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THE  
**NATIONAL PREACHER**  
AND  
*The Prayer-Meeting.*



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# The National Preacher,

AND THE

## PRAYER-MEETING.

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### EDITOR'S NOTE.

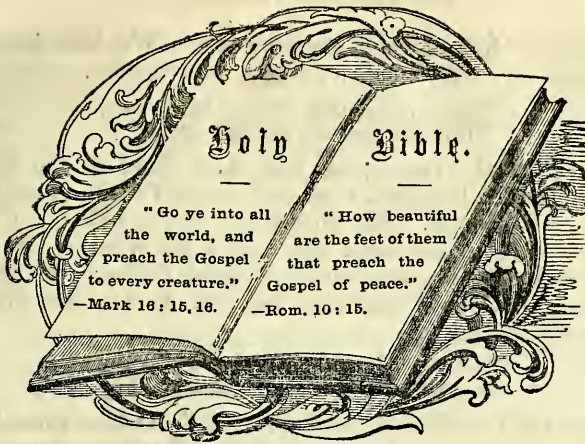
In this double number of the NATIONAL PREACHER for May and June will be found six able and interesting discourses from six clergymen, of five different denominations, on the general subject of our great National Calamity, the loss of our good and illustrious President Lincoln by the hand of the assassin. It forms the wicked climax of all crimes in the history of the world. The death of Abraham Lincoln is a fruitful theme for eloquence and pathos. These discourses, which we have not room to particularize, form a most interesting *In memorium* of that great and lamented man, which will be preserved by many and cherished for the sentiments and feelings which it breathes. They will be read with interest in after years. Each discourse will speak for itself, and is worthy of the mournful occasion and the most impressive theme.

*P.S.—Wanted very much the Jan. and Feb. numbers 1863, printed and stitched in one. We will pay for all returned to this office by mail or otherwise. Our friends will greatly oblige us by aiding us to obtain them.*

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### BUSINESS NOTE.

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THE  
NATIONAL PREACHER.

Vol. XXXIX, No. 5.]

MAY, 1865.

[Whole No. 361.]

SERMON XIII.

BY REV. DR. GURLEY,

PASTOR OF THE NEW YORK AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, WASHINGTON CITY.

IN MEMORIAM OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN.

Delivered at his funeral in the east room of the Presidential Mansion, April 19, 1865, at noon. See note at the end of the discourse.

As we stand here to-day mourners around this coffin and around the lifeless remains of our beloved Chief Magistrate, we recognize and we adore the sovereignty of God. His throne is in the Heavens, and his kingdom ruleth over all. He hath done, and He hath permitted to be done, whatsoever He pleased. "Clouds and darkness are round about him; righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne." His way is in the sea, and his path in the great waters, and his footsteps are not known. "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? Deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea. If he cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him? For he knoweth vain men; he seeth wicked-

ness also; will he not then consider it?" We bow before his infinite majesty. We bow, we weep, we worship.

"Where reason fails, with all her powers,  
There faith prevails, and love adores."

It was a cruel, cruel hand, that dark hand of the assassin which smote our honored, wise, and noble President, and filled the land with sorrow. But above and beyond that hand there is another which we must see and acknowledge. It is the chastening hand of a wise and a faithful Father. He gives us this bitter cup. And the cup that our Father has given us, shall we not drink it?

"God of the just, thou gavest us the cup;  
We yield to thy behest, and drink it up."

"Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." O, how these blessed words have cheered and strengthened and sustained us through all these long and weary years of civil strife, while our friends and brothers on so many ensanguined fields were falling and dying for the cause of liberty and union! Let them cheer and strengthen, and sustain us to-day. True, this new sorrow and chastening has come in such an hour and in such a way as we thought not, and it bears the impress of a rod that is very heavy, and of a mystery that is very deep. That such a life should be sacrificed at such a time, by such a foul and diabolical agency; that the man at the head of the nation, whom the people had learned to trust with a confiding and a loving confidence, and upon whom more than upon any other were centered, under God, our best hope for the true and speedy pacification of the country, the restoration of the Union, and the return of harmony and love; that he should be taken just as the prospect of peace was brightly opening upon our torn and bleeding country, and just as he was beginning to be animated and gladdened with the hope of ere long enjoying with the people the blessed fruit and reward of his and their toil, and care and patience, and self-sacrificing devotion to the interests of liberty and the Union. O, it is a mysterious and a most afflicting visitation. But it is our Father in heaven, the God of our fathers, and our God, who permits us to be so suddenly and sorely smitten; and we know that His judgments are right, and that in faithfulness He has afflicted us. In the midst of our rejoicings we needed this stroke, this dealing, this discipline; and therefore He has sent it. Let us remember our affliction has not come forth of the dust, and our trouble has not sprung out of the ground. Through and beyond all second causes let us look, and see the sovereign permissive agency of the great First Cause. It is His prerogative to bring light out of darkness and good out of evil. Surely the wrath of man shall praise Him, and the remainder of wrath He will restrain. In the

light of a clearer day we may yet see the wrath which planned and perpetrated the death of the President, was overruled by Him whose judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out, for the highest welfare of all those interests which are so dear to the Christian patriot and philanthropist, and for which a loyal people have made such an unexampled sacrifice of treasure and of blood. Let us not be faithless, but believing.

“Blind unbelief is prone to err,  
And scan his work in vain;  
God is his own interpreter,  
And He will make it plain.”

We will wait for his interpretation, and we will wait in faith, nothing doubting. He who has led us so well, and defended and prospered us so wonderfully during the last four years of toil, and struggle and sorrow, will not forsake us now. He may chasten, but He will not destroy. He may purify us more and more in the furnace of trial, but he will not consume us. No, no! He has chosen us as He did His people of old in the furnace of affliction, and He has said of us as He said of them, “This people have I formed for myself: they shall show forth my praise.” Let our principal anxiety now be that this new sorrow may be a sanctified sorrow; that it may lead us to a deeper repentance to a more humbling sense of our dependence upon God, and to the more unreserved consecration of ourselves and all that we have to the cause of truth and justice, of law and order, of liberty and good government, of pure and undefiled religion. Then, though weeping may endure for a night, joy will come in the morning. Blessed be God! despite of this great and sudden and temporary darkness, the morning has begun to dawn—the morning of a bright and glorious day, such as our country has never seen. That day will come and not tarry, and the death of a hundred Presidents and their cabinets can never, never prevent it. While we are thus hopeful, however, let us also be humble. The occasion calls us to prayerful and tearful humiliation. It demands of us that we live low, very low, before Him who has smitten us for our sins. O that all our rulers and all our people may bow in the dust to-day beneath the chastening hand of God! and may their voices go up to Him as one voice, and their hearts go up to Him as one heart, pleading with Him for mercy, for grace to sanctify our great and sore bereavement, and for wisdom to guide us in this our time of need. Such a united cry and pleading will not be in vain. It will enter into the ear and heart of Him who sits upon the throne, and He will say to us, as to His ancient Israel, “In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer.”

I have said that the people confided in the late lamented Pres-

ident with a full and a loving confidence. Probably no man since the days of Washington was ever so deeply and firmly imbedded and enshrined in the very hearts of the people as Abraham Lincoln. Nor was it a mistaken confidence and love. He deserved it—deserved it well—deserved it all. He merited it by his character, by his acts, and by the whole tenor and tone, and spirit of his life. He was simple and sincere, plain and honest, truthful and just, benevolent and kind. His perceptions were quick and clear, his judgment was calm and accurate, and his purposes were good and pure beyond a question. Always and everywhere he aimed and endeavored to *be* right and to *do* right. His integrity was thorough, all-pervading, all-controlling, and incorruptible. It was the same in every place and relation, in the consideration and the control of matters great or small, the same firm and steady principle of power and beauty that shed a clear and crowning lustre upon all his other excellences of mind and heart, and recommended him to his fellow-citizens as *the* man, who, in a time of unexampled peril, when the very life of the nation was at stake, should be chosen to occupy, in the country and for the country, its highest post of power and responsibility. How wisely and well, how purely and faithfully, how firmly and steadily, how justly and successfully he did occupy that post and meet its grave demands in circumstances of surpassing trial and difficulty, is known to you all, known to the country and the world. He comprehended from the first the perils to which treason had exposed the freest and best Government on the earth, the vast interests of liberty and humanity that were to be saved or lost forever in the urgent impending conflict; he rose to the dignity and momentousness of the occasion, saw his duty as the Chief Magistrate of a great and imperiled people, and he determined to do his duty, and his whole duty, seeking the guidance and leaning upon the arm of Him of whom it is written, "He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength." Yes, he leaned upon His arm. He recognized and received the truth that "the kingdom is the Lord's, and He is the governor among the nations." He remembered that "God is in history," and he felt that nowhere had his hand and his mercy been so marvelously conspicuous as in the history of this nation. He hoped and he prayed that that same hand would continue to guide us, and that same mercy continue to abound to us in the time of our greatest need. I speak what I know, and testify what I have often heard him say, when I affirm that that guidance and mercy were the prop on which he humbly and habitually leaned; they were the best hope he had for himself and for his country. Hence, when he was leaving his home in Illinois, and coming to this city to take his seat in the executive chair of a disturbed and troubled nation, he said to the old and tried friends who

gathered tearfully around him and bade him farewell, "I leave you with this request: *pray for me.*" They did pray for him; and millions of others prayed for him; nor did they pray in vain. Their prayer was heard, and the answer appears in all his subsequent history; it shines forth with a heavenly radiance in the whole course and tenor of his administration, from its commencement to its close. God raised him up for a great and glorious mission, furnished him for its work, and aided him in its accomplishment. Nor was it merely by strength of mind, and honesty of heart, and purity and pertinacity of purpose, that He furnished him; in addition to these things He gave him a calm and abiding confidence in the overruling providence of God and in the ultimate triumph of truth and righteousness through the power and the blessing of God. This confidence strengthened him in all hours of anxiety and toil, and inspired him with calm and cheering hope when others were inclining to despondency and gloom. Never shall I forget the emphasis and the deep emotion with which he said, in this very room, to a company of clergymen and others, who called to pay him their respects in the darkest days of our civil conflict: "Gentlemen, my hope of success in this great and terrible struggle rests on that immutable foundation, the justice and goodness of God. And when events are very threatening, and prospects very dark, I still hope that in some way which man cannot see all will be well in the end, because our cause is just, and God is on our side." Such was his sublime and holy faith, and it was an anchor to his soul, both sure and steadfast. It made him firm and strong. It emboldened him in the pathway of duty, however rugged and perilous it might be. It made him valiant for the right, for the cause of God and humanity, and it held him in steady, patient, and unswerving adherence to a policy of administration which he thought, and which all now think, both God and humanity required him to adopt. We admired and loved him on many accounts—for strong and various reasons; we admired his childlike simplicity, his freedom from guile and deceit, his staunch and sterling integrity, his kind and forgiving temper, his industry and patience, his persistent, self-sacrificing devotion to all the duties of his eminent position, from the least to the greatest; his readiness to hear and consider the cause of the poor and humble, the suffering and the oppressed; his charity toward those who questioned the correctness of his opinions and the wisdom of his policy; his wonderful skill in reconciling differences among the friends of the Union, leading them away from abstractions, and inducing them to work together and harmoniously for the common weal; his true and enlarged philanthropy that knew no distinction of color and race, but regarded all men as brethren, and endowed alike by their Creator: "with certain inalienable rights, among which are life,

liberty, and the pursuit of happiness ;" his inflexible purpose, that what freedom had gained in our terrible civil strife should never be lost, and that the end of the war should be the end of slavery, and, as a consequence, of rebellion ; his readiness to spend and be spent for the attainment of such a triumph—a triumph the blessed fruits of which shall be as wide-spreading as the earth, and as enduring as the sun.

All these things commanded and fixed our admiration, and the admiration of the world, and stamped upon his character and life the unmistakable stamp of *greatness*. But more sublime than any or all of these, more holy and influential, more beautiful and strong, and sustaining, was *his abiding confidence in God and in the final triumph of truth and righteousness through Him and and for His sake*. This was his noblest virtue, his grandest principle, the secret alike of his strength, his patience, and his success. And this, it seems to me, after being near him steadily, and with him often, for more than four years, is the principle by which, more than by any other, "he being dead, yet speaketh." Yes ; by his steady, enduring confidence in God, and in the complete ultimate success of the cause of God, which is the cause of humanity, more than in any other way, does he now speak to us and to the nation he loved and served so well. By this he speaks to his successor in office, and charges him to have faith in God. By this he speaks to the members of his cabinet, the men with whom he counseled so long, and he charges them to have faith in God. By this he speaks to all who occupy positions of influence and authority in these sad and troublous times, and he charges them all to have faith in God. By this he speaks to this great people as they sit in sackcloth to-day, and weep for him with a bitter wailing, and refuse to be comforted, and he charges them to have faith in God. And by this he *will* speak through the ages and to all rulers and peoples in every land, and his message to them will be, "Cling to liberty and right ; battle for them ; bleed for them ; die for them, if need be ; and have confidence in God." O that the voice of this testimony may sink down into our hearts to-day and every day, and into the heart of the nation, and exert its appropriate influence upon our feelings, our faith, our patience, and our devotion to the cause now dearer to us than ever before, because consecrated by the blood of its most conspicuous defender, its wisest and most fondly-trusted friend. He is dead ; but the God in whom he trusted lives, and He can guide and strengthen his successor, as he guided and strengthened him. He is dead ; but the memory of his virtues, of his wise and patriotic counsels and labors, of his calm and steady faith in God, lives, is precious, and will be a power for good in the country quite down to the end of time. He is dead ; but the cause he so ardently loved, so ably, patiently,



faithfully represented and defended—not for himself only, not for us only; but for all people in all their coming generations, till time shall be no more—that cause survives his fall, and will survive it. The light of its brightening prospects flashes cheerfully to-day athwart the gloom occasioned by his death, and the language of God's united providences is telling us that, though the friends of liberty die, liberty itself is immortal. There is no assassin strong enough, and no weapon deadly enough to quench its inextinguishable life, or arrest its onward march to the conquest and empire of the world. This is our confidence, and this is our consolation, as we weep and mourn to-day. Though our beloved President is slain, our country is saved. And so we sing of mercy as well as of judgment. Tears of gratitude mingle with those of sorrow. While there is darkness there is also the dawning of a brighter, happier day upon our stricken and weary land. God be praised that our fallen chief lived long enough to see the day dawn and the daystar of joy and peace arise upon the nation. He saw it, and he was glad. Alas! alas! he only saw the *dawn*. When the *sun* has risen, full-orbed and glorious, and a happy reunited people are rejoicing in its light, it will shine upon his grave. But that grave will be a precious and a consecrated spot. The friends of liberty and of the Union will repair to it in years and ages to come, to pronounce the memory of its occupant blessed, and, gathering from his very ashes, and from the rehearsal of his deeds and virtues, fresh incentives to patriotism, they will there renew their vows of fidelity to their country and their God.

And now I know not that I can more appropriately conclude this discourse which is but a simple utterance of the heart, than by addressing to our departed President, with some slight modification, the language which Tacitus, in his life of Agricola, addresses to his venerable and departed father-in-law: "With you we may now congratulate; you are blessed, not only because your life was a career of glory, but because you were released, when, your country safe, it was happiness to die. We have lost a parent, and, in our distress, it is now an addition to our heart-felt sorrow that we had it not in our power to commune with you on the bed of languishing, and receive your last embrace. Your dying words would have been ever dear to us; your commands we should have treasured up, and graved them on our hearts. This sad comfort we have lost, and the wound for that reason pierces deeper. From the world of spirits behold your disconsolate family and people; exalt our minds from fond regret and unavailing grief to the contemplation of your virtues. Those we must not lament; it were impiety to sully them with a tear. To cherish their memory, to embalm them with our praises, and, so far as we can, to emulate your bright example,

will be the truest mark of our respect, the best tribute we can offer. Your wife will thus preserve the memory of the best of husbands, and thus your children will prove their filial piety. By dwelling constantly on your words and actions, they will have an illustrious character before their eyes, and, not content with the bare image of your mortal frame, they will have what is more valuable—the form and features of your mind. Busts and statues, like their originals, are frail and perishable. The soul is formed of finer elements, and its inward form is not to be expressed by the hand of an artist with unconscious matter—our manners and our morals may in some degree trace the resemblance. All of you that gained our love and raised our admiration still subsists, and will ever subsist, preserved in the minds of men, the register of ages, and the records of fame. Others, who have figured on the stage of life and were the worthies of a former day, will sink, for want of a faithful historian, into the common lot of oblivion, inglorious and unremembered; but you, our lamented friend and head, delineated with truth, and fairly consigned to posterity, will survive yourself, and triumph over the injuries of time.”

