

Biblical Symbolism Behind the 4th of July

One of the most amazing facts about the Founding Fathers is this—the one referred to as the “voice” of the revolution (John Adams) and the one referred to as the “pen” of the revolution (Thomas Jefferson) both died on the same day, July 4, 1826, exactly 50 years from the formation of the United States of America in 1776. Some would call this a mere “coincidence;” I prefer to call it a “God-incidence,” a sign of the Creator’s providential care and divine involvement in the formation of this unique and blessed nation.

It is doubly amazing to see that the number 50 actually represents “liberty” in Biblical symbolism. Why? Because every 50 years, the Jewish people were commanded to celebrate a special year called the “Year of Jubilee.” This was a year when prisoners were set free, debts were forgiven and land was restored to its original owners. Great joy reigned over all the land. Interestingly, a phrase from the section of Scripture describing that recurring event is even found on one of our most beloved national emblems, the Liberty Bell:

“Proclaim LIBERTY throughout all the land to all the inhabitants thereof.” (Lev. 25:10)

This double-sign, in my opinion, is double-proof that it was God, and not just man, that raised up this bastion of freedom for His purposes to be accomplished in the earth. Not only have we been the natural bread-basket of the world; we have been the spiritual bread-basket of the world as well. We cannot lose sight of this “calling” in the face of so much anti-American sentiment and even the disappointment we may feel concerning our own government. Yes, there have been abuses of both political and military power and selfish corporate agendas that have fouled the waters of our influence

among the nations. But there are still many rivers of living water, flowing out of the bedrock of this republic, from multiplied thousands of ministries and Christian-run businesses who have changed the world in significant ways: financially, educationally, socially, governmentally, and most of all, spiritually.

Now our freedoms are being challenged in many ways. More than ever, it is time for the church to arise, on both a local and national level, and claim our nation for the Kingdom of God. For the sake of our heritage and the ones who sacrificed to pass it on to us, we must increase our efforts. For the sake of our children, we must strive to purify our society and culture. For the sake of the Kingdom of God, we must keep preaching the Good News and lifting up the Name of Jesus.

The Liberty Bell was actually created in 1753, after two failed attempts. This speaks a very important truth to us: that we should never give up on an ideal. Instead, may we tenaciously hold on to our vision, even in times when it seems to fail or when it doesn't work right.

It is also vital to understand that the Liberty Bell was first ordered as a 50-year memorial of William Penn's extraordinary "Charter of Privileges" in Pennsylvania. Little did the forgers know that it would ultimately represent something far greater and far more important—on a national scale. In like manner, our efforts in spreading the Gospel may, at times, seem small compared to the need, but the "God who gives the increase" can magnify and amplify our work by

His supernatural power (I Cor. 3:7).

According to one of the most popular legends, the Liberty Bell cracked when it was rung at the death of Chief Justice John Marshall in 1835. And so it is, that when justice "dies" (as in the horrendous slaughtering the unborn in our society), then the "liberty" of this republic is seriously and severely

damaged. Justice must reign for all, if liberty is to reign for all.

Finally, let us not shrink before those who would ridicule our faith. Instead, let us hold to the truth that standing for the Bible is one of the most American things that we can do. Immediately after the Declaration of Independence, the newly formed Continental Congress ordered 20,000 copies of the Bible to be distributed in the colonies. America's leaders were passionate about the spreading of God's Word in that day—and it's part of our heritage, regardless of what the post-modern secularists want America to be now.

On this July 4th, let us unite together in prayer that God will heal our land by sending another "Great Awakening," not only taking us back to our roots, but taking us deeper than ever into a culture that is both God-honoring and Bible-based. That is our only hope. No political, social, or economic program will cure our ills unless we experience another great outpouring from the throne room of God. *The God of heaven has done it before; He can do it again!*

Mike Shreve *author of 11 books, has been involved in full-time ministry and evangelism since 1971, sharing the gospel around the world. His passion is to see authentic New Testament Christianity in the earth, the release of God's glory, the manifestation of His gifts, and the fulfillment of His promises. He and his wife, Elizabeth, reside in Cleveland, TN, with their two children.*