



People Spot Missile: Lincoln's Day of Prayer and Fasting

As many of you know, I have been working on a Civil War project. I have been putting in book form everything that relates to the Civil War that was published in my denomination's paper, the *Church Advocate*. I was fascinated as I listened to the debate about the National Day of Prayer. Then I typed the following and was deeply touched and felt it worthy of sharing with you. The following is taken from Volume 27, April 9, 1863 page 398. It will also be in my second volume.

This piece needs no interpretation. It speaks quite clearly for itself.

The National Fast—A Proclamation by the President of the United States.—A PROCLAMATION.—Whereas, the Senate of the United States devoutly recognizing the supreme authority and just government of Almighty God, in all the affairs of men and of nations, has by a resolution, requested the President to designate and set apart a day for national prayer and humiliation:

And whereas it is the duty of nations, as of men, to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God, to confess their sins and transgression, in humble sorrow yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon, and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord:

And, in so much as we know, that, by his divine law, nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world, may we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war, which now desolates the land, may be but a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole people? We have been the recipient of the choicest bounties of heaven. We have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown. But, we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God who made us!

It behooves us, then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.

Now, therefore, in compliance with the request, and fully concurring in the views of the Senate, I do, by this my proclamation, designate, and set apart Thursday, the 30th day of April, 1863, as a day of national humiliation and prayer. And I do hereby request all the people to abstain on that day from their ordinary secular pursuits, and to unite, at their respective places of public worship, and their respective homes, in keeping the day holy to the Lord, and devoted to the humble discharge of religious duties proper to that solemn occasion.

All this being done in sincerity and truth, let us then rest humbly in the hope authorized by the divine teachings that the united cry of the nation will be heard on high and answered with blessings no less than the pardon of our national sins, and restoration of our now divided and suffering country to its former happy condition of unity and peace.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed. Done at the city of Washington this thirtieth day of March, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the independence of the United States the eighty-seventh. ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

By the President. WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Sect. of State April 9, 1863 p. 398

My newest book is now available. A little different than anything I have done before. It is A History of the Civil War as Presented by the Church Advocate. It is volume 1. It covers from May of 1859 to May of 1862. It is what was printed at the time. It is 400 pages The cost is \$40.00 plus shipping. I am also available to make a 1 hour presentation on the material.

I am now available to present "The Role of the Church in the Civil War", "Starting a New Service", "Churches Have Personalities", "People Spots", "Does Your Church Really Care About People?" and "A Christian Perspective on Leadership Skills." "Stewardship and Managing Debt" jm

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