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NOTE. The preceding discourse was delivered by Rev. Dr. Gurley at one o'clock, noon, in the east room of the Presidential Mansion, April 19, 1865, standing at the head of the coffin on the step of the catafalque, around which stood the President of the United States, Andrew Johnson, inaugurated four days previously, and his cabinet, Chief Justice Chase and other judges of the Supreme Court, Lieutenant General Grant and his staff, Rear Admiral Paragut of the United States Navy, and other officers, United States Senators and Members of Congress, the Governors of several States, Foreign Ambassadors and their suites, numerous clergymen and State deputations, forming a funeral assemblage and a scene more solemn and impressive than we have ever seen before.

We only add, as it seems proper, that Abraham Lincoln, late President of the United States, was born in Hardin county, Kentucky, February 12, 1809. His ancestors were Quakers from Bucks county, Pennsylvania, from whence they moved to Rockingham county, Virginia, and from thence his grandfather, Abram Lincoln removed to Kentucky in 1782, where he was killed by Indians in 1784. His father was Thomas Lincoln, who removed to Indiana in 1816. In 1830 he removed with his father to Illinois. In 1837 he removed to Springfield. May 16, 1860, he was nominated at Chicago for President of the United States, and afterwards elected; March 4th, 1861, he was inaugurated to that office, and again in March, 1865. He met his death by a cruel and terrible assassination in Ford's Theatre at Washington, April 14, by a pistol shot from the hand of J. Wilkes Booth. His demise and funeral has filled a nation with mourning and sorrow.—EDITOR OF N. PREACHER.

## SERMON XIV.

BY REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER.

PASTOR OF THE PLYMOUTH CHURCH, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK.

## THE NATIONAL BEREAVEMENT.

1. And Moses went up from the plains of Moab, unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho : and the Lord showed him the land of Gilead, unto Dan.
2. And all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea.
3. And the South, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar.
4. And the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac. and unto Jacob. saying, I will give it unto thy seed : I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither.
5. So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord.—DEUTERONOMY, xxxiv, 1-5.

THERE is no historic figure more noble than that of the Jewish lawgiver. After many thousand years, the figure of Moses is not diminished, but stands up against the background of early days, distinct and individual as if he lived but yesterday. There is scarcely another event in history more touching than his death. He had borne the great burdens of state for forty years, shaped the Jews to a nation, filled out their civil and religious polity, administered their laws, and guided their steps, or dwelt with them in all their sojourning in the wilderness, had mourned in their punishment, kept step with their marches and led them in wars, until the end of their labors drew nigh, the last stages were reached, and Jordan only lay between them and the promised land. The Promised Land! Oh, what yearnings had heaved his breast for that Divinely promised place! He had dreamed of it by night, and mused by day; it was holy, and endeared as God's favored spot; it was to be the cradle of an illustrious history. All along his laborious, and now weary life, he had aimed at this as the consummation of every desire, the reward of every toil and pain. Then came the word of the Lord to him, "Thou must not go over. Get thee up into the mountain, look upon it, and die." From that silent summit the hoary leader gazed to the north, to the south, to the west, with hungry eyes. The dim outlines rose up, the hazy recesses spoke of quiet valleys. With eager longing, with sad resignation, he looked upon the promised land, that was now the forbidden land. It was a moment's anguish. He forgot all his personal wants, and drank in the vision

of his people's home. His work was done. There lay God's promise fulfilled. There was the seat of coming Jerusalem—there the city of Jehovah's King, the sphere of judges and prophets, the mount of sorrow and salvation, the country whence were to flow blessings to all mankind. Joy chased sadness from every feature, and the prophet laid him down and died.

Again, a great leader of the people has passed through toil, sorrow, battle and war, and came near to the promised land of peace, into which he might not pass over. Who shall recount our martyr's sufferings for this people? Since the November of 1860, his horizon has been black with storms. By day and by night he trod the way of danger and darkness. On his shoulders rested a government dearer to him than his own life. At its life millions were striking at home; upon it foreign eyes were lowered, and it stood like a lone island in a sea full of storms, and every tide and wave seemed eager to devour it. Upon thousands of hearts great sorrows and anxieties have rested, but upon not one such, and in such measure, as upon that simple, truthful, noble soul, our faithful and sainted LINCOLN. Never rising to the enthusiasm of more impassioned natures in hours of hope, and never sinking with the mercurial in hours of defeat to the depths of despondency, he held on with unmoveable patience and fortitude, putting caution against hope that it might not be premature, and hope against caution that it might not yield to dread and danger. He wrestled ceaselessly through four black and dreadful purgatorial years, when God was cleansing the sins of this people as by fire. At last the watchman beheld the gray dawn. The mountains began to give forth their forms from out of the darkness, and the East came rushing towards us with arms full of joy for all our sorrows. Then it was for him to be glad exceedingly that had sorrowed immeasurably. Peace could bring to no other heart such joy, such rest, such honor, such trust, such gratitude. He but looked upon it as Moses looked upon the promised land. Then the wail of a nation proclaimed that he had gone from among us. Not thine the sorrow, but ours. Sainted soul, thou hast indeed entered the promised rest, while we are yet on the march. To us remains the rocking of the deep, the storm upon the land, days of duty and nights of watching; but thou art sphered high above all darkness and fear, beyond all sorrow or weariness. Rest, oh weary heart! Rejoice exceedingly, thou that hast enough suffered. Thou hast beheld Him who invariably led thee in this great wilderness. Thou standest among the elect; around thee are the royal men that have ennobled human life in every age; kingly art thou with glory on thy brow as a diadem, and joy is upon thee for evermore! Over all this land, over all the little cloud of years that now from thine infinite horizon waver back from thee as a

spark, thou art lifted up as high as the star is above the clouds that hide *us*, but never reach *it*. In the goodly company on Mount Zion thou shalt find that rest which so many have sought in vain; and thy name, an everlasting name in heaven, shall flourish in fragrance and beauty as long as men shall last upon the earth, or hearts remain to revere Truth, Fidelity, and Goodness. Never did two such orbs of experience meet in one hemisphere as the joy and sorrow of the same week in this land. The joy was as sudden as if no man had expected it, and as entrancing as if it had fallen from heaven. It rose up over sobriety, and swept business from its moorings, and ran down through the land in irresistible course. Men wept and embraced each other; they sang or prayed, or, deeper yet, could only think thanksgiving and weep gladness. That peace was sure, that government was firmer than ever, the land was cleansed of plague, that ages were opening to our footsteps and we were to begin a march of blessings, that blood was staunch and scowling enmities sinking like spent storms beneath the horizon; that the dear fatherland, nothing lost much gained, was to rise in unexampled honor among the nations of the earth—these thoughts, and that undistinguishable throng of fancies, and hopes, and desires, and yearnings, that filled the soul with tremblings like the heated air of midsummer days—all these kindled up such a surge of joy as no words may describe. In an hour, joy lay without a pulse, without a gleam or breath. A sorrow came that swept through the land, as huge storms swept through the forest and field, rolling thunder along the skies, dishevelling the flames and daunting every singer in the thicket or forest, and pouring blackness and darkness across the land and up the mountains. Did ever so many hearts in so brief a time touch two such boundless feelings? It was the uttermost of joy and the uttermost of sorrow—noon and midnight without space between. The blow brought not a sharp pang. It was so terrible that at first it stunned sensibility. Citizens were like men awakened at midnight by an earthquake, and bewildered to find every thing that they were accustomed to trust wavering and falling. The very earth was no longer solid. The first feeling was the least. Men waited to get strength to feel. They wandered in the street as if groping after some impending dread, or undeveloped sorrow. They met each other as if each would ask the other, "Am I awake, or do I dream?" There was a piteous helplessness. Strong men bowed down and wept. Other and common griefs belong to some one in chief, they are private property; but this was each man's, and every man's. Every virtuous household in the land felt as if its first-born were gone. Men took it home. They were bereaved, and walked for days as if a corpse lay unburied in their dwellings. There was

nothing else to think of; they could speak of nothing but that, and yet of that they could speak only falteringly. All business was laid aside; pleasure forgot to smile. The city for nearly a week ceased to roar, and great Leviathan laid down and was still. Even Avarice stood still, and Greed was strangely moved to generous sympathy with universal sorrow. Rear to his name monuments, found charitable institutions, and with his name above their heights, but no monument will ever equal the universal, spontaneous, and sublime sorrow that in a moment swept down lines and parties, and covered up animosities, and in an hour brought a divided people with unity of grief and indivisible fellowship of anguish! For myself, I can not yet command that quietness of spirit needed for a just and temperate delineation of a man whom goodness has made great.

I pass, then, to some considerations aside from the martyr President's character, reserving that for a future occasion, which are appropriate to this time and place.

I. Let us not mourn that his departure was so sudden nor fill our imagination with horror at its method. When good men pray for deliverance from hidden death, it is only that they may not be plunged, without preparation and all disrobed, into the presence of the Judge. Men long eluding and evading sorrow, when suddenly overtaken, seem enchanted to make it great to the uttermost—a habit which is not Christian although it is doubtless natural. When one is ready to depart, suddenness is a blessing. It is a painful sight to see a tree overthrown by a tornado, wrenched from its foundation and broken down like a reed; but it is yet more painful to see a vast and venerable tree lingering with vain strife, when age and infirmity have marked it for destruction. The process of decay is a spectacle humiliating and painful; but it seems good and grand for one to go from duty done with pulse high, with strength full and nerve strong, terminating a noble life in a fitting manner. Nor are we without Scripture warrant for these thoughts: "Let your loins be girded about. \* \* \* Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when He cometh, shall find watching."

\* \* \* Not those who die in a stupor are blessed, but they who go with all their powers about them, and wide awake, as to a wedding. He died watching. He died with armor on. In the midst of hours of labor, in the very heart of patriotic consultations, just returned from camps and council, he was stricken down. No fever dried his blood—no slow waste consumed him. All at once, in full strength and manhood, with his girdle tight about him, he departed, and walks with God. Nor was the manner of his death more shocking, if we will surround it with higher associations. Have not thousands of soldiers fallen on the field of battle by the bullets of an enemy, and did

not he? All soldiers that fall, ask to depart in the hour of victory, and at such an hour he fell. There was not a poor drummer boy in all this war that has fallen, for whom the great heart of LINCOLN would not have bled; there is not one private soldier without note or name, slain among thousands and hid in the pit among hundreds, without even the memorial of a separate burial, for whom the President would not have wept. He was a man from and of the people, and now that he who might not bear the march, the toil and battle, with these humble citizens, has been called to die by the bullet, as they were, do you not feel that there is a peculiar fitness to his nature and life, that he should in death be joined with them in a final common experience? For myself, when any event is susceptible of a nobler garnishing, I can not understand the nature or character of those who seek to drag it down, degrading and debasing, rather than ennobling and sanctifying it.

II. This blow was but the expiring rebellion; and as a miniature gives all the form and features of its subject, so, epitomized in this foul act, we find the whole nature and disposition of slavery. It begins in a wanton destruction of all human rights, and in the desecration of all the sanctities of heart and home. It can be maintained only at the sacrifice of every right moral feeling in its abettors and upholders. It is a two-edged sword, cutting both ways, desolating alike the oppressed and the oppressor, and violently destroying manhood in the victim, it insidiously destroys manhood in the master. No man born and bred under the influence of the accursed thing can possibly maintain his manhood, and I would as soon look for a saint in the darkness of perdition, as for a man of honor in this hot-bed of iniquity. The problem is solved, its demonstration is complete. Slavery wastes its victims, it wastes estates. It destroys public morality, it corrupts manhood in its centre. Communities in which it exists are not to be trusted. Its products are rotten. No timber grown in its cursed soil is fit for the ribs of our ship of state or for our household homes. The people are selfish in their patriotism, and brittle, and whoever leans on them for support is pierced in his hand. Their honor is not honor, but a bastard quality which disgraces the name of honor, and for all time the honor of the supporters of slavery will be throughout the earth a by-word and a hissing. Their whole moral nature is death-smitten. The needless rebellion, the treachery of its leaders to oaths and truths, their violations of the commonest principles of fidelity, sitting in senates, councils and places of trust, only to betray them—the long, general and unparalleled cruelty to prisoners, without provocation or excuse—their unreasoning malignity and fierceness—all mark the symptoms of the disease of slavery, that is a deadly poison to soul and body.

There may be exceptions, of course, but as a rule malignity is the nature and the essence. Slavery is itself barbarous, and the nation which upholds and protects it is likewise barbarous. It is fit that its expiring blow should be made to take away from men the last forbearance, the last pity, and fire the soul with invincible determination that the breeding ground of such mischiefs and monsters shall be utterly and forever destroyed! It needed not that the assassin should put on paper his belief in slavery. He was but the sting of the monster slavery which has struck this blow, and as long as this nation lasts, it will not be forgotten that we have had our "Martyr President," nor while Heaven holds high court or Hell rots beneath, will it be forgotten that slavery murdered him.

III. This blow was aimed at the life of government and of the nation. ABRAHAM LINCOLN was slain, but America was meant. The man was cast down but the government was smitten at. The President was killed, but national life-breathing freedom and benignity was sought. He of Illinois, as a private man, might have been detested, but it was because he represented the cause of just government, liberty and kindness, he was slain. It was a crime against universal government, and was aimed at all. Not more was it at us than at England or France, or any well-compacted government. It was aimed at mankind. The whole world will repudiate it and stigmatize it as a deed without a redeeming feature. It was not the deed of the oppressed, stung to madness by the cruelty of the oppressor; it was not the avenging hand against the heart of a despot; it was the exponent of a venomous hatred of liberty, and the avowed advocacy of slavery.

IV. But the blow has signally failed. The cause is not stricken, but strengthened; men hate slavery the more and love liberty better. The nation is dissolved, but only in tears, and stands more square and solid to-day than any pyramid in Egypt. The government is not weakened, it is strengthened. How readily and easily the ranks closed up. We shall be more true to every instinct of liberty, to the Constitution, and to the principles of universal freedom. Where, in any other community, the crowned head being stricken by the hand of an assassin, would the funds have stood firm as did ours, not wavering the half of one per cent.? After four years of drastic war, of heavy drafts upon the people, on top of all, the very head of the nation is stricken down, and the funds never quivered, but stand as firm as the granite ribs in the mountains. Republican institutions have been vindicated in this very experience. God has said, by the voice of his Providence, that republican liberty based upon universal freedom shall be as firm as the foundations of the globe.



V. I observe lastly : even he who now sleeps, has by this event been clothed with new influence. Dead, he speaks to men who now willingly hear, what before they shut their ears to. Like the words of WASHINGTON, will his simple, mighty words be pondered on by your children and children's children. Men will receive a new accession to their love of patriotism, and will for his sake guard with more zeal the welfare of the whole country. On the altar of this martyred patriot I swear you to be more faithful to your country. They will, as they follow his hearse, swear a new hatred to that slavery which has made him a martyr. By this solemn spectacle I swear you to renewed hostility to slavery, and to a never-ending pursuit of it to its grave. They will admire and imitate his firmness in justice, his inflexible conscience for the right, his gentleness and moderation of spirit, and I swear you to a faithful copy of his justice, his mercy and his gentleness. You I can comfort, but how can I speak to the twilight millions who revere his name as the name of God. Oh, there will be wailing for him in hamlet and cottage, in woods and wilds, and the fields of the South. Her dusky children looked on him as on a Moses come to lead them out from the land of bondage. To whom can we direct them but to the Shepherd of Israel, and to his care commit them for help, for comfort and protection? And now the martyr is moving in triumphal march, mightier than when alive. The nation rises up at his coming. Cities and States are his pall-bearers, and cannon beat the hours with solemn procession. Dead! dead! dead! he yet speaketh? Is WASHINGTON dead? Is HAMPDEN dead? Is DAVID dead? Now, disenthralled of flesh, and risen to the unobstructed sphere where passion never comes, he begins his illimitable work. His life is grafted upon the Infinite, and will be fruitful now as no earthly life can be. Pass on, thou that hast overcome! Your sorrows, oh people, are his pæan! Your bells, and bands, and muffled drums sound in his ear a triumph. You wail and weep here; God makes it triumph there. Four years ago, oh Illinois, we took him from your midst, an untried man from among the people. Behold, we return him a mighty conqueror. Not thine, but the nation's; not ours, but the world's! Give him place, ye prairies! In the midst of this great continent his dust shall rest, a sacred treasure to myriads who shall pilgrim to that shrine, to kindle anew their zeal and patriotism. Ye winds that move over the mighty spaces of the West, chant his requiem! Ye people, behold a martyr, whose blood, as articulate words, pleads for fidelity, for law, for liberty.

