

## American Minute with Bill Federer Ringing of the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia - A Symbol of Freedom

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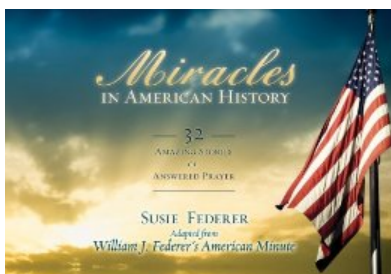
The **Pennsylvania Assembly** ordered it to commemorate the **50th anniversary of Quaker leader William Penn founding the Colony in 1701** and writing the **Charter of Privileges**.



**Quakers** were the first and strongest voices to **end slavery**.

In 1751, **Pennsylvania's Assembly** declared a "**Year of Jubilee**" and commissioned the **bell to be put in the Philadelphia State House ... [continue reading American Minute here ...](#)**

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**Speaker Isaac Norris** read the **Leviticus chapter 25**

**verse 10:**

"And ye shall make hallow the fiftieth year, and **PROCLAIM LIBERTY THROUGHOUT ALL THE LAND** unto all the inhabitants thereof; it shall be a **jubilee.**"

"**Jubilee**" in the **Israelite calendar** was, after seven cycles of seven years - 49 years, there would be a **sabbath year of release.**

**Slaves** would be **freed**, **debts** were to be **forgiven**, and **lands** were to be **returned** to the original families who owned them, to demonstrate the mercies of God.

Inscribed on **The Liberty Bell** is:

**"PROCLAIM LIBERTY THROUGHOUT ALL THE LAND  
UNTO ALL THE THE INHABITANTS THEREOF."**

The **Liberty Bell**, weighing over 2,000 pounds, was cast in England in August of 1752.

The **Liberty Bell** got its name from being rung JULY 8, 1776, to call the citizens of Philadelphia together to hear the **Declaration of Independence read out loud** for the **first time.**

A copy of the **Declaration** was rushed to **General Washington** in New York, who had it **read out loud to his troops**, July 9, 1776.

**Washington** then immediately appointed chaplains to each regiment, ordering that:

"**Officers and soldiers** ... attend carefully upon **religious exercises.** The **blessing and protection of Heaven** are at all times necessary but especially so in times of public distress and danger -

The **General** hopes and trusts, that **every officer and**

man, will endeavor so to live, and act, as becomes a **Christian Soldier**, defending the **dearest Rights and Liberties of his country.**"

During the **Revolution**, as the **British** were **invading Philadelphia** in 1777, the **Liberty Bell** was rushed out of the city to prevent the British from **melting it down** to make **musket balls**.

Transported on a wagon covered under hay and manure to prevent the British from spotting it, the **Liberty Bell** was brought to **Zion Reformed Church** in Allentown, Pennsylvania.

The church's floorboards were temporarily removed to lower it into the basement.

Finally, the British evacuated Philadelphia and the **Liberty Bell** was returned in June of 1778.

It was rung every **anniversary** of the **first public reading of the Declaration of Independence**.

The most common story is that the **Liberty Bell cracked** **JULY 8, 1835**, while being rung at the **funeral of Chief Justice John Marshall**, perhaps as a portent.

**John Marshall**, the **longest-serving Chief Justice**, began the trend of **increasing the Supreme Court's power** by using an expansive reading of the enumerated powers, thereby advancing the view of the supremacy of the Supreme Court through **"judicial review."**

This pattern has been observed throughout history, where **good leaders concentrate power** to be **more efficient in doing good**, but after they are gone, **ambitious leaders inherit the concentrated power** and use it **oppressively**.

**Joseph in Egypt** helped **concentrate power** into the **hands of the Pharaoh** who used it for **good**, providing

**food** for the **Children of Israel**, giving them the **best land of Goshen**, and even giving them **jobs** taking care of his cattle.

Then there was a **new Pharaoh** "who **did not know Joseph**," and he used the **concentrated power** to **oppress** the **Children of Israel**.

**Thomas Jefferson** had warned Mr. Hammond, 1821:

"The germ of dissolution of our federal government is in ... **the federal judiciary** ...

working like gravity by night and by day, gaining a little today and a little tomorrow, and advancing its noiseless step like a thief, over the field of jurisdiction, until all shall be **usurped from the States.**"

*Webster's 1828 Dictionary* defined "usurp" as:

**USURP**, verb transitive. [Latin usurpo.]

To seize and hold in possession by force or **without right**; as, to usurp a throne; to **usurp** the prerogatives of the crown; **to usurp power**. To usurp the right of a patron, is to oust or dispossess him. Vice sometimes **usurps** the place of virtue.

