

A Standing Miracle

by

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PRELUDE

All events retold in this presentation actually happened. The authorities are referenced in the endnotes, along with additional information. All third party quotes and many of Washington's words are the original words (Washington's original words are italicized in the script), edited for clarity, impact, and intelligibility for the modern audience. The meaning of the original language has not been altered. Beyond Washington's actual words, all opinions expressed in *A Standing Miracle* are found in Washington's own writings. Only the scene itself (the "stage" for this presentation) is fictionalized.

In an August 20, 1778, letter to his friend Brigadier General Thomas Nelson, General Washington wrote, "*The hand of Providence has been so conspicuous in [the course of the war] that he must be worse than an infidel that lacks faith, and more wicked that has not gratitude to acknowledge his obligations; but it will be time enough for me to turn Preacher when my present appointment ceases.*" Jared Sparks, ed., *The Writings of George Washington*, Boston: American Stationer's Company, 1837, NY: F. Andrew's, 1834–1847, vol. VI, p. 36; and other sources cited in William J. Federer, ed., *America's God and Country Encyclopedia of Quotations*, Coppel, TX: Fame Publishing, Inc., 1994, p. 643.

Additional information about America's Christian heritage may be obtained from:

(a) WallBuilders, Inc., P.O. Box 397, Aledo, TX 76008, phone (817) 441-6044 (David Barton, Founder and President), <http://www.wallbuilders.com>; and

(b) The Mayflower Institute, P.O. Box 4673, Thousand Oaks, CA 91359 (Marshall Foster, Founder and President), <http://www.mayflowerinstitute.com>.

See also William J. Federer, Ed., *America's God and Country Encyclopedia of Quotations*, Coppel, TX: Fame Publishing, Inc.: 820 S. MacArthur Blvd., Suite 105–220, Coppel, TX 75019-4214, 1994.

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We have heard with our ears, O God;
our fathers have told us what you did in their
days,
in days long ago.

With your hand you drove out the nations
and planted our fathers;
you crushed the peoples
and made our fathers flourish.

It was not by their sword that they won the land,
nor did their arm bring them victory;
it was your right hand, your arm,
and the light of your face,
for you loved them.

Psalm 44:1–3 (NIV)

A Standing Miracle

(March 4, 1797, Philadelphia¹: President George Washington, dressed in black with powdered hair² and ready for the inauguration of John Adams, is in his office. His candle-lit desk still bears some last-minute paperwork,³ to which he applies himself. Washington becomes aware of a visitor.)

Oh... Good morning! Thank you for coming. I know you are busy with your duties in the transition. But I think you will understand why we must talk now rather than after Mr. Adams takes the oath of office.

I am nearly done here with the "Washington Administration." I hope you will indulge me a few moments more. As always, almost *all the acts of this session of Congress have been presented to me within the last four days*. It is astonishing that, although *the Constitution allows the President 10 days to deliberate on each bill brought before him*, I am *allowed less than half that time to consider all the business of the session But as the scene is closing on my political life, I accomplish little now to let it be with murmurs.*⁴

There! Consider it complete! (as he signs the last paper and stacks it. He pauses, reflecting. Then...) *I resign the chair of government without a single regret and with no desire to meddle in politics again.*⁵ But I will miss you and so many other good friends and compatriots.

(Tearing himself away from the thought.) Now. You must wonder why this discussion would not wait until later. Rest assured, sir, that the point I am compelled to make is so important, it must be made now ... While I can still command your attention. After I walk out that door, I cannot be assured that anyone will listen to me again. (He finds and picks up a letter.) And the message must be heard . . . and heeded.

Almost 15 years ago, after our great victory at Yorktown, I received this foolish letter. In this, an officer in the Continental Army proposed to install me as king!⁶ What mischief! What folly! (He throws the letter on the desk.) What gets into people?

What would cause men to abandon the democracy they had fought and died for? ... And willingly accept what they had just thrown off ... A king? The sorry episode worried me. But until today, I had no answer why some men cannot live with freedom. Until today. And the answer? Fear.

Today, I understand that fear. You see, I am about to walk out that door, leaving others at the helm of this ship of democracy. And I am afraid. Afraid of what is to come; afraid of what my fellow citizens will do with my country. But ... But! ... There is an abiding truth larger than any fear.

And that is why I compelled your attendance here today. You must understand; you must pass the word: "God gave us this country as a sacred trust. We must honor that trust by

following Jesus Christ⁷ and upholding the constitution He gave us."⁸

I know this, because these eyes have witnessed the very hand of God. *Every step by which [we] have advanced to the character of an independent nation seems to have been distinguished by some token of Providential agency.... These reflections ... are too strong in my mind to be suppressed.*⁹ Therefore, as my last official act as President, I ask you to sit and listen while I review just a few examples of how God's *providential agency . . . established these United States as an independent nation.*¹⁰ These events are links in a chain of Providence some would attribute to chance, but which clearly come from the *invisible Hand which conducts the affairs of men.*¹¹ I hope you will see . . . No, you must see . . . that *the singular interpositions of Providence . . . in the creation of this country have been . . . little short of a standing miracle.*¹²

The first providential link involves a devastating defeat and a divine deliverance . . . near a river in the Ohio Territory, called the Monongahela. It happened in '55, some 20 years before our great struggle for independency, during what has become known as the French and Indian War. France had occupied part of the Ohio Territory, particularly a place called Fort Duquesne—you might know it as modern-day Pittsburgh—and had defeated my efforts to drive them out. The British Crown was determined not to be bested by France! So the famous and celebrated General Braddock was dispatched from England to "dispatch" the French from the Ohio. Because I knew the territory from prior trips there, Braddock took me along.

