



Old Testament Reading – Jeremiah 18:1-17
New Testament Reading – 1 Peter 4:12-19

The Effects of the First Great Awakening On America's Cry For Freedom Psalm 22:27-28

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The main theme of Psalm 22 is the universal sovereignty of God.

- Verses 1-21 – God is sovereign over the pain and suffering we all endure, whether that is the suffering we endure from the normal vicissitudes of life, or from the universal curse of sin.
- Verse 22-29 – David pivots from pain to praise, and from suffering to shouting, as he describes the day when every person on earth will recognize God as sovereign over all, and Jesus Christ as Lord.

- Philippians 2:10-11 – ***“At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”***
- Revelation 19:15-16 – ***“Out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.”***

According to Philippians 3:20, when we receive Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, we become citizens of heaven. Our supreme loyalty is to God the Father who called us, to the Lord Jesus Christ who saved us, and to the Kingdom of God. We are to live by Kingdom values and Kingdom ethics, and do all we can to advance the Kingdom of God on this earth until the Lord returns.

- However, as long as the Lord leaves us here, we are also citizens of an earthly nation, and God has called us to be His ambassadors wherever He has placed us. He has called us to model our Christian faith by the way we live, voting in every election, paying our taxes, obeying the laws, and serving in the defense of our nation, if called to do so.
- To be patriotic means to have a deep love, devotion, and a sense of loyalty toward one’s country, expressing pride in a nation’s culture, heritage, and values, and being actively committed to the well-being and success of the country and its fellow citizens.
- **The Pledge of Allegiance** is a patriotic oath of loyalty to the United States and its flag. It is recited at civic events to build national unity.
- **The Ten Commandments**, which were once posted in the classroom of every public school, serve as the basis for America’s moral standards.
- While America was not intended to be a Christian nation by law, it is overwhelmingly Christian by culture, demographics, and historical influence. Therefore, while our ultimate love, loyalty, and obedience belong to God alone, Christians are called to be engaged, loving, and law-abiding members of American society.

“Seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray to the Lord for it; for in its peace, you will have peace.”

Jeremiah 29:7

In the summer of 1776, 56 men signed their names to a parchment that defined a revolutionary plan to establish America as a sovereign nation.

- Apart from God's divine intervention, the plan had no chance of survival, because they were opposing the British Empire; which was then, the most powerful empire in the world. Yet, these men mutually pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor on that audacious conviction that **“all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights.”**

The U.S. Constitution, which was ratified in 1789, is the oldest working written national constitution in the world, which begs the question, **why has America's constitution survived?**

- The primary goal of the Pilgrims and the Puritans migration to America was their cry for religious freedom.
 - **The Pilgrims believed** the Church of England was beyond reform and sought a complete separation so they could establish their own congregations.
 - **The Puritans** did not want to separate from the Church of England, but rather sought to “purify” it of Roman Catholic practices.
- Two-hundred years before the First Great Awakening, God used great men of faith to awaken His people to the need for revival.
- God raised up John Calvin, Samuel Rutherford, Solomon Stoddard, John Winthrop, William Brewster, John Knox, John Bunyan, and Martin Luther. These men led the Christian Reformation of the 1500's, hoping to reform the Roman Catholic Church from within.
- From 1730 – 1740, God spoke through preachers such as Jonathan Edwards, George Whitfield, John Wesley, and many others.
- They filled the pulpits on Sunday, and traveled from hamlet to hamlet during the week, boldly calling men and women to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord
- Even secular historians admit that the First Great Awakening that swept across the American colonies laid the foundation for the principled pursuit of individual liberty. For the first time in their lives, people saw themselves as moral agents, created in the image of God, who were no longer subjects to the crown.

Jonathan Edwards' sermon, **“Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,”** was the landmark event that began the first Great Awakening.

- Edwards preached that sermon, July 8, 1741, in Enfield Connecticut.
- He prepared a manuscript of around 8,000 words, which he could be delivered in about one hour.

- However, it had to be cut short because of the emotional response of his hearers, as people began to weep and mourn, and loudly cry out unto God for His forgiveness.
- Edwards' sermon can be summarized: **"It is only the mercy of God that keeps people from falling into hell, and God is free to withdraw that mercy at any moment."**
- Edward's graphically illustrated sermon inspired other preachers to boldly proclaim the Word of God instead of delivering their comforting homilies

In 1831, 55 years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, Alexis de Tocqueville, a French sociologist traveled through America to discover its greatness. When he returned to France, Tocqueville wrote:

- *"I sought for the greatness of the U.S. in her commodious harbors, her ample rivers, her fertile fields, and boundless forests, and it was not there. I sought for it in her rich mines, her vast world commerce, her public school system, and in her institutions of higher learning, and it was not there. I looked for it in her Congress and her matchless Constitution, and it was not there. **Not until I went into the churches of America and heard her pulpits aflame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because America is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great.**"*

Contrary to modern revisionist claims, Christianity did not suppress liberty; it birthed it.

- The liberty our founders envisioned was deeply rooted in biblical truth.
- The Declaration of Independence appeals to the "Supreme Judge of the world" and declares that our rights come from "Nature's God."

Contrary to the secular humanists, the Bible shaped how Americans understood personal freedom, human dignity, self-government, and the establishment of fundamental laws. Even non-Christians were influenced by the biblical worldview that permeated colonial America.

- However, since World War II, secular humanists have sought to rewrite America's story, stripping it of its Christian founding and replacing it with secular humanism and democratic socialism.
- Their goal is the deconstruction of the family, the nullification of the Christian faith, and the abolishment of individual freedom.

- Many Americans have forgotten their biblical heritage and their Christian history, because today's pulpits have lost their prophetic voice to rally the nation to righteous living.

Proverbs 14:34 reminds us, ***“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.”***

- God can enable us to recover the biblical foundations that shaped our nation if today's generation of Christians is willing to pay the price.
- Such a recovery will not come through political action, but through personal repentance, which could lead to a corporate revival and perhaps even third Great Awakening.
- The only way that will happen is for America's pulpits to, once again, blaze with the bold proclamation of the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the clear, unapologetic proclamation of the essential doctrines of the Christian faith.