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American Minute with Bill Federer "Typhoon of Steel" Battle of Okinawa - Largest Amphibious Assault in Pacific WWII & Heroism of Medic Desmond Doss

The Battle of Okinawa is considered the **largest land-sea-air battle in world history**, and the **last major battle of World War II**.

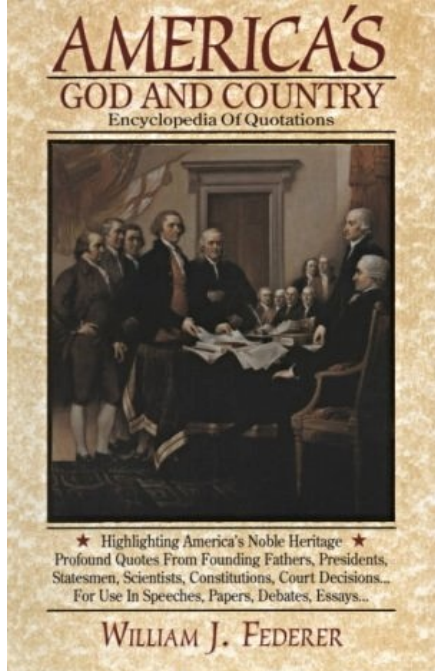


It began April 1, 1945, when 60,000 U.S. troops landed on the Island of **Okinawa**.

It was called "**The Typhoon of Steel**" because of the hundreds of **kamikaze attacks**, where suicide bombers flew planes filled with explosives into American ships ... [continue reading American Minute here ...](#)

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Fighting continued for 82 days.

Kamikaze pilots sank 38 U.S. ships, and damaged 368 more, in what is considered the **greatest loss of American ships in U.S. naval history.**

There were over **72,000 American casualties.**

Imperial Japan lost over **110,000 soldiers**, in addition to nearly **150,000 Okinawan civilian casualties**, many of whom were **ordered** by the retreating military to be human shields or **to commit suicide**, as the **Imperial honor code**, called "**seppuku**" or "**harakiri**," considered **surrender a shame worse than death.**

Pulitzer Prize winning war correspondent **Ernie Pyle** was killed in the battle, April 18, 1945, by Japanese machine-gun fire on an island northwest of **Okinawa Island.**

Ernie Pyle had been embedded with Army infantry soldiers in Europe, North Africa and the Pacific.

Infantry soldiers were given "**Government Issued**" supplies, resulting in the initials "**G.I.**"

Ernie Pyle's newspaper columns were turned into the 1945 movie, ***The Story of G.I. Joe.***

Ernie Pyle wrote in 1943:

"I love the infantry because they are the underdogs. They are the mud-rain-frost-and-wind boys.

They have no comforts, and they even learn to live without the necessities. And in the end they are the guys that wars can't be won without."

Desmond Doss was a **medic** who **saved 75 lives** during the **Battle of Okinawa**.

A Seventh-Day Adventist Christian, he was the **only conscientious objector** to receive the **Medal of Honor**.

Mel Gibson's 2016 Oscar-winning film *Hacksaw Ridge* depicts his story.

President Harry S Truman read his citation October 12, 1945:

"The 1st Battalion assaulted a jagged escarpment 400 feet high.

As our troops gained the summit, a heavy concentration of artillery, mortar and machine gun fire crashed into them, inflicting approximately 75 casualties and driving the others back.

Private First Class Doss refused to seek cover and remained in the fire-swept area with the many stricken, carrying them one by one to the edge of the escarpment and there lowering them on a rope-supported litter down the face of a cliff to friendly hands.

Truman continued:

"On 2 May, he exposed himself to heavy rifle and mortar fire in rescuing a wounded man 200 yards forward of the

lines on the same escarpment;

and two days later he treated four men who had been cut down while assaulting a strongly defended cave, advancing through a shower of grenades to within eight yards of enemy forces in a cave's mouth, where he dressed his comrades' wounds before making four separate trips under fire to evacuate them to safety.

... On 5 May, he unhesitatingly braved enemy shelling and small arms fire to assist an artillery officer.

