

Our America: Flawed, Floundering, Part 1

But Favored by Providence, Part 1

Geysers rank among nature's most impressive displays of hydrothermal energy. Every sixty to ninety minutes, Old Faithful in Yellowstone National Park blasts thousands of gallons of boiling-hot water some one- to two- hundred feet into the air. As if orchestrated by some hidden hand, blasts depend on a complex natural balancing act of converging happenstance—specifically, hot rocks, ample groundwater, subsurface water reservoir, and fissures that deliver water to the surface.[\[i\]](#) Indeed, “He maketh the deep to boil like a pot.”[\[ii\]](#)

America's birth demanded a similarly complex chain of seemingly haphazard, uncommonly enabling occurrences. *New York Times* bestselling author Michael Medved quantifies creation of our nation as no mere accident. As if manipulated by some hidden hand, a complex balancing act of converging happenstance produced on cue the most impressive blast of bravado known to mankind.[\[iii\]](#)

The primary function of a root is to anchor a plant. Sadly, in ignoring our national roots, Americans today lack confidence in government, law enforcement, the mainstream media, and public education. Endless entitlements exacerbate crippling debt while social injustice gives way to rampant drug addiction, homelessness, and violence. Coupled with breakdown of the traditional family and transcendent spirituality, real and/or contrived racism and class warfare, crime, and acts of unthinkable terrorism chip away at America's foundation. For many, doubt trumps hope in the future of our nation.[\[iv\]](#)

We do well to recall that, as late as 1607, America was

primitive and nearly vacant [\[v\]](#) but then the United States rose to undisputed leader of the entire free world. More progress was made in the two hundred years following America's founding than what transpired in the previous five thousand years of human history. While housing only five percent of the global population, America created more new wealth than the entire world combined; and for over one hundred years, she has been the world food basket, having bestowed more dollars in aid and relief than most of the world's nations combined. [\[vii\]](#)

How Firm a Foundation America's Roots

What many fail to realize is that our nation's true heritage actually *predates* the likes of Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and John Adams, as evidenced within the first colonial grant made to Sir Walter Raleigh (1584); in the first charter of Virginia, granted by King James I (1606); in subsequent Virginia charters (1609 and 1611); and various ones granted to the other colonies. [\[viii\]](#) From its beginning, America embraced a dynamic success formula guided by four biblically-based points of the American compass—namely, rule of law, individual rights, private property, and American identity. [\[ix\]](#)

Founded by Pedro Menendez de Aviles of Spain, St. Augustine in northern Florida has existed continuously since 1565. Settlers were Huguenots—specifically, French Calvinists. In colonizing, they sought escape from persecution to worship the Lord, study the Bible for themselves, and to be led by the Holy Spirit in everyday life—all free from Rome's interference. Under command of King Philip II of Spain, General Menendez drew a line in the sand, allowing each man opportunity to renounce his faith and live, or cross the line and meet his Maker. Fittingly, Menendez called the river inlet *Matanzas*, meaning "slaughters." There, one hundred eleven valiant men of conscience were martyred in what then became a series of massacres. The blood-washed line in the sand, aptly referred to as "America's hidden treasure," strengthened the resolve of

settlers who drew strength from their principled predecessors.[\[ix\]](#)

Accordingly, the *Magna Carta* (1215) uniquely influenced the 1620 *Mayflower Compact*, which in turn shaped the U.S. Constitution fashioned more than one hundred fifty years thereafter.[\[x\]](#) Signers of the Compact promised “*all due submission and obedience*” to “*just and equall Lawes, ordinances, Acts, constitutions and offices.*” Key to the undertaking was being “*in the Presence of God and one of another*” expressly “*for the glorie of God and advancemente of ye Christian faith.*”[\[xi\]](#)

Flawed and Floundering Leadership

Even so, each and every founder, settler, parishioner, and citizen was not “Christian” by faith nor “godly” by nature.[\[xii\]](#) In fact, many left a littered trail of vice, personal indulgence, drunkenness, womanizing, flip-flopping, and the like.[\[xiii\]](#) Yet our nation’s leaders unearthed and polished what in time proved to be the jewel centerpiece of some four hundred years of world history—namely, the American Miracle.[\[xiv\]](#)

