

---

REV. D. DYER'S DISCOURSE

COMMEMORATIVE OF

PRESIDENT LINCOLN.

---

25



# DISCOURSE

OCCASIONED BY THE ASSASSINATION OF

# ABRAHAM LINCOLN,

DELIVERED IN THE

ALBANY PENITENTIARY,

A MILITARY PRISON OF THE U. S.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 1865,

BY DAVID DYER.

---

ALBANY :  
EDWARD LESLIE, PRINTER,  
1865.

PENITENTIARY, SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE, }  
ALBANY, N. Y., April 20, 1865. }

REV. D. DYER, CHAPLAIN:

Dear Sir:—Desiring to furnish every prisoner under my care with a printed copy of the discourse delivered by you in our Chapel yesterday, on the death of President Lincoln, I respectfully solicit a copy for publication.

Truly yours,

AMOS PILSBURY,

*Superintendent.*

ALBANY, April 21, 1865.

Dear Sir:

The accompanying discourse, though hastily prepared, is cheerfully placed at your disposal for the purpose you desire.

I am, respectfully yours,

DAVID DYER,

*Chaplain.*

GEN. AMOS PILSBURY.

## DISCOURSE.

---

*The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the Lord, was taken in their pits, of whom we said, Under his shadow we shall live among the heathen. LAM. 4: 24.*

*I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints; but let them not turn again to folly. Ps. 85: 8.*

Jehovah has just spoken to this great nation by an afflictive dispensation. Its President is gone—gone the way of all flesh; and gone to his last account. Raised, not long since, for the second time to the highest office in the gift of the people; busily engaged in administering the affairs of State, and attending to the civil interests of the nation, he has been suddenly removed by death; and now, as his body is about to be committed to the dust, his spirit is with God who gave it.

His death has occurred under circumstances of a painfully instructive character. Not only have the long-cherished ties of domestic bliss been rent asunder—the wife bereft of her endeared husband, and the children of a venerated father—but it has occurred by an assassin's hand, at a critical period of our national affairs; when peculiar measures are necessary to secure a well-grounded peace, and restore the brotherhood of States; when a chief magistrate is required who shall be more concerned for the nation than for party; when firmness, enlightened wisdom, and honesty of purpose are specially needed; and when multitudes were looking to him, and rejoicing in the belief that he possessed those high qualifications, and was equal to the emergency. At such a time, and in such circumstances has the Presidential chair been clothed in sackcloth; its honored occupant removed; the hopes of

millions extinguished, and the nation plunged into deep mourning.

Amid such scenes it is our solemn duty to recognize the hand of God; to stop and ask why the Lord hath dealt with us thus? why he hath laid on us this severe chastising stroke, and what he would have us learn from this event?

The all-wise Governor of the Universe has certainly some important reason for appealing in this striking and painful manner to our senses; and it is right that in the sanctuary we should specially seek to find it out, for thus we imitate the example of the pious dead, pursue the path of wisdom and safety, and follow the directions of the Lord. Not to do so would evince a spirit of criminal indifference, which would be offensive to God and provoke the infliction of his wrath. Let us, then, with docility and prayerfulness, listen to his voice.

1. *God teaches us by this event that rulers and people are alike subject to his government.* This must be so. Having the same origin, they are subject to the same power; formed by the same hand, they are under the same authority; feeling the same wants, they are dependent on the same bounty; having the same laws to obey and the same duties to perform, they must be subject to the same rule and amenable to the same bar. No worldly circumstances, however imposing; no adventitious honors, however splendid; no human authority, however vast; nor any mortal endowments, however bright and powerful, can liberate the individual from this divine control. It is based on the prerogatives of God, and is indispensable to the welfare of mankind.

He who observes the falling of a sparrow, orders the affairs of kingdoms and the world; He who listens to the sighing of the prisoner, controls the doings of rulers and kings; He who numbers the very hairs of our head, presides over all the destinies of nations. Not anything can transpire without

his permission; and, in ways unknown to us, he overrules all the actions of mankind, and all the changes of time, for the fulfillment of his will. He is the "blessed and the only potentate; the King of kings, and the Lord of lords." He says: "By me, kings reign and princes decree justice; by me, princes rule, and nobles—even all the judges of the earth." "I am the Lord, and beside me there is none else."