He applied bandages, moved his patient to a spot that offered protection from small-arms fire and, while artillery and mortar shells fell close by, painstakingly administered plasma.

... Later that day, when an American was severely wounded by fire from a cave, **Private First Class Doss** crawled to him where he had fallen 25 feet from the enemy position, rendered aid, and carried him 100 yards to safety while continually exposed to enemy fire.

... On 21 May, in a night attack on high ground near Shuri, he remained in exposed territory while the rest of his company took cover, fearlessly risking the chance that he would be mistaken for an infiltrating Japanese and giving aid to the injured until he was himself seriously wounded in the legs by the explosion of a grenade.

Rather than call another aid man from cover, he cared for his own injuries and waited five hours before litter bearers reached him and started carrying him to cover.

.. The trio was caught in an enemy tank attack and Private First Class Doss, seeing a more critically wounded man nearby, crawled off the litter and directed the bearers to give their first attention to the other man.

... Awaiting the litter bearers' return, he was again struck,

this time suffering a compound fracture of one arm.

With magnificent fortitude he bound a rifle stock to his shattered arm as a splint and then crawled 300 yards over rough terrain to the aid station.

... Through his outstanding bravery and unflinching determination in the face of desperately dangerous conditions **Private First Class Doss** saved the lives of many soldiers.

His name became a symbol throughout the 77th Infantry Division for outstanding gallantry far above and beyond the call of duty."

The fierceness of Japanese combat in the **Battle of Okinawa** convinced the U.S. Navy and Marines to expect over a million casualties if they attempted to invade the main Japanese islands.

This convinced Democrat President **Harry S Truman** to drop the atomic bomb on the industrial centers of **Hiroshima** and **Kyoto** in August of 1945.

Secretary of War Henry Stimson argued to spare **Kyoto** as a target.

The city **Kokura** was then chosen, but on the fateful day cloud cover blocked the crews' visual identification, so the bomb was dropped on nearby **Nagasaki**.

Tragically, **Nagasaki** had been **the most Christian city in all of Japan**.

Nagasaki was first visited by Jesuit missionary **St. Francis Xavier** in 1549, through whose efforts the powerful **daimyo (lord) Ōmura Sumitada** had been baptized.

Over 300,000 Japanese became Christian by the end of the 16th century.

Suffering intense persecution, the **Kakure Kirishitan "Hidden Christians"** or **Mukashi Kirishitan "Ancient Christians"** passed their faith on to succeeding generations, century after century.

Martin Scorsese's movie *SILENCE* (2016) gives the account of **missionaries to Japan** and the **persecutions suffered by Japanese Christians.**

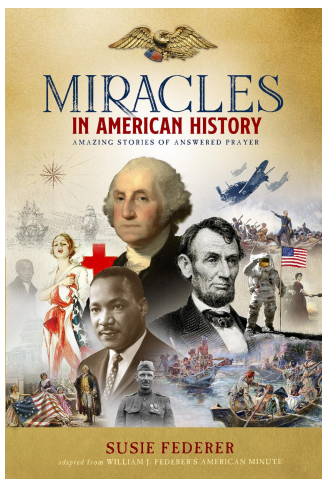
Emperor Meiji finally allowed religious freedom during the **Meiji Restoration, 1868-1912.**

From 1912 to 1926, Japan experienced unprecedented freedom and prosperity during the **"Taishō democracy."**

Beginning in 1926, **Japan's Shōwa Emperor, Hirohito** and his generals re-concentrated power politically into a **totalitarian, militaristic state.**

Emperor Hirohito's Imperial Japan entered into a **Tripartite Treaty** with **Benito Mussolini's Fascist Italy** and **Adolph Hitler's National Socialist Workers Party** on September 27, 1940, being referred to as the **"Axis Powers."**

In 1941, **Turkey** signed a **Friendship Treaty** with **Nazi Germany.**



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After the Imperial planes had attacked Pearl Harbor, **President Franklin D. Roosevelt** recited the reason the **U.S.** entered into war in his address to Congress,

December 8, 1941:

"The attack yesterday on the Hawaiian Islands has caused severe damage ... lives have been lost ...

