

# George Washington - Son of the Republic

## Washington's Vision at Valley Forge

This is a true copy of General George Washington's Vision, reprinted from the U. S. war veterans' news paper: *The National Tribune*, in December, 1880. *The Tribune*, now called *The Stars and Stripes*, reprinted this article in December 21, 1950.

In 1859, Sherman gave this account of Washington's vision to a writer named Wesley Bradshaw, who published it. Wesley Bradshaw wrote: The last time I ever saw Anthony Sherman was on the fourth of July 1859, in Independence Square. He was then ninety-nine years old, and was becoming very feeble. But though so old, his dimming eyes rekindled. "Let us go into the hall," Sherman said to the writer. "I want to tell you of an incident of Washington's life— one which no one alive knows of except myself; and if you live, before long you will see it verified; mark the prediction, you will see it verified." Following is the account that Sherman gave to the writer, Wesley Bradshaw:

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The darkest period of the war was when Washington retreated to Valley Forge, where he resolved to pass the winter of 1777. Ah! I have often seen the tears coursing down our dear Commander's care-worn cheeks, as he would be conversing with a confidential officer about the condition of his poor soldiers. You have doubtless heard the story of Washington's going to the thicket to pray. Well, it was not only true, but often he used to pray in secret for aid and comfort. And God brought us safely through the darkest days of our tribulation.

One day, I remember it well, the chilly winds whistled through the leafless trees, though the sky was cloudless and the sun shone brightly. He remained in his quarters nearly all the afternoon, alone. When he came out I noticed that his face was a shade paler than usual, and there seemed to be something on his mind of more than ordinary importance. Returning just after dusk, he dispatched an orderly to the quarters of an officer, who was presently in attendance.

After a preliminary conversation of about half an hour, Washington, gazing upon his companion with that strange look of dignity which he alone could command, said to the latter:

I do not know whether it is owing to the anxiety of my mind, or what, but this afternoon, as I was sitting at this table engaged in preparing a dispatch, something in the apartment seemed to disturb me.

Looking up, I beheld standing opposite me a singularly beautiful Being. Because I had given strict orders not to be disturbed, it was some moments before I found language to inquire the cause of the visit. A second, a third, and even a fourth time did I repeat my question, but received no answer from my mysterious Visitor except a slight raising of the eyes.

By this time I felt strange sensations spreading through me. I would have risen but the riveted gaze of the Being before me rendered volition impossible. I assayed once more to speak, but my tongue had become useless, as if paralyzed. A new influence, mysterious, potent, irresistible, took possession of me. All I could do was to gaze steadily, vacantly at my unknown Visitor.

Gradually the surrounding atmosphere seemed to fill with sensations, and grew luminous. Everything about me seemed to rarefy, the mysterious visitor also becoming more airy and yet more distinct to my sight than before. I began to feel as someone who is dying, or rather to experience the sensations which I have sometimes imagined, accompany death. I did not think, I did not reason, I did not move. All were alike impossible. I was only conscious of gazing fixedly, vacantly at my unknown companion.

Presently I heard a voice saying, "Son of the Republic, look and learn," while at the same time my visitor extended an arm eastward. I now beheld a heavy white vapor at some distance rising fold upon fold. This gradually dissipated, and I looked upon a strange scene. Before me lay, spread out in one vast plain, all the countries of the world—Europe, Asia, Africa and America. I saw rolling and tossing between Europe and America the billows of the Atlantic, and between Asia and America lay the Pacific. "Son of the Republic," said the same mysterious voice as before, "look and learn."

At that moment I beheld a dark, shadowy being, like an angel, standing, or rather floating in mid-air, between Europe and America. Dipping water out of the ocean in the hollow of each hand, he sprinkled some upon America with his right hand, while with his left he cast some over Europe. Immediately a cloud arose from these countries, and joined—in mid-ocean. For a while it remained stationary, and then it moved slowly westward, until it enveloped America in its murky folds. Sharp flashes of lightning gleamed through it at intervals, and I heard the smothered groans and cries of the American people.

