

**Bible Devotions: Lock Stock & Barrel**  
**Devotional Reading for Outdoorsmen (Old Testament)**

Numbers 10:9

Inkwells and Quills

*When you go to war in your land against the enemy who oppresses you, then you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets, and you will be remembered before the Lord your God, and you will be saved from your enemies.*

With pen in hand, 56 men signaled their intent to declare independence from their oppressor. Some, like Stephen Hopkins, inked their way into the pages of world history with trembling hands but firm resolve. Some would one day hold office of judge, or senator, or president, like George Wythe, Richard Henry Lee, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams. One signed his name with such a bold autograph that it earned him immortal standing in the phraseology of American culture – John Hancock. It was he who said that they would succeed "if we fear God and repent of our sins" (Barton, 2000).

Outnumbered, outgunned, and outflanked, these brave men stood up to the oppression that invaded their land and their homes. They stated their intent to establish a new government. They listed the facts about their oppressor. They made it clear to the world that "A Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people." Then with tempered valor they declared their independence. There was no question about the source of their strength: "a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence." In the eloquence of their day, that meant God.

Inkwells and quills were their silver trumpets – such beautiful stains they made. What magnificent tolling of freedom rang out with every stroke of their pens. Never in the course of human events did men so loudly pledge their lives, their fortunes, their sacred honor. Few have so courageously stared into the face of certain death and won.

Every chapter of world history is marred by oppression. No one likes it, at least no right-minded person. It is, indeed, the right of the people to alter or abolish this type of horrible government (The Declaration of Independence, 1776).

The Israelites knew what it was like to be oppressed. Blasts from two silver trumpets signaled their own firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, rallying them to war like bugles in a battlefield (Numbers 10:2-10). It was God's reminder that He would deliver His children from the hand of their enemies. Yet the Israelites could not grasp this lesson on obedience and eventually tuned God out (Judges 6:10).

If only the Israelites could have seen a glimpse of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. They would have witnessed bravery and courage, grit and determination, faith and obedience. I suppose then that the echoes of silver trumpets would have left an imprint in world history. Just like inkwells and quills did in the hands of freedom-loving men on August 2, 1776.

*The Star-Spangled Banner* (2nd verse)

Francis Scott Key (1779 – 1834)

O thus be it ever, when free men shall stand  
Between their loved homes and the war's desolation;  
Blest with victory and peace, may the heaven-rescued land  
Praise the Power that hath made and preserved us a nation!  
Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just;  
And this be our motto: "In God is our trust!"  
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave  
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

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## Bible Devotions: Hook Line & Sinker (study guide)

Numbers 10:9  
Inkwells and Quills

### HOOK

1. In your view, what is the most important event in world history, outside the work of Jesus?

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2. List two things you can do that will help guard our freedom in America.

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3. Write all that you remember about *The Declaration of Independence*.

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### LINE

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The Israelites knew what it was like to be oppressed. Blasts from two silver trumpets signaled their own firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, rallying them to war like bugles in a battlefield. It was God's reminder that He would deliver His children from the hand of their enemies. Yet the Israelites could not grasp this lesson on obedience and eventually tuned God out.

If only the Israelites could have seen a glimpse of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. They would have witnessed bravery and courage, grit and determination, faith and obedience.

Define what you believe John Hancock meant when he said that they would succeed "if we fear God and repent of our sins."

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List three ways you will be obedient to God in your citizenship. Describe your efforts in detail.

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### SINKER

Take a few minutes to write your thoughts on this devotional. Reflect on your own experiences.

Key words:                    freedom                    oppression                    fear God and repent of sins

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