... Ships have been reported torpedoed between **San Francisco** and **Honolulu** ...

The **Japanese Government** also launched an attack against **Malaya ... Hong Kong ... Guam ... Philippine Islands ... Wake Island ... and Midway Island.**"

FDR stated January 6, 1942:

"**Japan's** ... conquest goes back half a century ...

War against **China** in 1894 ...

Occupation of **Korea** (1910) ...

War against **Russia** in 1904 ...

Fortification of the mandated **Pacific islands** following 1920 ...

Seizure of **Manchuria** in 1931 ...

Invasion of **China** in 1937."

Invading **Imperial soldiers** massacred over 300,000 in **Nanking, China**, 1937-1938.

FDR concluded his address:

"We are fighting today for security, for progress, and for peace, not only for ourselves but for all men, not only for one generation but for all generations.

We are fighting to cleanse the world of ancient evils, ancient ills. Our enemies are guided by brutal cynicism,

by **unholy contempt for the human race.**

We are inspired by a faith that goes back through all the years to the first chapter of the **Book of Genesis: 'God created man in His own image.'**

We on our side are striving to be true to that **divine heritage ..."**

FDR continued:

"We are fighting, as our fathers have fought, to uphold the doctrine that **all men are equal in the sight of God.**

Those on the other side are striving to destroy this deep belief and to create a world in their own image -- a world of tyranny and cruelty and serfdom.

That is the conflict that day and night now pervades our lives.

No compromise can end that conflict. There never has been, **there never can be,** successful **compromise between good and evil.**

Only total victory can reward the champions of tolerance, and decency, and freedom, and **faith."**

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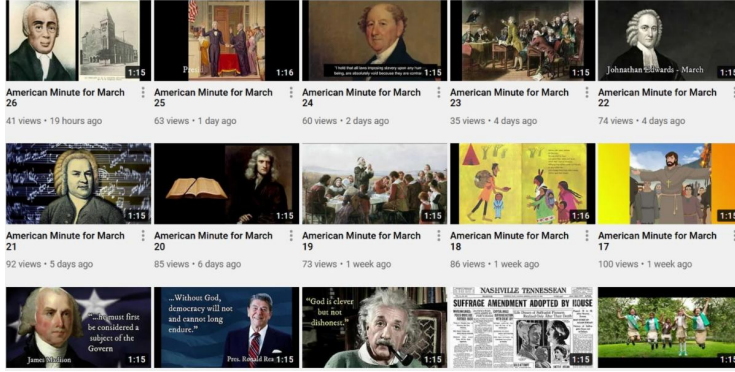
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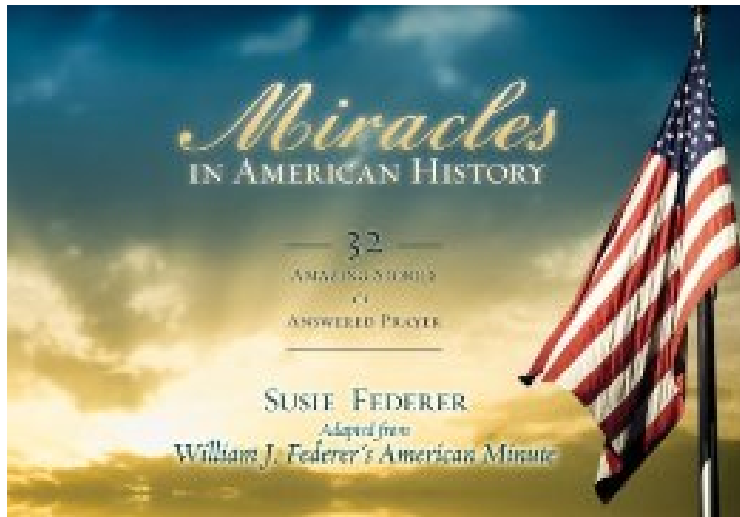
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wjfederer@gmail.com

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