I can see it today. General Braddock's large force moved ponderously toward Fort Duquesne. Against my advice, we had many officers and much baggage. Braddock did direct us to use caution when crossing the Monongahela, the last river before Fort Duquesne and a likely place for a surprise attack. But no attack came. That convinced Braddock the French had learned of our approach and abandoned the fort. He ordered us to form up for a ceremonial march to the fort (still 10 miles away). The display was one of the most beautiful spectacles I ever beheld. *Every man was neatly dressed in full uniform; the soldiers were arranged in columns and marched in exact order; the sun gleamed from their burnished arms; the river flowed tranquilly on their right, [while] the deep forest overshadowed them with solemn grandeur on their left. Officers and men were equally inspirited . . .*¹³

(His thoughts grow cold.) But disaster lurked just up the trail. Just three miles into our parade, we marched between two heavily wooded hills. (Reliving it.) Shots! From the left! ... The right! Ambush! . . . From the underbrush! Death coming from all sides! I ride back and forth, first carrying Braddock's orders . . . Then rallying the troops and directing cannon fire! Men falling all around me! (Forces himself back to the present.) . . . Especially the officers. Braddock was wounded and later died. Sixty-three of our 86 officers were killed or wounded. The mounted officers had been singled out for targeted fire, and every mounted officer, except me, had fallen.¹⁴ But, *by the all-powerful dispensations of Providence, I had been protected beyond all human probability or expectation; for I had four bullets through my coat, and two horses shot under me, yet I escaped unhurt, although death was leveling my companions on every side of me!*¹⁵

Some 15 years later, God reminded me, in no uncertain terms, of how He protected me in

that battle. In the fall of '70, my old friend, Dr. Craik, and I revisited the Ohio territory. While there, we met a group of Indians led by a certain old chief. Around a council fire, the old chief spoke:

I am a chief and ruler over my tribes. My influence extends to the waters of the Great Lakes and to the far blue mountains. I have traveled a long and weary path that I might see the young warrior of the Great Battle. [He nodded at me.] It was on the day when the white man's blood mixed with the streams of our forest that I first beheld this chief. I called to my young men and said, mark [that] tall and daring warrior? He is not of the Red-Coat tribe -- he ha[s] an Indian's wisdom, and his warriors fight as we do -- [He] is alone exposed. Quick, let your aim be certain, and he dies. Our rifles were leveled, rifles which, but for you, knew not how to miss -- [It was] all in vain. A power mightier far than we, shielded you. Seeing you were under the special guardianship of the Great Spirit, we . . . ceased to fire at you. I am old and soon shall be gathered to the Great Council Fire of my fathers . . ., but [before] I go, there is something bids me speak in the voice of prophecy. (To everyone.) Listen! The Great Spirit protects that man, and guides his destinies -- he will become the chief of nations, and a people yet unborn will hail him as the founder of a mighty empire. I am come to pay homage to the man who is the particular favorite of Heaven, and who can never die in battle.¹⁶

What can a man say to such a clear message from God? "I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in Him will I trust . . . A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee."¹⁷

I was delivered by His hand for future duties, . . . including those during the War for Independence, when God wrought the next four links in this chain. You know that in '75 I was appointed by Congress to lead our forces in that struggle. As Commander in Chief, I saw a multitude of God's gracious acts. The first happened in my first encounter as General, at Boston harbor.

When I arrived at Boston, I found the British firmly in control, with our forces on the outside looking in. The Boston theater was a fearful sight. Our troops had . . . *very little discipline, order or government*.¹⁸ Our men formed *a semicircle of eight or nine miles to guard, to every part of which we were obliged to be equally attentive. The British . . . in the center of the semicircle [having entire command of the water] could concentrate their whole force against any one part of our lines with equal ease.* There were no engineers to construct proper defensive positions, nor any tools to build them, nor sufficient numbers of men to man such works had they been built.¹⁹ Our men were half naked and improperly housed. Because of our short enlistment terms and lack of discipline, our men were leaving whenever it suited them, with or without permission.²⁰ And, if all that were not bad enough, someone discovered that in our entire armory, we had only 35 half barrels of ammunition. For the whole army!²¹ Many of our men were stationed only yards from the nearest redcoats, and we were essentially unarmed. Had the British attacked, five minutes would have seen us with empty guns. Nine rounds per man!²²

But God intervened.²³ First, the British did not attack. And as our enlistments were nearing their end,²⁴ winter's snows providentially allowed the large guns captured with Fort Ticonderoga to be sledged to Boston.²⁵ the offensive works we needed to shell Boston from Dorchester Heights were impossible, until one of my young officers, one Rufus Putman, just happened upon a certain field engineering manual the very evening we discussed the need for such works. From that book we drew a French idea for quick construction of works called "chandeliers," works built out of tightly bundled sticks to substitute for earthen works, something that could be done in short order. In fact, our works were done essentially overnight, much to the surprise of the British.²⁶ Their commander, General Howe, said of their discovery, "The rebels have done more in one night than my whole army would have done in months."²⁷ The Redcoats immediately prepared to attack our works, but as they waited for the tide to launch their strike, a violent storm came up.²⁸ It blew until the night had passed,²⁹ and with it what was left of the British opportunity. So the British were forced to evacuate Boston,³⁰ without our losing a man.³¹

The storm, on the heels of the other events, represented another *remarkable interposition of Providence*.³² I was sorely disappointed at not getting to fight after such a long wait, but God knew that we would need all of our troops later.

"Later" came at Long Island, New York,³³ in August of '76. The next great link. We were 9,000 against an enemy of 20,000.³⁴ Our men were nearly surrounded even before the August 27 attack.³⁵ All the British needed to completely encircle us was to sail up the East River at our rear. Their infantry attacked and pushed our left and center back to our defensive perimeter. Our forces on the right were cut off from the rest of us and nearly surrounded. I could only watch through field glasses, helpless to stop what would be the annihilation of a large part of my army.³⁶ Our forces on the right broke ranks and fled through a swamp to reach our defensive perimeter. Many did not make it. The British onslaught neared our defensive trenches. It was only a matter of time before our dreams of independence would be dashed.

