

#### D. The Revolutionary Rejection of Monarchy

1. One of the reasons why it is important to highlight the unification of Egypt c.3000 BC in *American* history is that a proper understanding of America's place in history is only possible when one knows how special America's government is compared to all the others that came before it in history.
2. People in nearly every part of the world for 5000 years of history had believed that monarchy (the rule of one) was the only proper kind of government. They accepted that one person should *have power over all* others. They had no notion of individual rights.
3. Then the Founding Fathers of the United States rebelled against this accepted notion in 1776, declaring that each individual has a right to their own "life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness," and they created a government to protect those rights.

#### E. The Ancient Roots of American Government

1. Although the American government was the first government ever made to defend individual rights, two ancient societies had taken important steps forward long ago, providing important examples of how to do it. America's Founding Fathers learned a great deal from their stories.
2. The people of the ancient Greek city of Athens had rejected monarchy c.508 BC and created the first "democracy." In their government, all individuals had an equal voice in the government and voted in creating the laws.
3. The people of the ancient Italian city of Rome has also rejected monarchy c.509 BC (apparently just one year before Athens!) and created the first "republic." In their government, not everyone had an equal voice in the making of the laws, but special methods were used to protect people's rights *from the power of their own government* such as the implementation of a set of laws — a constitution — that no one could overturn.
4. When the Founding Fathers created the American government in 1776, its design was anchored in the historical understanding they had of the ancient governments of Athens and Rome. They rejected the European version of monarchy, and created a *republic*.

#### F. Christianity and the Christian Calendar in an America-Centric World

1. Another important aspect of the world we live in today is the presence of the religion of Christianity in modern culture.
2. The modern calendar measures all events relative to the birth of the central figure in Christianity, Jesus Christ, approximately 2014 years ago.
3. All events before the year of Jesus's birth are marked "BC" — "before Christ."

4. All events after are marked “AD” — short for “Anno Domini” — a Latin expression that means “in the year of our Lord.” (Christians sometimes refer to their God as “the Lord” and to the man many believe was his son, Jesus, as “the Lord” as well.)
5. Jesus was born and died inside the Roman Empire. Rome had changed from a republic into an empire with a monarch known as an “emperor.” It had swallowed up the Mediterranean world, including Greece, which was no longer a democracy also.
6. Jesus lived in a small corner of the huge Roman empire called Judea, and the story of his life was known to very few people. It took centuries for his teachings to become widely known, and for Christianity to become an important religion in and around the Roman Empire.
7. Working backward, early Christians developed a tradition of a certain year being the year of Jesus’s birth, which they called year “1,” but it was never known with certainty. The research of scientific historians shows us that the best guess for his actual year of birth is in fact 4 BC, but since there is no way to know for sure, this has not resulted in a change of the calendar. (What matters to history is not the exact date of Jesus’s birth, but rather the importance of Christianity in world culture.)
8. Christianity was eventually so widely accepted in Europe that even when the Roman Empire collapsed in 476 AD, Christianity survived as an organized religion.
9. By the time of Christopher Columbus, over a thousand years later still, almost everyone in Europe was Christian.
10. In America today, and in the America-centric world, religion is not nearly as important as it was in Roman and early European times. Also although Christianity is the most important of the major religions in the world, it is only one of them, accepted by some 30% of the people in the world. Nonetheless, it was European Christians who enacted globalization, creating empires on every continent in the world, it was the European Christian calendar that came to be used as a standard calendar around the world, and that calendar continues to be in use today.

#### G. The Most Recent Chapter in History

1. We live in the final chapter (so far) in a five-thousand year story that begins in ancient Egypt, flows through Greece and Rome, to Europe, and ultimately to modern America and the America-centric world.
2. Along the way, approximately a hundred years ago, America emerged as the most powerful and culturally influential nation in the history of the world, taking over from Europe as the main civilization of the world.
3. Although it started as a republic seeking independence from the rest of the world, the United States has become a world police power fighting to spread democracy.
4. In a world of many different cultures and forms of government, America’s efforts to police the globe have made it many enemies. In particular, in the region called the “Middle East” (between Europe and East Asia), many have been angered by America’s power and influence.

5. The vast majority of the people of that region wish for a world that is Islam-centric — a world centered around the religion of Islam — and America’s power is the greatest obstacle they see to this religious goal.
6. Since America’s military power is so overwhelmingly great, some Muslims (the name for people who follow the religion of Islam) have adopted the method of terrorism to try to reduce America’s power over them. This means they do not attack America’s military, but civilians instead, to terrorize them into reducing America’s control of the world.
7. On September 11, 2001, Muslim terrorists attacked America and destroyed the World Trade Center in New York City, as well as other locations.
8. Instead of withdrawing from the world, Americans retaliated. The attacks of 9-11 led to the United States conquering the countries of Afghanistan and Iraq in retaliation as part of the “War on Terror,” which continues to this day.