

THE U.S. FLAG AND THE EASTERN STAR FLAG

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WHEN THE FIRST FAINT DAWN OF AMERICAN FREEDOM WAS BREAKING OVER THE LAND, AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA WAS COMING INTO BEING AS A NATION, A FLAG WAS ADOPTED TO REPRESENT THIS NEW NATION AMONG THE COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD.

THE FLAG WHICH WAS CHOSEN WAS OLD GLORY, ADOPTED TO REPRESENT THE PRINCIPLES OF LIBERTY, EQUALITY AND JUSTICE, THE PRINCIPLES ON WHICH THE NATION WAS ESTABLISHED.

GUIDED AND LED, IT SEEMS BY THE HAND OF PROVIDENCE, THIS NATION AND OLD GLORY FAST ATTAINED A HIGH STANDING OF HONOR AND RESPECT THROUGHOUT THE CIVILIZED WORLD AND WAS RECOGNIZED AND RECEIVED BY OLDER AND MORE POWERFUL NATIONS.

ALMIGHTY PROVIDENCE MUST HAVE BEEN FAVORABLE TO THE YOUNG NATION, FOR IN THE DARKEST HOURS OF THE COUNTRY'S TRIALS, WHEN FLAG AND FATE OF THE COUNTRY APPEARED TO BE IN THE BALANCE, SOME UNSEEN POWER SEEMED TO TIP THE SCALES IN FAVOR OF OLD GLORY AND THE UNITED STATES. INSPIRED BY THIS GLORIOUS BANNER, ITS BRAVE DEFENDERS HAVE ADDED VICTORY AFTER VICTORY TO THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM AND JUSTICE.

CARRIED BY DAUNTLESS AND FEARLESS ADVENTUROUS SPIRITS TO THE REMOTEST PARTS OF THE WORLD IT HAS EVER BROUGHT ITS MESSAGE OF GOODWILL AND FRATERNITY. IT FLIES AT HALF MAST IN RESPECT TO THE MEMORY OF THOSE WHO HAVE MADE THE SUPREME EFFORT.

TODAY WE HONOR IT IN OUR CHAPTER ROOMS, WE PLACE IT IN THE EAST. THE GREATEST TRIBUTE IN OUR POWER TO PAY IT. WE PLEDGE IT OUR ALLEGIANCE AND SUPPORT. LET US ALSO SOLEMNLY RESOLVE THAT WE WILL CONSIDER OUR PLEDGES AS SOLEMN ENGAGEMENTS AND BY PRECEPT AND EXAMPLE SHOW TO THE WORLD THAT WE ARE SINCERE IN OUR DUTIES AS TRUE AMERICAN CITIZENS. LET US ESTABLISH A STANDARD OF REVERENCE FOR OUR FLAG THAT SHALL BE BEYOND REPROACH AND BE FAITHFUL TO THE SACRED TRUST REPOSED IN US.

IT IS OUR NATIONAL EMBLEM. IT IS WOVEN OF HEROISM AND GRIEF, OF THE BRAVERY OF MEN AND WOMEN'S TEARS, OF RIGHTEOUSNESS AND OF BATTLE OF SACRIFICE AND ANGUISH, OF TRIUMPH AND GLORY. HE MUST BE COLD INDEED WHO COULD GAZE UPON ITS FOLDS WITHOUT REVERENCE AND PRIDE OF COUNTRY.

BEHOLD IT, LISTEN TO IT, EVERY STAR HAS A TONGUE, EVERY STRIPE IS ARTICULATE. IT HAS AN ANSWER FOR EVERY QUESTION OF DUTY. IT HAS A SOLUTION FOR EVERY DOUBT AND PERPLEXITY AND A WORD OF GOOD CHEER FOR EVERY HOUR OF GLOOM. IT SPEAKS OF EARLIER AND OF LATER STRUGGLES. IT SPEAKS OF VICTORIES AND SOMETIMES OF REVERSES ON THE LAND, ON THE SEA. IT SPEAKS OF PATRIOTS AND HEROES AMONG THE LIVING AND THE DEAD. LET ME TELL AGAIN THE STORY OF ITS BIRTH, OF THE GALLANT VOLUNTEERS WHO MARCHED UNDER ITS FOLDS BY DAY AND REPOSED BENEATH THE STARS BY NIGHT. THE WONDERFUL TALE OF ITS TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS IN PEACE AS WELL AS IN WAR. OUR FLAG, AS ADOPTED BY CONGRESS, ROSE OVER THIRTEEN STATES ALONG THE ATLANTIC SEABOARD, WITH A POPULATION OF ABOUT THREE MILLION. TODAY IT FLOATS OVER FIFTY STATES, EXTENDING ACROSS OUR CONTINENT AND OVER THE GREAT ISLANDS OF THE TWO OCEANS. OVER TWO HUNDRED MILLION OWE IT ALLEGIANCE. IT HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO THIS PROUD POSITION BY LOVE AND SACRIFICE. CITIZENS HAVE ADVANCED IT AND HEROES HAVE DIED FOR IT. THERE IS NO OTHER FLAG SO FULL OF MEANING AS THE FLAG OF THIS COUNTRY, MADE BY AND FOR LIBERTY. WHEREVER OUR FLAG HAS GONE IT HAS BEEN THE HERALD OF A BETTER DAY. IT IS THE PLEDGE OF FREEDOM, CIVILIZATION AND CHRISTIANITY. OUR FLAG STANDS FOR HUMANITY, FOR AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL THE SONS OF MEN. IT IS NOT SO MUCH THE FLAG OF OUR FATHERS AS THE FLAG OF OUR CHILDREN. IT IS THE FLAG OF TOMORROW. IT IS THE FLAG OF OURSELVES. 'TIS OURS TO LOVE; 'TIS OURS TO SERVE; 'TIS OURS TO CHERISH EVERMORE.

