

Independence Day – 4 July 2014, Anno Domini (the 238th year of American Independence)



One Nation, Under God will result in Liberty and Justice for all

And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people. (Exodus 13:21-22)



Enshrined in the Foundation Stones of our American Republic are the biblical imperatives that gave our Founding Fathers the spiritual Light to found a nation peculiar to all the nations of the earth for Liberty, Godliness, and Union. The Light was not an 'uncertain Light' but a sure and faithful Light of Truth and Freedom under which nations might find the blessings and beneficence of Divine Love. Our nation has been subject to many challenges and dangerous wars, yet, we have always endured every challenge to come smiling through unscathed and stronger than ever. It has been so because we have not forgotten the God of Providence and Love that has given breath to our national being. There has always been that luminous and glowing Light that has forever preceded us in the day of battle, and trailed at our back during the nights of our hardships. That Light is Christ!

On the obverse side of the US One Dollar Bill, may be found the Great Seal and escutcheon of our Nation. The symbolic nature of all depicted there has a special significance to our reliance upon that Providential Hand that directed our steps from the early days of our founding. There is depicted on our National Seal a Great Eagle grasping, in his left talons, the thirteen arrows (symbolizing the original thirteen colonies and the essential power that sustains us). In the right talons we see the olive branch consisting of thirteen leaves and thirteen fruits demonstrating that a Godly peace and prosperity is forever preferred to the resort to war which the arrows represent. Hovering over the depiction of the Eagle is affixed what we call the "Glory Cloud." The "Glory" is a luminous cloud containing thirteen stars that also represent the full number of colonies at our founding. This Glory Cloud is the same



as that cloud which followed the Children of Israel at night in the Wilderness and gave the Light essential to make their way known. That same Cloud preceded them by day to lead them into the good path, and to defend against all aggressors. What would have happened to our nation if we had not had the benefit of that Light from 1776 to present? Suppose that Light were extinguished and the Cloud dissipated? What light would we then follow? Has it not already become dim to our eyes as we turn to the Malthusian philosophy over and above our primitive faith in Christ?

On the left side of that same Dollar bill is the Great Pyramid with the Capstone floating above with the all-seeing Eye. This chief cornerstone represents the "*Stone that the Builders Rejected.*" It has become the Chief Cornerstone of our Nation – Under God. (St. Matthew 21:42)



We celebrate today what we **WERE** as a nation blessed of God. But we must also observe this day what we have BECOME and as a time of prayerful repentance to that Great and Divine Power that made us a nation most blessed among all the nations of the earth. We have ceased to follow that Glory Cloud that has attended our National Being from its inception. We have turned to gods of flesh and of precious metal instead of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We have forbidden our children to enjoy that same freedom of public prayer that most of us have enjoyed when in elementary and high school. We have opened the flood gates of immorality and enshrined the most egregious sins in our public laws. How will God respond to our national arrogance and depravity? Does He not always send forth warnings and lightnings from His Throne preceding hard judgment? Has He not sent among our coastal and interior cities the destroying wind and the whirlwind? Have enormous fires not destroyed much wealth and caused many to flee their homes? Have ravages of sexual diseases not brought many of our youth to the grave? Has He not spurred the hand of the sorcerer to supply soul-destroying drugs to our youth? Have wars raged which have depleted our national coffers and the lives of our best and brightest? Has He not given us leadership that represents our own demented values? Have we not ceased to be a Light and City on a Hill that is the envy of the world?

This Independence Day, America, awaken from your spiritual stupor and look again to the Lord that has been our Light. Remember the grandeur and righteousness of our past years, and do not forget the depths of ruin to which we have sunk, and are accelerating, in our present age. We might remember that hymn written so long ago of the Kindly Light (John Newman):

*Lead, kindly Light, amid th'encircling gloom, lead Thou me on!
The night is dark, and I am far from home; lead Thou me on!
Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me.*

*I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou shouldst lead me on;
I loved to choose and see my path; but now lead Thou me on!
I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,
Pride ruled my will. Remember not past years!*

*So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still will lead me on.
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till the night is gone,
And with the morn those angel faces smile, which I
Have loved long since, and lost awhile!*

*Meantime, along the narrow rugged path, Thyself hast trod,
Lead, Savior, lead me home in childlike faith, home to my God.
To rest forever after earthly strife
In the calm light of everlasting life.*

Please, America, remember today the God that delivered you from the hand of the oppressor. Turn to Him in prayer that our moral sense and duty be restored in the hearts of our people. Pray and fast. Repent and turn. The Light is fixed. Only our own wanderings have made it appear more dimly lit.



The Anglican Church, being founded on the principal of one nation, one church, holds patriotism and true love of country in great regard. It is quite interesting that the majority of the Founding Fathers were members of the Church of England and transferred their national church identity to what became the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States. Like Henry VIII and Thomas Cranmer, they saw the need for a national church. Not a captive arm of the government, but a link to God for the people of the nation.

We hold our Independence Day dear to our hearts and it is one of our religious feasts or holidays. A proper Red Letter Day!

The Independence Day Propers are found on Page 263-264.

Independence Day.

[July 4.]

The Collect.

O ETERNAL God, through whose mighty power our fathers won their liberties of old; Grant, we beseech thee, that we and all the people of this land may have grace to maintain these liberties in righteousness and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The Epistle comes from the Tenth Chapter of the Book of Deuteronomy beginning at the Seventeenth Verse:

THE LORD your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward: he doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment. Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name. He is thy praise, and he is thy God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things, which thine eyes have seen..

Today's Gospel started in the Fifth Chapter of the Gospel according to Saint Matthew beginning at the Forty-Third Verse:

JESUS said, Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.