



OPINION

The American Flag

I am the American flag, listen to me and I'll tell you my story. My colors are red, white and blue. I have a field of fifty stars and thirteen stripes. I am also known as "The Stars and Stripes" and "Old Glory." I am honored to be in all public places. I go to schools where the children pledge allegiance to me. I attend all sporting events and stand proud and fly high as they sing my song "The Star Spangled Banner." I am honored when I go by in a parade and my people salute me.

Yes, I am the American flag. I served under forty some presidents. I was in peace and war. I was at the battle of Bunker Hill and Valley Forge where I saw the soldiers starve and freeze to death. I was with General Washington as he crossed the Delaware. I was in the Civil War where I saw father and son, brother and brother fight against each other to save the Union. I was there when they freed the slaves. I was at Gettysburg with President Lincoln, where in a few minutes he gave the most famous speech ever heard "The Gettysburg Address." I went along to the trenches in France in World War I, the beaches of Normandy in World War II, the day which lives in infamy at Pearl Harbor, the sands of Iwo Jima, where a few soldiers planted me in the sand to fly high with honor over them. I was in many wars and places with the people of my country. The farthest distance I have traveled is to the moon where I'm also flying high to honor my country.

I am the American flag. I stand for freedom, but freedom has its price. Freedom doesn't prevail without tyranny. I was disgraced many a time. I was spit on, stepped on, shot at and burned. I saw racism and other violence in my country, but I have overcome, for I fly over America the greatest country there is. A land of freedom, liberty, opportunities, a place to dream and live your dreams, a land of bounteous blessings, a land of milk and honey. A land to worship your Lord and Master. If we would just open our eyes and hearts and believe in God and ourselves we could move mountains. What a great country I stand for. I'm proud of my patriots. May they be proud of me!

I am the American flag. I am at the boot camp where the morning reveille is played. I am the cover over the casket when one of my servicemen who have served their country reach their final resting place. And I'll fly high with honor while taps are played for those who have served their country and have paid the price. They gave their all so that I may fly free.

Yes, I am the American flag. May I long wave over the land of the free and the home of the brave.

God Bless my Country! God Bless America! Long may She live!

Anna Landis

Herndon

(Written in honor of those who have served and died for their country.)

Saturday, November 11
 Clarion/Venango Holstein Annual Meeting, Wolf's Den Restaurant, Knox, 7 p.m.
 Year 2000 Goat Conference, Penn State Ag Arena, University Park, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
 27th Annual Berks County Farm Tour, noon-5 p.m., also Nov. 12.

Sunday, November 12
 NAILE Feeder Calf Sale, Kentucky Fair and Expo Center, Newmarket Hall, Louisville, Ky., 7 p.m.

Monday, November 13
 Poultry Health and Management Seminar, Kreider's Restaurant, Manheim, noon.
 Dauphin County Cooperative Extension 4-H Achievement Night, Pa. Farm Show Cafeteria, 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, November 14
 Pennsylvania Farm Bureau 50th Anniversary, Hershey Lodge and Convention Center, thru Nov. 15.

Wednesday, November 15
 Ephrata Area Young Farmer meeting on equipment maintenance, Adamstown Equipment, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, November 16
 Clarion County Corn Day, Custom Harvesting, Riverside Inn, Cambridge Springs.

Land O'Lakes Regional Meeting, Clarion (formerly Embers), Carlisle, 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Lebanon County Dairy Herd Improvement Association Annual Meeting, Hoss's Steak and Sea House, Annville, 6:30 p.m.

Penn State Golf Turf Conference, Nittany Lion Inn, State College, thru Nov. 16.

Dairy Cattle Nutrition Workshop, Holiday Inn, Grantville, thru Nov. 15.

4th Decennial National Irrigation Symposium, Phoenix Civic Center, Arizona, thru Nov. 16.

Extension In The New Millennium, Ramada Inn, Altoona, thru Nov. 15.

Solanco Young Farmers meeting, Corn Grain Management, Solanco High School, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, November 15
 Extension Conference, Penn State Conference Center Hotel, thru Nov. 16.