So prone are men—specially those who bask in the smiles of fortune—to forget this subjection, and to indulge a spirit of independence towards God, that he often emphatically reminds them of its reality and the supremacy of his control. He says: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom; neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this; that he understandeth and knoweth me; that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth." He often breaks in upon the full tide of human affairs; and, to arouse them from their self-sufficiency and criminal indifference to his authority, he blasts, as in a moment, their brightest hopes; extinguishes their fondest expectations; removes their dearest friends—even those whose existence seemed essential to their support; or, as in the present instance, he takes away those who are looked up to by millions of their fellow-beings just when their presence seemed all but indispensable.

2. *God would teach us by this event that neither distinction in society, nor the wants of individuals or nations, can save from the arrest of death.* Death, we have frequently seen, is an imperious monarch. His mandate is imperative, and must be obeyed. No circumstances, however fascinating; no wants, however urgent; no ties, however dear; no duties, however pressing and important; nor any power, however great, can prevent or hinder his grasp. The individual may be a pattern of kindness, temperance, and piety; he may be

endowed with great intellectual powers and acquirements, and be performing labors that will bless a world; he may have conquered mighty nations, and made his name to be feared and respected throughout the habitable globe; he may be surrounded by distinguished pomp, and sway a sceptre over millions of his fellow-men; his existence may seem almost essential to the welfare of the family, the church, or the nation, but all will be of no avail; they cannot detain his spirit; yield he must to the arrest of death, and become an inhabitant of the tomb.

Was it otherwise, we might have supposed an exemption would have been made, for a period at least, in the case of the deceased President. Having passed so satisfactorily, and with such distinguished ability through the very peculiar and trying duties of his first Presidential term, and entered with so much promise on his second—regarded on every hand with such sincere respect for his simple, unpretending, virtuous habits; his mild, firm, and generous spirit; his ardent and unquestioned patriotism; his honesty of purpose and effort to promote the good of the whole nation; and presiding, as he did, at a period when his services seemed so specially required, we might have thought he would have been spared. But it was not so. Despite of all, he must yield to death, and leave to others the arduous task of directing the affairs of State. It is as if death sought to make the highest demonstration of his sovereignty, and for this purpose selected as a mark the man who stood the foremost and the most conspicuous in the nation.

“ He marks his way

With dreadful waste of what deserves to shine!

Art, genius, fortune, elevated power!

With various lustre, these light up the world,

Which death puts out and darkens human race.”

3. *God would teach us by this event the vanity of human greatness.* There was unquestionably, in the situation of the late President, much to be coveted by aspirants for worldly

happiness and honor. Nature had endowed him with a kind and generous heart, with a firm and well-balanced mind, and with a discriminating judgment. Providence had kindly preserved him in a virtuous course, blessed him with more than a competence of earthly good, and given him many years of domestic comfort. The duties which his fellow-citizens had called him to discharge, though difficult and attended with great personal labor, were performed with remarkable prudence, firmness, and wisdom, and so as to merit the public praise.

Having been inducted a second time to that high office, he announced, in pacific and impressive words, his purpose to pursue that course which Providence might direct and the interest of the whole nation demand. And now, however some may have differed in opinion from him, all candid men will admit that he was honestly and constantly working to fulfill that pledge, and preserve unimpaired the honor of the nation. There was unquestionably a growing respect for him, and confidence in his administration. But while the tide of his popularity was increasing; while millions of thoughtful patriotic minds were directed with hope to him; while there was not anything that his strongest political opponents could find in his public conduct to tarnish fame; and while he was anxiously laboring for his country's good, the scene dropped; his associations were sundered; his plans frustrated; his expectations vanished, and his eyes closed in death.

What a melancholy proof of the vanity of human greatness! Viewed in the light of this event, what is there in the adulations of the multitude, in the voice of fame, in the honors of office, in the fascinations of wealth, in the pomp of power, or in the government of a kingdom, to satisfy an immortal mind? to meet the wants of the soul? to prepare the spirit for the glory of heaven? They are all "of the earth, earthy." They are uncertain in their continuance, and

momentary in their duration. In them there is not anything spiritual or Christlike. They differ in origin and essence from the soul, and must ever fail to give satisfactory pleasure. An inspired preacher, who shared them all, said : "Vanity of vanities! vanity of vanities! all is vanity and vexation of spirit!"