But a curious thing happened. The British halted and did not attack further on the 27th. Nor on the 28th. Then in the late afternoon of the 28th, a cold rain began to fall, and with it a northeast wind began to blow, a wind keeping Howe's fleet from entering the East River to close the trap.³⁷ The storm continued through the 29th as the British dug closer and closer to our defenses. When dusk came that evening, we realized: we had been given a window of opportunity to try a desperate escape. So, under cover of darkness, we gathered boats and began moving men and matériel from Long Island to Manhattan.³⁸ Overnight we remained undiscovered.³⁹ But as dawn neared, we had not completed our evacuation. We would undoubtedly be seen any moment and attacked in a very vulnerable position. But God again intervened, as He might have done for the nation of Israel. You see, a dense fog arose on the land and over the water, covering our lines, the British, and the evacuating boats. It lifted only after our last boat, with me in it, got beyond the range of the British muskets.⁴⁰ We had been spared by the Almighty! His hand had freed us to fight another day! I had seen it, and knew the deliverance the Psalmist celebrated:

For in the time of trouble he shall hide me And now shall mine head be

lifted up above mine enemies round about me; therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord.⁴¹

Our escape from Long Island was indeed miraculous, as were many other events during the war. But no less miraculous was a string of events in '81, leading up to Yorktown and the end of the war.⁴²

This next providential link began with our victory in the south commanded by Daniel Morgan, at the Battle of Cowpens.⁴³ Cornwallis was angered at this strategic defeat and rushed his much larger force toward the Catawba River to cut off Morgan's retreat. Morgan and his men, along with 500 British prisoners from the Cowpens triumph, crossed the river, pulling all available boats with them, just two hours before Cornwallis appeared on the south bank. Well, victory was within the British grasp. But, for no apparent reason, they decided to wait until morning to cross and destroy the Americans. But overnight? Rain. Rain! -- So much rain that by morning the river was impassable to the British, and Morgan and company had escaped For the first time. A few days later, fleeing north, Morgan, now joined by General Nathaniel Green, reached and crossed the Yadkin River in North Carolina. No sooner had he crossed than Cornwallis appeared behind the Americans. But, again, a rising river slowed the pursuers, boats were denied the British, and Morgan, with Green, had escaped a second time. Ten more days of "sprint" brought Morgan, Greene, and the beleaguered Americans to the Dan River and a crossing into friendly Virginia territory. When Cornwallis reached the river just hours later, again a full, engorged river stopped him, giving the Americans their third and ultimate escape.

British General Clinton wrote of this episode, "Here the Royal Army was again stopped by a sudden rise of the waters, which had only just fallen (almost miraculously) to let the enemy over [Otherwise they would not] have eluded Lord Cornwallis' grasp, so close was he upon their rear."⁴⁴ Again, God had delivered us . . . as if we were in the Exodus through the Red Sea.

Morgan and Greene's escape left our southern forces intact in Virginia, allowed rest and replenishment with new forces, and forged the next links in this chain of providence. With fresh strength, our southern command badly damaged the British at the battle of Guilford Courthouse in North Carolina and then annoyed Cornwallis into a blunder that would cost Britain the war.⁴⁵ In his weakened and frustrated condition, Cornwallis moved to the port at Yorktown to occupy the Chesapeake area from fortified positions and enjoy British naval superiority, maybe even join Clinton's forces in New York. But then virtually the entire French fleet arrived off Yorktown. When the British fleet arrived, the French got the upper hand in the Battle of the Chesapeake and sent them back to New York in retreat.⁴⁶ Meanwhile, with a large French army with us, we had force-marched our northern forces to the south and taken up positions around Yorktown. We now had Cornwallis substantially outnumbered and trapped against the York River. In response, after it became apparent that British rescue from the sea would not happen, his Lordship, in desperation, tried the same darkness-covered amphibious retreat we had used in our miraculous escape from Long Island. But the Almighty was not as kind to the British escape attempt as He had been to ours. As they tried to cross the York, the driving rainstorm became violently tempestuous, swamping boats and dooming the British escape attempt.⁴⁷ The Red Coats were finished. And, once again, God's hand was the cause. The day after the British laid down their

arms at Yorktown, I gratefully ordered a thanksgiving service for all the troops to give thanks to God for the repeated *and astonishing interposition of Providence*,⁴⁸ which led to this great victory.

After Yorktown, the Crown no longer had the heart to keep us under his thumb. The peace treaty came in '83, because of all that God had done. But He was not done, even then. There is one more providential link, a golden one, that I simply must leave you with.

After the war, I returned to Mount Vernon and, I hoped, a normal life. But as the years passed, it was clear our new country was in trouble. There was unrest, there was lack of any cohesive power, there was even armed rebellion. *It was but the other day, that we were shedding our blood to obtain our democratic governments . . . and now we were unsheathing the sword to overturn them [T]he foederal government was nearly . . . at a standstill The question was, would it be annihilated or supported?*⁴⁹ It became obvious, our new nation would not long survive without a stronger national contract, the Constitution.

Well, sir, the Constitutional Convention was called. We gathered here in Philadelphia at Independence Hall, where the Declaration had been signed. It was the summer of '87. The temperature was hot . . . The tempers were hotter. You know that I was elected to chair the Convention. From that vantage point, I saw the deep divisions between states that were "united" in name only. The large states demanded representation based on wealth or population, while the small states held out for equal representation with the others. The delegates became hopelessly deadlocked and many prepared to leave in disgust and defeat. (He sees his spectacles on the desk and connects them with Franklin.) Then . . . in that dark hour . . . old Ben Franklin . . . reputed by many to be a ladies' man and certainly not as openly devout as many delegates thought themselves to be, rose and spoke the words that turned the Convention on its ear:

How has it happened, sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly appealing to the Father of Lights to illuminate our understandings? In the beginning of the contest with Great Britain, when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayers in this room for divine protection. Our prayers, sir, were heard, and they were graciously answered. All of us who were engaged in the struggle must have observed frequent instances of a superintending Providence in our favor And have we now forgotten this powerful Friend? Or do we imagine we no longer need His assistance?

I have lived, sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth: that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid?