Westmoreland County Farm-City Dinner, Mountain View Inn, Greensburg, 7 p.m.

Thursday, November 16
 Catocoin Soil Conservation Dis-

(Turn to Page A35)

Now Is The Time
 By John Schwartz
 Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

To Understand Deer Stand Safety

In an effort to outsmart the elusive white tail deer, more and more Pennsylvania hunters are taking to the trees to bag their quarry, according to Earl Robbins, Tioga County extension agent.

Hunters may climb existing limbs or use ladders, steps, or commercial climbers to reach perches 10 to 15 feet off the forest floor.

Tree stands have been very popular with hunters in archery season, and now more hunters are using them during rifle season.

Hunting from tree stands may be more productive, but using them

may be dangerous. One out of every three tree stand users will eventually fall out of a tree stand. Nationwide, about 10 hunters every year are killed in falls from tree stands, while many others suffer temporary or permanent injury.

Human error is the main reason for tree stand accidents. People climb into trees or stands when conditions are wet, icy, or windy. They also fall asleep and fall out of the tree or become excited when a deer appears and take one step too far.

To Be Safe In Tree Stands

Earl Robbins, Tioga County extension agent, recommends hunters follow these safety tips when using tree stands:

- Do not use weathered, homemade tree stands. These stands often deteriorate quickly and often are unsafe even when newly installed.

- Wear a safety belt or harness. These products fit under both arms and are attached to the tree and the hunter. If the stand breaks or slips, the hunter remains in position.

- Always unload firearms before pulling them up into or lowering them from the tree stand.

- Choose an obviously healthy tree that can support the additional weight. Make sure the tree has no dead branches or fungal growths. Mushrooms or fungi on trees can be a sign of ill health.

- When climbing up or down, always ensure that your hands and feet are secure at three points of contact before moving the fourth point.

- Closely follow manufacturer's directions when using commercial tree stands.

Remember, hunters may not place a tree stand in any tree of their choice. You need to ask the owner first. There is a \$100 fine plus damage costs for placing a tree stand on public or private property without permission.

To Set Hunter Safety Example

If you are taking a young person hunting this year, make sure they understand the importance of hunting safety rules.

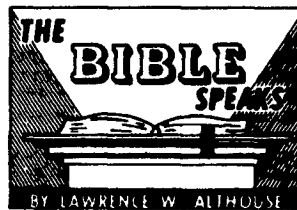
Young people handling firearms need to develop some important habits, according to Earl Robbins, Tioga County extension agent. We can instill these habits by instructing them and, more importantly, by setting an example.

These youth need role models who practice safe hunting skills. Make sure firearms are in good working order and barrels and chambers are free of obstructions. Make sure every member of the group wears a combined minimum of 250 square inches of hunter orange on the head, chest, and back.

Assume every firearm is loaded. When you pick up a gun, the first thing you should do is check it for ammunition. When you pass a firearm to someone else, leave the action open so there is no chance of it firing. Unload guns and leave actions open when transporting them.

Do not shoot until you are absolutely sure of your target. Shooting at a sound or an undefined shape is inviting tragedy.

Feather Prof's Footnote: "The voyage of discovery is not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes."



WHAT WILL YOU LEAVE ME?

Background Scripture:
 1 Kings 2:1-4; 3:1-15; 1 Chronicles 29:22-25; 2 Chronicles 1:1-13.
Devotional Reading:
 Psalms 119:101-9.

In David's life, there came the time that comes to all of us. After a reign of 40 years, the man whom God anointed to be king over Israel was facing the hour of death. He had built up a strong kingdom and accumulated much wealth.

We can imagine that some of David's heirs were already wondering what their rich and powerful father would leave to them. One of David's sons, Abiathar, had already tried a power play to seize the throne for himself, a ploy which Solomon's mother, Bathsheba, had quashed.