"The glories of our mortal state  
Are shadows, not substantial things;  
There is no armor against fate;  
Death lays his icy hand on kings—  
Sceptre and crown  
Must tumble down,  
And in the dust be equal made,  
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

"Some men with sword may reap the field,  
And plant fresh laurels where they kill;  
But their strong nerves at last must yield—  
They tame but one another still.  
Early or late,  
They stoop to fate,  
And must give up their conquering breath,  
When they, pale captives, creep to death.

"The garlands wither on your brow;  
Then boast no more of mighty deeds;  
Upon death's purple altar now,  
See where the victor-victim bleeds.  
All heads must come  
To the cold tomb;  
*Only the actions of the just  
Smell sweet and blossom in the dust.*"

4. *God would lead us by this event to a more direct and practical recognition of him in our individual and national affairs.* The human mind, bound by the chains of sin, and engrossed by the things of time, is slow to think of God, or regard his dispensations. Rather, there is a constant inclination to forget Him, and to look to secondary causes as the origin of both our sorrows and our joys. "God is not in all their thoughts," is the solemn charge brought against our race. And, though in Christian countries there is a general belief avowed in the supremacy of Jehovah, yet how slight

is its hold on the public mind ! How little, at best, is it regarded ! The people, for the greater part, scarcely give it a thought; and statesmen legislate, as we often see, in the bold disregard of this fact.

Such a course, depend upon it, is offensive and dangerous. It has often led to national calamities. And who can truly say that it has nothing to do with our present affliction ? Who can, with correctness, affirm that in this event we are not receiving a divine rebuke ? Why, if it is not so, has He thus painfully broken in upon the rising tide of our national affairs ? Why has He, at this critical moment, stopped the wheels of our national government ? Why has He clothed the Presidential mansion in mourning ? Why has He put the mementos of death on the arms of judges and statesmen ? And why has He brought such sadness on the nation ? Why, but to remind us that He observes our conduct and holds us accountable to his authority. Such, we believe, is His gracious purpose in this dispensation, and most heartily do we pray that it may be universally regarded.

5. I pass other lessons this event teaches to remark that *God would show us by it the dreadful tendency of party spirit, and the deep depravity of the human heart.* The existence of parties in a free government is inevitable from the prevalence of free discussion; and their influence, when properly exerted, will contribute to the general good.

But when they exist for mere party interests; when they lead to a disregard of real worth, to angry invectives, to unjust suspicions, to inroads on private friendship and public order, and to the resistance of righteous authority, they become alarming evils, and threaten the existence of whatever is dear, valuable, and just. The late President wisely regarded this, and hence he nobly resolved to be, not the chief of a party, but the *magistrate of the nation.*

But now we see the baseness and culminating power of

this party spirit. Now, it has been displayed with the blackest moral turpitude and the highest crime. Now, its ripest and most obnoxious fruit is before the nation. Never before has such a horrible development disgraced our history. It is the culmination of wickedness, party violence, and enmity. After four years of rebellion against our just laws and benign government, in which were concentrated the deepest malignity and hate; after repeated acts of robbery and piracy on our Northern borders; after widespread piratical efforts against our commerce on the high seas; after persistent and earnest efforts to plunge us in war with foreign nations; after basely attempting to burn at night New York and other Northern cities; after destroying by slow and horrible tortures, in Southern dungeons, thousands of our brave soldiers; now this hellish spirit has branded our beloved President a tyrant, and has planned and accomplished his death. Thus has that noble man been sacrificed; thus has "the breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the Lord," been destroyed; thus has the nation been deprived of services which no human power could estimate. Well has it been said, that "the hand that fired the shot would, had it the power, sink America and her free institutions, schools, churches, commerce, wealth, benevolent societies in the deep ocean of annihilation." What malignity! what deep and detestable wickedness!

You will expect me to refer more particularly to President Lincoln, though I can now give but a brief outline of his life and character. He was born in Kentucky on the 12th of February, 1809. His father, not satisfied with a residence in a slave State, determined; when Abraham was in his eighth year, to find a home in the wilds of Indiana, where free labor would not have to compete with that of slaves; and where the poor white man might raise up his family to respectability and competence.

There—and I ask young men to notice it—without any

educational advantages and very few books, he spent several years of his early life. Notwithstanding, by his mother's aid and his own diligence, he learned to read and write; until, at length, he had an opportunity of attending a common school which one of the settlers opened in his own log-cabin.

In the year 1830, his father removed to Decatur, Illinois. Abraham, then twenty-one years of age, aided his father in breaking up the ground and making a rail fence around the farm. After his first winter there, he was engaged sometimes as a farm hand, and sometimes as a clerk in a store.