IT IS A FLAG WHICH BY THE SERVICES AND PRAYERS OF ITS PEOPLES STRIVING TO PRACTICE THOSE VIRTUES WHICH HALT NATIONS, NAMELY, JUSTICE, TRUTH, LIBERTY AND PEACE, HAS BECOME THE SACRED SYMBOL OF OUR COUNTRY'S IDEALS OF THE SACRIFICES OF OUR PEOPLE, OF OUR FAITH IN OUR FATHER, GOD, AND HIS ETERNAL LOVE.

TO US THE RED, WHITE AND BLUE HAVE A PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE, AS IT REPRESENTS THE TRIANGLE OF OUR CENTRAL STAR. IT IS NOT ONLY A TRIANGLE OF COLOR, BUT ALSO SYMBOLIZES THE TRIANGLE OF BATTLE.

ELECTA, THE RED POINT. PORTRAYS THE BATTLE OF THE CROSS; ESTHER, THE WHITE POINT, PICTURES THE FIGHT TO SAVE HER PEOPLE FROM EXTERMINATION; AND ADAH, THE BLUE POINT, TELLS THE STORY OF HER FIGHT TO SAVE HER FATHER'S HONOR. IT IS TRULY SIGNIFICANT THEN THAT THE COLORS OF OUR FLAG AND OUR STAR ARE SYNONYMOUS.

RED SYMBOLIZES SACRIFICE, FERVCENCY, STRENGTH, AND BRAVERY; WHITE SYMBOLIZES LIGHT. PURITY, CHARITY AND PEACE; BLUE SYMBOLIZES LOVE, LOYALTY, FIDELITY AND TRUTH.

AS OUR COUNTRY HAS FLOURISHED, BY CARRYING OUT THE VIRTUES OF HER FLAG, MAY GOD GRANT THAT OUR BELOVED ORDER MAY PROSPER, TOO, AS WE ENDEAVOR TO CARRY OUT THESE SAME VIRTUES PORTRAYED IN THESE SAME COLORS OF OUR STAR AND OUR FLAG.

FOR CENTURIES FLAGS HAVE BEEN USED TO SYMBOLIZE THE NOBLE ASPIRATIONS AND GLORIOUS ACHIEVEMENTS OF MEN AND NATIONS. DOES NOT THE HEART OF EVERY TRUE AMERICAN THRILL AT THE SIGHT OF THE STARS AND STRIPES, OR THE SOUND OF THE NATIONAL ANTHEM? DO WE NOT FEEL A GREAT SENSE OF PRIDE WHEN WE BEHOLD OUR OWN STATE FLAG? THEN, DOES NOT EVERY MEMBER OF OUR BELOVED ORDER HAVE THE SAME FEELING REGARDING OUR OWN FLAG? WHEN YOU BEHOLD THE FLAG OF THE ORDER OF THE EASTERN STAR, WHAT DO YOU SEE? DO YOU SEE JUST THE MATERIAL OR DESIGN, THE FIVE BANDS OF COLOR, REPRESENTING THE RAYS OF OUR EMBLEMATIC STAR? THERE IS MUCH MORE TO BE SEEN.

YOU ALL KNOW THE FIRST BANDS OF COLOR USED AS A SYMBOL WAS A RAINBOW. STRETCHED ACROSS THE HEAVEN, CAUSING MEN TO LOOK UP AND REMEMBER THE COVENANT BETWEEN GOD AND MAN. OUR FLAG SHOULD TEACH US TO LOOK UP AND REMEMBER THAT WE, TOO, HAVE A COVENANT MADE AT OUR HOLY ALTAR. LET US LOOK UP TO BEHOLD EACH OF THE COLORS IN OUR FLAG. LOOK UP AT THE BLUE CANOPY OF HEAVEN FROM WHICH WE TAKE OUR BLUE OF FIDELITY: THEN AT THE YELLOW OF THE GOLDEN RAYS OF THE SUN, SHEDDING LIGHT AND WARMTH ON THE JUST AND UNJUST. TEACHING US TO BE EVERY CONSTANT AND TRUE; WHITE IS THE SYMBOL OF LIGHT. PURITY AND JOY. LOOK UP AT THE WHITE FLEECY CLOUDS FLOATING ABOVE US, EVER CHANGING THAT GORGEOUS SCENERY, NOT MADE WITH HANDS. MAY WE RECEIVE OUR LIGHT FROM THE ONE GREAT LIGHT. WHICH RESTS UPON OUR ALTAR AND BE LOYAL TO KINDRED AND FRIENDS. THE GREEN--AN EMBLEM OF NATURE'S LIFE AND BEAUTY, A SYMBOL OF HOPE AND IMMORTALITY.

LOOK UP AND SEE THE BUDDING OF THE TREES AFTER THEIR LONG SLEEP, AND KNOW THAT THERE IS A RESURRECTION AND A NEW LIFE. WE HAVE LOOKED UP TO BEHOLD THE FIRST FOUR COLORS IN OUR FLAG, SHOWING THE MIGHTY WORKS OF A GREAT CREATOR.

YOU MAY SAY, CAN WE LOOK UP AND SEE THE RED IN OUR FLAG? YES, SISTERS AND BROTHERS LOOK UP TO CALVARY AND SEE THE CROSS ON WHICH OUR SAVIOUR DIED, SHEDDING HIS BLOOD OF SACRIFICE AND LOVE THAT ALL MANKIND MIGHT BE SAVED. LOOK UP, I SAY, AND KNOW THAT HE CAME TO REDEEM THE WORLD; THEN, LET US FOLLOW HIS STAR IN THE EAST. FOLLOW IN HIS STEPS AND LOVE ONE ANOTHER.