A second time the Angel dipped water from the ocean and sprinkled it out as before. The dark cloud was then drawn back to the

ocean, in whose heaving billows it sank from view.

A third time I heard the mysterious Voice saying, “Son of the Republic, look and learn.” I cast my eyes upon America and beheld villages and towns and cities springing up one after another until the whole land from the Atlantic to the Pacific was dotted with them. Again, I heard the mysterious voice say, “Son of the Republic, the end of the century comes, look and learn.”

And this time the dark, shadowy Angel turned his face southward. From Africa I saw an ill-omened specter approach our land. It flitted slowly and heavily over every town and city of the latter. The inhabitants presently set themselves in battle array against each other.

As I continued looking I saw a bright Angel on whose brow rested a crown of light, on which was traced the word ‘UNION.’ He was bearing the American flag. He placed the flag between the divided nation and said, “Remember, you are brethren.”

Instantly the inhabitants, casting down their weapons, became friends once more and united around the National Standard.

Again I heard the mysterious Voice saying, “Son of the Republic, look and learn.” At this the dark, shadowy Angel placed a trumpet to his mouth, and blew three distinct blasts; and taking water from the ocean, he sprinkled it upon Europe, Asia and Africa.

Then my eyes beheld a fearful scene. From each of these continents arose thick black clouds that were soon joined into one. And throughout this mass there gleamed a dark red light by which I saw hordes of armed men. These men, moving with the cloud, marched by land and sailed by sea to America, which country was enveloped in the volume of cloud. And I dimly saw these vast armies devastate the whole country and the villages, towns and cities which I had seen springing up.

As my ears listened to the thundering of the cannon, clashing of the swords, and the shouts and cries of millions in mortal combat, I again heard the mysterious voice saying, “Son of the Republic, look and learn.” Where the voice had ceased, the dark shadowy Angel placed his trumpet once more to his mouth, and blew a long and fearful blast.

Instantly a light as of a thousand suns shone down from above me, and pierced and broke into fragments the dark cloud which enveloped America. At the same moment the Angel upon whose head still shown the word ‘UNION’, and who bore our national flag in one hand, and a sword in the other, descended from the heavens attended by, legions of white spirits. These immediately joined the inhabitants of America, who I perceived were well-nigh overcome, but who immediately taking courage again, closed up their broken ranks and renewed the battle.

Again, amid the fearful noise of the conflict I heard the mysterious voice saying, “Son of the Republic, look and learn.” As the voice ceased, the shadowy Angel for the last time dipped water from the ocean and sprinkled it upon America. Instantly the dark cloud rolled back, together with the armies it had brought, leaving the inhabitants of the land victorious.

Then once more, I beheld the villages, towns and cities springing up where I had seen them before, while the bright Angel, planting the azure standard He had brought in the midst of them, cried with the loud voice: “While the stars remain, and the heaven send down dew upon the earth, so long shall the UNION last.” And taking from His brow the crown on which blazoned the word ‘UNION,’ He placed it upon the standard while the people, kneeling down, said “Amen.”

The scene instantly began to fade and dissolve, and I, at last saw nothing but the rising, curling vapor I at first beheld. This also disappeared, and I found myself once more gazing upon the mysterious visitor, who, in the same voice I had heard before, said, “Son of the Republic, what you have seen is thus interpreted; Three great perils will come upon the Republic. The most fearful for her is the third. But the whole world united shall not prevail against her. Let every child of the Republic learn to live for his God, his land, and ‘UNION’.

With these words the Vision vanished, and I started from my seat and felt that I had seen a vision wherein had been shown me the birth, the progress, and the destiny of the United States.

“Such, my friends,” the venerable narrator concluded, “were the words I heard from Washington’s own lips, and America will do well to profit by them.”

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By the way, isn’t it interesting that we never read this story while growing up...attending school? It makes me wonder what else we haven’t been told.

Concerning the genuineness of this Vision, there have been both Pros & Cons in the news media. I, the printer of this edition, have chosen not to include those arguments. Regardless of how convincing the arguments are, most people believe whichever way they feel inclined.

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