In 1832, he became the captain of a volunteer company who took part in the Black Hawk war. His conduct in that position was prompt, faithful, kind to his men, nobly patriotic, and courageous. At the close of his military career he became a candidate for the State Legislature, but was defeated; though he had in his own precinct 277 out of 284 votes. Then he turned his attention to surveying, in which he achieved success. In 1834, he entered the Legislature of Illinois; soon after he commenced the study of law. and in 1837 he removed to Springfield and entered on the practice of his profession.

After sitting in the Legislature through three terms, he remained for several years in private life devoting himself to the practice of law, and the study of politics in connection with the interests of his country. Then he was called to occupy a more prominent and responsible position; and in 1847 he took his seat in the Congress of the United States; and there, as elsewhere, he was virtuous, industrious, firm, and courteous in the maintenance of his principles, and won a high reputation. In 1860 it was but too evident that a crisis was hastening in our land. And many felt that it was desirable to have a chief magistrate who, while opposed to *the extension of slavery*, should pursue a wise, conservative, and constitutional course. And, to the surprise of

almost the whole nation, but as it has since proved, by the guidance of God, Mr. Lincoln was chosen by them as their candidaté. You know the result, and the course which, as President, he took. Suffice it to say, that in circumstances of unexampled trial and conflict he so justly commended himself to the loyal people of this nation as to merit and receive a place by the immortal Washington.

Last Friday night the distinguished services and career of this honored and beloved man closed—closed not by a natural death, but by a mean assassin's hand.

WAR DEPARTMENT, }  
WASHINGTON, April 15—1:30 A. M. }

*To Major General Dix:*

This evening, at about 9 $\frac{1}{2}$  P. M., at Ford's Theatre, the President, while sitting in his private box, with Mrs. Lincoln, Mrs. Senator Harris, and Major Rathbone, was shot by an assassin, who suddenly entered the box and approached behind the President.

The assassin then leaped upon the stage, brandishing a large dagger, and made his escape from the rear of the theatre. The pistol ball entered the back of the President's head and penetrated nearly through the head. The wound is mortal. The President has been insensible ever since it has been inflicted, and is now dying.

About the same hour an assassin, whether the same one or not, entered Mr. Seward's apartments, and under pretence of having a preparation, was shown to the sick chamber.

The assassin immediately rushed to the bed and inflicted two or three stabs in the throat and two in the face. It is hoped the wounds will not prove mortal. My apprehension is they will prove fatal.

The nurse alarmed Mr. Frederick Seward, who was in an adjoining room, and hastened to the door of his father's room when he met the assassin, who inflicted upon him one or more dangerous wounds. The recovery of Frederick Seward is doubtful.

It is not probable that the President will live through the night.

Gen. Grant and wife were advertised to be at the theatre

this evening, but he started to Burlington at 6 o'clock this evening.

At a Cabinet meeting, at which Gen. Grant was present, the subject of the state of the country and the prospect of a speedy peace was discussed.

The President was very cheerful and hopeful, and spoke very kindly of Gen. Lee and others of the Confederacy, and of the establishment of government in Virginia.

All the members of the Cabinet except Mr. Seward are now in attendance upon the President. I have seen Mr. Seward, and he and Frederick were both unconscious.

LATER.—Abraham Lincoln died this morning at 22 minutes after 7 o'clock.

E. M. STANTON, *Sec'y of War.*

The characteristics of President Lincoln demand a brief notice. *He was a true and eminent representative of the American citizen—specially of the Western class.* Accustomed from his early days to the toils, and, to some degree, the hardships of life on our Western frontier, he was independent, self-reliant, ready to adapt himself to circumstances, easy and affable in his intercourse with others, and always willing that they should exercise the right—which he never surrendered—to think for themselves. Wherever he went, he mingled freely with the people. Was not in the least pretentious, manifested no official air, nor claimed any particular attention.

This disposition probably led him on that fatal night to the theatre. It was well known that he had no taste for such amusements, and it is said that when he attended them he expressed little interest. But on the night in question he remained in conversation with a gentleman for half an hour after the time appointed for departure, and then went with reluctance. But, as it had been advertised that General Grant and himself would attend, and as the former left Washington that day for New Jersey, he did not like to have the people wholly disappointed.

