.

Bible

- Recite or write the portion of Leviticus 25:10 on the Liberty Bell from memory.

If you are using the optional Quiz and Exam Book, answer the questions for Lesson 20 and take the quiz for Unit 4.