We have been assured, sir, in the sacred writings that, except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. I firmly believe this. I also believe that, without His concurring aid, we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel; we shall be divided by our little, partial local interests;

our projects will be confounded; and we ourselves shall become a reproach and a byword down to future ages. And what is worse, mankind may hereafter, from this unfortunate instance, despair of establishing government by human wisdom and leave it to chance, war, or conquest.

I therefore beg leave to move that, henceforth, prayers imploring the assistance of Heaven and its blessing on our deliberation be held in this assembly every morning before we proceed to business.⁵⁰

Now, who do you suppose prompted old Ben to remind us we needed heaven's help with our task? Can there be any doubt? . . . Nor can there be any doubt the result was *in the hand of God*⁵¹ and that it was with His help that we finished our task, our Constitution.

Well, sir, you have heard it . . . just a few *proofs that the liberties of America* [have been] *the object of Divine protection*.⁵² So why fear freedom? (Pause) *I can never believe that Providence, who has guided us so long, and through such a labyrinth, will withdraw His protection at this juncture*.⁵³ *The great Governor of the Universe has led us too long and too far on the road to happiness and glory, to forsake us in the midst of it*.⁵⁴ In fact, [n]o people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the Invisible Hand which conducts the affairs of men, more than the people of these United States.⁵⁵

And now, I anticipate with pleasing expectation a retreat to my beloved Mt. Vernon for *the sweet enjoyment of . . . the benign influence of good laws under a free government, the ever favourite object of my heart, and the happy reward . . . of our mutual cares, labours and dangers*.⁵⁶

(He was "finished," but he realizes . . .) In moments, I *shall, once again, become a private citizen on the banks of the Potomac I consider it an indispensable duty to close this last act to my official life by commending the interest of our dearest country to the protection of almighty God*.⁵⁷ Will you pray with me?⁵⁸

Father of us all, we *render sincere and hearty thanks to Thee, the great Ruler of Nations, for the manifold and signal mercies which distinguish our lot as a nation; particularly for the . . . Constitution . . . which unites and, by that union, establishes liberty with order; for the preservation of our peace . . . and . . . the prosperous condition of our affairs, and at the same time humbly and fervently beseech Thee, as the kind Author of these blessings graciously to prolong them to us Imprint on our hearts a deep and solemn sense of our obligations to Thee for them Preserve us from the arrogance of prosperity, and from hazarding the advantages we enjoy by delusive pursuits Dispose us to merit the continuance of Thy favors by not abusing them, by our gratitude for them, and by a corresponding conduct as citizens . . . to render this country more and more a safe haven for the unfortunate of other countries Extend among us true and useful knowledge, Establish habits of sobriety, order, morality, and piety, and finally . . . impart all the blessings we . . . ask for . . . to the whole family of mankind*.⁵⁹ [T]hrough Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.⁶⁰

We have been given freedom and independency. We are, . . . actors on a most conspicuous theatre, . . . peculiarly designated by Providence for the display of human greatness and felicity As you have seen, *nothing can illustrate these observations more forcibly, than a recollection of the happy conjuncture of times and circumstances, under which our Republic assumed its rank among the nations* By these divine acts and so many others, *the United States came into existence as a nation, and if we should not be completely free and happy, the fault will be entirely our own.*

*[I]t is in our choice, and depends upon our conduct, whether we will be respectable and prosperous, or contemptible and miserable as a nation. This is the time of our political probation; this is the moment when the eyes of the whole world are turned upon us; this is the moment to establish or ruin our national character forever It is yet to be decided, whether the Revolution must ultimately be considered as a blessing or a curse: a blessing or a curse, not to the present age alone, for with our fate will the destiny of unborn millions be involved.*⁶¹

So, do not let it be forgotten. Tell everyone that God does indeed govern in the affairs of men! Tell them that He has given us our constitutional republic as a sacred trust that must be cherished, prayed for, and protected. Do not let us fail! (He lifts an imaginary torch.) Hold high the torch of freedom! (He looks up as his hand opens toward heaven.) . . . Freedom!

(He gives "his" office one last glance.) Well, the time has come, and I *take my leave*.⁶²
(Blows out candle. A confident smile.) *'Tis well*.⁶³

[Optional (maybe from the door): I trust you will join us for the inauguration?]⁶⁴

(He exits.)

ENDNOTES

1. The inauguration of John Adams as the second President occurred in Philadelphia, still the seat of government at that time. Washington's diary entry was, "Much such a day as yesterday in all respects. Mercury at 41." Washington walked alone to Congress Hall to see the ceremony, passing through crowds that were strangely quiet, some weeping. Elswyth Thane, *Potomac Squire*, Mount Vernon, Va.: Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, 1963, p. 362. Philadelphia was used as the temporary capitol from 1790 (for about 10 years) until the new Federal City could be built on the Potomac River. Shelby Little, *George Washington*, Halcyon House: Garden City, NY, 1929, p. 381.
 2. *Potomac Squire*, p. 362.
 3. Letter to Jonathan Trumbull, March 3, 1797, from *George Washington: A Collection*, ed. W.B. Allen, Liberty Fund, Inc., 7440 N. Shadeland, Indianapolis, IN 46250, 1988, pp. 654–55.
 4. *Id.* And see U.S. CONST. Art I, Section 7.
 5. *Id.*
 6. In the letter from Colonel Lewis Nicola, the officer suggested that the colonies could "never become a nation under a republican form of government" and proposing "the establishment of a kingdom with Washington at the head." *The Book of Virtues*, ed. William J. Bennett, Simon & Schuster: New York, 1993, p. 717.
 7. Cf. *Circular to the States*, June 14, 1783, from *George Washington: A Collection*, ed. W.B. Allen, p. 239, and at p. 249, "I now make it my earnest prayer, that God would ... dispose us all, to do Justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that Charity, humility and pacific temper of mind, which were the Characteristicks of the Divine Author of our blessed Religion, and without an humble imitation of whose example in these things, we can never hope to be a happy Nation."
- Henry Muhlenberg, one of the founders of the Lutheran Church in America and the pastor of the Lutheran Church near Valley Forge, wrote this about Washington: "From all appearances, this gentleman does not belong to the so-called world of society, for he respects God's Word, believes in the atonement through Christ, and bears himself in humility and gentleness. Therefore, the Lord God has also singularly, yea, marvelously, preserved him from harm in the midst of countless perils, ambuscades [ambushes], fatigues, etc., and has hitherto graciously held him in His hand as a chosen vessel." Henry Melchior Muhlenberg (Theodore G. Tappert and John W. Doberstern, trans. and ed.), *The Notebook of a Colonial Clergyman*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975, p. 195; and see *America's God and Country Encyclopedia of Quotations*, p. 641.
8. Cf. *Farewell Address*, September 19, 1796, from *George Washington: A Collection*, ed. W.B. Allen, at p. 514, "... that Heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its beneficence; ... that the free constitution, which is the work of your hands, may be sacredly maintained; that its Administration in every department may be stamped with wisdom and Virtue...."
 9. The First Inaugural Speech, April 30, 1789, from *George Washington: A Collection*, ed. W.B. Allen, p. 461. This first inauguration was held in New York. *Id.*, p. 460.
 10. Letter to the Hebrew Congregations of the City of Savannah, Georgia, undated, but written early in the first administration, from *George Washington: A Collection*, ed. W.B. Allen, p. 549.
 11. The italicized phrase comes from The First Inaugural Speech, April 30, 1789, [from *George Washington: A Collection*, ed. W.B. Allen, p. 461 & 463].
 12. Farewell Orders to the Armies of the United States, November 2, 1783, from *George Washington: A Collection*, ed. W.B. Allen, p. 267. From Rock Hill, near Princeton.