As a true American, our late President *had great confi-*

dence in the "government of the people, by the people, and for the people." This was with him a cherished and ruling principle. He frequently expressed it with emphasis and power. In his journey from Springfield to Washington in 1861, it was reiterated in different and decided forms. At Indianapolis, he said: "Of the people, when they rise in mass in behalf of the Union and the liberties of their country, truly may it be said: 'The gates of hell cannot prevail against them.' \* \* \* I, as already intimated, am but an accidental instrument, temporary, and to serve but for a limited time, and I appeal to you again to constantly bear in mind, that with you, and not with politicians, not with presidents, not with office-seekers, but with you is the question, Shall the Union, and shall the liberties of this country be preserved to the latest generations?" Elsewhere he said: "It is for you, the people, to advance the great cause of the Union and the Constitution. I am sure I bring a heart true to the work. For the ability to perform it, I must trust in that Supreme Being who has never forsaken this favored land, through the instrumentality of this great and intelligent people."

This principle was indeed loudly *professed* before; but with President Lincoln it was fundamental and practical, and it has been well said: "The importance to the country of having a man in the Presidential chair during the Rebellion who was thoroughly and practically in earnest in holding these doctrines, is hardly to be over-estimated, for the events of this period required such an appeal to be made by the Government to the people as was never before demanded; and the course of the Government on some of the most important questions of policy has displayed an absolute confidence in the satisfactory answer that the people would make to their appeal. The nation was worthy of this confidence; and the past four years have done more than any similar period in our history to develop its trust in itself, and to convert not merely our politicians, but the whole people,

from theoretical democratic Republicans into practical believers in the rights of man, and in the power and virtue of an intelligent democracy." And for this we are, to a great extent, indebted to our late honored President.

In harmony with this peculiarly American characteristic, *the late President always manifested a conciliatory disposition even towards the enemies of the Government.* I cannot, after reviewing the utterances he has given to the public during the period of his administration, find one expression that was adapted to irritate, or needlessly try, the feelings of any individual or class however opposed in sentiment or conduct to himself. In the maintenance of his opinions, he spoke with a moderation and courtesy which demand our admiration, and are worthy of our imitation.

Notwithstanding all the abuse which was heaped upon him, and all the vile epithets which were applied to him, he uttered no expression of retort; he made no complaint, nor asked for public sympathy; but bore it all with the patience and generosity which belong to a truth-loving and magnanimous spirit. He neither said nor did anything that was designed to arouse an angry feeling; but he always sought to pour oil on the troubled waters, and to bring peace out of strife. With his devotion to duty, to the country, and to God, he united a regard to man as man, which led him to seek the good of those who despitefully used him. It is known that he cordially approved the generous terms of surrender which were made to, and so readily accepted by General Lee; and it is said, on what I have no doubt is good authority, that at the time he was so basely slain by a rebel hand, he was meditating the proclamation of an amnesty for those who opposed his rule. I cannot forbear the conviction that the Confederate actors in this malignant plot have killed the best friend of the citizens in the Southern States.

*The mental characteristics of President Lincoln have been*

*so strikingly displayed that no one can consistently question their greatness.* Without the power of Henry Clay; the comprehensive cultivation and mental strength of Daniel Webster, and the masterly skill and eloquence of Edward Everett, he yet had traits peculiarly his own, and which justly made him a peer among peers, and eminently fitted him to be the President of this great nation during this particular and trying crisis. Though he was slow in reaching conclusions, yet his mind grasped all the details of a question, laid hold of its very gist, and then presented the point with such clearness and demonstrative power, that even the unlettered readily perceived, and felt, the correctness of his conclusions. Some of his letters and State papers are remarkable for their terseness, conciseness, and sagacity; and will, I believe, excite the admiration of generations to come.

*As a statesman, our late President occupied an eminent position.* While he was not of those who impose by their brilliancy, or create surprise by their dash, he possessed and cultivated the virtues and qualifications which secure enduring usefulness and honor. To integrity of purpose, firmness of will, patience in investigation, unswerving fidelity to trust, and a deep impression of his accountability to the nation and to God, he added a thorough knowledge of the theory and principles of our government, and of men. He knew how to influence them for good, and in most trying emergencies he displayed administrative abilities of the highest order. From the beginning to the end, he never swerved from duty, or discharged it in a slovenly or inefficient manner. In accordance with his oath, he maintained the Constitution and the integrity of the Federal Republic; and to him, under God, more than to any other, is due the success which has crowned our efforts to maintain the Union and the institutions of our country.

