

HARVEST FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

Enrico & Vicki Correlli
P.O. Box 119
White Marsh, MD 21162

Email: ecorrelli@gmail.com
Ph: 443-804-3525
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harvestfellowshipinternational.org

HISTORY AND DATES

Famous dates are familiar to all of us. It's unthinkable and foolish to study History without realizing the necessity of dates. Sometimes an entire date - day, month and year is remembered - for example, December 7, 1941. Often mention is made of the tragic events of 9/11. In other instances, we remember just the year like 1492. Even in some situations, an event is associated with a particular month such as the October Revolution.

In April of 1861, the Civil War began. In the South, deep resentment of Abolitionists, who lived mostly in the northern States, had been galvanized by the election of Abraham Lincoln. The Confederate States felt their economic well-being, whose substructure was the institution of slavery, was threatened.

THE BATTLE OF ANTIETAM

Hardly anyone remembers September 17, 1862. The Confederate General, Robert E. Lee, had made a decision to invade the North. Unquestionably a bold move that quite possibly could have altered the outcome of the entire war.

President Lincoln, understanding the strategic importance of this battle, began to implore God. He prayed that if God would give him victory in the Battle of Maryland (as he called it), he would free the slaves. On that fateful day of September 17, 1862, the bloodiest one-day battle in the Civil War took place in Sharpsburg, Maryland near a creek named Antietam. There was a combined death toll of over 23,000 as the North repelled Lee's army and drove them back into the South.

Lincoln made good on his sacred promise to the Lord and issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, thus freeing the slaves. *The Battle of Antietam*, also called *The Battle of Sharpsburg*, or as Lincoln called it, *The Battle of Maryland*, has had immeasurable and profound importance in the history of our Nation.

OUR WAR TODAY

Perhaps January of 2021 will be another seminal moment and date for our United States. We find ourselves in a battle that also has several names. Some call it a cultural battle; others a battle of ideas; or world views; or politics.

But the underlying war has one name, and one name only: spiritual. Every person alive is involved in this spiritual war whether they know it or not. At stake are the souls of men and women. In this new year, when everyone is relieved that 2020 is finally over, let us 'join the battle' with more prayer than ever. Let us beseech the Lord, as Lincoln did, for the true liberation of the human race which only Jesus can give.

DIVINE INTERVENTION

One final note concerning *The Battle of Antietam*. While marching toward the battle site, a Confederate officer reached into his pocket for a cigar. Unknown to him (or any other of his fellow-soldiers), the plans for the battle fell to the ground. As the army moved forward, a soldier from the North 'just happened' to discover those plans.

A coincidence? I don't think so; rather a direct result of the supplication of a humble President. We have a prayer-answering, supernatural God Who is always with us. He is ready & willing to intervene in the affairs of mankind.