13. David Barton, *The Bulletproof George Washington*, Wallbuilder Press: P.O. Box 397, Aledo, Texas 76008, 1990 (3rd ed. 1993), p. 33.

14. *Bulletproof*, pp. 38 and 40.

15. *Bulletproof*, p. 47.

16. George Washington Parke Custis, *Recollections and Private Memoirs of Washington*, Derby & Jackson: New York, 1860, pp. 303–04. (Thanks to WallBuilders for a photocopy of the salient pages of *Recollections*.) The following comment appears therein in a footnote: “This narrative the author of the *Recollections* received from the lips of Dr. Craik [Washington’s friend, physician, and companion on this trip]. Washington does not mention the circumstance in his Diary. It was a peculiar trait of his character to avoid everything, either in speech or writing, that had a personal relation to himself, in this manner.”

But let not the skeptic doubt the occurrence of the prophecy, based upon the General’s omission of the event from his notes. “On the mind of Doctor James Craik, a most deep and lasting impression [of the prophecy] was made, and in the war of the Revolution it became a favorite theme with him, particularly after any perilous action, in which his friend and commander had been particularly exposed, as the battles of Princeton, Germantown, and Monmouth. On the latter occasion, ... Dr. Craik expressed his great faith in the Indian’s prophecy. ‘Gentlemen,’ he said, to some of the officers, ‘recollect what I have often told you, of the old Indian’s prophecy. Yes, I do believe, a Great Spirit protects that man -- and that one day or other, honored and beloved, he will be the chief of our nation, as he is now our general, our father, and our friend. Never mind the enemy, they can not kill him, and while he lives, our cause will never die.’

During the engagement on the following day, while Washington was speaking to a favorite officer, ... a cannon ball struck just at his horse’s feet, throwing dirt in his face, and over his clothes, the general continued giving his orders, without noticing.... The officers present, several of whom were of the party the preceding evening, looked at each other with anxiety. The chief of the medical staff [Craik], pleased with the proof of his prediction, and in reminiscence of what had passed the night before, pointed toward heaven, which was noticed by the others, with a gratifying smile of acknowledgment.” *Recollections*, pages 305–06.

Also noteworthy is this quote attributed to an Indian warrior who was one of the leaders in the ambush: “Washington was never born to be killed by a bullet! I had seventeen fair fires at him with my rifle, and after all could not bring him to the ground!” *Bulletproof*, p. 49.

And see *Bulletproof*, pp. 50–51, and other references cited in *America’s God and Country Encyclopedia of Quotations*, pp. 636–37.

17. Psalm 91:2 & 7 (KJV).

18. Attributed in Shelby Little, *George Washington*, Halcyon House: Garden City, NY, 1929, p. 120.

19. *Id.*, p. 121.

20. *Id.*, p. 122.

21. *Id.*, p. 123.

22. Peter Marshall and David Manuel, *The Light and the Glory*, Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1977, p. 292.

23. “If I shall be able to rise superior to these and many other difficulties, which might be enumerated, I shall most religiously believe, that the finger of Providence is in it, to blind the eyes of our enemies; for surely if we get well

through this month, it must be for want of their knowing the disadvantages we labour under." Letter, George Washington to Joseph Reed, January 14, 1776, from *George Washington: A Collection*, ed. W.B. Allen, Liberty Fund, Inc., 7440 N. Shadeland, Indianapolis, IN 46250, 1988, p. 60.

24. Changing so many of the personnel of the Continental Army "in the midst of winter, with the enemy so close at hand, was like nothing 'in the pages of history.' That the British were so 'blind' to what was going on and the true state of his situation [Washington] considered nearly miraculous." McCullough, David, *1776*, Simon & Schuster, Rockefeller Center, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, NY, NY 10020, 2005, p. 79.

25. Henry Knox, in charge of the detail transporting the guns from Fort Ticonderoga to Boston, wrote in his diary, "It appeared to me almost a miracle that people with heavy loads should be able to get up and down such hills." McCullough, David, *1776*, Simon & Schuster, Rockefeller Center, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, NY, NY 10020, 2005, p. 84 (citing Henry Knox Diary, January 10, 1776, Massachusetts Historical Society).

26. *The Light and the Glory*, pp. 298–99.

27. *The Light and the Glory*, p. 299, (reporting from the *Boston Globe*, "Washington's First Victory", p. 65).

28. James Thomas Flexner, "Providence Rides a Storm," American Heritage series, Vol. XIX, No. 1, p. 17 (as reported by *The Light and the Glory*, p. 300).