▪ President Abraham Lincoln

With less than a year of formal education, the desperately poor Abraham Lincoln was a chronic depressive beset with nightmares and obsessed with ominous premonitions. He had not one favorable word to say about his father. An admittedly superstitious, stubborn atheist in his youth, Lincoln fretted over his checkered heritage of illegitimacy, melancholy, and madness. Fearing his family to have been uniquely cursed, Lincoln wrote and published a poem about killing himself. Our sixteenth president underwent punishing medical treatments and, by all accounts, came within an inch of being “a perfect lunatic for life.” Mary Todd contributed her own emotional baggage to their martial union.[\[xv\]](#)

While Lincoln-Douglas debates set Lincoln on the national stage, the prairie lawyer felt unfit to be president. Prior to his election, Lincoln's political résumé registered more defeats than victories. For apparent reason, election of the "Rail Splitter Candidate" struck many, if not most, as incredulous. Having penned an agnostic tract ("his little book on Infidelity")—this, in an attempt to disprove the divinity of Christ—our sixteenth president, once elected, uncharacteristically plunged into prayer, Bible study, and church worship. He who denied sacred authority of the Bible now cherished it as "the best gift God has given to man." In a word, this "horrid and hideous, ape-like" figure (*The Charleston Mercury*) was clearly transfigured. [\[xvi\]](#)

In due time, Lincoln's administration handled the most momentous crisis in our nation's history. [\[xvii\]](#) Doing so, he united a bitterly divided nation and, according to the *DC Daily National Intelligencer*, spoke healing words worthy of being "printed in gold." Under Lincoln's leadership, the first nation in history explicitly committed to permanent protection of the institution of slavery issued a world-changing announcement crediting *God* with deciding the issue. Enter, the Emancipation Proclamation. [\[xviii\]](#)

▪ Sam Houston

Texas might still be a part of Mexico today if "Big Drunk" Sam Houston hadn't passed through dark years of depression and drunkenness only to earn one of the most astonishing victories in the history of warfare. Houston's stern Presbyterian upbringing, seasoned with Cherokee spirituality adopted as a teen, gave way to born-again Baptist fervor. [\[19\]](#) [\[xix\]](#) Houston established himself as first president of the independent Republic of Texas, and almost one-third of the present area of the American nation (nearly a million square miles of territory) changed sovereignty when America acquired Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, California, Utah, and parts of Colorado, Wyoming, Kansas, and Oklahoma. [\[xx\]](#)

Exceptionalism Demands Special Responsibility

In our nation's founding, some hidden hand seemed to manipulate a complex chain of seemingly haphazard, uncommonly enabling occurrences. Yale Professor David Gelernter opines, "The American Religion incorporates the biblical ideals of a chosen people in a promised land." Our nation was considered "the hope of the world," but the reality of American exceptionalism in no way demands fantasies about American perfectionism any more than Israel's destiny, expounded in Daniel's seventy-weeks prophecy, demands human perfection. Moreover, with Divine call comes special responsibility.[\[xxi\]](#)

Mission Accomplished Against All Odds

Against all odds, George Washington, Andrew Jackson, and Abraham Lincoln lived to fulfill their life missions. The "Hero of Monongahela," Washington defied certain death. Two horses were shot out from under him. Bullets penetrated his clothing, and one bullet knocked off his hat. Nevertheless, Washington lived to father our country![\[xxii\]](#)

In the War of 1812 Andrew Jackson acknowledged "the unerring hand of Providence shielding his men from the powers of balls, bombs and rockets," carrying with them "a mission of death." He was lauded as "the worthy instrument of heaven's merciful designs."[\[xxiii\]](#)

Perpetual danger likewise surrounded our sixteenth president. Recipient of scores of death threats, Abraham Lincoln escaped unharmed despite nearly a dozen attempts on his life following the 1860 election. Once re-elected, Abraham Lincoln unwittingly diverted planned attempts on his life by twice canceling theater plans—once because of a sudden freezing rainstorm; once again to review a regiment of Indiana volunteers returning from the front—significantly, at the National Hotel in Washington, where Booth had recently booked a room.[\[xxiv\]](#)

In an arresting vision (April 1865), Abraham Lincoln dreamed of his untimely demise at the hand of an assassin. Though his closest associates urged him not to go out to Ford Theater, Lincoln went anyway. From a distance less than a foot, a .44-caliber Derringer “pocket cannon” sealed his fate. In a burning barn at a Virginia tobacco farm, the fleeing assassin took a bullet. While Booth’s bullet earned him a name in infamy, Lincoln’s bullet catapulted him to the status of national martyr. Within weeks of his demise, Lincoln’s countrymen viewed the nation itself as born again. All Americans embraced hope that the fallen president represented the final casualty of the war. [\[xxv\]](#)

More to follow in Part 2.

