

Remember to read the whole story of the
Appeal to Heaven flag at:
texaseagle.org/blog/appeal-to-heaven

Order an Appeal to Heaven flag at:
dutchsheets.mybigcommerce.com/large-an-appeal-to-heaven-flag-3-x-5

An Appeal to Heaven t-shirts, hats and other
items can be purchased at:
zazzle.com/constitutionalsupply



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AN APPEAL TO HEAVEN



The Time Has Come Again

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I recently read the story of the “An Appeal to Heaven” flag, its history and the important philosophical concept behind it. Most of us don't even know there was such a flag and even fewer understand its significance. You really cannot correctly understand our nation's history, or our Declaration of Independence, without understanding the concept behind “An Appeal to Heaven.”

The concept comes from English philosopher, John Locke. In his *Second Treatise of Government*, Locke explains that once all human avenues for seeking justice (judges, legislatures, executives, etc), or relief from tyranny, have been exhausted, only an appeal to Heaven remains. At that point, men become justified to seek relief by their own actions, appealing to the God of Heaven to sustain their endeavor, as no earthly mediator is left to them.

“...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 a liberty to appeal to heaven, whenever they judge the cause of sufficient moment.” (John Locke)

This was Locke’s justification for the deposing of King James II, and as students of Locke, this principle was at the heart of the American founders Declaration of Independence.

“We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States...

And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.”

There is of course much more to the story of the Appeal to Heaven flag including the Iroquois Confederation, why a pine tree was used on the flag and George Washington's private navy. Please do yourself a big favor and read the whole story here – texaseagle.org/blog/appeal-to-heaven.

Like our nation's founders, many in the Christian-conservative-right are feeling like they too are suffering a long train of abuses at the hands of their government. In the wake of the recent Supreme Court opinion on marriage that tramples religious liberty and violates freedom of conscience, many may feel America has returned to the place of its founding with only an appeal to Heaven left to us.

While appealing to Heaven through prayer is always a right thing to do, the appeal to Heaven taught by John Locke, and acted upon by the American founders by declaring independence from Great Britain, is a matter of political action that looks to the God of Heaven for favor upon that action. To be justified, and to qualify for divine favor, that action must be predicated upon two things.

1. No appeal on earth remaining to the aggrieved within the established political systems.
2. Rectitude of intentions on the part of those taking action to obtain relief.

No Appeal on Earth

Before declaring their independence, the American Founders had exhausted every means available to right the wrongs being done to them by King George III. One of the great complaints leading up to the break with Britain was taxation without representation in Parliament.

Today, we have a vote and an active voice in choosing our representatives for everything from city council, to county sheriff, state representative, state supreme court justices, congress, president, and many more offices. We may not like the representatives that “we the people” have picked and often deplore what they do, but we elect them. Therefore, we cannot say that we have “no appeal on earth” as we have an appeal every 2, 4 or 6 years, depending on the office. Therefore, it cannot be justified at this time to go outside of, or seek the overthrow of, “the forms of government to which we are accustomed.”

However, like our nation's founders, it is incumbent upon us to vigorously pursue every avenue available for the righting of wrongs as we appeal to Heaven for favor upon our endeavors. But remember, the founders taught us that our appeal to Heaven needs to predicated upon the rectitude of our intentions.

Rectitude of Intentions

The word “rectitude” isn't something you hear in daily conversation. It's one of those old English words that we kind of gloss over and act like we get it.

According to Webster's Dictionary of 1828, the first truly American dictionary and the one understood to most accurately convey the meanings intended by the American founders, rectitude is:

Rectitude

REC'TITUDE, *noun* [Latin rectus, right, straight.]

In morality, rightness of principle or practice; uprightness of mind; exact conformity to truth, or to the rules prescribed for moral conduct, either by divine or human laws. *rectitude* of mind is the disposition to act in conformity to any known standard of right, truth or justice; *rectitude* of conduct is the actual conformity to such standard. Perfect *rectitude* belongs only to the Supreme Being. The more nearly the *rectitude* of men approaches to the standard of the divine law, the more exalted and dignified is their character. Want of *rectitude* is not only sinful, but debasing.

There is a sublimity in conscious *rectitude* - in comparison with which the treasures of earth are not worth naming.

We can see from this definition that true rectitude “belongs only to the Supreme Being,” with its ultimate standard determined by “divine law.” Only the Creator of man gets to determine the standard of what is right for man. Therefore, we cannot appeal to Heaven for favor on our endeavors except to the degree our endeavors conform to God's standards of truth, justice, uprightness and sound principles.

In politics, as in all matters, our natural reaction is to assume that our side is right, if only because the guy on the radio is telling us the other side is wrong. That's a trap ancient Israel fell into regularly. They would call on God to deliver them from their enemies on the grounds that “we're God's people and the other guys are evil Philistines, so we must be right.” Yet in nearly every case, God had to begin by showing His people where they had departed from His law (His standard) and had unwittingly adopted

the practices, and even the false gods, of the heathen nations around them.

Christians and conservatives of today are inclined to view Democrats as the “new Philistines” that we need God to deliver us from. However, as measured by the party that Christians most commonly support, and whose candidates would never win a single office without their support, the Christian-conservative-right and the Republican Party wield far more influence in America than do Democrats. A majority of the U.S. Supreme Court are Republican appointees. The U.S. House, which holds the nation's purse strings and determines what federal activities will or will not take place, has been under Republican control 16 of the last 20 years. More than three times as many states are under complete Republican control (24) than Democrat (7). If America and its union states are going in the wrong direction, the Republican Party bears more blame than the Democratic, as it holds more positions of power.

It's tempting to blame the Republican office holders saying, “they're kowtowing to the party bosses and power brokers, they're putting political expediency ahead of principle, they're compromising.” The truth is that we, the Christian-conservative-right, placed them into power and they are a reflection of us. We bowed to the influence of pundits and talking heads who told us who can and cannot win, we placed political expediency and a win at the ballot box ahead of principle, and we *compromised* when we voted for those candidates.

It would appear that God's people in America today have fallen into the same trap as Israel of old. We are calling on God to deliver us with the assumption that our side is in the right. However, our political priests have lead us into compromise, taught us to worship at the alters of political expediency and to give the virtue of our

vote to candidates who cast off constitutional restraint and serve the gods of statism.

An Appeal to Heaven

It is indeed time for an appeal to Heaven, but not the appeal of casting off, or going outside of, the established systems of government to take matters into our own hands, seeing that we yet have the ballot box left to us. Neither is it the appeal of prayer alone that takes no action, or that merely asks God to bless a continuation of compromise or corrupted political associations.

It is time for an appeal to Heaven that begins by asking the just Judge of the universe to search us to see if there be any wicked ways of compromise in us, and to lead us back to His divine standards of truth, justice, uprightness and sound principles (Psalm 139:23, 24).

It is time for an appeal to Heaven which, with firm resolve, places sound principle ahead of political expediency, partisan politics and the councils of pundits, and which pledges its support to every candidate and cause that soundly upholds biblical values, constitutional limits on government, and the principles of liberty without regard for partisan affiliation or whether anyone says they can win.

It is time for an appeal to Heaven which, with equally firm resolve, pledges to withhold support from every candidate, cause, party or other political entity that shrinks back from the biblical and constitutional standards.

It is time for an appeal to Heaven which, like our nation's founders did, steps out where human might alone cannot sustain and divine providence becomes our only hope as we “Appeal to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions.”