

Teacher's Manual • Lesson 14

176 Chapter 14 National Expansion

Chapter 14 (pages 290–311)

NATIONAL EXPANSION

Chapter Objectives

- To learn how Texas became an independent nation and later a state of the United States.
- To understand the expansionism of the 1840s in terms of manifest destiny.
- To gain an understanding of the Mexican War and its effects.
- To learn how the Oregon Territory was settled and became part of the United States.
- To learn about the gold rush to California, and how California became a state.

To the Teacher

As the book progresses in American history, facts and concepts from earlier chapters will be increasingly involved in understanding the current chapters. To give students a proper comprehension, show how events are related to the earlier chapters. For example, the story of Texas, New Mexico, and California relates closely to Chapter 4 on Spanish colonization.

Geography is important in this chapter. Make sure students have a picture of the general geographic setting, especially the West in relation to California and Oregon. Make it clear that the westward movement discussed in this chapter is to the Far West, whereas that of earlier chapters related to what we today call the Midwest.

The Mexican War can be portrayed in a bad light. But as usual, there are two sides to every story. For example, the United States did send John Slidell to negotiate with Mexico; but because the Mexican government was so unstable, he was rebuffed. Present the facts without trying to decide who was good or bad, and remember that God has a purpose in what He allows.

Note on chapter test: There is a single test for Chapters 13 and 14.

Christian Perspectives

- Although God allowed the United States to expand to the Pacific Ocean, that does not mean He had a spiritual mission for the nation. God regards the nations as beasts (Daniel 7, 8), and beastly conduct is evident in the Mexican War. But God did bless the United States for recognizing basic principles of justice and right.
- Many mountain men, fur traders, and explorers lived loose, wicked lives, especially at rendezvous times. (Jedediah Smith was an exception.) Their contribution is recognized in the text because of their important role in opening the Far West.
- The Oregon-bound pioneers exhibited courage and fortitude on the Oregon