29. Upon discovering the American works on Dorchester Heights, General Howe ordered an attack to begin that night. As troops were moved, starting at noon, to prepare for the attack, they encountered increasing difficulty due to strong headwinds. About midday, the wind shifted and blew "pretty fresh." [from William Gordon to Samuel Wilson, April 6, 1776, *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, LX (October 1926–June 1927), 364.] The headwinds grew steadily until nightfall. "By midnight, 'the wind blew almost a hurricane.' Windows were smashed, fences blown over.... The American lieutenant Isaac Bangs, who was among those freezing at their posts on the high ground of Dorchester, called it the worst storm 'that ever I was exposed to.' [Isaac Bangs, April 1, 1776, in *Journal of Lieutenant Isaac Bangs, April 1–July 29, 1776*, Edward Bangs, Ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: John Wilson & son, 1890), p. 12.] ... The morning after, the winds continued to blow with a fury. The snow and sleet had changed to driving rain. General Heath concluded that 'kind Heaven' had stepped in to intervene. [William Heath, *Heath's Memoirs of the American War* (New York: A. Wessels Co., 1904), p. 50.] As so it seemed to many on both sides, when, that morning, Howe called off the attack and gave orders to prepare to evacuate Boston." McCullough, David, *1776*, Simon & Schuster, Rockefeller Center, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, NY, NY 10020, 2005, pp. 94–96.

30. Abigail Adams, from her home just outside Boston, saw the British evacuating and wrote, "Surely it is the Lord's doings and it is marvelous in our eyes." McCullough, David, *1776*, Simon & Schuster, Rockefeller Center, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, NY, NY 10020, 2005, p. 105 (citing Abigail Adams to John Adams, March 16, 1776, in *Adams Family Correspondence*, I (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1963), p. 360.).

31. *The Light and the Glory*, p. 300. ALSO: During the night of March 4, 1776, Washington's troops quietly moved artillery recovered from Ft. Ticonderoga up Boston's Dorchester Heights, along with all materials needed to construct fortifications. Upon seeing the "Works" the following morning, British General Howe is said to have remarked, "The rebels did more in one night than my whole army would have done in one month." Here is Washington's account:

"I resolved to take possession of Dorchester Point... which I knew would force the Enemy to an Engagement, or subject them to be enfiladed [shot their entire depth] by our Cannon... The ground at this time being froze upwards of two feet deep, & as impenetrable as a Rock... we were obliged therefore to provide an amazing quantity of Chandeliers [portable frames] and Fascines [bundles of sticks] for the Work, and on the Night of the 4th, after a previous severe Cannonade & Bombardment for three Nights together to divert the Enemy's attention from our real design, removed every material to the spot under Cover of Darkness...

Upon their discovery of the Works next Morning, great preparations were made for attacking them, but not being ready before the Afternoon and the Weather getting very tempestuous, much blood was Saved... this remarkable Interposition of Providence is for some wise purpose I have not a doubt[.] ...the Enemy thinking (as we have since learned) that we had got too securely posted before the second morning to be much hurt by them, and apprehending great annoyance from our new Works, resolved upon a retreat, and accordingly Embarked in as much hurry... and confusion as ever Troops did... leaving Kings property in Boston to the amount... of thirty or £40,000 in Provisions, Stores... [and] Cannon... Baggage Wagons, Artillery Carts, etc. which they have been Eighteen Months preparing to take the Field with, were found destroyed—thrown into the Docks—and drifted upon every Shore.” George Washington, Letter to John Augustine Washington, March 31, 1776

James Still (Feb 2016), RetraceOurSteps.com

“[Boston]... is again open & free for Its rightful possessors... May that being who is powerful to save, and in whose hands is the fate of Nations, look down with an eye of tender pity & compassion upon the whole of the United Colonies...” George Washington, Address to the Massachusetts General Court, April 1, 1776

32. Flexner, p. 98 (as reported by *The Light and the Glory*, p. 300). Washington attributed the storm to "the intervening hand of God." McCullough, David, *1776*, Simon & Schuster, Rockefeller Center, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, NY, NY 10020, 2005, p. 110 (citing Letter from George Washington to Joseph Reed, February 26–March 9, 1776, from *The Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series*, [W. W. Abbott, Philander D. Chase, and Dorothy Twohig, eds., Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1985–98] vol. III, p. 373.).

33. The Americans guessed correctly that the first attack would come on Long Island's south coast, near the village of Gravesend. A line of forts was installed along the higher ground in the island's middle, called Brooklyn Heights, then additional fortifications at Brooklyn, on the island's north shore. McCullough, David, *1776*, Simon & Schuster, Rockefeller Center, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, NY, NY 10020, 2005, p. 127.

34. *George Washington: A Collection*, p. 51. (Other accounts placed the American strength at 8,000, half of them untrained. *The Light and the Glory*, p. 312.)

35. Early on August 27, 1776, the British attacked, starting with a successful infiltration on the American left end along what was called the Jamaica Road, through the Jamaica Pass (pp. 166, 169–70), and a feint in the early morning hours on the right attacking the 1,600 American troops under the command of "Lord" Stirling. (pp. 171–72) American forces on the left and center fell back or were captured. (p. 174) Washington crossed over to Long Island, arriving about 9 a.m. (pp. 175) McCullough, David, *1776*, Simon & Schuster, Rockefeller Center, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, NY, NY 10020, 2005, pp. 166–75.

36. *The Light and the Glory*, p. 312.

37. After the Long Island attack had initially succeeded, the British sent five warships to "the East River with a favorable wind and tide. It was what [Washington] had most feared. Then miraculously the wind had veered off to the north. The ships, after tacking to and fro, trying to gain headway, at last gave up. Only the Roebuck could 'fetch high enough' to threaten the battery at Red Hook with a few random shots." McCullough, David, *1776*, Simon & Schuster, Rockefeller Center, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, NY, NY 10020, 2005, p. 175.

