

This Flag Is Symbolic of an Emerging Move of God

In my quest to gain a greater understanding of God's prophetic mandate upon my life, I have spent hours researching the historical significance of the "An Appeal to Heaven" flag. I'm amazed at how the message and symbolism of this flag was so deeply entrenched within America at the time of it's birthing.

I am not a historian, but I would like to share with you a synopsis of my findings, endeavoring to do so through the lens of divine Providence. I believe the hand of God has always been upon this nation. America was founded upon a covenantal relationship with God birthed by the power of prayer and was intended to be a light and an example to the nations of the earth.

Let's begin our historical journey in 1775. The American Revolution was under way. Though oppressed by the mighty British Empire, and occupied by it's powerful military, a remnant filled with hope for freedom arose. These colonists, however, understood that victory against such a powerful enemy would be virtually impossible, and knew their only real hope of success was through an intervention from heaven.

General George Washington, leader of the American Revolution, commissioned six ships for the war efforts. Highlighting this dependence on providential help, each ship was to fly under the banner of a white flag, dawning an evergreen tree in the center and the phrase, "*Appeal to Heaven*" embroidered across the top. The following is a brief history and the significance of this flag.

The Evergreen Tree

The evergreen tree was an important symbol of peace in the tradition of the Iroquois Native American nation, and in the

historical record of diplomacy between the Iroquois and colonists. Never losing its leaves, the evergreen tree also symbolized eternity. At a challenging time in their history, a peacemaker among the Iroquois united six great tribes, establishing unity among them. Their peace treaty and eternal covenant to work and fight together was sealed by burying their weapons underneath a great evergreen tree.

Our Founding Fathers were greatly influenced by Iroquois cultural traditions, their form of government, and this tree that symbolized peace and eternal covenant. The covenant they intended to honor was with God and one another. They would pledge their lives, fortunes and sacred honor to this agreement. But the symbol of the evergreen tree on Washington's flag was not inspired only by the Iroquois' tradition. The "tree of peace" would soon become known also as the colonists' "liberty tree." This new meaning evolved from a conflict with the King of England.

The colonies depended heavily on the wood from these massive evergreen trees for their livelihood, using them to build homes, furniture, boats, fires, tools, and much more. Measuring up to 6 feet in width and exceeding heights of 250 feet, these "New World Pines" were considered some of the best in the world. The king of England, therefore, established the "Broad Arrow Act" as a way to harvest American pines for constructing vessels for the British Royal Navy.

Regardless of the trees' importance to the colonists, British soldiers were ordered to mark the best evergreens—even those on personal property—for only the king's use. This was done with an arrow symbol axed into them. Thus the name, Broad Arrow Act. This of course, infuriated the colonists and was used as a rallying cry of sorts for several years leading up to the war.

An Appeal to Heaven

The evergreen tree of the Iroquois and the colonists' (their liberty tree) became an important symbol for the colonists. A flag bearing its representation would soon be seen throughout all 13 colonies. Designed and commissioned for use on General Washington's navy vessels, this white banner with an evergreen tree became the symbol of the colonists unwavering spirit of liberty.

But, as we know, the tree was only part of the flag. General Washington, the Continental Army, and the colonists at large, recognized that the liberty they sought could never be attained through their abilities and strength alone. Their only hope for defeating the British was divine help from the God they were in covenant with. For this reason, the evergreen tree on the white flag was crowned with the phrase, *"Appeal to Heaven."*

Where did this interesting phrase originate? The phrase "Appeal to Heaven" was written by an Englishman, John Locke, in his "Second Treatise of Government." One of the great philosophers of his time, Locke presented a system of justice that God intended for all humankind, and spoke of inalienable rights that were derived from our Creator, rather than from the laws of civil government.

"And where the body of the people, or any single man, is deprived of their right, or is under the exercise of a power without right, and have no appeal on earth, then they have liberty to appeal to heaven" –John Locke, Second Treatise of Government

Locke's phrase, *"Appeal to Heaven,"* connotes that when all resources and the ability to attain justice on earth are exhausted, an "appeal to heaven" still remains. This concept would become a foundational philosophy in American society used even in the Declaration of Independence.

By raising the "Appeal to Heaven" flag, the general of the

Continental Army prophetically proclaimed that, despite being grossly outnumbered, inexperienced and under-resourced, with God's help they would triumph over injustice. Like David raising his tiny sling against a great giant, with heaven's aid, they would prevail against their oppressors. And they did, becoming a powerful, free republic and a light to the nations, undeniably raised up by the arm of Almighty God.

Today, the future of this great Christian nation, formed under this banner, symbolizing eternal covenant, liberty and the power of prayer, is in jeopardy. We are perilously close to losing our freedom and destiny. Yet my conviction is strong: There is still hope for America! We can emulate the strategy of our Founding Fathers and make "An Appeal to Heaven!" If we do, we, too, will experience God's supernatural intervention. We can. We must.

Want to know more about the next great move of God? Click here to see Jennifer LeClaire's new book, featuring Dutch Sheets, Reinhard Bonnke, Jonathan Cahn, Billy Graham and others.

Dutch Sheets is an internationally recognized teacher, conference speaker and author of *The Power of Hope*. He has written more than 20 books, translated into over 30 languages. His first work, *Intercessory Prayer*, sold nearly a million copies and is being used to empower believers worldwide for passionate prayer and societal transformation. He and his wife, Ceci, make their home in the Dallas area.