## CLOSING PRAYER,

BY REV. DR. GERRY, CHAPLAIN UNITED STATES SENATE.

O, LORD God of Hosts, behold a nation prostrate before Thy throne, clothed in sackcloth, who stand around all that now remains of our illustrious and beloved chief. We thank Thee that Thou hast given to us such a patriot, and to the country such a ruler, and to the world such a noble specimen of manhood. We bless Thee that Thou hast raised him to the highest position of trust and power in the nation ; and that Thou hast spared him so long to guide and direct the affairs of the Government in its hour of peril and conflict. We trusted it would be he who should deliver Israel, that he would have been retained to us while the nation was passing through its baptism of blood ; but in an evil hour, in an unexpected moment, when joy and rejoicing filled our souls, and was thrilling the heart of the nation, he fell. O God, give grace to sustain us under this dark and mysterious providence ! Help us to look up unto Thee and say, Not our will but Thine, O God, be done. We commend to Thy merciful regard and tender compassion the afflicted family of the deceased. Thou seest how their hearts are stricken with sorrow and wrung with agony. O, help them, as they are now passing through the dark valley and shadow of death, to fear no evil, but to lean upon Thy rod and staff for support. O, help them to cast their burden upon the Great Burden-bearer, and find relief. Help them to look beyond human agencies and human means, and recognize Thy hand, O God, in this providence, and say : It is the Lord ; let him do what seemeth good in his sight ; and as they proceed slowly and sadly on their way with the remains of a husband and father, to consign them to their last resting place, may they look beyond the grave to the morning of Resurrection, when that which they now sow in weakness shall be raised in strength ; what they now sow a mortal body shall be raised a spiritual body ; that they now sow in corruption shall be raised in incorruption, and shall be fashioned like unto Christ's most glorious body. O God of the bereaved, comfort and sustain this mourning family. Bless the new Chief Magistrate. Let the mantle of his predecessor fall upon him. Bless the Secretary of State and his family. O God, if possible, according to Thy will, spare their lives, that they may render still important service to the country. Bless all the members of the Cabinet. Endow them with wisdom from above. Bless the commanders of our army and navy, and all the brave defenders of the country, and give them continued success. Bless the ambassadors from foreign courts, and give us peace with the nations of the earth. O God, let treason, that has deluged our land with blood, and devastated our country, and bereaved our homes, and filled them with widows and orphans, and has at length culminated in the assassination of the nation's chosen ruler—God of justice, and Avenger of the nation's wrong, let the work of treason cease, and let the guilty author of this horrible crime be arrested and brought to justice. O, hear the cry and the prayer and the tears now arising from a nation's crushed and smitten heart, and deliver us from the power of all our enemies, and send speedy peace unto all of our borders, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## SERMON XV.

BY REV. ROBERT R. BOOTH, D. D.

### PERSONAL FORGIVENESS AND PUBLIC JUSTICE.\*

“Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will reply, saith the Lord.”—ROMANS xii. 19.

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers; for there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.”—ROMANS xiii. 1, 2.

In directing your attention to these two distinct sentiments of Holy Writ, a few preliminary statements will further the end we have in view, and will make their application more apparent.

In times like these, the public good demands that the light of God’s word shall be thrown clearly upon the amazing succession of events which commands the attention of men. We listen to the voices of those who stand in places of power; we read the carefully prepared editorials of the public journals, and to a large degree our opinions are moulded by the influences which these organs exert upon us. But whatever may be the tone and direction of those, it is perfectly evident that the pulpit has a duty to discharge in applying the truth of the Bible to the great events of the hour, and if this is not faithfully done, then the pulpit is false to its trust.

We may not, indeed, claim for it the right—as, with but few exceptions, its ministers have not the inclination—to interfere in mere questions of policy; but whenever public affairs stand in the area of those sublime and eternal moral principles which God has affirmed, then the duty is plain—the truth must be uttered as it has pleased God to reveal it. This is the more imperative in a country like ours; under a form of government, which visits responsibility directly upon the people, and which reflects the integrity of their sentiments directly in the mirror of the public administration.

True as this is at all times, it is especially true in the presence of events such as these which now thrill our hearts. We must be blind, indeed, and willful, if we do not realize that God is now speaking to us in solemn accents, and pointing out by His providence the path of our duty and the dangers that beset us.

\* Preached in the Mercer Street Presbyterian church, N. Y., April 23, 1865.

We have passed almost, if not altogether, through the Red Sea of rebellion and civil war ; we have witnessed the utter discomfiture of our enemies, and the overthrow of their unrighteous cause ; we have raised our song of victory and of praise for so great a deliverance, and now each loyal heart thrills with the consciousness that not only for ourselves, but for the whole human race and for far-distant ages, has our nationality been raised from the dust, cleared from the manifold embarrassments of the past, and established anew on a basis of union and liberty.

One shadow alone dims the grandeur and rapture of this hour of triumph. But that is so deep and sombre that it has drawn away all eyes from the constellation of beauty, which begins to shine again in the firmament, to fix them upon the pale form, which that shadow covers.

The death of the President, in the midst of the national rejoicing—his murder at the very hour when he was bending the energies of his clear head and generous heart to the great work of healing the wounds of the nation and restoring the breaches made by the rebellion—compels us to pause, not only for lamentation and woe, but also to inquire what God has intended to teach us by His permissive providence.

Not without meaning, as I firmly believe, has this deep sense of injury been inflicted upon us. Not without a purpose of God has this last cruel blow been struck by those who were in sympathy with the cause of treason and slavery. If we cannot bring ourselves to think that God has ordained it, at least we know that in permitting it He has had an end to accomplish, a lesson to teach. What this lesson is, it behooves us to consider.

Incidentally, it has taught us much about the frailty of man, and the vanity of all earthly greatness—and much about the wickedness which the lost human heart can conceive and accomplish. Incidentally, also, it has revealed, as never before, the strength of our Republican Government ; receiving as it did this deadly wound full on the front, yet hardly reeling for a moment, but standing, ere the shock had passed, like the prophetic church of God—"fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."

Yet, salutary and impressive as these lessons are, we cannot doubt that the Divine purpose disclosed in this event is of far more importance and in a different direction. It reveals to us, and was intended to reveal, the depths of darkness which were concealed under the specious defences of secession and slavery, and the utter impossibility of any national compromise with the crimes which they have committed.

This I take to be the great lesson to which God, by his providence, is now directing the attention of the stricken people.

It can hardly be denied that, as a nation, we were in a position

of danger, before this calamity befell us, through a prevalent disposition to overlook the sanctions of law, and to treat the authors of our political woes as if their crimes deserved to be condoned rather than to be punished. The marvellous magnanimity of the Government seemed almost prepared to disregard the great principle of the Divine law which requires the administration of justice, not only for the punishment of the guilty, but also for the defence of the innocent. In the brilliancy of our military success, the crime of rebellion against a free, constitutional government was beginning to be lightly esteemed, and the restraints which must ever be the safeguard of liberty were in danger of being more seriously broken down in the hour of our triumph than even in the suspense of the conflict. Had these lenient sentiments been exercised without interruption it would have been most unfortunate for the nation and for the world—the largest indulgence would have been given to the leaders of anarchy and misrule the world over, could they have been allowed to infer that the failure of their infamous schemes would involve only their subordinates in ruin, while they themselves might hope to get safely off in the haze of their more daring criminality.

In such a juncture our Government needed an infusion of the Old Testament severity rather than of the New Testament tenderness, and it seems clear that God has intended, by this sudden and appalling calamity, to bring to our remembrance those truths of distributive justice which stand out so clearly in his dealings with Israel of old, and which do indeed underlie the whole framework of Gospel salvation.

There is a prevalent mistake concerning the bearing of that old dispensation upon the Divine government as now administered. It is regarded by many as entirely a thing of the past; abrogated when Christ came to achieve our deliverance. It is supposed that justice, as an attribute of God, has gone into abeyance, and that the only example which is now binding upon us as individuals, and as nations, is that of the gentle and forgiving Lamb of God. But can we forget that Christ came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. How can we miss the meaning of that great sacrifice on the altar of justice, by which God can be just and yet justify those who believe in Jesus? That Divine wrath against sin is not extinguished because sinners are pardoned. The stern word of the law, "the soul that sinneth it shall die," is as true in the light of the forgiveness conferred at the cross, as it is in the darkness when there is "weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth." God did not remit the sanctions of his holy law when he became reconciled to man through the blood of atonement. Nor have the Old Testament ethics lost their application, either to personal duty and destiny

or to the guidance of nations. As God passes before us now in his goodness, we hear the same voice which Moses heard in the Mount, proclaiming, "the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." Here is justice standing on guard at the door of his temple of grace, and vindicating his law to the letter, both to those whom he pardons, and to those whom he punishes. We must thus understand the New Testament in the light of the Old, or we shall misunderstand it, and we must conform our opinions and practices, as individuals and as a nation, to these clear, moral principles, or our morality will be extinguished in license and all social order will be wrecked on the insurgent passions of men.

In view of these truths, we urge, therefore that the principle on which the Divine government is administered, is strictly applicable to the welfare of nations. *Deliberate sin must be punished according to law, or forgiven only with the approval of justice.*

This is the process which is revealed to us, in the moral government of the world, through the incarnation and atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ. And this is the truth to which the hearts of this nation have been solemnly turned in this season of mourning.

There are *two distinct sentiments* which have been struggling together in our national councils, as the question of the final adjustment of our difficulties, has come practically before us. The minds of Christian men have also been exercised mightily concerning the true mode of harmonizing the Divine law of forgiveness and good-will to our enemies, and the Divine law of punishment in the interest of justice and for the welfare of society.

It is evident, when we place side by side two passages, like those which I have read at the outset, that they are either in direct contradiction, or that there is a rule of personal conduct laid down in the Gospel, which can not be carried into strict operation in the administration of public affairs.

On the one hand, we meet those precepts of the Saviour and his apostles which direct us to the most patient endurance of wrong, without a thought of revenge, or an attempt to make ourselves the executioners of justice.

The first part of the text stands for an illustration of these, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

And following this directly we meet those mandates of *public justice*, which gleam before us in the thirteenth chapter of the same Epistle ; which represent the rulers of nations as ordained of God to be a terror to all evil-doers ; revengers to execute wrath upon all who transgress their authority.

Is there then a manifest contradiction in these two Divine orders, or are we to understand that there is a law of public justice, which must transcend altogether the dictates of personal and private forgiveness? Undoubtedly the latter is the only tenable view, and it can be justified and made perfectly plain, as soon as we consider what human government really is, and how the sanctions of just human laws are essential to the well-being of man.

In the first place God meets us in the Gospel as members of a lost race, individually guilty and individually condemned. As He offers forgiveness for the sake of His Son, He bids us purge our hearts from the old leaven of malice and selfishness and unrighteous enmity, and to possess the Spirit of Christ, who died for us, "leaving us an example, that we should follow His steps: who did no sin; neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously." This is always *our personal rule*; love to our enemies, forgiveness of injuries, kindness of reproving their faults, generosity in rewarding them with good for their evil.

We are to take this golden rule and practice it, just as far as God has applied, that is, in all personal relations. But it is evident that it needs to be limited in certain respects. For, if it stood alone or without limitation, it would be quite impossible to justify war or to engage in it without sin—no matter how righteous the cause for which it was waged. Nay, more; if this golden rule stood alone, we should find it impossible to sustain the integrity of the social condition of man, or to arrest and punish malefactors and criminals. So far as the Christian might be concerned, under this law alone, society would be dissolved into a chaos of impunity in the commission of crime, and of suffering on the part of the purest and best.

But God has set the limitation at the right place. While the individual is bound by these gentle precepts, society, governments, are organized on a different plan altogether. The State represents the Divine sovereignty over the earthly conduct and interests of associated individuals. Law is its basis, justice is its animating principle, security is its end, punishment is its prerogative.

Therefore, in the second place, we are not authorized to bring these personal sentiments, which we cherish as individuals, into the administration of public affairs, but must stand by the letter

of God's Word, as it applies to them, and *must recognize Governments as Divinely commissioned to administer justice, in rewarding the good and in punishing the evil.*

This principle runs clearly through the Old Testament history and is reaffirmed in the New. Just in proportion, as this is lost sight of, does the State weaken, and the tendencies to misrule and corruption increase.

It is not indeed requisite, that the strict letter of law should always be observed in meting out punishment. Extenuating circumstances continually modify its application. But unless the ruling purpose is to honor the law, and to administer Government in the interest of justice, the State is always in peril, and anarchy lies in wait at the door.

If we carry over these principles to the questions which all men are pondering now, their bearing is plain :

*We have no right as individuals to be vindictive, but as a nation we must be just.* The sentiments and conduct which we could not exercise if we had been injured in our personal welfare, become needful and proper, when we act in behalf of the State, whose majesty has been defied, whose laws have been broken, whose very life has been put in peril. We may obey the voice of the holy apostle in the first of these passages, while we insist that the State shall obey his precepts in the second.

Personally, every one of us has suffered irreparable wrongs by this rebellion. Who or what can compensate for the loss of treasure, for the fearful solitudes, for the nights of agonizing suspense, for the contemplation of those things which have passed before us, in the sad years gone by. Many present have suffered also in far deeper anguish. I have seen here the venerable old man, tortured with ceaseless anxiety for his sons away in the war. I have seen the widow bowing in heart-broken anguish for her only son slain on the field. Fathers, too, have been mourning here like David for his lost Absalom. Twice have we gathered in our place of worship to bury two of the noblest of our American youth. Nay, more than this ; who of us all is not in his own heart a mourner to-day ? As we stand awe-struck and tearful at the cruel fate of our Martyr-President, it seems as though each family circle had lost its head ; and from every heart goes up a cry like that of Elisha : " My father, my father ! the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof."

And yet for us all, in this manifold experience of personal injury, the Gospel law of forgiveness is emphatic and clear. Let the mourners weep, but curse not, for, " Vengeance is mine ; I will repay, saith the Lord." He that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, all glorious in his apparel, is now travelling among us, in the greatness of his strength ; and they that fear the Lord, can leave their cause in his care as he moves



through the land proclaiming by his Providence, "the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my Redeemed is come."

But with this sentiment of personal forgiveness, it will never do to confound the obligations which belong to us as members of a commonwealth, or rather of a nation which has been set on the high places of the earth, by God himself, to maintain the interests of public justice, humanity and truth. At this point our responsibility is drawn, not from the 12th but from the 13th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. It is drawn not from the gentle impulses of personal piety, but from the stern mandate of the eternal law of God. As members of a community, founded upon law, it is imperative upon us to demand the administration of justice according to law.

Nothing more vigorous or more comprehensive can be said on this point than the utterance of President Johnson to the Illinois delegation a few days ago : "The American people must be taught, if they do not already feel, that treason is a crime and must be punished, that the Government will not always bear with its enemies ; that it is strong, not only to protect, but also to punish. When we turn to the criminal code and examine the catalogue of crimes, we find there arson laid down as a crime, with its appropriate penalty ; we find there theft and robbery and murder given as crimes, and there too we find the last and highest of crimes—treason ; with other and inferior offenses our people are familiar. But in our peaceful history, treason has been almost unknown. The people must understand that it is the blackest of crimes, and will surely be punished."

These are brave words, and the nation is stronger to-day than ever before, because they were uttered with the clear emphasis of one in authority.