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Footnotes:

[\[i\]](#) <http://geology.com/articles/geyser.shtml> (Accessed 25 March 2017).

[\[ii\]](#) Job 41:31.

[\[iii\]](#) Michael Medved. *The American Miracle: Divine Providence in the Rise of the Republic*. (New York: Crown Forum, 2016).

[\[iv\]](#) “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope,” Romans 15:13.

[\[v\]](#) Historian Walter A. McDougall, University of Pennsylvania.

[\[vi\]](#) Medved, *The American Miracle*, 365-367.

[\[vii\]](#) W. Cleon Skousen. *The 5000 Year Leap: The 28 Great Ideas That Changed the World* (WA DC: National Center for Constitutional Studies, 2006). 1-33.

[\[viii\]](#) Skousen, *The 5000 Year Leap*, 37, 123, 169, 179, 243,

305.

[ix] Sara Ballenger and Arthur Burk. *America's Buried Treasure: The Martyrs of Matanzas* (Herdon, VA: Capitol Hill Prayer Partners, 2004). Chapter 2.

[x] Larry P. Arnn, President. *The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States of America* (Hillsdale: Hillsdale College, July 2014). 17.

[xi] William J. Federer. *America's God and Country: Encyclopedia of Quotations* (St. Louis, MO: AMERISEARCH, INC., 2000).435-436.

[xii] "Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it," Matthew 7:14.

[xiii] "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like," Galatians 5:19-21.

[xiv] In 1892 the U.S. Supreme Court established that "our laws and our institutions must necessarily be based upon the teachings of the Redeemer of Mankind. It is impossible that it should be otherwise; and in this sense and to this extent, our civilization and our institutions are emphatically Christian." See also: *Vidal v. Girald's Executors*, 1844; *Church of the Holy Trinity v. United States*, 1892; *United States v. Macintosh*, 1931; *McCollum v. Board of Education*, 1948; *Lynch v. Donnelly*, 1985; *Bowers v. Hardwick*, 1986, etc. Federer, *America's God and Country*, 595-613.

[xv] Stephen Mansfield. *Lincoln's Battle with God: A President's Struggle with Faith and What it Meant for America* (Dallas: Thomas Nelson, 2012).

[\[xvi\]](#) Medved, *The American Miracle*, 285-297, 339.

[\[xvii\]](#) Dr. James Kubal-Komoto, "The Humble Morality of Abraham Lincoln" (Seattle: *The Seattle Times*, 20 February 2012). News A11.

[\[xviii\]](#) Medved, *The American Miracle*, 300, 307, 313-316, 323.

[\[xix\]](#) Biblical salvation involves recognition that I am a sinner (Romans 3:23) and therefore under condemnation of death (Hebrews 9:27; Romans 6:23). God requires a moral change of attitude (repentance, Acts 17:30; Luke 13:5), belief and receipt of Jesus Christ as personal Savior/Lord (Hebrews 9:22; 1 Timothy 2:5; Acts 4:12) for me to embrace, by grace through faith, the freely given gift of salvation (2 Corinthians 5:21). Public confession of Jesus Christ and water baptism follow (Romans 10:9; Acts 1:8 & 2:38-39); and a changed life, empowered by the Holy Spirit, demonstrates my newfound relationship with the Lord (Acts 19:5-6; John 3:3; 2 Corinthians 5:17).

[\[xx\]](#) Medved *The American Miracle*, 209, 224.

[\[xxi\]](#) The Seventy Weeks of Daniel is a name applied to 490 years referred to in Daniel 9: 24-27, which contains a complete history of Israel from Daniel's time to that of the Messiah and which discloses Israel's ultimate restoration as a nation. These Seventy Weeks are crucial to understanding all Biblical prophecy, especially end-time prophecy.

[\[xxii\]](#) David Barton. *The Bulletproof George Washington* (Aledo, TX: Wallbuilder Press, 1990).

[\[xxiii\]](#) Medved, *The American Miracle*, 176.

[\[xxiv\]](#) Medved *The American Miracle*, 336-338, 346, 352-355.

[\[xxv\]](#) Medved *The American Miracle*, 267, 323, 341, 345, 348-349, 351, 352, 356.