David, however, had something even more important to give Solomon than riches and power — the essence of what his father had learned over the years. David charged his son: "Be strong and show yourself a man, and keep the charge of the Lord your God, walking in his ways and keeping his statutes, his commandments, his ordinances, and his testimonies . . . that you may prosper in all that you do wherever you turn that the Lord may establish his word which he spoke concerning me, 'If you sons take heed to their way, to walk before me in faithfulness with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail you a man on the throne of Israel'" (1 Kings 2:1-4).

It seems sad to me that, although we pass on to our children and the coming generations much in the way of material wealth, we are much less likely to pass on to them what we have learned. Perhaps that is because, despite the longevity of our lives, we think that we haven't learned all that much. Or perhaps we do not value spiritual advice as much as material goods.

I wish that I could leave each of my children with a nest egg amount that would provide them with help in buying a house. The chances for

that are not very great, but I can actually leave them something more important: what I have learned.

Walking In His Ways

David's advice to his son is simple and straightforward: "Be strong and show yourself a man, and keep the charge of the Lord your God, walking in his ways and keeping his statutes, his commandments, his ordinances, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn, that the Lord may establish his word which he spoke concerning me, saying, 'If your sons take heed to their way, to walk before me in faithfulness with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail you a man on the throne of Israel'" (2:2-4).

What had David learned from which Solomon, his son, might profit? David had personally experienced the goodness of God who permitted him to prosper and grow as King of Israel when he kept the charge of God and walked in his ways. If you go with God, what he is saying, and follow his lead, you cannot fail as King of Israel.

Unspoken, but at least implied, is the fact that although David had also learned much through success, he had also learned through failure, with which he had much experience also. When he arrogantly abused his power and sinned with Bathsheba, plotting for the demise of Uriah, her husband, David had experienced the judgment as well as the forgiveness of God. In the midst of all his terrible travail with his son Absalom, he had found God's presence the only means of living through this terrible time.

So now David died and "slept with his fathers" and Solomon at last succeeded to the throne, although not without some struggle. Then, while at Gibeon, a place of worship, he had a dream in which God came to him and asked, "Ask what I shall give you?" (3:5). Solomon replies by first thanking and praising God for his "great and steadfast love to thy servant David, my father."

He also thanks the Lord for putting him on his father's throne. If Solomon's words were sincere, this is a humble prayer: ". . . thou hast made thy servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people whom thou hast chosen, a great people,

that cannot be numbered or counted for multitude" (3:7,8). (Later in his life, Solomon would be arrogant, not humble, but I take his words here at face value.)

Bequeathing Wisdom

It is in this continuing state of humility that Solomon now answers God's request to "Ask what I shall give to you."

"Give thy servant, therefore," he prays, "an understanding mind to govern thy people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to govern this thy great people?" (3:9).

God is favorably impressed with Solomon's attitude and responds, telling him that because he asked nothing for himself, "long life or riches or the life of your enemies," he will give him what he asks for, "a wise and discerning mind," unequaled by anyone who lived before him or will come after him. Apparently, Solomon was thus gifted and his enduring reputation is that of the "wisdom of Solomon" — although as the latter parts of his story will show, he didn't always exercise that wisdom.

The story of Solomon's ascension to the throne also tells us something more about what God bequeaths to his obedient and faithful children: God said to Solomon, "I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other kind shall compare with you, all your days" (3:13). It reminds us that Jesus taught his disciples, "Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things shall be yours as well" (Lk. 12:31).

That doesn't mean we will inherit Solomon's riches nor his prominence, but that if we walk closely with him, the Lord will give us all we really need.

I like the way C.S. Lewis paraphrases this: "Aim at heaven and you will get earth 'thrown in'; aim at earth and you will get neither."

Lancaster Farming
 Established 1955
 Published Every Saturday
 Ephrata Review Building
 1 E. Main St.
 Ephrata, PA 17522
 —by—
Lancaster Farming, Inc.
 A Steinman Enterprise
 William J. Burgess General Manager
 Everett R. Newswanger Editor
 Copyright 2000 by Lancaster Farming