Let no man forget that equity is the true—the Divine basis of government, and that leniency to crime, in defiance of law, is an open door into the treasury where the regalia of nations are lying. It was for justice that the elder Brutus gave his two sons to the lictors of Rome, and sat unmoved on his judgment-seat, when they laid their guilty heads on the block. It was for justice that George Washington signed the death-warrant of the unhappy André, though his tender pity made the tears run down his cheeks. It is the claim of justice that the authors of this tremendous crime of rebellion against the liberties of America, and of the enormous misery which has followed it, should be condemned and punished, and the people must rise to the stern virtue which will accept the claim, and cry "Amen," to its fulfillment.

This is essential, as much in the interest of private security

as of public justice. Unrestrained mercy to criminals is always cruelty to the innocent. It is necessary for us to make rebellion perilous and odious for all time to come. We can not afford, as a people, to invite by our leniency a new assault upon our Union and liberty.

It is well said by Samuel Rogers, in his "Sketches in Italy," that whenever justice is ill-administered, the injured will redress themselves. Robbery provokes to robbery, murder to assassination. Resentments become hereditary; and what began in disorder, ends as if all hell had broke loose. Laws create a habit of self-restraint, not only by the influence of fear, but by regulating in its exercise the passion of revenge. If they overawe the bad by a prospect of punishment, certain and well-defined, they console the injured by the infliction of that punishment; and as the infliction is a public act, it excites and entails no enmity. The laws are offended, and the community, for its own sake, pursues and overtakes the offender, often without the concurrence of the sufferer, sometimes against his wishes.\*

And now from this ground we are prepared to meet the final inquiry to which all these principles converge. Who, then, are properly amenable to this claim which comes before us in the second portion of our test?

I answer, first, *the institutions* in the interest of which the rebellion has been organized, and this last direful crime has been wrought—secession and slavery—the twin horrors which have sought to rule or to ruin this land: criminal in every aspect; barbarous, ruthless, ruinous to the bodies and the souls of men. To sustain and to perpetuate them, woes unutterable have been wrought among us. For these, 300,000 men or more are lying cold beneath the sod to-day, or bleaching under a southern sky. For these, as many more have been brought home to live among us, maimed, mutilated and suffering. For these, widows are weeping, children are defenseless, and the world is filled with wonder for our shame. Secession and slavery have done this work. Let them perish! In the grave of our murdered President, let the last vestige of them be buried, and let their memory rot, never to be spoken of with approval hereafter by a true patriot or Christian man. Let the axe be laid to the roots of these deadly trees, and as they fall for ever, heaven and earth will raise new hallelujahs to the throne of the Most High.

And besides these institutions, who are properly amenable to the claims of justice? I answer, second, *those leading men*, whether of Northern or of Southern birth, who have contrived and consummated all this crime and misery; those who enjoyed the benignant nurture of the Government only to aim their

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\* "Italy," Part II., Sect. 5.

murderous hands straight to its throat ; those who, to gratify a personal ambition, rent the land asunder, and strode through tears and blood to transient years of power ; those who have fanned the flames of hatred between the people who were once peacefully united ; who have murdered helpless prisoners by thousands ; who have wrought outrages upon the loyal men of their own section, beside which the horrors of the Sepoy mutiny seem like the work of children ; those who, through these four bitter years, have known no end but to annihilate the Union of our fathers, and who have consummated all their foul misdeeds by laying low our gentle, generous chief ; let them have justice, —be they who they may, statesmen or soldiers, editors, artizans or planters, open foes or treacherous friends—let them have justice. This land is broad, but it is not broad enough for them and us. Henceforth, let them have no name, nor right, nor memorial in Israel. “ O my soul, come not thou into their secret ; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united : cursed be their anger, for it was fierce ; and their wrath, for it was cruel ; I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.

And are there others still, to whom this law of justice appertains ? Yes, but with another application of it altogether. There is a nobler conquest yet before us at the South—the conquest of light, and love, and generosity, and pity, over all those who have been misled by ignorance or maddened by lying words, or drawn by force into the mad rush of battle. The helpless people, angry, stubborn, wilful though they may be still ; they have a claim upon us now, a claim of justice—the claim which the weak have always on the strong, and the miserable on the prosperous. As solemnly as we are called to punish deliberate transgressors, are we called upon to shelter and protect the ignorant transgressor. It is ours as a nation to bid these dry bones live, to build up these waste places, to purge corrupted institutions, to upheave the roots of bitterness, and sow upon the track of desolation the seeds of liberty and Christian love. And this also will we do, if God assist us by His grace, until ere long brighter harvests shall be waving on that sunny soil than ever yet were planted there ; until a nationality is builded there which is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh ; with one temple for the people, consecrated to law and justice, and true religion ; with one loyal and fraternal impulse ruling the hearts of all who have come forth from this great tribulation, and who will stand before the world, in brighter years to come, to proclaim the honors and to defend the rights of constitutional freedom in America.

This work of justice toward the people, which the providence of God now lays upon us, is brought the more impressively

before us now, as we stand on the threshold of that civic pageant which is to honor the memory of that great and good man whose life was consecrated to the union of these States, and whose death has sealed his glorious record.

It will be ours, as a community, to receive to-morrow the sacred dust, which comes to touch our hearts once more with pity, and to speak to us through those sealed lips, more solemnly than any voice of eloquence or power could speak.

Amid the tolling bells, the beat of muffled drums, the mournful music, and the steady tramping of the long funeral procession, the mortal part of Abraham Lincoln will be brought hither, and will pass forth from us to his last resting-place beneath the prairies of the West.

Amid all the thrilling lessons of this heroic time, amid all the strong incentives to patriotic self-devotion, and to humble trust in God, which have been urged upon us, perhaps the most impressive lesson, and the loftiest impulse will be connected with the funereal honors to our martyred President; who, though dead, yet speaketh, and evermore will speak, for the Union which he saved, for the liberty he guarded, and for the oppressed millions whom he raised to freedom.

And if it is given unto those who have passed within the veil which hides the eternal world from us, to look back upon these scenes, and to survey the progress of the work which fell unfinished from their hands; if spirits of the blessed know the progress and triumph of those interests for which they labored; who shall say that our last martyr has not already had a recompense for all his patient toil, and for his bitter death.

Yes; from the everlasting hills surveying a nation reunited, round the pale form which journeys through the land he loved so well, doubtless he understands it all; and bowing before the Saviour, to whom he gave his weary heart, among the graves of Gettysburg, he joins with cheerful voice the song of those who have gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, saying, as they stand on the sea of glass, having harps of gold, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

## SERMON XVI.

BY THE REV. SAMUEL T. SPEAR, D. D.

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### OUR NATIONAL SORROW.

“And I myself perceived also that one event happeneth to them all.”—

ECCLESIASTES ii : 14.

I MEET you to-day, my friends and fellow countrymen, under circumstances of the greatest public grief and sorrow. I had risen early Saturday morning to complete the first of two sermons, having for my theme *Victory and its duties*, and expecting to have preached that sermon to you at this time. I waited for the morning paper, and when it came, it brought to me as it did to you, the intelligence of the most awful event in the history of this country. The carrier greeted me with a tearful and saddened countenance, exclaiming,—“Sad news this morning! The President is shot!” I could scarcely believe it true, yet I opened the paper and read the dispatches, and saw that it was so. Ere this the news has spread through all parts of the land, kindling emotions in the heart of the nation which no words can describe. But yesterday we were joyous and hopeful, thanking God for his mercies, and congratulating each other upon the bright prospects of the future. Our recent victories gave promise of a speedy and lasting peace. We saw, as we supposed, the end of this terrible war. How suddenly and how awfully have our emotions been changed into those of the deepest sorrow! Who can refuse to weep? Who can withhold his tears or command his feelings at such a moment? And is it so? Has the President of these United States, the personal representative of the honor, glory and dignity of this nation, the man of the people’s choice, the man who has guided the ship of State with consummate wisdom and unflinching integrity during these stormy years, the man whom God seemed to have raised up and signally qualified for the duties of this great crisis—yes, has Abraham Lincoln, good in his greatness, and great in his goodness, fallen the victim of murderous assassination, just in the moment of our triumph? And has his Honorable Secretary of State been assailed with the instrument of death for a like purpose? We pause in the profoundest astonishment. Our

indignation in one direction, and our sorrow in the other, are past all utterance. The American people never felt as they do to-day. They never before had such an occasion for feeling. We all feel the dreadful blow. It has fallen upon us like a thunderbolt in the midst of our joys. To the deep and pungent thrill of the national heart no human words can do any adequate justice.

1. Looking towards earth and at men, one instinctively inquires: *Why* has the assassinating hand sought the life of Abraham Lincoln, and that of William H. Seward? Why has the President of these United States been marked for death? The answer is a plain one. It consists in the fact that he *was* the President, officially intrusted with the executive duty of administering the military power of this government for the suppression of a wanton and wicked rebellion against the constituted authorities of the land. This was Mr. Lincoln's sole offense. The murderous weapon was not aimed at him as a *man*, but as the *President* of these United States, as God's minister for the punishment of evil doers, and the praise of them that do well. It was therefore aimed at you and at me, at every man, woman and child living under the protection of this Government, at public order, at the sanctity of law, at the integrity of the Union, and at the God who commands our subjection to the powers that be. This is the true interpretation of the blow sought to be struck; and this it is that gives significance to the act. We look upon Mr. Lincoln as a murdered President, and not as a man falling in the private walks of life, the victim of a purely personal vengeance. The blood that flowed from his lacerated brain, was, in the circumstances, official blood. The pistol shot that hurried him to his doom, was fired into the heart of the nation. I do not wish to stir either your passions or my own to undue violence; yet I think it best in this dreadful hour to look at facts as they are, and speak of things as they are. Abraham Lincoln will go down to posterity as a murdered and a martyred President, slain for discharging his duty, honored by God, and trusted by a grateful people. In his death we all feel the pangs of death. Well may a nation bow in grief. Well may all party feeling and rancor subside, while a whole people weep before God under an oppressive sense of the calamity which has befallen them.

2. Looking at the circumstances attending this sad event, we inquire: *Whence* came the blow? It was on the evening of the day when the flag of the Union again floated in triumph over the war-scarred walls of Fort Sumter. It was when the nation had flung her proud flag to the breeze in the fullness of grateful joy; when victories had seemingly extinguished the last hope of the Rebel insurgents; when Jefferson Davis, the traitor and the

tyrant, was fleeing from the hand of avenging justice. It was at a time and in a place, when and where our great military commander was expected to be present, who was doubtless marked for the same fate. The thing was done under circumstances that clearly imply plan and concert of action, and more parties than one are involved in this stupendous guilt. Why was Mr. Seward assaulted at the same time, and in a different place? And who held the horses of these fiends in human shape while each proceeded to the work of death? I know not, my friends, who these men are; but I can not well resist the conclusion that they represent a class, and I must add, a very large class, of those with whom we have been contending in this war, who will rejoice when they hear the news, and laud these murderous wretches as distinguished heroes. I do not say that a large number of persons were privy to this assassinating conspiracy; yet, you may depend upon it, the agents thereof had their accomplices.

This, let me tell you, is the work of *traitors*, coming from the same impulses, and inspired by the same hellish motives, which have governed traitors in seeking the destruction of this Government. It is one of the dread incidents of their treason, accomplished in the moment of their extremest desperation. It is the work of men, the same in kind as those who sought to wrap the city of New York in one universal conflagration; the same in kind as those who refused all quarter to our colored soldiers at Fort Pillow; the same in kind as those who sacked the city of Lawrence, in Kansas, and murdered its helpless citizens. It is a work proceeding from the same spirit, the same style and temper of humanity, that has, by the process of slow starvation, deliberately murdered our prisoners of war by thousands and tens of thousands. Jefferson Davis, the head of the rebel Confederacy, has not personally assassinated the President, I am aware; perhaps he had no direct connection with this atrocious murder; yet, by his authority, by his agents, with his knowledge and approbation, thousands of our soldiers have been literally starved to death in rebel prisons. General Lee may be a Christian gentleman; some say he is; yet he is a traitor to his country, who richly deserves to be hung for his crimes. Libby Prison and Belle Isle were directly under his eye at Richmond; he knew how our prisoners were treated in these dens of death, as well as elsewhere; he was, too, the man of great influence in the Confederate Government; and when and where did General Lee ever lift his voice, or do a solitary thing, to mitigate these outrageous enormities? I am speaking in a plain way. My soul is stirred within me. These are serious times. Let me tell you, my friends and fellow countrymen, that this act of assassination does not stand alone by itself. It is one of a series. It has a

common basis with other acts of kindred character. It represents, and identifies itself with, a class of acts, as it will crown them with an immortality of infamy. It is the creature of treason; and this treason is the child of slavery; and this slavery has made the traitors barbarians, who would rather rule in hell than submit in heaven. The history of this war proves it. We may as well understand first as last with what *kind* of men we are, and have been, dealing in this dreadful contest of arms. They are desperate men. Slavery has made them insensible to the rights of our common humanity, ruined their moral sense, and just fitted them for the work of treason and death.

Our excellent President, for whom we have so often thanked the God of heaven, who in his life so beautifully recognized the providence and the grace of the King of kings, from whose past wisdom we have received so many blessings, and in whose future we had hoped so largely, now lies in *death*, stricken down by a traitor's hand. I have been compelled to ask, in view of the circumstances: *Whence* came the blow? Not simply from the daring fiend who inflicted it, but from a source more generic and universal. Treason fired that shot, and treason killed the President, and slavery made the man and the men fit for such deeds. And treason wants nothing but power to kill this nation. It has never yielded to anything but power, and it never will. The men in whom is embodied this spirit of treason, who are its leaders and great sources, must be absolutely crushed and utterly blasted in this country. You can never have any peace with them. You can never make any peace with them. They are not the men of peace. The military arm of the Government must first subjugate them, and then a just and righteous retribution must so dispose of them that they will be virtually dead to the country. Then you will have peace; and till then you will not.

3. Looking again at this sorrowful event, I am led to submit another question: Who are the *mourners*, the men and women, that will be afflicted by this appalling tragedy? The family of our dead President, his wife and children, and immediate kindred, are at this moment bathed in the most heart-rending sorrow. He who was the pride and glory of their lives, whose relation to them had lifted them to position and honor; in whose private and public character they could not but rejoice, has fallen in a way to give death its deepest affliction, and grief its most pungent sting. Alas! for them, the husband, the father, and the guide is no more! May the God of grace comfort them with that comfort which God only can supply.

The members of his Cabinet, who have so often shared with the President in the counsels of State; the Generals and other officers of his appointment, who have so nobly borne the banner of their country on many a hard-fought field; the common sol-



diers who, under this waving banner, have braved the storm of death, and driven the rebel hosts in confusion before them; these men of wisdom and these men of valor are to-day in tears. Their sensibilities are overwhelmed. They mourn the loss of one whom they had learned to trust, and who had learned to trust them.

All truly loyal men and women throughout the nation are mourners to-day. Every right-thinking man feels as if he had lost a dear friend. During his administration, Mr. Lincoln has displayed qualities of intellect and heart, which have commended him to the strongest confidence and affection of the American people. His sterling honesty, his sagacious and far-reaching common sense, his abiding faith, his hopeful temper, his enduring patience, his fidelity to the country's cause, his amiable, forgiving and unvengeful mood of feeling, his profound respect for the rights of man, and his deep reverence for God, mark him as the man whom the people loved. Millions who never saw him, felt towards Mr. Lincoln the tender attachment of personal friendship. There was a charm about his character and his life which it is not in human nature to defy or resist. Go where you will to-day throughout the length and breadth of this land, into the cottages of the poor, or the palaces of the rich, and you will see a people bowed in sorrow. A nation weeps to-day. A nation's President has been assassinated in the Capital of the country; a nation's President has fallen in the midst of his usefulness, when his experience was so much needed to complete what he had so well begun; and now a nation mourns as perhaps no other people ever did mourn. When I think of the foul and villainous murderer, and of the generic inspiration which he represents, by which he was moved, my anger, I confess, knows no bounds; and when I think of the sequel of that deadly shot, my heart sinks within me. As I feel, so you feel; and so feels every man who deserves the name of an American citizen. Honored and sacred dead! This tribute we bring to thy memory. Thy name shall be dear to us. Thou art embalmed in a nation's grief.