**Thomas Jefferson** explained to Supreme Court Justice William Johnson, June 12, 1823:

"On every question of construction, carry ourselves back to the time **when the Constitution was adopted**, recollect the spirit manifested in the **debates**,

and instead of trying **what meaning may be squeezed out of the text**, or invented against it, **conform to the probable one in which it was passed.**"

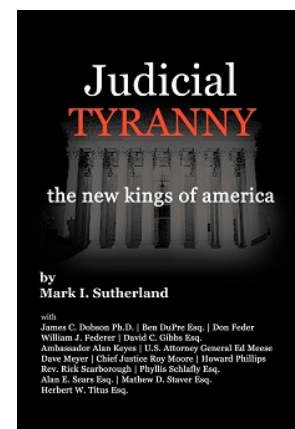
**James Madison** wrote to Henry Lee, June 25, 1824:

"I entirely concur in the propriety of resorting to the **sense in which the Constitution was accepted and ratified** by the nation. In that sense alone it is the **legitimate Constitution**.

And if that be not the guide in expounding it, there can be no security for a consistent and stable ... exercise of its powers ...

What a **metamorphosis** would be produced in the code of law **if all its ancient phraseology** were to be taken in **its modern sense.**"

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As the **Quakers of Pennsylvania** were anti-slavery, and the the Leviticus 25 Year of Jubilee freed the **slaves**, the **Liberty Bell** became an **anti-slavery symbol**.

It was popularized by the **New York Anti-Slavery Society's** journal, ***Anti-Slavery Record***.

In 1839, **Boston's abolitionist society Friends of Liberty** titled their journal ***The Liberty Bell***.

Abolitionist **William Lloyd Garrison's** anti-slavery publication ***The Liberator*** helped promote **The Liberty Bell** as an symbol to **fight slavery in the Democrat South**.

Black Republican **Frederick Douglass** stated at the Southern Loyalists' Convention in Philadelphia, 1866:

"I ask you ... to adopt the **principles** proclaimed by **yourselves**, by **your revolutionary fathers**, and by the **old bell in Independence Hall.**"

**Nelson Mandela** was awarded the Liberty Medal in Philadelphia, July 4, 1993. He spoke of:

"... the durability of the **glorious vision that gave birth to the independence** of this country and to the **United States Constitution** ...

**The Liberty Bell** is a **very significant symbol** for the **entire democratic world.**"

*(The Philadelphia Inquirer, July 4, 1993)*

**Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.**, made reference to the **bell ringing freedom** in his "I Have A Dream" speech, August 28, 1963:

"When the architects of our great republic wrote the **magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence**, they were signing a promissory note to which **every American** was to fall heir.

This note was a promise that all men, yes, **black men as well as white men**, would be guaranteed the **inalienable rights of life liberty and the pursuit of happiness** ...

Now is the time to make justice a reality to **all of God's children** ...

... I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed.

We hold these truths to be self-evident that **all men are created equal.**

I have a dream that one day out in the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slaveowners will be able to sit down together at the **table of brotherhood.**"

**Rev. King** vocalized opposition to views such as critical race theory, which divide people based on race:

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will **not be judged by the color of their skin but by their character.**"

A Republican, **Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.**, condemned the "vicious racist" views of Democrat Governor **George Wallace** of Alabama, who refused to integrate schools:

"I have a dream that one day, down in **Alabama**, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification; one day right there in **Alabama**, little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers."

**Rev. King** quoted from the prophet **Isaiah**:

"I have a dream that one day '**every valley shall be engulfed, every hill shall be exalted and every mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plains and the crooked places will be made straight and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together**' (Isaiah 40:4-5) ...

... With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into **a beautiful symphony of brotherhood.**

With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together."

**King** quoted from the **patriotic song "America (My Country, 'Tis of Thee)"** written in 1831 by **Rev. Samuel Francis Smith**, pastor of Boston's Park Street Church:

"This will be the day when **all of God's children** will be able to sing with new meaning

**'My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my father's died, land of the Pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring!'**

And if **America** is to be a **great nation**, this must become true ...