38. As cover, Washington ordered the troops to prepare to attack, while secretly gathering a fleet of boats to remove the army to Manhattan. That night, August 29, though the rain stopped, the northeast wind continued unabated, delaying the start of the evacuation. That continued until, "as if by design," about 11 p.m. the northeast wind died down and shifted to the southwest, and the crossing began. McCullough, David, *1776*, Simon & Schuster, Rockefeller Center, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, NY, NY 10020, 2005, pp. 187–88.

39. Troops under General Thomas Mifflin were, at Mifflin's request, assigned to be the rearguard and both guard and keep up appearances that the Continental Army was in place in its lines at Brooklyn, while the rest of the army

escaped across the East River. About 4 a.m., young Major Alexander Scammell, a Harvard-graduated lawyer, found Mifflin and—in a blunder that could have cost many hundreds or thousands of lives—erroneously told him Washington awaited Mifflin's troops at the embarkation point. Though Mifflin doubted the truth of Scammell's information and argued with him, his troops pulled out and headed for the river. About a half mile from the landing, Washington, on horseback, confronted them; said, "Good God! General Mifflin, I am afraid you have ruined us;" and sent them back. They returned without the British discovering their movement. McCullough, David, *1776*, Simon & Schuster, Rockefeller Center, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, NY, NY 10020, 2005, pp. 189–90 (citing [1] George F. Scheer & Hugh F. Rankin, eds., *Rebels and Redcoats* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1957), pp. 170–71; and [2] Alexander Graydon, *Memoirs of His Own Time*, John Stockton Littell, ed. (Philadelphia: Lindsay & Blakiston, 1846), pp. 167–68.).

40. John Fiske, *The American Revolution*, Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1898, vol. I, p. 212. See also *The Light and the Glory*, pp. 312–15; *The American Covenant*, pp. 41–42; and other sources cited in *America's God and Country Encyclopedia of Quotations*, pp. 639–40. "Time was running out. Though nearly morning [of August 30], a large part of the army still waited to embark, and without the curtain of night to conceal them, their escape was doomed. Incredibly, yet again, circumstances—fate, luck, Providence, the hand of God, as would be said so often—intervened. Just at daybreak a heavy fog settled in over the whole of Brooklyn, concealing everything no less than had the night. It was a fog so thick, remembered a soldier, that one 'could scarcely discern a man at six yards distance.' ... [O]n the New York side of the river there was no fog at all. ... Major Tallmadge, among the last to depart on the boats, ... saw Washington on the ferry stairs staying to the very end. [Alexander] Graydon [who was with the Mifflin rearguard] estimated that it was seven in the morning, [or] a little later, when he and his men landed in New York. 'And in less than an hour after, the fog having dispersed, the enemy was visible on the shore we had left'. In a single night, 9,000 troops had escaped across the river. Not a single life was lost. The only men captured were three who had hung back to plunder." McCullough, David, *1776*, Simon & Schuster, Rockefeller Center, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, NY, NY 10020, 2005, pp. 190–91 (citing [1] Alexander Graydon, *Memoirs of His Own Time*, John Stockton Littell, ed. (Philadelphia: Lindsay & Blakiston, 1846), pp. 168; and [2] "Major Tallmadge's Account of the Battles of Long Island and White Plains," in Henry P. Johnston, *The Campaign of 1776 Around New York and Brooklyn* (Brooklyn: Long Island Historical Society, 1878), Part II, pp. 78–79.).

41. Psalm 27:5–6 (KJV).

42. See generally, Nathaniel Philbrick, *In the Hurricane's Eye: The Genius of George Washington and the Victory at Yorktown*, Penguin Books: 1745 Broadway, New York, NY 10019, 2018 (ed. 2019), pp. 129–238.

43. James Truslow Adams, *The March of Democracy: A History of the United States*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932, p. 207.

44. *The American Covenant*, p. 165–66, (reporting the Clinton quote from "Remember our Bicentennial -- 1781," by William Hosmer, Foundation for Christian Self-Government *Newsletter* (June, 1981), p. 5).

45. *Id.*, at p. 166.

46. *The Light and the Glory*, p. 330.

47. *The Light and the Glory*, pp. 330–31.

48. General Orders, October 20, 1781, from *George Washington: A Collection*, p. 196 (quote at p. 198).

49. Letter to David Humphreys, December 26, 1786, from *George Washington: A Collection*, ed. W.B. Allen, p. 350–52.

50. Benjamin Franklin, speech to the Constitutional Convention, Philadelphia, June 28, 1787, from Marshall, Peter,

and Manual, David, *The Light and Glory*, pp. 342–43, and Foster, Marshall, and Swanson, Mary-Elaine, *The American Covenant*, pp. 16–17.

51. While there is some authority that suggests formal prayers were then instituted for the rest of the convention (Letter, September 1825, from William Steele to his son Jonathan Steele), the better authorities (James Madison's Journal and Ben Franklin's own notes) suggest that formal, clergy-led prayers were not adopted (because of the convention's lack of funds to pay a clergyman and the advanced stage of the convention's proceedings). See, John Bigelow, *Works of Benjamin Franklin*, footnote on page 378. However, Franklin's speech did change attitudes and outlooks of convention delegates; it did break down animosities that had built up during heated debate, breaking the impasse; and it did lead to chaplains for the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate after the adoption of the Constitution. Also as a result, Washington lead most of the convention delegates to a July 4 sermon at the Reformed Calvinist Lutheran Church preached by James Campbell in observance of the anniversary of independence. See generally, "Franklin's Prayer Request at the Constitutional Convention, 1787", Monograph from WallBuilders, Inc., P.O. Box 397, Aledo, TX 76008.

And to the effect that he believed God governed the Convention's outcome, note this quote from Washington during the Convention: "*If to please the people, we offer what we ourselves disapprove, how can we afterward defend our work? Let us raise a standard to which the wise and the honest can repair; the event is in the Hand of God!*" *America's God and Country Encyclopedia of Quotations*, pp. 647–48, and sources cited there.

