



An Appeal to Heaven, Still Needed at 250



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July 3, 2026  by [Thomas Lemmer](#)

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On this 250th Independence Day, let us keep first things first. Our most essential rights come from God, and it is the proper role of government to protect these natural rights of the people. The struggle between good and evil is real. As is the struggle between liberty and tyranny. People of faith understand that an appeal to heaven is always available in the cause of justice. At the time of the American Revolution, the British king wielded the mightiest military power of any nation on Earth. When the repeated appeals for justice made to the king by our founders failed, they resisted the king, and appealed to heaven. We have cause for both celebration and continuing appeal to heaven. Thank God for our freedoms. Pray for guidance, and the strength needed for us to remain *"one nation, under God, with liberty and justice for all."*

Even Before July 1776

[Faith was active among our founders.](#) They were greatly influenced by their faith and the expanding enlightenment of that era. Writing in the late 1600s, philosopher [John Locke](#) held that the natural order is one of freedom, and that all people have a God-given natural right to life, liberty, and property. He instructed that governments operate within a [social contract](#) with their people. In the face of tyrannical government, he argued that the people retained the right to resist such unjust rule, and in so doing, make an appeal to heaven regarding the justness of their resistance.

William Federer, the creator of the [American Minute](#), has chronicled numerous examples of formal, public prayer among those who would lead our revolution. Including a May 1774 Virginia House of Burgesses resolution for a ["Day of Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer."](#) Proposed by Thomas Jefferson, the motion expressed Virginia's support for the people of Massachusetts, as they were suffering through a British blockade of Boston's Harbor. This day of fasting, humbling, and prayer in Virginia was to occur on the First of June 1774. The call to seek God's assistance was urgent, and the personal journal of George Washington for that day reflected his own participation.

Tensions in the 13 American colonies over British rule had been building since the 1760s. King George III and the British parliament had expanded taxes and increasingly restricted the ability of the colonies to engage in local self-government. The first battle between American militiamen and British soldiers occurred about 18 miles northwest of Boston on 19 April 1775, in the towns

of Lexington and Concord. In June, the [Second Continental Congress](#) appointed George Washington a general and commander-in-chief of the forming army of colonial militias.

An Early Symbolic Appeal to Heaven

General Washington's first efforts focused on the British Army then occupying Boston. He sought to prevent their resupply via Boston Harbor and the Charles River. Beginning in September 1775 he ultimately commissioned seven schooners and some fortified barges. As described by [Colonel Joseph Reed](#), an aide to Washington, the craft flew a distinctive flag. It was white, with a pine tree in the middle. It held the motto, "*Appeal to Heaven*." Our founders understood that successfully resisting the immense power of the king would require the protection of God and divine intervention.



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Appealing to God in Declaring Independence

Without question, the July 1776 Declaration of Independence is an inspirational work. That document's lead author, [Thomas Jefferson](#), sought to provide clarity in the cause for independence. He knew that the law and justice are not left to kings alone to define.

Might does not make right. Those in power may not do as they alone decide. They may not abuse their authority. There is a higher authority.

The declaration was a direct appeal to God's sovereignty.

"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."



Declaration of Independence

The entirety of the document is written using precise language, and the closing returned to a focus on God. That text reads that in declaring independence they were: "appealing to the

Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions.” With the word “rectitude,” the founders made clear that they were seeking God’s guidance in ensuring their motivations were right, just, and morally correct.

Perhaps because we today know the outcome of that 1776 declaration, we forget that active fighting in the war lasted several years. We forget as well that the American forces lost more battles than they won. But, those seeking liberty endured, and remained faithful in their cause. Like David before them, many of those seeking independence looked to God for the strength to confront the Goliath that sought to crush them. Their faith was rewarded.

God Always Does His Part

Free peoples who forget the origins of their liberty place their most fundamental rights at risk. In America, we are abundantly blessed. Our national independence was a [miracle](#). The appeal to heaven from our founders was answered in this world, in their time, and ours. And, there is indeed much to celebrate with the 250th anniversary of American independence.

Americans today have been the beneficiary of our history as a free and prosperous nation. We were gifted with a constitution and governmental structure founded on an understanding of our rights as a people. Our military has protected our national sovereignty against continuing international threats. Our police officers protect us from the lawlessness that reaches into our local communities. We remain blessed to live under the protection of a military and a policing profession that are both sworn to defend and abide by our constitution. They are the visible expression of a nation whose people can truly hope to experience the blessings of liberty and justice in this world. Thank those that serve. Thank God.

Proudly celebrate that God has blessed America. And, pray fervently that America remains “*one nation, under God, with liberty and justice for all.*”

We are interested in your thoughts, and invite you to comment below.

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Thomas Lemmer

Thomas Lemmer is a consultant, researcher, analyst, author, and instructor. He has been active in the field of public safety for over 40 years. He has extensive experience as a state-certified law enforcement officer, including within key supervisory and police executive roles. Lemmer served for more than 34 years with the Chicago Police Department (CPD), rising to the rank of deputy chief. During his career, Lemmer has served in both ethnically diverse and predominately minority communities, as well as within college, military, public transportation, and public housing settings. Lemmer is the founder of Secure 1776. You can find out more information at: www.secure1776.us



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