... When we **let freedom ring**, when we **let it ring** from every tenement and every hamlet, from every state and every city,

we will be able to speed up that day when **all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics**, will be able to join hands and **sing in the words of the old spiritual**,

'Free at last, free at last. Thank God Almighty, we are free at last.'

**Rev. King** referred to a **Negro Spiritual** published by **John Wesley Work, Jr.**, in *New Jubilee Songs and Folk Songs of the American Negro*, (1907):

Free at last, free at last.  
I thank **God** I'm free at last.  
Free at last, free at last.  
I thank **God** I'm free at last.

Way down yonder in the graveyard walk



I thank **God** I'm free at last.  
Me and my **Jesus** going to meet and talk  
I thank **God** I'm free at last.

On my knees when the light pass'd by  
I thank **God** I'm free at last.  
Tho't my soul would rise and fly  
I thank **God** I'm free at last.

Some of these mornings, bright and fair  
I thank **God** I'm free at last.  
Goin' meet **King Jesus** in the air  
I thank **God** I'm free at last.

At the **150th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence**, 1926, **President Calvin Coolidge** stated:

"People at home and abroad consider Independence Hall as hallowed ground and revere the **Liberty Bell** as a **sacred relic**.

... That pile of bricks and mortar, that mass of metal, might appear as only the outgrown meeting place and **the shattered bell** ...

But to those who know, they have become consecrated. They are the framework of a **spiritual event**.

The world looks upon them because of their associations of 150 years ago, **as it looks upon the Holy Land because of what took place there nineteen hundred years ago.**"

**Coolidge** added:

**"The American Revolution** represented the ... convictions of a great mass of independent, liberty-loving, **God-fearing people who knew their rights**, and possessed the courage to **dare to maintain them** ..."

He explained further:

"In the great outline of its **principles** the **DECLARATION** was the result of the **RELIGIOUS TEACHINGS** of the preceding period ...

The **PRINCIPLES** ... which went into the **DECLARATION of Independence** ... are found in the texts, the **SERMONS**, and the writings of the **EARLY COLONIAL CLERGY** ...

They preached **equality** because they believed in the **fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.**

They justified **freedom** by the text that **we are all created in the divine image** ...

... Placing **EVERY MAN** on a plane where he acknowledged no superiors, **WHERE NO ONE POSSESSED ANY RIGHT TO RULE OVER HIM**, he must inevitably choose his own rulers through a **system of SELF-GOVERNMENT** ...

In order that they might have **freedom** to express these thoughts and opportunity to put them into action, **WHOLE CONGREGATIONS** with their **PASTORS** had migrated to the colonies ..."

Coolidge added:

"... In its main feature the **DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE** is a great **SPIRITUAL DOCUMENT.**

It is a **declaration** not of material but of **spiritual conceptions.**

**Equality, LIBERTY**, popular sovereignty, the rights of man -- these are not elements which we can see and touch. **They are ideals.**

They have their SOURCE and their roots in the **RELIGIOUS CONVICTIONS**. They belong to the unseen world."

**Sir William Blackstone** wrote in *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1765-1769), which was the definitive pre-Revolutionary source of common law by United States courts:

"Of great importance to the public is the **preservation** of this **personal liberty**;

for if once it were left in the power of any the highest **magistrate to imprison arbitrarily** whomever he or his officers thought proper ... **there would soon be an end of all other rights.**"

**Coolidge** concluded his address:

"UNLESS the **faith** of the American in these **RELIGIOUS CONVICTIONS** is to endure, the **principles of OUR DECLARATION WILL PERISH.**

We cannot continue to enjoy the **RESULT** if we neglect and abandon the **CAUSE.**"

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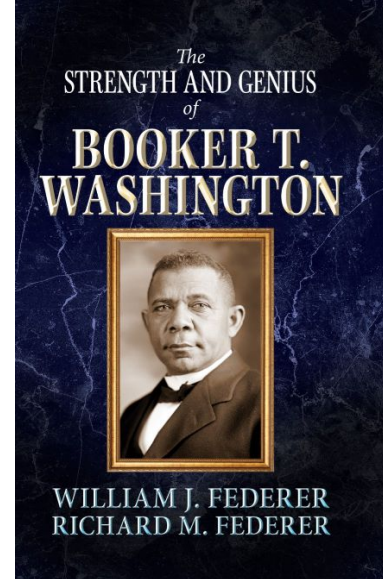
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