There is another class of our fellow-men that may well mourn to-day, bringing their tribute of gratitude and love, and placing it upon the altar of a great and good man. I allude to the suffering sons of human bondage. These sable victims of outrage and wrong have heard of Mr. Lincoln. They have heard of his Emancipation Proclamation. They have learned to identify their hopes of liberty with his name; and when they shall hear of his death, in the simplicity and honesty of their hearts, they will feel that a friend has departed. Mr. Lincoln, though not a fanatic, was by nature and by conviction, by those generous moral sentiments with which kind Heaven had inspired his bosom, the

friend of the oppressed. He saw and deplored the great evils of slavery, and gave his public influence on the side of freedom. When he issued his Emancipation Proclamation as a measure of war, he appealed to the God of nations and the moral sense of the civilized world, for the justice of the act. To that Proclamation he declared his purpose to adhere, and to it he has adhered with unflinching fidelity. That Proclamation will make Mr. Lincoln's name dear in all ages. It will be read and quoted as a State paper of the highest rank, and the largest philanthropy. Well may the outcast sons of bondage bless God for the life of such a man; and well may they mourn over his death. They have tears to shed to-day—tears, too, that do honor to the man for whom they weep. One of their most eminent and valuable friends now lies in death, assaulted by hands red with treason—a victim of the malign and cruel spirit which had so long afflicted them. They will understand and the world will understand, that slavery is at the bottom of the causes which have murdered our President.

And, my hearers, when the sad news shall cross the water, and fly over the nations of Europe, all the lovers of liberty will stand aghast with surprise. They will join with us in our public sorrows. The excitement and grief occasioned by this fearful tragedy, will be world-wide. The memory of the scene will last as long as time endures. Alas! alas! for my country, when her Presidents, her men in high office, her patriots, her good and great men, must fall before the dagger of the traitorous assassin! Let the power of God expurgate such a soil, if need be, with the dire bolts of his providential vengeance! Let the power of God kill the last relic of treason, and drive the accursed monster from this fair land! Shame, eternal shame on the men, who have the least sympathy with this awful wickedness! They are not fit to inhabit a country they so grossly dishonor.

4. Looking now, in the fourth place, at the nation in its present status, and in reference to the duties which now press upon every loyal heart, I am happy to say to you, that though the President is dead, the nation lives. The blow which, in being aimed at him, was meant for the nation, will miss its mark. We have heard in these latter days of happy feeling not a few exhortations that we should *conciliate* the rebels, and deal very tenderly with them,—that having conquered them, and spent millions upon millions of money, and thousands upon thousands of lives, for this purpose, we should now treat the conflict as a mere collision of ideas, and be careful not to punish the leaders, even Jefferson Davis himself, should they fall into our power. My conciliation embraces the following programme:

First, I would give this rebellion war to the knife, and nothing but war, till the last vestige of it is dead. This I believe the short and only safe road to final peace.

I would then, secondly, extend a generous and liberal amnesty to the masses of the people, upon the condition, that they reorganize their State Governments upon the basis of absolute loyalty, discarding traitors and abandoning slavery, holding them in the meantime subject to a military government till they resume their proper relation to the Union upon these terms.

I would then, thirdly, divide the responsible leaders and prime authors of the rebellion into three classes according to the grade of their guilt: the first of which and the smallest—of which Jefferson Davis is a conspicuous example—I would hang by the neck till they are dead; the second of which, and a larger class, I would expel from the country, and send them forth as fugitives over the face of the earth; the third of which, and a still larger class, I would dispossess of all political power, denying to them the right to vote, and making them ineligible to any office of profit or trust under the Government of the United States. I would visit these penalties upon these men for the enormous crimes which they have committed. Justice requires it. The future safety of the nation demands it. Away with that mawkish sympathy that ignores justice and ruins government! It is alike stupid and cruel.

Such, in brief, is my conception of the great and pressing duties which belong to the hour, and in the faithful discharge of which we may confidently hope to save our country. I repeat it; our President is dead; we can no longer be availed of his counsels; he has done his last acts and said his last words: and now what we have to do, while mourning the sad loss, is to take good care of that country and those institutions to which he gave his rare powers. May the mantle of his wisdom fall upon his successor. Andrew Johnson is as yet an untried man in this sphere; yet I have strong hopes that the nation will not be disappointed in either his capacity or integrity. I accept him as the President of these United States. I intend to honor and obey him as the minister of God, and do what I can to support the government of my country as administered by him. Let us, my friends, lay aside all partisan animosities, and unite together as one people in again bringing peace and prosperity to this land. This, I am persuaded, would be the advice of our President dead, could he speak to us from that world whither his spirit has gone.

5. Lifting our thoughts finally above all the scenes of earth, and contemplating God as sitting upon the throne of Eternal providence, permitting and ordering all things after the counsel of his own will, I advise you, while discharging the duties of the present, to trust his providence for the future. His providence gave us our President, and preserved him to us in the days of our greatest darkness. He was the pupil and the creature

of providence. He sat at the feet of providence and sought to walk in its ways. This providence has permitted what seems to us an untimely fall. I cannot explain it; I shall not try; yet I am comforted with the thought that God has made no mistake. Under his providence all men are immortal till their work is done; and then they go the way of all the earth by an arrangement, which in heaven is no error, however painful it may be to men. Our late President had finished his allotted task; and well and truly has he done so. If we, his survivors, trust providence, and do our duty, God will complete this work, and preserve us by other hands than those we had anticipated. Hitherto he has made our cause his care, imposing upon us a severe discipline for our good, postponing our final triumph till the ends of his providence should be realized; and now he has permitted this great apparent calamity for some wise reason, perhaps now perfectly simple to the enlarged intelligence of our President in heaven. On earth we may never see this reason; yet the Lord knows, and this should suffice for us. Let us bow in faith, and weep in hope. God's government is not dead. God's providence is not dead. These will prevail when empires perish. No fiendish hand can strike the supremacy of God's throne. No assassin's shot or traitor's dagger can suspend his control in human affairs.

God moves in a mysterious way,  
 His wonders to perform;  
 He plants his footsteps in the sea,  
 And rides upon the storm.  
 Deep, in unfathomable mines  
 Of never-failing skill,  
 He treasures up his bright designs,  
 And works his sovereign will.

Such, my friends, are the remarks which I have thought fitting to the occasion. I have prepared them amid the haste and excitement of this soul-stirring hour. I have had no time to revise them, or recast my words. I have spoken to you just as I feel. And now I ask you, one and all, to be solemnly reminded of the fact that you are mortal, that your days are uncertain, that soon you must resign all the trusts of earth and appear before the Judge of the quick and dead. I point you to the Bible for your light, and for your salvation, to him whose atoning blood cleanseth from all sin. I hope, from what I have heard, I am led to believe, that Abraham Lincoln was a Christian, a man of prayer, and hence that his sudden and appalling death has been to him sudden glory. We leave the fallen with God. We beseech the God of grace to make this providence a blessing to our hearts. We commend our suffering country to his care and keeping. We here pledge ourselves to each other, and call

upon high Heaven to witness the covenant, that to the cause for which Abraham Lincoln lived, and in which he died, we will be true to our last breath. We will never desert the Stars and Stripes. We will never lay down the sword till the supremacy of this government is vindicated. We will never pause till the daring criminals who have brought this evil upon the land, are themselves brought to merited justice. God helping us, we will crush treason and suitably punish traitors, cost what it may. Just now we are in no mood to be trifled with by that senseless philanthropism, that shallow and almost soulless sentimentality, that has no foundation in the moral nature of man, and none in the moral government of God. We are not dealing with wasps, perfectly harmless if we let them alone, but with traitors, with the enemies of public order, with men who have virtually raised the black flag over our defenceless and helpless soldiers captured in war, a fit representative of whom has just murdered our President. Such are the men who are at the head of this rebellion, and with whom we have to do, and our duty in the premises is as clear as light. May the God of heaven prepare us for the work, and crown it with his blessing.

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S E R M O N · X V I I .

BY REV. WILLIAM R. WILLIAMS, D. D.,

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GOD VAILING HIMSELF EVEN WHEN BRINGING SALVATION.\*

“Verily, Thou art a God that hidest Thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.” ISAIAH  
xlv, 15.

The nation staggers, as if, besmeared and blinded with their own gore, and stunned with amazement and indignation, each of

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\* A discourse on occasion of the assassination of the President of the United States, upon the evening of Friday, 14th April, 1865. Preached before the Amity Street Baptist Church, New York, on Sabbath morning, 16th April, 1865.

the people felt on his own front the bludgeon, and found delivered on his own brow or throat, the assassin's shot and the assassin's knife, which have been aimed at the chief magistrate of the land, and at the household and person of the statesman highest in position among the counsellors who formed that President's cabinet. To calm, to guide, and to brace us, let us recur to the lesson of our text. It is a portion of Holy Writ which was a favorite theme for meditation, and a frequent citation with Blaise Pascal, one of the brightest and profoundest intellects in the history of our race; and one too, whom the grace of God had made as eminently devout and Christian as he was great; leading him to consecrate the splendor of his genius and the fervor of his nature, in lowly and hearty service to Christ and His truth. Amid the lurid tempest of calamity that lowers and growls and howls around us, this great principle stands immovable and serene, that the God of Israel, the Saviour, rules yet; and that, all-wise and almighty that He is, He shall yet yoke even the whirlwinds of carnage and civil war among the outriders of his own predestined triumph. He is hidden in a dim, untraceable majesty, but though thus invisible, is not aloof from the turmoil. In justice and in mercy, in faithfulness and in vigilance, He is hidden behind all this dun, crimson hurricane, which for the time casts its ominous shadow over all the homes, and activities and charities of the land. The storm is but the dust of his feet. "Clouds and darkness are round about him;" yet none the less is it true that "righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne." Jehovah veiled—and veiled as the Bringer of Salvation—behind the commotions and distresses that most perplex and overwhelm a people—is the truth of which we are here reminded. And it is a lesson that may well cheer and hearten us, under losses had they been even more sudden, more startling and irreparable than ours now are.

God hides himself. We could not, with our present organization, bear the full, bright blaze of His glories; and would be consumed instead of being enlightened by the blasting splendor of the vision. Even the favored Moses might not see Jehovah's full majesty and live. And yet he would not and does not leave himself without sufficient witness of his being and his constant power and supervision. The outer world of material Nature, and the inner witness of reason and conscience in man's own bosom, are more than intimations of the Maker's character and will. Hence there is no inconsistency between the sentiment of our text, on the one hand, of a withdrawn and shadowed Majesty, and the language of the context, on the other hand, where in the same chapter\* our Maker and Ruler asserts: "I have not spoken

in secret, in a dark place of the earth : I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain : I, the Lord, speak righteousness. I declare things that are right." The hiding was not entire and absolute. Nature and History throb and palpitate evermore as in the conscious presence of their God. It was in no muttered, growelling, and darkling oracle that the Most High addressed his Israel. In the center of the world's ancient civilization, and not in any dark nook and remote corner of barbarism, was his revelation spoken. To prayer he turned no deaf ear, and gave no dilatory response. The Hearer of prayer who answered Jacob at Bethel, answered also Jacob's children as well, not at Shiloh and Mount Zion only, but wherever they kneeled. Nor were his edicts flagrant wrongs and palpable contradictions, that violated all natural equity, and which shocked all right reason, as was the character of the teachings of the forged and rival deities of the heathen. But yet, though an outspoken revelation, and a prompt response to supplication, and a righteous and wise government were evermore allowed to his people, on his part, no visible, outlined form shone out upon the Shekinah. And hence, the classical Pagans who worshipped carved wood, and chiseled marble, and molten brass, contemned in their supercilious ignorance the Hebrew as worshipping empty air, because his God was a Spirit ; because the sanctuary at Jerusalem displayed no picture or statue like the shrines of the Gentiles.

And even in the word of Revelation, that he gave, there was beside the much that was plainly told, much that was withheld, or that was but remotely indicated. An attitude of docile faith and habitual dependence, was exacted from the worshippers, and even when he spake to an Abraham or a Moses as a man talketh with his friend, it was not to make the favored patriarch the depositary of all God's councils, or to let either of them into the reserved store of his kingly and divine mysteries. They surveyed the day of the Messiah as at a distance ; and saw Canaan's King, as the one of them saw Canaan itself, in the broader, fuller manifestations of his dominion, only as from the remote peaks of Pisgah, seeing but "parts of his ways" and but "a little portion of Him,"\* and were reminded that they could not "understand the thunder of his power." Even the most honored thus touched but the hem and outer fringe of Jehovah's vestments. And in this way, there were clues given which left none at a loss who honestly desired guidance and defence : there were obscurities and difficulties left which taught the most favored and the most highly advanced their need of meekness, lowliness, and reverence in approaching the Holy, the Only Wise, and the Infallible, as well as the Unfathomable. And these same difficulties, in God's wise

arrangement of discipline and retribution, afforded grounds of cavilling to those who sought pretexts for their disobedience; and became occasions of fatal stumbling to those who, in levity and insincerity, sought such occasion. The very book of divine teachings thus became not merely an intellectual discipline to its students, but a moral test. There was light to beam with growing brightness on the children of light who earnestly sought and honestly followed it. There was interspersed gloom, that, to those who loved darkness rather than light, furnished plausible coverts under which they might burrow their way back to unbelief, atheism and perdition.

And when God came in human flesh, and the Incarnate walked the hillsides of Palestine, and the streets of Jerusalem, how wondrously did this—the Unfolding of the divine character and nature—yet retain, in itself, traits of the Enfolding and covering up of the Divine Majesty. The Manifestation enshrouded, on some sides and at certain times, very much of the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, which, on other sides and at other times, it allowed brightly to stream forth. It shone on Tabor, but how did it seem eclipsed on Calvary. As the Son of God, how startling and towering were his claims, and how full his divine credentials. Yet, as the Son of Man, how did he wear our sinless infirmities as the exterior wrappers of the Indwelling Divinity, and the mortal Tabernacle and Vail of the Incarnate Jehovah. On the side of his abasement, who stooped lower? On the side of his proper and hereditary honor, who towered higher? What Rabbi, or Sanhedrim, or Prophet, or Sovereign, uttered a loftier claim than that which called men to honor him, the Son, even as they honored the Father? Verily, from the manger to the Cross, the Saviour was a God "*hiding himself*;" and yet, along his whole career, in his discourses and in his miracles, how did he allow the streams of his majestic brightness to break out, as at every window, and loophole, and crevice, of the pavilion under which he moved. His entrance upon the mortal stage, and his withdrawal from it, in the interlacing gloom and glory, required, from the eastern sages who saw his star, and the Bethlehem shepherds who heard his angelic escort, and from the Roman sentinel at his cross, watching all the portents of his death, the acknowledgment that this was indeed the King of Israel and the Son of God. But the Day-dawn from on high, thus visiting us, was, both in its mortal sun-rising and in its mortal sun-setting, begirt with clouds. The first comers saw an infant laid in the manger of the inn, the feeding trough of the cattle. The earliest gossip of Hebrew newsmongers, about the visit of the wise men and the star guiding them, was soon intermingled with the tale of the butcheries that left the mothers of Bethlehem frenzied mourners. The attendants around the last



scenes of our Lord's earthly career beheld and heard a bruised and plaintive sufferer, and in the cross where he hung saw probably but a trunk, in aspect quite like to the two contiguous stakes where writhed, on his right hand and his left, two ordinary, vulgar, and ill-favored malefactors.

