

# Independence Day & God

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On July 2, 1776, the Continental Congress in Philadelphia officially separated the thirteen New World colonies from English rule by enacting this resolution:

“... that these united colonies are and of right ought to be free and independant states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the british crown and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is and ought to be totally dissolved.”

Responding to the awesomeness of the occasion, John Adams who would become our second president, wrote this acknowledgement of God to his wife:

"The second day of July, 1776, will be the most memorable epoch in the history of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival. It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty.”

The Declaration of Independence was signed two days later on July 4, and it is that second day that has since been known in the United States of America as “Independence Day.”

Yesterday was July 4<sup>th</sup>, the anniversary of the declaration of America’s independence from England, and every year that we celebrate, we should remember that, even at the very moment of our Nation’s birth, God was on the lips of its founding fathers. It is easy to forget, because each year the secular media does all it can to revise American history, hoping that we will forget God’s part in it. I experienced an example of it yesterday as I watched the History Channel’s otherwise laudable account of our struggle for independence, and heard the statement of John Adams I read to you a minute ago, quoted, but with its reference to God omitted. They achieved this remarkable disappearance of God by leaving out Adams’ third sentence, and joining his second sentence to his fourth, to produce this:

"The Second Day of July 1776, will be the most memorable epoch in the History of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated, by succeeding Generations, as the great anniversary Festival. . . . It ought to be solemnized with Pomp and Parade, with Shews, Games, Sports, Guns, Bells, Bonfires and Illuminations from one End of this Continent to the other from this Time forward forever more."

This same quotation (with God omitted) appeared on page 25 of in this year’s July 2 Washington Post, but at least the Post had the decency to insert dots to mark the place of omission.

I am bringing this to your attention for two reasons – first, to do my small part in helping to restore God to his rightful place in our history, and second, to alert us to a conspiracy that is designed to desensitize us, over time, to God’s rightful place in our American identity. The conspiracy I am referring to is not between the Washington Post and the History Channel; it is

between both of them and Satan. Satan knows exactly what he is doing. The media also knows what they are doing, but they do not realize they are doing it as pawns of Satan. And why should they? They seem not to believe in God, so why should they believe in Satan?

The myth being perpetrated is that The United States of America is and always has been a secular country in which God has had no public place. The expression “separation of church and state” is taught as though it is part of the U.S. constitution, but here is what is actually in our constitution as part of the First Amendment:

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; ...”

If that is what is meant as “separation of church and state,” then I’m for it because it protects us from the government establishing a state religion, as was, and still is, the case in England. Only in Israel’s government of the future, when God’s sovereignty is fully recognized and bowed down to, will that be appropriate.

At this time of the year, it helps to be reminded of how much God has impacted our country; so here are some random facts:

1. The words “In God we Trust” first appeared on a United States coin in 1864, and was adopted as the country’s official motto in 1956.

2. The country’s first “Pledge of Allegiance” was composed in 1892 without mention of God. Then in 1954, President Dwight Eisenhower approved adding the words “under God,” and said regarding it:

"In this way we are reaffirming the transcendence of religious faith in America's heritage and future; in this way we shall constantly strengthen those spiritual weapons which forever will be our country's most powerful resource in peace and war."

3. George Washington, the Father of our Nation and its first president, was a Christian. In his farewell speech on September 19, 1796 he said:

"It is impossible to govern the world without God and the Bible. Of all the dispositions and habits that lead to political prosperity, our religion and morality are the indispensable supporters. Let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Reason and experience both forbid us to expect that our national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle."

4. Our third president, Thomas Jefferson, wrote these words in his Bible:

"I am a Christian, that is to say a disciple of the doctrines of Jesus. I have little doubt that our whole country will soon be rallied to the unity of our Creator and, I hope, to the pure doctrine of Jesus also."

He didn't call him Yeshua, but ... oh well!

5. Calvin Coolidge, our 30th President, wrote:

"The foundations of our society and our government rest so much on the teachings of the Bible that it would be difficult to support them if faith in these teachings would cease to be practically universal in our country."

6. In 1776, Patrick Henry wrote:

"It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great nation was founded not by religionists, but by Christians; not on religion, but on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For that reason alone, people of other faiths have been afforded freedom of worship here."

There are an endless number of quotations I could cite testifying of our founding fathers' faith in God, but let me, instead, go back to the fourth of July of 1776, and read the first, second, and last paragraphs of the Declaration of Independence signed on that day, that we celebrated yesterday, more than two hundred years later. Although the Declaration is intended as a political document, please take note, as you hear me read it, that it begins and ends with references to God, and our nation's need to rely upon Him.

