

A TIME FOR REMEMBERING

By Tammy Hulse



It was early autumn in Boston, Massachusetts. The year was 1746. The entire community of Boston was in turmoil. The most powerful fleet of the time was sailing from France under the command of French Duke d'Anville. There were 70 ships carrying over 10,000 troops with a mission to burn Boston to her very foundations.

The governor declared a day of fasting and prayer to petition the help of Almighty God to deliver the community from the horrific invasion. The men of Massachusetts, some of whom were veterans of the earlier French war, with their old outdated weapons, gathered at Boston Common in preparation for the coming attack. The following account of the event was shared on William J. Federer's American Minute.*

"The fleet was at their doorstep when reverend Thomas Prince, from the pulpit of the Old South Meetinghouse prayed before his congregation. The morning was clear and calm. 'Deliver us from our enemy!' the minister implored. 'Send thy tempest, Lord, upon the waters to the eastward! Raise Thy right hand. Scatter the ship of our tormentors and drive them hence., Sink their proud frigates beneath the power of Thy winds!' He had scarcely pronounced the words when the sun was gone and the morning darkened. All the church was in shadow. A wind shrieked so hard that the great church bell struck twice. Thomas Prince paused in his prayer, both arms raised. 'We hear thy voice, O Lord! We hear it! Thy breath is upon the waters of the eastward, even upon the deep, The bell tolls for the death of our enemies!' He bowed his head; when he looked up, tears streamed down his face. 'thine be the glory, Lord. Amen and amen!'

Historian Catherine Drinker Bowen related that as he finished praying, the sky darkened, winds shrieked and church bells rang 'a wild, uneven sound...though no man was in the steeple.' A hurricane subsequently sank and scattered the entire French fleet. With 4,000 sick and 2,000 dead, including d'Anville, Vice-Admiral Cornelle's threw himself on his sword. The French attack never came. A week later details were provided by other vessels entering Boston from the northeastward. The French fleet was nearly lost. All who survived the sudden storm suffered from a pestilential fever. The great Admiral Duke d'Anville was dead. The few remaining ships, half manned, were limping off to the south invasion of America!"

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote the following Ballad of the French Fleet:

*'Admiral d'Anville had sworn by cross and crown,
to ravage with fire and steel our helpless Boston Town...
From mouth to mouth spread tidings of dismay,
I stood in the Old South saying humbly: 'Let us pray!'.
Like a potter's vessel broke, the great ships of the line,
were carried away as smoke or sank in the brine.'*

This story is just one of many accounts of divine intervention on behalf of the United States of America. Our heritage is rich with accounts of faith, sacrifice, devotion, and the miraculous hand of God in the building and establishment of the United States and its Constitution. The challenges and threats to freedom for the early colonists were great, yet brave men and women rose to the challenge of their day, exercised faith in the God who brought them to this land, and participated in the miracle and making of America.

Enemies of freedom have always been present from the beginning of time. And thus, a free America will always have her enemies. But there is a difference in the threats we experience today in comparison to the challenges we have faced before. This difference is found in the memory of the American people. Unfortunately, the memory of the faith, the character, and the patriotism of our Founding Fathers is waning. Too many of the rising generation are unfamiliar with the great patriots of the past. Karl Marx stated that “a people without a heritage are easily persuaded.” We can see evidence all around us of the vulnerability of Americans who are unfamiliar with her heritage and legacy.

How do 21st century Americans rise to the challenge of their day with the strength and power of our Fathers before us? Has the day of miracles ceased in regards to America? Or can we as Americans today dare to believe that God will come to our aid? I believe He will. Hope is on the horizon as modern day patriots connect with the faith, character, and patriotism of the past.

The connection that modern day Americans have with the faith and power of their forefathers can be found in one word – **remember**. Remember the courage and the sacrifice. Remember the perseverance and faith. Remember the virtue and morality. Remember the heroes. Remember those who were lost.

The word, **remember**, carries great power because it maintains a link to the lessons of history and the inspiration of the past. The richness of American heritage will infuse life, purpose, and meaning into her future. The power of the past begins to flow within the veins of modern day patriots the moment they participate in a story, memorial service, event or activity that causes them to re-visit an episode in America’s dynamic history. Furthermore, when “remembering” experiences are repeated frequently, they will create a propelling force that will move America towards a promising future.

*“It is when people forget God
that tyrants forge their chains.”*

~Patrick Henry

We encourage families to take a few moments to **remember** our heritage by attending a concert, visiting a museum, reading a story, participating in a community celebration or other activity . . . as America commemorates significant dates and moments in her history.

**American Minute can be found on the American Heritage Center of the HFA website. The American Minute changes daily and provides families a great topic for daily discussion about America’s heritage and legacy.*



*“Those people
who will not
be governed
by God
will be ruled
by tyrants.”*