And, as in the Scripture, and in the very Incarnation, the gloom lay, in broad, mantling folds, around and beside the glory, so, too, in his daily Providence, does he allow himself to seem, at times, withdrawn and concealed, in disappointment of our confiding expectations—in disarrangement often of the wisest human plans, and in what, at least, looks like indifference to our highest interests. Like the disciples in their gloomy conference on the way to Emmaus, we are perplexed at the frustration, so rude, of what seemed hopes so blessed and so just. Why does Falsehood have for an hour currency, and even, not for weeks only, but for entire centuries, in the realms ruled over by a God of truth? Why is Wrong ever allowed a span of impunity—however narrow be that span—under the very eye-lids of a God alike almighty and all-righteous? We may answer, without danger of presumption: Because a state of moral probation for our race requires the doubt and the trial, in order to test the fullness of our loyal trust in the Sovereign and Father; and in order to awaken and to reward the earnestness and importunity of our filial prayers. We walk by faith, and not by sight. Our hope must be fetched from the unseen; for, as the apostle argues, "What a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" So, too, by sharp and sudden reverses, he weans us from self-reliance, and from undue confidence in our fellow mortal, and braces our trust, more directly and more firmly, upon his own all-sufficiency and unchangeableness. He stains, by disaster, the pride of all human glorying, and checks, by flickering shades of uncertainty and bereavement, the brightest of our earthly blessings, that man may find nothing beyond Himself—the All-in-All. Here the parent weeps over the child's empty cradle. There the orphan, through blinding tears, gazes on a parents vacant place. He reminds us of sin, in the perpetual visits of death, and in the suddenness of its inroads; and he warns us against heedless provocations, and habitual sluggishness, by startling rebuffs, and unlooked-for humiliations and desolations. So, too, it comes to pass, that his richest mercies visit us often in the guise, or in the train, of heavy judgments; and so, on many a shore, his judgments upon a nation are made the forerunners of richest consolation and widest revival to his churches. His keen chastisements but plough and harrow the soil for harvests of unexampled blessing, enrichment, and disenthralment. The darkness makes the light more vivid while it shines, but the returning shadows teach us that the light is heaven's boon, not man's perquisite. So, to

his ancient Israel, amid the wonders of the Exodus, while the angel of the Lord, in the cloudy, fiery pillar, led them, there was a continuous admonition of the Divine inspection and control. And yet that captain of the Lord's host walked in darkness, nor let the sound of his footsteps be heard by the quickest ear in all the camps that he now broke up, and that he now again pitched. Yet occasionally and gloriously was the shout of a king heard, resounding in those same encampments. He was their Saviour, but, ordinarily, an unseen one. He was their Conductor, but, most commonly, an inaudible one. He was their Omnipresent Keeper, neither slumbering nor sleeping; but no eye was wont to catch sight of their guardian's feet, and no groping quest felt distinctly the pulses of the guardian's outstretched and guiding hand. Among them and before them—their van-guard and their rear-ward—he yet hid himself from them; constant, and watchful, and bounteous Saviour, though he evermore continued to be.

Now, in days of calamity and trial, we are prone to exaggerate this trait of the divine conduct toward us, as if it were on his part abandonment and desertion—as if, in the sudden lurch given by the ship of the state under the stress of the storm, the helm of the universe had swept out of the Divine Pilot's hand. We complain, with Job, of looking for the Most High on the right hand and the left, alike in vain; of failing, as we go forward, or as we retrace backward our past steps, to discover any further proofs of his nearness to us, and of his interest in our concerns. Is the Mighty and the Just One, any longer, near to us, midst bereavement and disaster, and crimes that unite such cruelty and treachery to such seeming impunity?

A chief magistrate, chosen to his high post in most difficult times—a man of the people, in his training, and tastes and habits, and utterances, but simple, massive, sincere, kindly and patient, had filled his first term of four years. And now, but in the second month of his second term of four years, he is congratulating us on the apparent success of the gigantic conflict, in which he and we had embarked for the vindication of the national unity and life. Four years since had the flag of the Union been lowered at Fort Sumter in South Carolina, as the attempted revolution began its treacherous outbreak. On the very anniversary which completed four years of time from the descent of that flag adown the staff whence it had long floated, the noble officer who had been compelled to surrender the post is instructed to raise it again on the ruinous mound. He has probably done it on that fortress of our southern coast. But, unknown to him and to his associates who have been thus heralding the failure of Treason bearded in its own den, and the return of Authority and Nationality to these their rightful outposts—that president, under whose orders they act, is, at the very centre and seat of the national

government, himself smitten down. It is not in Richmond, the surrendered capitol of the baffled revolt, that this occurs: but in Washington, where, for four years of what had almost seemed a garrison life, he had been each month of the preceding term in greater apparent danger of such assault than now. And this, too, when in a recent visit to that recovered city of Richmond this eminent victim had shown such disposition to welcome the return of the worsted and baffled insurgents, by a gentleness and magnanimity which four years of contumelious obloquy had not soured, and with a parental indulgence that many of his staunchest supporters blamed as extreme. Shrewd, apt, penetrating, and yet familiar—honest and firm, he had established himself against strongest disadvantages—in the popular heart, and in the esteem of the friends of freedom in the Old World. He was widely hailed as of kin to our first President Washington in the simplicity, breadth, disinterestedness and integrity of his character; called of providence, as he seemed to be, to become the Restorer over a wider territory and against a fiercer foe where Washington had been the Founder. He fell, not by an open, manful attack, but under a shot fired without warning, from behind: not, in a collision waged upon equal terms, but by an assault marked with a ferocious disregard of all equality of risks, he is dispatched unawares. And the murderer mouths, with a flourish of his dagger "Such be evermore the tyrant's fate," a motto borrowed from the escutcheon of Virginia, and upon that State's shield, surrounding a presentment of David with the head of Goliath. It was as if the cowardly stabber would plant himself, in his frensied avenging of the cause of Oppression, on the glorious plain of David, the fearless champion of Israel's freedom and of Israel's God; and would fain make his victim a huge, lawless, godless Gittite, who had invaded a country not his own: while actually that murdered magistrate was but asserting as his official oath bound him to assert it, the whole nation's right, as banded freemen, to the whole of that nation's territory.

On that same night and at the same hour a Confederate assassin attacks the Secretary of State, when confined to his couch by a fracture of both the arm and the jaw, and under the vile falsehood of a friendly not only but of a medical errand, with a brazen fraud that recalls the Joab or the Judas, simulating friendship, when contriving murder, he attempts, himself, the young, vigorous, and sinewy, to sever the throat of this aged, disabled, and bed-ridden, and helpless object of his malignity. Frantically he stabbed and bludgeoned, not the parent only, but the sons and attendants of his intended quarry, and all on the same chivalrous pretext of exterminating tyranny; as if there could be a tyranny viler than that which, in the cause of oppression, resorted to methods so mendacious and remorseless.

Was the God of justice indifferent, that he permitted the butchery of a kindly, generous, patriotic, and upright ruler; and that he allowed what may possibly, if not probably\*—be the attendant slaughter of others whose only fault was that they were that ruler's faithful and chosen counsellors, or were but the inmates of the household of that foremost statesman in the cabinet of that massacred chief? While stealthy and craven murder, with bludgeon and knife and revolver, thus raged, and thus—for the time at least—escaped, did the Justice on high slumber, or connive, or sanction? It neither sanctioned deed so foul, nor connived at ferocity so base, nor slumbered for one moment, through all the slow concoction, and all the swift achievement of the plot.

But if God—as it may well be—saw that—much as the nation had already learned, in the few later months of the struggle, to know of the inherent evils, and of the ineradicable barbarism of Slavery—it yet needed, by a more malign outbreak, and a more distinguished sacrifice, to have its holy wrath aroused and intensified into a deadly and uncompromising decision against all further tolerance of the system—then might not this very hiding of himself, as the Immediate Avenger—this abstinence from intervening to ward off the attack—this delay to entangle the assailants by an immediate pursuit, and a prompt punishment on the part of the by-standers—prove him in the end and at the more fitting season, the fuller and the more effectual Vindicator of the rights and lives thus hacked at? Might not the Judge of all the earth—thus for the time withdrawn, and vailing his cognizance of the huge crime—become, by such apparent withdrawal and delay to interpose, only the more signally, and the more surely the Just Extirpator of the usages of a social system, which made for centuries the slave so much a victim, and the slave-master so relentless and brutal a foeman? In a document, which was his own last message, Abraham Lincoln had spoken of God's possible purpose to compensate each drop of blood drawn by the driver's lash, by another drop of blood streaming from the soldier's sword. Might not the All-Wise God emphasize and rubricate that message, so to speak, by allowing the dying spasms of the tyranny which wielded that driver's lash, to dash, as it were, upon the face of this prophetic admonition, the blood of its utterer; and thus leave it, for all after time of our national history, slavery's bloody hand set as its own clumsy seal, slavery's crimson endorsement of its own indictment? Might not the very champions of the institution become thus God's select and appointed expositors of its true hideousness, and his unconscious executioners of their own idol, whilst they deemed

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\*Apprehensions since, in God's mercy, disappointed.

themselves its heroic avengers? They had been wont to speak with profuse, unstinted eulogy, of the slaveholder's relations to his bondmen as rearing a nobler civilization, and nursing a rare and true chivalry, like that of the old Paladins and Bayards. In a school book, prepared in Britain for the use of their own Southern youth, they had spoken of Southern society as lacking but titles to make it the peer and welcome mate of the nobler classes of Europe. When this chivalry, thus disdainful of Northern industry, had been left, as at Andersonville and Belle Isle to famish and dismember and craze its prisoners; to butcher, as at Fort Pillow, its surrendered, disarmed, and unresisting prisoners because of their dusky skin; to plan the burning of Northern hotels with their unarmed inmates, non-combatants, and many of them helpless women and children; to offer in their own public journals large moneyed rewards for the heads of their Northern opposers, as if the Dayak and the New Zealander were the crowning types of their vaunted chivalry; and to carve into finger rings the bones of their Northern foemen fallen in battle; and then, to inaugurate private assassination as the supplement of failure in open war, was not the system, so employing its lease of domination, and so carrying out its demonstrations of vaunted superiority in knightly valor, and honor, and refinement, and courtesy, left virtually in the avenging wisdom of God, to fill up before the nations of the earth, the measure of its own dishonor and of their loathing? The cry of the assailant, as he brandished the knife, "Such be evermore the tyrant's fate," was not, as he intended it, the verdict of conscience and history against the murdered, but the assassin's self-recited verdict of that conscience and that history, and of the God who implanted the one and who shapes the other, against the murderers, and against the yet more tyrannous system that bred them. "To perish in their own corruption," is the fearful doom of Scripture against sinners—a rotting away in the leprous sloughing of their own vices. And the embodied Tyranny that, defiant, elate, and vaunting, wrote itself thus bloody, thus ruthless, and thus false, and then seemed to look round, assured of sympathy and applause, was in fact, but building its own gibbet by the feat, and writing in red letters its own death-sentence for the amazement of a gazing and loathing Universe; at the very same time, and in the very act, at which it supposed itself the rival of old Roman heroism and of old Hebrew devotedness, treading in the steps, as it thought, of Brutus and of David. In the mysteries of the divine government, it is needed that a certain range and swoop be given for "*sin*" to show, in the affecting and inimitable language of Scripture, its own "*exceeding sinfulness*." And God may have given to rebellion and slave-breeding their long tether of domination and their high, broad stage of glorying, and this new glut of eminent vic-

tims, only in the just intent that thus they might earn a wider execration, and go down amid a more unanimous tempest of denunciation and abhorrence; the shriek of their own frenzied triumph, but, in another and juster sense of it, the world's indignant acclaim over the tyranny that dealt so craven a blow, and contrived so dastardly and ferocious a treachery.

God, again, removes his own useful and honored instruments, at dates that to us seem untimely, and in modes, that, although painful and even shocking to themselves and to the survivors and friends who mourn them, yet do, in reality, round the career of the departed as into a more epic symmetry, and crown the hero's or statesman's career of enfranchisement and victory, as with something that resembles the palm of religious martyrdom. The successful policy, and the triumphant campaign might secure to him who had ordered the one or the other, a niche of honor in the nation's gallery of her chief worthies, who had deserved well of the Republic. An earlier assassination of this chosen ruler had been menaced and probably intended at Baltimore, when he was first going to be inducted into office. It was, in God's good providence, an utter failure. How much, in the interval between the two terms of the first, frustrated attempt, and the final consummation of the second attempt, had God permitted this chief of our people to witness and to accomplish. And all the intervening denunciation by frenzied opposers and now at last the bullet of fanatical hate, have served finally to give to the character thus developed, and the career thus suddenly shut, a yet loftier niche in the nation's grateful memory. It has now become shelved, apart from predecessors—and it may be trusted, from successors also—the name and fame of a vast revolt successfully quelled—of a great social reform that seemed to require centuries, completed in a half decade—a name and fame safely sealed by so tragic and foul a death. In the fierce hate of Catholic Spain against Protestant Holland the pistol of Balthazar Gerard let out the life of Holland's noblest and ablest champion. But when the honored Prince of Orange, William the Taciturn died, thus foully and suddenly, although Spain conferred patents of nobility as her guerdon for the act on the murderer's kin, did the death daunt and overwhelm the nascent freedom and the suffering protestantism of the Netherlands? Has the world a literature or an ethical system that can long glorify *our* Balthazar Girard? In an early day of the European Reformation, one brother, in his frenzied detestation of the new doctrine killed another—under the guise of friendship—his own brother because a protestant heretic. The persecuting church applauded the new Cain who had thus struck down, by perfidy and fratricide a new Abel. But did the honors of the church arrest the world's general judgment of the slaughter; or stay

the contagious power of the faith professed by the martyr? The St. Bartholomew Massacre was, for the time, a sad discouragement of the Calvinists of France and Europe. But the field of Ivry, and the Edict of Nantes came in its ultimate train. And, meanwhile, did it most damage and blacken the victims, or the atrocious authors of the plot? And who of us would not rather choose to go down to posterity with the aged Coligny, with his white hairs bedabbled in blood, whom it sacrificed, than with the wily and ruthless Catharine de Medici, and her son Charles IX., who survived the butchery, and for the time chuckled and gloated over the success of their crime? It is the victim, meekly faithful, in such a fierce collision, and such a solemn crisis, who, by the judgment of man's conscience, and the decree of the Divine Lord of conscience, remains the real conqueror, and not his unpunished slayer. As said cheerily the aged Latimer, when they had bound him to the stake and he turned to a fellow confessor with no wail in his tone, and no gloom in his eye: "We light this day, brother Ridley, a candle in England, which they will never put out." Many were the murders of that Marian era; but Foxe's Book of Martyrs which records them, remains to this day one of the bulwarks and safeguards of the National Protestantism. And so in later days of English history, the sufferings of Puritan and Nonconformist, at the hands of the Stuart line of Kings, only served to bar, finally and effectually, the return of that royal house to the English throne. Talleyrand, a perspicacious observer of man's nature and of the currents of social change, spoke of guilty acts that were worse than crimes—they were blunders. Now, really, and under the divine legislation, all crime is blundering. It blunders, as to its aims; it blunders, as to its methods; and it blunders, as to its results. But there are crimes of singular atrocity which have as much of absurdity as atrocity. The slaughter by Herod of the babes of Bethlehem was such a sin. Aimed at the absent and invincible Messiah, it immortalized the plotter, as one, who shrunk not from the massacre of innocent nurslings, in his most impotent hope of foiling the Infallible, and achieving a successful Deicide. Crimes that are of an especial zest to their authors and their patrons, may yet, before the bar of posterity, be adjudged incredibly foolish for the blindness that filled the contrivers as to the inevitable recoil of their own effort. And so the men, who plotted this slaughter in our high places, when talking of tyranny as if that tyranny inhered mainly or only in the soul which they unhoused, were actually stabbing to the heart that form of society, that slave-bred chivalry, which they affected to advocate, and expected, in this savage fashion, to illustrate and to vindicate. The curse invoked by the Jews on the head of the Crucified came, hurtling back, in bloody rain, on them and their children's children,

through long centuries and across wide continents. Those old Hebrews denounced their victim as a deceiver of the people; but were in fact, themselves, the most deceived of all people, in thus rejecting their true Deliverer and choosing to be thrall'd by the veriest delusions of the destroyer. So, in less degree, is it with lesser and later crimes. "The curse causeless" travels back, dire and swift, on the heads of its guilty shouters. The banner may—or may not, have been that day, restored by its old defenders to the walls of Fort Sumter. But the pistol shot, discharged that same day, in Washington, if we do not read all wrongly the omens of Providence, saluted another and more momentous flag-raising. The bullet-shot and the knife-stab, that evening delivered, have effectually nailed to the mast of the ship of state the banner of Emancipation—of universal—unconditional—uncompensated and unrepealable enfranchisement. This evil, Slavery, has been through our whole national lifetime the Achan, troubling our peace. We must bury it now, in this valley of Achor, the scene of our national mourning. Let them massacre, without stint, the witnesses of Right at the North, wherever they may choose them, in legislative halls, pulpits, at presses or in professor's chairs. But the slaughterers have even thus but fixed that banner of enfranchisement. These men of the South have themselves driven, with their own violent hands, the nails that fasten it in place. Who, North or South, has power to draw the nails so driven? So perishes tyranny, drunk in the frenzy of its hate, and shouting its own doom, when supposing itself triumphant over its gasping victims.