Paragraph 1:

*When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which **the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them**, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.*

Paragraph 2:

*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.--Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great*

*Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.*

Last Paragraph:

*We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, **appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions**, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. **And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence**, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.*

*Signed by order and in behalf of the Congress,*

**JOHN HANCOCK, President**

That was then, and now is now, and some circumstances have changed. One circumstance that has not changed, however, is the need for our country to boldly proclaim God as its creator and protector.

Proverbs 3:5-6 teaches:

*“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.”*

That is an exhortation to nations as well as to individuals. And Zechariah 14:16 prophesies of the nations:

*“And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.”*

We of the United States are one of those nations whose destiny it is to accompany Israel in worshipping the King. We are blessed to have a head start on many nations who have never been taught about Yeshua and the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, so let us not waste our advantage.

We are in a war for the hearts and minds of our citizenry because we are surrounded by an atheistic media and others who are relentless in their attempts to hide the godliness of our origins, pervert the facts of our history, and discourage us from trusting God. They won't be successful against us who are adult believers, because we already know the truth and are fortified

by it. However, our children are at risk – especially those who attend public schools – because from early morning until late, their information comes solely from secular sources who teach unbelief. That’s why it is critical that we who are parents spend every spare moment with our children teaching them God’s truths and God’s ways, for Proverbs 22:6 entreats us:

*“Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.”*

At least once a year, usually at this time, I’m moved by patriotic songs that remind me of how much God is part of the history of these United States that I call home. I’d like to share some of them with you, and if you are so inclined, please join me.

### **America the Beautiful**

**Lyrics by Katherine Lee Bates**

**Music by Samuel Ward**

O beautiful for spacious skies,  
For amber waves of grain,  
For purple mountain majesties  
Above the fruited plain!

America! America!  
God shed His grace on thee,  
And crown thy good with brotherhood  
From sea to shining sea!  
O beautiful for heroes proved  
In liberating strife,  
Who more than self their country loved,  
And mercy more than life.

America! America!  
May God thy gold refine  
Till all success be nobleness,  
And ev'ry gain divine.

### **Battle Hymn of the Republic**

**Lyrics by Julia Ward Howe**

**Music: “John Brown’s Body”**

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;  
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;  
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword;  
His truth is marching on.

Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!  
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch fires of a hundred circling camps  
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps;  
I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps;  
His day is marching on.

Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!  
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! His day is marching on.

I have read a fiery Gospel writ in burnished rows of steel;  
“As ye deal with My contemnners, so with you My grace shall deal”;  
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with His heel,  
Since God is marching on.

Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!  
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! Since God is marching on.

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;  
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment seat;  
Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him! be jubilant, my feet;  
Our God is marching on.

Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!  
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! Our God is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,  
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me:  
As He died to make men holy, let us live to make men free;  
[originally ...let us *die* to make men free]  
While God is marching on.

Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!  
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! While God is marching on.

He is coming like the glory of the morning on the wave,  
He is wisdom to the mighty, He is honor to the brave;  
So the world shall be His footstool, and the soul of wrong His slave,  
Our God is marching on.

Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!  
Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! Our God is marching on.

**God Bless America**  
**by Irving Berlin**

God Bless America,  
Land that I love.  
Stand beside her, and guide her  
Thru the night with a light from above.  
From the mountains, to the prairies,  
To the oceans, white with foam  
God bless America, My home sweet home.

Today, as in the years following 1776 and in many wars since, young Americans are putting their lives on the line, fighting an enemy to keep America free. Their service may be in Iraq or Afghanistan, or elsewhere, but they are serving in the spirit of 1776 so that our national independence and liberty declared back then will not be lost in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Some of those in the U.S. military today are related to us personally or through our Ohev family, so it is entirely appropriate that we pause at this time to pray for their safety, and the success of their mission.

Let us now conclude by singing the second stanza of our National Anthem, the Star Spangled Banner.

**Star Spangled Banner (stanza 2)**  
**Lyrics by Francis Scott Key**  
**Music by John Stafford Smith**

Oh, thus be it ever when free men shall stand,  
Between their loved homes and the war's desolation;  
Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the heav'n-rescued land  
Praise the Power that has made and preserved us as a nation.  
Then conquer we must, when our cause is just,  
And this be our motto: "In God is our trust";  
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave  
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.