52. (A comment on the occasion of the providential discovery of Benedict Arnold's treachery in attempting to hand over the garrison of West Point to the British.) *The Light and the Glory*, pp. 328–29 (reporting from *Voices of 1776*, ed. Richard Wheeler, Greenwich: Fawcett Premier Book, 1972, p. 382); and David Barton, "The Spirit of the American Revolution" (audio tape), 1992. And see, James Truslow Adams, *The March of Democracy: A History of the United States*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932, pp. 203–04.

53. Letter to Jonathan Trumbull, March 3, 1797, from *George Washington: A Collection*, ed. W.B. Allen, pp. 654–55. In this instance, the pronouns "which" and "its" have been altered to the personal "who" and "His" for effect. Washington used the personal references in numerous other places when referring to God, so this does not misrepresent his mind.

54. Letter to Benjamin Lincoln, June 29, 1788, from *George Washington: A Collection*, ed. W.B. Allen, pp. 403–04.

55. The First Inaugural Speech, April 30, 1789, from *George Washington: A Collection*, ed. W.B. Allen, p. 461.

56. The final words from Washington's "Farewell Address", September 19, 1796, from *George Washington: A Collection*, ed. W.B. Allen, p. 527.

57. Letter to Baron Friedrich von Steuben, December 23, 1783, from Burk, William Herbert, D.D., *The Washington Window in the Washington Memorial Chapel of Valley Forge*, Pennsylvania: Norristown Press, 1926, p. 36 [as reported in Catherine Millard, *The Rewriting of America's History*, Camp Hill, Pa.: Horizon House, 1991, p. 72]. (The Baron was largely responsible for instilling military discipline into the army through rigorous training.)

58. Prayer was important to Washington. His mother, Mary Washington, imparted these words of advice to George, when he was leaving home to begin his service to his country: "Remember that God is our only sure trust. To Him, I commend you My son, neglect not the duty of secret prayer." (1) John N. Norton, *Life of General Washington*, 1870, p. 34; (2) Marion Harland, *The Story of Mary Washington*, 1892, p. 87; (3) William J. Johnson, *George Washington - The Christian*, St. Paul, MN: William J. Johnson, Merriam Park, February 23, 1919; Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1919; reprinted Milford, MI: Mott Media, 1976; reprinted Arlington Heights, IL: Christian Liberty Press, 502 West Euclid Ave., Arlington Heights, IL 60004, 1992, p. 36; (4) *The Light and the Glory*, p. 285; **all as reported** in (5) William J. Federer, *America's God and Country Encyclopedia of Quotations*, Coppel, TX: Fame Publishing, Inc., 1994, p. 636.

In the dark days of the 1777 Valley Forge winter encampment of the Continental Army, a Quaker named Isaac Potts, then acting as landLord for Washington, was travelling through thick woods near army headquarters and came upon General Washington, alone “on his knees in the act of devotion to the Ruler of the Universe ... interceding for his beloved country.” The event so impressed Potts that when he returned home, he stated to his wife, “I have seen this day what I shall never forget. Till now I have thought that a Christian and a soldier were characters incompatible; but if George Washington be not a man of God, I am mistaken, and still more shall I be disappointed if God does not through him perform some great thing for this country.” William Herbert Burk, D.D., *The Washington Window in the Washington Memorial Chapel of Valley Forge*, Pennsylvania: Norristown Press, 1926, p. 36 (attributing its source as Ruth Anna Potts); *George Washington - The Christian*, pp. 102–07; Mason Locke Weems, *The Life of George Washington; with Curious Anecdotes, Equally Honourable to Himself, and Exemplary to His Young Countrymen*, Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1800, 1809 edition, reprinted 1962, pp. 181–82 (with slightly varying language but recounting the same story); all as cited in *America's God and Country Encyclopedia of Quotations*, pp. 640–41.

59. "National Thanksgiving Proclamation," January 1, 1795, from Catherine Millard, *The Rewriting of America's History*, pp. 61–62.

60. *George Washington's Prayer for America*. The Washington Memorial Chapel at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. (As reported by Catherine Millard, *The Rewriting of America's History*, Horizon House Publishers: Camp Hill, PA, 1991, p. 67.)

61. "Circular to the States," June 14, 1783, from *George Washington: A Collection*, ed. W.B. Allen, pp. 240–41.

62. A phrase used as General Washington resigned his commission to Congress, December 23, 1783. “Having now finished the work assigned to me, I retire from the great theatre of Action; and bidding an Affectionate farewell to this August body under whose orders I have so long acted, I here offer my Commission, and take my leave of all the employments of public life.” *George Washington: A Collection*, p. 273.

63. Washington's last words. Elswyth Thane, *Potomac Squire*, Mount Vernon, Va.: Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, 1963, p. 411.

The following account of the General's last hours is from Willard Sterne Randall, *George Washington: A Life*, New York, N.Y.: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1997, p. 502:

Washington had convinced himself early in the day that he was going to die and he had deferred to the advice of Dr. Craik, the senior physician present, his companion in the French and Indian War and on frontier voyages of exploration. ... Washington gave [his secretary, Tobias] Lear his hand and whispered, “I find I am going. My breath cannot last long.” He gave Lear instructions to arrange all his military papers and accounts. Lear agreed. Then Washington, smiling, said that death “is the debt which we must all pay,” and that he “looked on the event with perfect resignation.” A little later, when Dr. Craik came in again, Washington whispered, “Doctor, I die hard, but I am not afraid to go. My breath cannot last long.”

When the other doctors came and asked Washington to sit up, he asked to “be permitted to die without further interruptions.” A stoic all his life, he did not now complain of his undoubtedly acute pain. Summoning all his strength, he told Lear, “I am just going. Have me decently buried and do not let my body be put into the vault in less than three days after I am dead.” Too choked up to speak, Lear nodded; Craik sat by the fire bowed in grief.

“Do you understand?” Washington rasped.

“Yes, sir.”

“‘Tis well.” ... Five hours later, at ten on the night of December 14, 1799, with Martha at his side, George

Washington died without uttering another word.

64. This line can be effectively delivered from the door before the final exit.