

DEVOTIONAL SET #2 - THE FLAG

Devotion #1 - Exodus 17:15,16

Imagine you are right in the middle of the War of 1812. You have been chosen to negotiate the release of an American prisoner. You are rowed out to a British warship, but instead of letting the prisoner go they hold you as well for the night. As you look toward shore you see your fort under heavy attack. There's a red glow from the many fires. You fall asleep exhausted, with little hope of victory Your eyes open as the sun is rising. You turn your face toward shore and the first thing to catch your eye is the American flag still flying over Fort McHenry!

What does that tell you? How does that make you feel? What might it cause you to do? This happened to a man named Francis Scott Key. Seeing that flag moved him to write The Star Spangled Banner.

How does the flag make Americans feel? O what does it remind them? Now look what verses 15 and 16 of Exodus 17 say, "Moses built an altar and called it The Lord is my Banner. He said, 'For hands were lifted up to the throne of the Lord.'" What does Moses say God is? How could Moses consider God a flag? I'm sure you remember the story leading up to this. As long as Moses held his hands up in prayer to God the Israelites would beat the Amalekites. If he let his hands drop Israel would begin to lose. Finally, Aaron and Hur had to hold his hands up until Israel had won the battle. As long as Moses was praying it was as if God was unfurled and waving like a flag over the camp of Israel. How did God cause the People of Israel to feel? Of what did thinking about God remind them?

When Christians think about God how do they feel? When they think about God of what kind of things are they reminded? Of what one event in particular are they reminded? What does having God as their flag bring Christians to do? May "The Lord is My Banner" fly over our meeting tonight!

PRAYER: Dear Father in heaven, as a Lutheran Pioneer I will learn how to fold our country's flag and put it neatly away. Lord, may I never learn to fold you up and put you away. Fly over my head continually with your guidance and protection. Open up your Word to me so I am reminded of Your tremendous love, especially Your love in sending Jesus as my Savior. May all the love You have shown me in the past cause me to live my life for You. Help me to fly You as my flag wherever I may go. Amen.

HYMN: 575, v. 1-3 (TLH) 618, v. 1-3 (CW)

DEVOTION #2 - Psalm 20:5

THEME: Raising Our Flag in God's Name

If you had the choice of flags to raise over your country, which would you choose? Why? What does the American flag stand for? But, really, what has the American flag actually accomplished? Does the American flag defeat armies? Does the American flag guarantee freedom? Does the American flag give people happiness?

Psalm 20:5 shows us the only proper and effective way for us to use our flag . . . in God's name. Victory, freedom, happiness all come from God and are given to those who depend on Him. We can appreciate the American flag not because America is God's country, but because in America we are allowed to be Christians, we are allowed to depend on God instead of our government, our army, or our flag. How important it is that being an American never becomes more important than our being Christians. Raise the flag in God's name.

PRAYER: As we raise our flag, Lord, may we be reminded of how You have protected, guided, and blessed both our country and us. May our flag be simply another reason for us to praise Your name.

HYMN 577 (TLH) 619 (CW)

Devotion #3 - Numbers 30:2

THEME: CHRISTIANS PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE

(1) We can learn what our country expects of us as we understand what God expects of us.

(2) Certainly we have a great many reasons to commit ourselves entirely to God. Let those same reasons lead us to commit ourselves to our country. That is being a Christian citizen.

Additional References for the topic.

Banner(s), Standard, Pledge

Numbers 1:52, 2:2, 10:14, 2 Chronicles 34:32, Psalm 60:4, Song of Solomon 2:4, 6:4, Isaiah 5:26, 11:10, 11:12, 13:2, 18:3, 30:17, 31:9, 49:22, 62:10, Jeremiah 4:21, 50:2, 51:12, 51:27, 1 Timothy 5:12, 1 Peter 3:21.