

All the Difference
a Bible study note from Wayne Braudrick

Patriotism

Patriotism is a biblical virtue, and thus this week after July 4 is an appropriate time for Americans to give thanks for their country. However, scriptural patriotism differs from the worldly norm in one very significant fashion – it is all about the LORD, not any human agency. The point is evident in this patriotic song of freedom:

A Song of Ascents, of David.

"Had it not been the LORD who was on our side,"

Let Israel now say,

"Had it not been the LORD who was on our side,

When men rose up against us;

Then they would have swallowed us alive,

When their anger was kindled against us;

Then the waters would have engulfed us,

The stream would have swept over our soul;

Then the raging waters would have swept over our soul.

Blessed be the LORD,

Who has not given us to be torn by their teeth.

Our soul has escaped as a bird out of the snare of the trapper;

The snare is broken and we have escaped.

Our help is in the name of the LORD,

Who made heaven and earth. (Psalm 124 NASB)

Israel's national pride is not based in the country itself. They are not singing with lusty joy about how great their arms are; nor about their heroes; nor their constitution. Fine and good as all those are, the biblical singers find the basis of their cheer in one place only: in the Lord. They sing about who God is and what He has done.

I think all modern countries would do well to learn this lesson. National pride is not based on what we do, nor even on what our forefathers did. The only biblical basis for patriotism is the Lord God Almighty – who He is and what He has done for a country. That's what prompted the Father of the United States to write:

“While we are zealously performing the duties of good citizens and soldiers, we certainly ought not to be inattentive to the higher duties of religion. To the distinguished character of Patriot, it should be our highest glory to add the more distinguished character of Christian.” – George Washington, General Orders 2 May 1778.

God bless,
Wayne

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"The goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith." I Timothy 1:5

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