A writer, who has been a persistent opponent of the administration, says: "As to the dead President, let us do

justice to his memory ! He dies in the hour of his country's restored greatness, in the full fruition of his own personal triumph ! History might have disputed the character of his acts, and if he had lived he might have forfeited some of his fame. The assassin's blow will rank him, in the memory of millions, among the martyrs of Liberty."

Finally : There is good reason to believe that our departed chief magistrate *yielded his heart to the claims of religion and Jesus*. His cherished sense of obligation to God ; his oft-expressed consciousness of dependence on God ; his devout acknowledgment of divine help ; his repeated request for the prayers of the people ; his well-known love of the Bible and study of its truths, encourage the hope that he was no stranger to the holy impulses of true piety.

In the brief and touching address he delivered to his neighbors on leaving Springfield for Washington in February, 1861, he uttered these devout emotions :

" My friends, no one not in my position can appreciate the sadness I feel at this parting. To this people I owe all that I am. Here I have lived more than a quarter of a century ; here my children were born ; and here one of them lies buried. I know not how soon I shall see you again. A duty devolves upon me which is, perhaps, greater than that which has devolved upon any other man since the days of Washington. He never would have succeeded except for the aid of Divine Providence, upon which at all times he relied. I feel that I cannot succeed without the same Divine aid which sustained him, and on the same Almighty Being I place my reliance for support, and I hope you, my friends, will all pray that I may receive that Divine assistance without which I cannot succeed, but with which success is certain. Again, I bid you all an affectionate farewell."

A short time since some of those neighbors and fellow-townsmen called on him in Washington, and when about to leave him they inquired if there was anything they could do

for him. His quick response was : “ *Yes; pray for me.*” An incident, simple as it is, indicates what were the strong desires of his soul.

But we have reason to entertain this belief from the ever-memorable words which, on his late inauguration, he addressed to the nation. They were of deep and solemn weight, resembling those of the old Hebrew prophets. They evidently expressed the deep sentiments of his soul, and their high moral tone indicated a spirit which had communed with God, and drawn its inspiration from the fount of divine truth. An English writer says : “ These words reflect the highest credit on the head and heart of Abraham Lincoln. They will be often quoted, and take a permanent place in the history of these extraordinary times.” Mark the following extract :

“ ‘ Woe unto the world because of offences, for it must needs be that offences come ; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh.’ If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of these offences, which, in the Providence of God, must needs come, but which having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offence came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him ? Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may soon pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman’s two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid with another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so, still it must be said: ‘ The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.’

“ With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us

strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and orphans, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

Now, in conclusion, let us listen, I pray you, to the voice which calls us, by this event, *to pursue with zeal our eternal interests.* In its light we see that much as our country claims our thoughts; dear as its institutions may be to our hearts, and anxious as we should be for the just administration of its laws, still these things should not supremely engage our minds or efforts. We have higher interests than these—interests not committed to the keeping of a human hand; not measured by time, nor subject to decay. Those interests are pure as the mansions of light; boundless as the ages of eternity; firm as the throne of God, and in the care of the King of kings. They claim our first and constant attention; and not to give them this is ingratitude to God and injury to ourselves.

You know me too well to suppose I am indifferent to civil liberty and prosperity. But what are these to freedom from the power of sin? from the sting of death? from the condemnation to eternal woe? What are these to the approbation of the Lord? to the glorious liberty of the sons of God? to a well-grounded hope of everlasting bliss? What are these to a glorious appearing at the bar of God? to an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away? to an eternal residence with God and the Lamb?

Surrounded by the things of time, men invest them with undue importance, and pursue them as the chief good. But this afflictive dispensation reminds us that the things which are unseen and eternal are of greater magnitude, and demand more earnest zeal. And not thus to pursue them is to defeat the end of our existence, to neglect the soul's salvation, and bring on ourselves the abiding wrath of God.

---

Neglect, I pray you, anything, rather than this everlasting good. Be indifferent to anything but "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Let the *realization of this* absorb your minds, and be the prize towards which you constantly press. Then, when kingdoms shall be rent asunder; when empires shall decay; when a universal death shall seize all terrestrial things, you shall remain unhurt; and, amidst the plaudits of angels and the smiles of Jesus, shall enter a glorious kingdom which can never be moved, but abideth forever.