The men of our own State may well, at such times, find happy and blessed lessons, as they remember the yet loftier motto, borne on the escutcheon of our own free State, "HIGHER." Let us, in the fear of our God, rise higher and higher, through the storms and glooms of the time, to the purer and serener regions above, where the Lord God of our fathers sits in untroubled Sovereignty. Let us calm and brace ourselves in the assurance, that no event, however unwelcome, or guilty, or disastrous—no influence for evil however defiant—no effort towards good however feeble, obscure, or powerless it may to us seem, is there on our lower plane of action and observation—but it is distinctly and exactly ordered, permitted, or overruled, as a part of the great scheme of Providence, which on that loftier plane above is moving steadily on to its blessed consummation. Let us rejoice that our misguided foes must strike "higher" than they have yet aimed, if they would hope to uproot our confidence and to kill our principles. They must stab out the sun on high—the mounting, morning sun, as portrayed on the State shield, and in its place there a fit emblem, as we may read it, of the rising sun of Righteousness—if they would proscribe Liberty, and banish Right-



eousness, and exile effectually Conscience, and Hope, and Truth, from the earth. Can those who would "frame mischief by a law" expect to succeed, unless they can persuade the Common Father to interpolate it into his own legislation? Till they do, can they hope; or need we despair? And the Jehovah dwelling in the high and holy place, can bring, and is of old wont to bring, great deliverance in the train of vast sorrows, and even of hideous crimes. This the Judge of all the earth has, like earthly magistrates, his certain set times of visitation. In these eras of crisis, and of inquisition, and of retribution, He often precipitates, into a brief space, the decision of questions that have been slowly ripening for long generations before. He "cuts short His work in righteousness." May not the changes and wastings that are upon us be regarded but as a summons from His secret pavilion, bidding us to look up, with loftier aims and calmer trust, and more untiring prayer? Methinks it is but the trumpet peal that heralds the intervention and fuller manifestation of the God, who, as the hearer of prayer, is thus demanding from his people a more earnest and importunate use of prayer. He waits to be inquired of; and he is pledged that this inquiry shall not be left, as to his people's interests, a fruitless one. May we not well believe that the dreadful mutations of our times and of this present war, are in his survey of them, but newer and deeper and broader channels which he has opened to evangelization, and along which shall rush a more rapid and wide stream of truth. Will not the God of Israel—the Saviour thereof—not from trouble—but the Saviour thereof by means of trouble—if earnestly and passionately invoked, come forth out of the very scenes of bereavement, desolation, and carnage that have littered the land with ruins; and show himself the Zerubbabel of a larger captivity than that which followed Nehemiah and Ezra from the Euphrates to the Jordan? Is not the residue of the Spirit with him; but awaiting the ascent of prayer, then to descend in showers of benediction over a regenerate, accordant, and prosperous nation? Those celestial and God-given influences wait not for man's permission to take their free and mighty course. He cannot curb them or exclude them more than he can shut out heaven's dropping rains, or returning daylight. A "HIGHER" power overrides earthly schemings and barriers, flooding and dominating them, like "morning spread on the mountains." Reminded how terribly may be exacted the long arrears of long unpunished sin, let us put promptly and thoroughly away the relics, habits, and spirit of oppression. Admonished, how suddenly the paths of worldly ambition and activity may terminate in the tomb, should not the young, the busy, and the eager, and the giddy be startled, amid these funeral solemnities, to bethink themselves of that eternity, of which we are but too

easily and generally forgetful? Was there not wisdom in his time, and is there not equal wisdom for our time, in the prophet's decision: "And I will wait upon the Lord *that hideth his face* from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him."\* Has he not, and by the same Isaiah, replied to such a quest at such a time: "In a little wrath *I hid my face* from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer."† "And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; *we have waited for him, and he will save us*; this is the Lord; we have waited for him, *we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.*"‡ In the days of his incarnation he seemed sheltering himself from the prayers of the Syrophœnician mother, importunate in her pleadings for her child; but the withdrawal was but in kindness, to make more signal the faith that persisted in praying, and more exuberant the benediction which descended on that persistent, undaunted trust. High, therefore, and yet higher let the intercessions of the home, the closet, and the sanctuary arise, that out of this crisis and agony of the national life may yet revolve untold deliverances, and enduring and pervasive reformation.

Is it not a refreshment and a delight to remember that the Jesus whom we preach, and in whose name your prayers and hymns mount heavenward, and who is now exalted to the throne of supremest dominion, was himself once the maligned, the sacrificed, and the blasphemed? But in his rejection and entombment he was but preparing the overthrow of unbelief, and the triumph of his own gospel and kingdom. "Light is sown for the righteous." Christ reigns in this very day of our nation's mourning; and this Christian nation lives, whoever of its trusted captains falls; and this Christian freedom rises vindicated, consecrated, and necessitated by every gash and bullet-wound made in her confessors. When from under the altar the souls of those slain for the truth of God were heard asking, "*How long, O Lord?*" the infinite faithfulness of that most high and Holy One was heard, admeasuring the time, and assuring the ultimate victory, however long delayed.

We cannot but believe, that the nobler minds of the South will themselves recoil from a cause that has such patrons as the conspirators and assassins, now betraying their hand—that the new crime will, by God's gracious alchemy, furnish a test which shall clear from clinging delusions many of the better intellects and nobler hearts of the southern States. If, in others of that population, it but precipitate a new and darker ferocity, it pillories their own cause; and sentences the fanatical tyranny to a more general reprobation, and a speedier and more irrevocable

\* Isaiah viii. 17

† Isaiah liv. 8.

‡ Isaiah xxv. 9.

overthrow. And as of old Pentecost came in the wake of the last Passion, may we not well hope, and should we not earnestly pray, that the Holy Spirit, the enlightener, and the renewer, and the consoler—will go forth over the very track of devastation, unspent in his infinite energy, on his errand of enkindling, and renovating, reconciling, sanctifying and restoring? May not his own churches, rejoicing in the life, inaccessible and indestructible, of this Blessed Friend, entrust cheerfully to his guardianship their own earthly lives, so soon and perchance so suddenly to close? It is his right not only, but it is his wont, to confer a peace which no earthly wars or commotions can shatter, and a life for the human soul, which death itself can not spill, but only enhance and defecate. He waits for the prayer of Zion; and he responds victoriously to her trust.

Be the Lord's, that you may be all the more truly and more effectively classed among your country's guardians and bulwarks. Free by his grace, the man who is the Lord's freeman—be his worldly infelicities what they may—is at the last free as a denizen of the New Jerusalem, beyond and above these lower scenes of carnage, strife, woe and sin. This Captain of salvation may be hidden from the worldly, careless and impenitent; and concealed beneath the thick veils of Nature and Providence, which neither wholly reveal, nor yet wholly disguise his worldly pathway. But if hidden to them who believe him not and seek him not, he tenderly and habitually reveals himself to the eager inquirer, the praying disciple, and the obedient follower. Sweet are the glimpses which faith and hope and love win of him, in the earthly pilgrimage; but what shall be the full-orbed manifestation of that Saviour seen in his heavenly mansions, not for a time but forevermore. "We shall be like unto him, for we shall see him as he is." Some, even in the judgment, shall, like Balaam, see him "but not near," and, repelled from his throne, shall be sentenced to a yet greater removal, and to the long, sad exile of an endless night and a hopeless sorrow. What a hiding shall that be, on the part of a long refused Saviour, now clothed in all the tremendous majesty of an incensed Judge, withdrawn entirely and eternally from the sufferers who steadily spurned his consolations and the sinners who slighted, defied and forfeited the grace which would fain have blessed and rescued them. In outraging him, they missed pardon and flung away the glory and repose and felicity of Paradise. "They are hidden from thine eyes," was his own lament over obdurate Jerusalem. Let not ours be the stubborn ingratitude and unbelief that eclipses the Light of Life, and leaves us the heirs of such a wrath and such a ban, as the rejected Saviour must pronounce against the rejecting sinner.

## SERMON XVIII.

BY STEPHEN H. TYNG, D.D., RECTOR.

### VICTORY AND REUNION.\*

“AND the king of Israel said unto Elisha, when he saw them, My father, shall I smite them? shall I smite them? And he answered, Thou shalt not smite them. Wouldst thou smite those whom thou hast taken captive with thy sword and with thy bow? Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master.”—2. KINGS vi. : 21.

THE point of this story is very manifest. The principle which it establishes is also very clear. The simple question proposed to the prophet and answered by him was: What shall be our treatment of an enemy subdued? One class of sentiment demands, in the very language of man's nature: “Shall I smite them?” Another replies in the spirit of the divine teaching: “Set bread and water before them, and let them go.” The combination of both would be in the analogy of the divine administration. “Behold the goodness and the severity of God.” There are those involved in every such crisis, the sparing of whom is false to the true operation of mercy. There are those also, the punishing of whom would be an avenging undue to justice.

Both mercy and justice derive their very nature and power from a proportionate discernment. When man describes either of them as blind and unlimited, he paints them as arbitrary, tyrannical, and unreasoning. In a just and equitable administration of government, whether distributing its rewards or its penalties, there must be the most accurate discerning of varied responsibility. The leaders in crime should never be excused from the just penalty of their offence. The subordinates—subjects of relative influence,—victims of determined power,—often more sinned against than sinning—are never to be dealt with,—on the same plane of responsibility. For them, mercy delights to rejoice against judgment, and the highest sovereignty may well display itself in the most complete forgiveness.

In the story which lies before us now, four separate facts are very remarkable, and to our purpose extremely appropriate. I. The warfare was really against the God of Israel. II. The

\* A Commemorative Sermon, preached in St. George's Church, New York, April 20th, 1865.

power which prevailed was the providence of God. III. The victory attained was the gift of God. IV. The resulting treatment of the captives was the example of God.

These are very important propositions in any earthly crisis. The field of their illustration was very limited in the history of Israel. The extent of the field, however, will not affect the propriety of their application. I deem them remarkably applicable to our own national condition. And as you require and expect me, on these occasions of a nation's worship, to speak on the subjects of the nation's interest, I shall freely speak of the elements and obligations of the present crisis. I assume these four propositions as absolutely and minutely illustrated by our national condition.

I. The warfare which this Southern rebellion has made on our Government and nation, has been really a warfare against God. Not Israel was more truly a nation divinely collected, divinely governed, divinely commissioned, divinely prospered, than have been the United States of America. It is no boastful nationalism to say that this nation, in its establishment and prosperity, was the last hope in a weary world that man could ever on earth enjoy a peaceful and protected liberty. This broad, unoccupied continent, which God had reserved for its possession, was the last open field of earth remaining on which to try the grand experiment of a moral, social, intellectual advancement of the peaceful poor of the human family.

Freedom, education, orderly government, secure possessions, equal social rights, triumphant, stable law, universal possibility and prospect of advancement, complete freedom in man's personal relations to God, had been in all generations, and among all people, flying before the violence of savage force and brutish selfishness. Here was the last possible opening for their peaceful conquest. Here only on earth could human welfare be attained, without the violence of destructive revolutions and the overthrow of nations in the confusion of war and blood. To make the other three quarters of the globe free and happy, demanded a process of previous destruction of reigning evil. To make America free, happy, and prosperous, required only that it should be settled in peace, prospered in liberty, and hallowed in prayer. If it could thus be set with plants of renown, generations to come should gather from it the fruits of paradise and glory.

The actual circumstances combining to make up the history of the settlement of this nation were so peculiarly and remarkably an ordering and arrangement in divine providence, that I will not waste your time, or trifle with your intelligence, by demonstrating in detail the fact, that God had chosen this place and this people for a special exhibition of his own wisdom and

goodness in the government of man, and for the accomplishment of great results in human happiness, which had been nowhere else attained. I should be ready to affirm that whoever warred with the integrity, prosperity, and onward growth of this nation, warred with the plans and purposes of God.

But the warfare through which we have now passed, was organized expressly to overthrow the government and integrity of the American nation, for the establishment of local sectional sovereignties. It was avowed to be for the arrest and destruction of the dominion of universal liberty; for the maintenance and perpetuation of American slavery. It was to establish a perpetual degradation of honorable labor and of the hard-toiling laboring classes, by making the capital of wealth the owner of the labor of poverty. It was to create and maintain a repulsive rivalry of distinct and contending peoples, in the place of one, united, and mutually sustaining nation. It was to overturn the whole power which this nation was exercising as a nation, to bless and exalt the earth, by breaking it up into inferior and inefficient communities, an example of good to none, a probable curse to all.

I can not conceive of a warfare, in its inauguration and purpose, more completely against the purposes and the commands of the Most High. If we could imagine its success in the accomplishment of these avowed purposes of this rebellion, it would be impossible to calculate, in human reasoning, the sorrows which it would have brought upon a laboring earth. It would have been the success of savage, bloodthirsty hatred, over all the arts of peace, and the employments and habits of patient and civilized men. It would have been the triumph of murder and cruelty, in spirit and habit, intensified by the pride of power, over all the barriers of law and the restraints of opinion. It would have been the overthrow of all the efforts of Christian benevolence, in the mere hardihood of selfish gain and acrid hostility. It would have been the ruin of the Christian Church, with all its associations for the spreading of the Gospel, and honoring and establishing the Word of God. It would have spread a desolation, moral and physical, over this whole continent, devouring the hopes of coming generations, and blasting the anticipations of future goodness and greatness to the children of men.

The spirit, the mind, the heart of this rebellion have been displayed in the long-continued sufferings of the negro,—in the oppression and contempt of the poor whites,—in the native love of bloodshed, which has delighted in duelling and schooled itself in the skill of murder,—in the foulness of lust, which has left its fruits and marks in indelible monuments through the whole Southern country. They have now displayed themselves far

more distinctly, but in an accordant manner, in the unprecedented and incredible cruelties which have been inflicted on our captive soldiers—deliberately planning the murder of thousands perfectly helpless, and the objects of pity to all other nations, by starvation, cruelty, and neglect. The whole exhibition of that people, as a people, has been so deeply, intensely wicked, that it was incredible, and was not and could not be believed, that such a race of men, within the limits of outward civilization, were to be found on earth. Their success would have been the most shocking social desolation and accumulated crime that the human race has ever seen.

But even all this has not aroused the public sentiment of our nation to the conviction that we were really fighting the battles of the Lord against the enemies of man. And it has required this last ripened fruit of a demoniac hatred, in the shocking murder of the President of the Republic, in the quietness of secure repose, and the cowardly assassination of his cabinet minister, in the helplessness of a bed of sickness and suffering, long planned, encouraged and urged in public papers as a deed of honor, to make perfectly manifest that this whole warfare has been an assault of the most violent of men upon all that was orderly, conservative, and beneficent, in the gift of God and in the enjoyment of mankind. And no unprejudiced and impartial reader of history will hereafter, in his survey of the whole period, hesitate to say: "Never was there more clearly on earth an instance of that heavenly war, when Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and Satan which deceiveth the whole world, was cast out into the earth."

II. The power which has prevailed was the providence of God. The whole survey of this contest past has been a review of divine providence. The facts succeeding have been successive steps in this remarkable development of providence. The divine concealment of the real issue from the body of our people at the commencement of the struggle, was the opening line of this providence. How few were willing to accept the thought, that thus God would overturn the giant wrong of human slavery! How few could look upon the apparently mad attempt of John Brown, in the feeling that he was, after all, the Wickliffe of the coming day—the morning star of a new reformation! We did not justify him; we do not,—we need not justify him now. But we see him now as we dared not believe him then, opening a battle in a single duel, which should have no other end than the universal destruction of the slavery of man.

We were then combining to contend for a Constitution as it was. We asked no change. How few imagined that we were to fight out its glorious amendment on the side of liberty, until the signature of every State to its adoption should be written in

the blood of its noblest citizens and youth! We then pressed a compensated emancipation, and were ready to pay for it, at any conceivable price. How few could imagine that the States involved would madly refuse the offer, until God's peculiar plan should be wrought out, to let his captives go, but not by price or reward.

Most slowly did even that wisest man among us, who has been the last great sacrifice upon the altar of liberty, reach even a measure of willingness that the issue of liberty should be in the war at all. And yet how persistently did this great issue rise, as much by reproachful objections against it, as by growing clearness of perception concerning it, till at last South and North combined to see that the one grand question for white and black, for bond and free, was that which they called "the everlasting negro."

