



AMERICAN AND FRENCH REVOLUTION – WORLD HISTORY AND GS I MAINS

Q. How did the American and The French revolution lay the foundation for the modern world?
(15 marks, 250 words)

News: *A History of State Secrets and the French and American Revolutions*

American Revolution and Foundation for the modern world:

- 1. Declaration of Independence** - brings out the rights for human freedom.
- 2. Written constitutionalism** - brings out the principle of constitutionalism in governance mechanisms.
- 3. Limited government** - government must function based on and within limitations provided by the written constitution.
- 4. Ideals of republic and rule of law** - Individuals elected by the people based on election should govern the country instead of a person elected by monarchy.
- 5. Federalism** - The American war of independence gave birth to a novel system of government, viz, federalism (13 colonies came together to share power).
- 6. Nationalism** - Struggle against anti-colonialism led by several leaders like Thomas Paine (No taxation without representation) ignited the sense and pride of nationalism among the people of America. Thus, the American revolution was the first successful struggle for freedom in modern history.
- 7. Democratic values** - Established the first nation built upon democratic values.

French Revolution and Foundation for the modern world:

- 1. Birth of liberalism** - Ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity were born out of the French Revolution that had a significant impact on freedom struggles all across the world.
- 2. Rule of law** - ending the arbitrary royal rule, the revolution paved the way for rule by law under a constitutional order. Thus, French revolution helps in bringing out the political and social modernity.
- 3. 'Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen'** - asserted the equality of all men, the sovereignty of the people and the rights to liberty, property, security, right to education, to free speech, to be informed, right of the poor to public assistance, a ban on torture and slavery, recognition of the right of the people. France became the first state in history to grant universal male suffrage. These ideals brought political awakening in Europe.
- 4. Destruction of Feudalism** - French revolution led to the destruction of feudalism in France as all laws of the old feudal regime were repealed and lands of the nobles and church were confiscated and redistributed.



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5. Abolition of Slavery - The abolition of Slavery after the French revolution was the first move against this repressive system and Britain followed suit in 1833 while the USA banned it in 1865.

6. Secularism - The revolution ended the sovereignty, despotism and corruption of the Church. The importance of the worship of intellect and reason became more prominent.

Thus, the American and French revolution acted as a watershed movement in modern world history by bringing out the spirit of political, social and economic equality in the centre stage of common people.

