

# Fragile and Precious Liberty



Several years ago I stood above Omaha Beach surrounded by almost 10,000 crosses and stars of David on simple white headstones of American soldiers, some mere teenagers with names precious to parents and adoring siblings, who gave their lives to recover freedom for people they would never meet. As I wandered from my companions to weep alone, I was abruptly stopped by a visceral and deeply spiritual connection to one headstone that read simply, “Here rests in honored glory a comrade in arms known only to God.” I lingered long there to thank that brave comrade, hoping that somehow he could hear my thanks through my tears.

Through most of human history, under fallen creatures drawn to and corrupted by tribal or national power, life has been oppressively cruel. Our young democracy is a rare exception, fragile and never more than one generation from extinction. Amid the fireworks and barbeque, this Fourth of July Sunday is a good time also to connect to the “great cloud of witnesses” – “known only to God” – to whom we owe this fragile and precious liberty.

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