How completely hidden from our possible view was the extent of time and suffering to which the war should reach! Could all its demands have been calculated and surveyed, how few would have been willing to embark upon a sea so troubled and apparently so hopeless! We thought of thousands of precious lives. Who would have dared to confront the certainty of a million? On the one side was ample and long-planned preparation and thought, adequate material, and the edge of united purpose whetted to its utmost temper;—men that were prepared to fight, and determined to fight, not in a question of local liberty, but of universal conquest. On the other side was the habit of good-natured yielding of every thing for peace, a total want of preparation of material, a greater want even of spirit and desire to enter upon the contest. How gladly would they have made any concession and accepted any compromise, before the grand determination for the trial was wound up! Years of defeat were in store, apparently certain divisions were prepared, men's hearts failed them when they looked at the things which were coming; and yet all that they saw or imagined was but a mere toying with the great issue, when compared with the approaching reality, which they did not see.

How wonderfully and unexpectedly was the union of the North created, by the very assault on Sumter which was to fire the Southern heart! How few would have believed that all the Southern calculation upon a divided North, all the fears of mutual contests in our own streets, were to be put to rest for ever in the mere process of the controversy! What a providence for us was that sudden seizing of all forts and arsenals and public property, in the incredible violence of mad earnestness, when a calm and pretentious scheme of counsel would probably have betrayed our giant power in its sleep.

How graciously God has all the time stimulated purpose, and



elevated faith, and new-created hope, by the mere mortification of defeats! How mercifully he has trained us up to the national idea, that we are a people, that we are one people, by scattering the blood of New England and the West, of the Middle and the South, of the hill-tops and the shore, in one common sprinkling, through the whole field of warfare; burying the dead of the whole land side by side, in far distant but fraternal and equal cemeteries; giving a title to every State in every soil, in this precious planting of their strength and glory, until at length we have come to rejoice in being one people, under one ruler—and in the one title, American, we know no North, no South, no East, no West! How remarkable is that providence which has given us a new currency, negotiable throughout the continent, founded upon the aggregate of the property of the nation, and cherished and made certain by the very pride of the people; making that which is proverbially, in social economy, the weakness of a nation, the very strength of ours!

What a providence was that which settled the question of our iron-clads on the sea! "Man had not designed or intended it. Our authorities did not suspect the coming, if they were aware even of the character of the Merrimac, when she bore down upon our wooden fleet in the harbor of Norfolk. No preparation had been made sufficient to meet her. The Monitor, the only vessel in our whole navy that was able to cope successfully with her terrible armament and iron-plated sides, was considered of so little importance, that when she steamed out of the port of New York, on her trial trip, few were aware of her departure. She was not sent to engage her powerful foe. On the contrary, while upon her passage south, an order from the Navy Department was sent to call her back. But God interposed. The order was not permitted to be delivered. Winds and storm were made the executors of his will. Her voyage was retarded sufficiently to permit her antagonist to come forth and display her character and power, but not sufficiently to prevent *her* coming in time to save and defend the nation's property and the nation's honor. At the very moment when really needed, when most desired, and all was apparently lost, she came to the rescue and secured a glorious victory. *It was a victory given of God.*" It secured the succession of similar victories and the perennial monuments of the skill and courage of American naval warfare.

All these are lines of providence,—exalted, hidden, beyond our conception or arrangement. We might multiply them almost indefinitely, for they cover the whole field of observation. Every step which these Southern rebels have taken, they have been fighting against a providence that has been resistless, and have been compelled to defeat themselves. They have fought for slavery as a divine institution, until they were compelled absurdly to

promise liberty to their slaves, if they would enlist and fight for slavery with them. And Emancipation was made the boon for the black equally by the North and the South. They had vast crops of cotton, which they laid up for Northern armies to seize. They issued an unlimited order to plant only for food, to cover their territory with corn, and thus prepared the way for the support of Northern troops, in their glorious march through the whole length of the rebelling territory.

They have lain in constrained idleness around Richmond, until the gathering host from abroad were too manifestly encircling them to permit a longer quiet. And then Richmond must be evacuated and their whole armies, driven from their burrow, be made to surrender in the field. These are wonderful providences of God.

Perhaps the last act of providence is the most remarkable of all. They have combined for the murder of the President and his cabinet, in the hope of creating an unexpected anarchy of the nation without a ruler, and of involving a nation, in the suddenness of its despair, in an inextricable and hopeless revolution. But how God has confounded the counsel of Ahithophel! Satan was not more deceived when he plunged the Jewish mob into the murder of their Lord, than when, on this very commemoration day of his crucifixion, he has aimed a traitor's bullet against the exalted ruler of this people. It is a costly sacrifice, indeed, to us, but the blessings which it will purchase it may be well worth the price. It has demonstrated the spirit and fruit of this rebellion. It has made it abhorrent and hateful in the eyes of the whole nation. It has cut up all partial, trifling dealing with it by the roots. It has introduced a ruler whose stern experience of Southern wickedness will cut off all pleas of leniency to the base destroyers of their country. It has cemented for ever the national union and spirit of this people, by making the man whom they most loved and honored the last great sacrifice for the liberty and order of the people. And just as the murder of Charles the First has been the one grand support of the English throne for two centuries, has made rebellion inconceivably hateful to the loyal mind, and warned off generations of Englishmen from all approaches to rebellion, so will the murder of Mr. Lincoln sanctify the right and power of Government, make rebellion for ever hateful to the American nation.

If there be this day a single fact which especially strengthens the royal house and government of England, it is the unrighteous murder of the first Charles. The severed head of a Stuart is the foundation-stone beneath the throne of Britain and Victoria. And if there be one fact of providence which hereafter will especially consecrate the right of national authority, and overwhelm the first suggestion of secession or treason, it will be this

murder of the man whom all history will acknowledge the wisest, purest, greatest, best of American rulers; if not the Father of his country, at least the loved brother of all his people, and the friend and defender of the poorest and lowest of all its generations. Thus has providence triumphed over our enemies and given us the victory.

III. The victory is the gift of God. This is so clear in fact, and so clearly a consequence of the series of facts which we have already considered, that I need not illustrate it in minute detail. The time is too recent for our forgetfulness of any of the great distinguishing facts which have marked this warfare, or to permit us to arrogate the honor to our own skill and power alone. It is impossible to forget the gloomy aspect of the first years of this struggle—when at the East we were for a time severed from all communication with the national capital—and in the West, all the States watered by the Mississippi up to the Ohio, and higher on the western side—were held and fortified by the rebellion. It is impossible to forget the sadness of defeat after defeat in Virginia; the inaction and unwillingness to act on the part of some of our leaders in positive aggression against this Southern power, so conspicuously exalted, so defiant, so boastful, so encouraged from abroad; the threatening aspect of the Border States, as they were called; the bold threats of the leaders of the rebellion, of the devastation and ruin they were to bring upon this Northern land.

It is impossible to undervalue the courage, the union, the determination, the spirit with which these Southern Rebels were inspired and sustained in their infuriated purpose. It is impossible to forget the devout humbleness of spirit with which our beloved and exalted President called the thoughts and dependence of the people, like some ancient ruler in the Theocracy, back to God. And when in the opening of the second year General Grant commenced his victorious career in the West,—and Donelson, and Pittsburgh Landing, and Vicksburgh, were rapid fruits of his valor, wisdom, and fidelity; and Dupont made his great opening on the coast of South Carolina; and Burnside effected his permanent lodgment on the inland shore of North Carolina; and the noble Farragut opened the Mississippi to New Orleans, meeting in his upward ascent the fleets which came down from the waters above; and Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee, and Maryland, were all recovered to a permanent union; and Antietam and Gettysburgh were the remarkable tokens of divine protection within the limits of our own eastern soil; it was impossible not to discern the hand of God, giving victory from the very hour that the war was acknowledged to be a war for liberty as well as order,—and for the deliverance of the oppressed, as truly as for the conserving of the prosperous and peaceful.

Accordingly, again and again did our exalted and believing President issue his proclamations of thanksgiving, sounding the appeal in the ears of the whole nation,—Oh! give give thanks unto the Lord, who maketh us to triumph over our enemies. But later victories are even more remarkable. The rapid campaign of Sherman, and the quiet, imperturbable wisdom, faith, and purpose of General Grant, in the combination of all his varied self-abnegation, in his calm endurance,—in his modest self-abnegation, in his fidelity to duty, and success in duty, have no parallel in the greatness of character which they severally manifest, in human history. All these displays, though grand in themselves, are but a part of the one wonderful divine scheme. All talent, calculation, courage, and force opposed to them, seem to have been paralyzed and made useless. And as I survey the whole scene, thus rapidly noted, I should hold myself an infidel in spirit, not to say, It is God alone who giveth us the victories.

But I deem all these displays inferior and secondary. The moral greatness of the President,—his meekness,—his faith,—his gentleness,—his patience,—his self-possession,—his love of the people,—his confidence in the people,—his higher confidence in God,—his generous temper never provoked,—his love fearing no evil, provoking no evil,—are such an elevation of human character, such an appropriate supply for our every want, that I cannot but adore the power of that God, whose inspiration giveth man wisdom, as the one author of this gift,—bringing an unknown, a reproached, a despised man, to reveal a greatness of ability, and a dignity of appropriation, which surrounding men had not suspected, which shone too purely and too beautifully to be envied or hated by any,—and which had at last commanded universal confidence and homage from those who had never united to sustain him.

Yet the divine interposition does not leave the field even here. The creation of the wonderful spirit and reach of human beneficence and ministration, which we have seen in the midst of this war, and by this war, and for this war, throughout our country, is even an higher demonstration of the divine presence and power. The calling forth of the Sanitary and Christian Commissions, like the father and mother of the household, in their separate relationships and responsibility—the one striving for material provision, the other ministering the words and acts of kindness and love to those made the objects of their protection; the creating of the Freedmen's Commission, to search and care for the poor outcasts, for whom nothing was provided,—the prompting of the Union Commission, to minister to the wants of those whom rebellion had stripped, and rendered homeless and destitute, for whom no other protection seemed prepared,—the

starting forth of Homes for Disabled Soldiers, and the orphans of soldiers, and the millions of dollars given by a people heavily taxed and burdened by all the cost of defending their liberty and their nation, for the grand and glorious purpose of ministering increased comfort to their varied objects of spontaneous consideration and sympathy,—displaying a love and tenderness, and purpose, which have grown brighter in the midst of the very sorrows which have filled every house and heart,—have been such a divine display of God's interposition, as nothing on earth beside has equalled.

How strangely contrasted has all this divine teaching and guidance appeared with the recklessness of life and comfort which have marked the history of the agents of this rebellion! How most highly contrasted in the different relations adopted toward the prisoners of war! No cruelty to our prisoners in Southern hands could move our Government to a bitter retaliation. Even though sometimes an occasional excitement of acerbity among the people, excessively provoked by the tales of suffering which they heard, has demanded some retaliation, the President could never be brought to be the agent of revenge or cruelty: and the general sentiment of this people would never have consented to it as a principle of national rule. That God, who has given them the victory in the line of their fidelity to himself, would have vindicated his own honor in their humiliation if they had laid such unhallowed hands upon the ark of God. And now all this survey is of a finished work. God hath given us the victory. And there remains as the one absorbing thought that which is our fourth point,—

IV. The resulting treatment of the captives in the Lord's example: "My father, shall I smite them? Shall I smite them?" "Thou shalt not smite them. Wouldst thou smite those whom thou hast taken captive with thy sword, and with thy bow? Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and let them go." The carrying out of this resuscitating plan seemed eminently adapted to the mind and heart of President Lincoln. But too great personal honor and influence it is not the will of God to trust to individual men. When Moses came to the entrance upon the Land of Promise, he was permitted, by faith enlightened, to see something of its glory. But he was not personally to minister in its settlement or distribution. He beheld the glowing future spread before his people, and laid down in the land of Moab to die.

So our beloved leader has been allowed to live until, as from Pisgah's height, he could contemplate the fast approaching future for his nation. He saw the enemy subdued, their strongholds taken, their army scattered every man to his home, and the sure prospect of union, liberty, and peace before the nation.

The one remaining question was, What shall be done with those whom God has thus subdued? The generosity of his spirit and wish, his readiness to give the utmost possible latitude to mercy in the arrangement of their return to national duty and penitent loyalty, were perfectly understood and known. All this future he was calmly, kindly considering, when his life was taken from him by the hand of violence. We shall not withhold our lament that death found him in the sanctioning by his presence of the demoralizing influence of the theatre, unwillingly as he evidently went there. That he should have been thus slain in a Moab like this can never be any thing but a sorrow to every serious mind. The full purpose of that providence we do not yet read. This death, like the burning of the Richmond theatre, many years since, may awaken a feeling of increased horror and aversion to the seductive influence of the theatre throughout our religious community, and may thus be a blessing in the divine providence to arise from this sad incident in his departure.

But he has gone before the settlement, and without the settlement of this great problem of the coming influence and relations of his administration. That his death will change in some degree the character and measure of that influence can not be doubted. That a restriction shall come as the consequence of his death upon the freeness of the action of mercy to the conquered is most natural and just. Human law knows no crime greater in its malignity, or its effects, than the murder of the ruler of a nation, the final, heaviest guilt of treason against its authority. That others, whose influence and example have nourished this spirit, whose words and avowals have often before encouraged and incited it, shall be held responsible for it, is inevitable and just. And our Government owe it to the majesty of the nation, and to the authority of God, which they represent, not to allow such an abhorrent violation of human authority and safety to pass, without a very clear and distinct retribution upon the guilty inciters and accessories in such a crime.

Still, let not a spirit of individual vengeance be allowed to rear the monument to our fallen head. Let not passion seize the reins of guidance in an hour so momentous. Let the widest possible door be opened for the exercise of kindness, and the utterance of welcome to those who honestly desire to return to their loyalty and duty to the nation which they have outraged, and the Government which they have insulted and despised. The intelligent leaders in this rebellion deserve no pity from any human being. Let them go. Some other land must be their home. Their own attained relations and results will be punishment and sorrow enough in time to come. Their property is justly forfeited to the nation which they have attempted to destroy, and to the oppressed, over whom they have tyrannized

and triumphed. If the just utterance of law condemns them personally to suffer as traitors, let no life be taken in the spirit of vengeance. Let the world see one instance of a Government that is great enough to ask no revenge, and self-confident and self-sustaining enough to need no retributive violence to maintain the majesty of its authority. Let the Lord's own example be, to the utmost extent of personal relations, or rule and purpose, determined in the spirit of union and patience and kindness, to edify and restore, in the widest possible application of the spirit, consistent with the nation's safety and the honor of the laws,—the multitudes who have been swept down the current of rebellion, by the dominant influence and example of those whom they have been taught to regard as their leaders in the path of public duty.

There may be great difficulties in the details of the resuscitation of our afflicted land. But there can be none which such a spirit and purpose as were displayed in President Lincoln would not soon overcome and remove. And upon nothing will memory more delight to dwell than upon that high forgiving temper which lifts up a fallen foe, restores a wandering brother, and repays the cruelty of hatred by an overcoming benignity and love. Little was he known in character and tendency by those who met his first administration with violent threats, and reproachful libels. And little has the real spirit of this Northern people been known by the great body of the South, who really know but little upon any subject, but as their accredited superiors have been accustomed to teach them. They have heard from their highest rebel officers nothing but terms of low and ribaldrous reproach and scorn applied to us. They have called us hyenas, and satisfied their hatred by the freedom of unlimited abuse. But in reality there has never been a time when this whole Northern people have not been ready to meet the first offer of conciliation with the most cordial response of kindness. Let that spirit now prevail. Open the arms of fraternal concord. Spread through all the land the priceless blessings of liberty and education to all the people. Give the full rights of respected and acknowledged citizenship to all. Blot out, cover up the last remnant of that slavery which has been the parent and the child of every species of oppression—the one line of division between a free North and a beggared South—and plant around the grave that holds the monument and the memory of our beloved President a mingled grove of the pine-tree and the palm, the orange and the apple, to flourish in immortal union, and to rival each other only in the beauty of their growth, the abundance of their fruit, and the perennial verdure of their living foliage, that God may be glorified in all and by all for ever.

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