

125.3 In a Minute

I participated in **Savings Bond** drives when I was in elementary school. I brought a quarter to school each week to purchase a Savings Bond stamp for my booklet. By the end of the year, I filled my booklet and turned it in for a \$25 Savings Bond that I kept for fourteen years, earning more than the face value.

What I remember the most is the Minuteman's picture on the stamps. All I knew about the Minutemen was that they fought for our independence from Great Britain and could be ready for battle with a minute's notice. I did not know they were churchmen, and their pastors or deacons led them into combat.

The leaders in our efforts for independence knew God would not bless an offensive/aggressive war. However, they believed He would honor a defensive strategy. Therefore, they did not initiate conflict with the British, nor did they shrink back from it. They knew many Bible passages support self-defense. One is **Nehemiah 4:14** (NKJV). As the Jews prepared for an attack from their enemies, Nehemiah encouraged them, "**Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes.**" The British had fired the first shots at the Boston Massacre in 1770, bombing Boston and burning Charlestown in 1774, and in the attacks on Williamsburg, Concord, and Lexington in 1775 – before we declared independence.¹ The Colonists were ready to defend themselves.

Paul Revere and his friends made the famous "midnight ride" on April 18, 1775, to alert Americans of the advancing British Regulars. In particular, they warned **Samuel Adams** and **John Hancock**, who were visiting the local pastor, **Jonas Clark**, in Lexington. Clark assured the two men that he had trained his parishioners for this hour. They would fight and die in the shadow of the church house if necessary. With the alarm sounding, seventy or so Minutemen began arriving throughout the night to face down the British troops at dawn, outnumbered ten to one.

The **French and Indian War** veteran, Captain **John Parker**, led the troops onto the Lexington Green. He purportedly told his troops, "Stand your ground, don't fire unless fired upon, but if they mean to have a war, let it begin here." For eleven years, the American colonists had turned the other cheek and tried to peaceably resolve the issues with the King and Parliament, to no avail. These courageous CHRISTIAN Minutemen stood ready to defend their bold leaders and families against the embodiment of tyranny.

In the previous year, 1774, the **Massachusetts Provincial Congress** formally recognized the colony's Militia, twenty-five percent of which were Minutemen. Like the apostle Paul, who was ready to suffer and die for Christ (**Acts 21:31**), these men prepared to suffer for Liberty under Christ, their King. The Provincial Congress charged the Minutemen with:

You ... are placed by Providence in the post of honor because it is the post of danger.... The eyes not only of North America and the whole British Empire but all of Europe, are upon you. Let us be, therefore, altogether solicitous that no disorderly behavior, nothing unbecoming our characters, as Americans, as citizens, and Christians, be justly chargeable to us.²

From the American point of view, the conflict with Great Britain was not to be an Antifa-styled riot of destruction and raucous behavior. The Militia was to conduct itself with Christian character. The Massachusetts government officially sanctioned its army to defend its citizens – unlike our current regime. The early skirmishes with the British were between armies, not an armed rabble.

¹ Cummings, Brad, and Lance Wubbels, editors. *The Founders' Bible*. Newbury Park, CA, Shiloh Road Publishers, 2012, p. 1769.

² Lee, Dr. Richard G., General Editor. *The American Patriot's Bible: The Word of God and the Shaping of America*. Nashville, TN, Thomas Nelson, 2009. P. 724.

Christian character and conduct under God were a concern for the Continental Army. After all, it was biblical. Peter wrote of such in **1 Peter 1:15** (ESV), “**But as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct. . .**” Contrary to popular belief today, holy conduct includes self-defense.

When **George Washington** became the Commander in Chief of the Army, he issued his first general order to his officers on January 1, 1776. In part, it read:

His Excellency hopes that the Importance of the great Cause we are engaged in, will be deeply impressed upon every Man’s mind, and wishes it to be considered, that an Army without Order, Regularity & Discipline, is no better than a Commission’d Mob; Let us therefore, when every thing dear and valuable to Freemen is at stake; . . . endeavour by all the Skill and Discipline in our power, to acquire that knowledge, and conduct, which is necessary in War—Our men are brave and good; Men who with pleasure it is observed, are addicted to fewer Vices than are commonly found in Armies; but it is Subordination & Discipline (the Life and Soul of an Army) which next under providence, is to make us formidable to our enemies, honorable in ourselves, and respected in the world; and herein is to be shewn the Goodness of the Officer.

In 1774, the Provincial Congress issued a resolution to Massachusetts Bay. It read:

Resistance to tyranny becomes the Christian and social duty of each individual... Continue steadfast, and with a proper dependence on God, nobly defend those rights which heaven gave, and no man ought to take from us.

I hope you caught that they believed it was the duty of Christians to resist tyranny, not submit to it. They were to defend their unalienable rights NOBLY. If modern Christian Americans had the same perspective, we would not allow the constant government intrusions that we do. Our educational system has dumbed us down from knowing our history and being able to emulate it today.

When a nation’s roots are cut away, a regime can lead them wherever they want; no one is the wiser. God sprinkled history lessons throughout the Bible. Periodically, He includes a brief overview of Israel’s past. In **Acts 7**, for instance, Stephen recounts Israel’s story beginning with Abram. His purpose was to bring his audience up to speed with Jesus. Based on what the faithful did in the past, the audience should likewise respond in faith.

The truth does not always convict people to do the right thing. Sometimes, it provokes them to be evil. Stephen’s audience stoned him to death under Saul of Tarsus’ leadership. Today, few people want to know or believe our history. Most Americans do not want God involved in our affairs. We would have to change our behavior if we allowed Him in or knew our past. So, most prefer to deny His presence and providence in the American story and embrace the disorder that comes with no firm historical footing.

The Boston patriot **Josiah Quincy**, expressed the determination of the revolutionary colonials and stated, “Under God, we are determined at whatsoever, whensoever, or howsoever, we shall be called to make our exit, we will die free men.” **George Washington** said, “I would rather die on my feet than live on my knees.”

I wonder if there are modern Minutemen and women who are ready at a minute’s notice to stand up for America. I wonder how committed American Christians are to God and His inalienable rights. I wonder how dedicated we are to resisting tyranny in the name of God. . . .

Keep The Light of *Readiness* Burning!