

LINCOLN LORE

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LINCOLN'S EXPRESSIONS OF RELIGIOUS FAITH

The Thanksgiving season offers an appropriate atmosphere in which to present a few of the many significant statements which Abraham Lincoln made with reference to his own dependence on the Divine Being and the part the Ruler of the Universe played in the affairs of the nation.

The human heart is with us. God is with us.

So true is it that man proposes and God disposes.

May God give you that consolation which is beyond all earthly power.

May the God of the right give you the victory now as he surely will in the end.

And above all (with) an unshaken faith in the Supreme Ruler of Nations, I accept this trust.

I shall still receive for our country and myself your earnest prayer to our Father in Heaven.

In regard to this great book (the Bible), I have but to say it is the best gift God has given to man.

Fondly do we hope—ferverently do we pray—that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away.

May the Almighty grant that the cause of truth, justice, and humanity shall in no wise suffer at my hands.

To strengthen our reliance on the Supreme Being for the final triumph of the right, cannot but be well for us all.

To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell.

What remains undone demands our most sincere prayers to, and reliance upon, Him without whom all human effort is vain.

As was said three thousand years ago, so still must it be said, "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

Unless I am more deceived in myself than I often am, it is my earnest desire to know the will of Providence in this matter.

I am a patient man—always willing to forgive on the Christian terms of repentance and also to give ample time for repentance.

With a reliance on Providence all the more firm and earnest, let us proceed to the great task which events have devolved upon us.

It is difficult to make a man miserable while he feels he is worthy of himself, and claims kindred to the great God who made him.

He notes the fall of a sparrow, and numbers the hairs of our heads, and He will not forget the dying man who puts his trust in Him.

Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him (Washington) I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail.

I can only say that I have acted upon my best convictions without selfishness or malice and that by the help of God I shall continue to do so.

Trusting in His care who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well.

Tell him to remember to call upon and confide in our great and good and merciful Maker, who will not turn away from him in any extremity.

And having thus chosen our course, without guile and with pure purpose, let us renew our trust in God and go forward without fear and with manly hearts.

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in.

On principle I dislike an oath which requires a man to swear he has not done wrong. It rejects the Christian principle of forgiveness on terms of repentance.

If it be his lot to go now he will soon have a joyous meeting with many loved ones gone before, and where the rest of us with the help of God hope ere long to join them.

Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken this favored land, are still competent to adjust in the best way all our present difficulties.

The true rule, in determining to embrace or reject anything, is not whether it may have any evil in it, but whether it have more of evil than of good. There are few things wholly evil.

The will of God prevails. In great contests each party claims to act in accordance with the will of God. Both may be, and one must be, wrong. God cannot be for and against the same thing at the same time.

I hope it will not be irreverent for me to say that if it is probable that God would reveal his will to others on a point so connected with my duty, it might be supposed he would reveal it directly to me.

Men are not flattered by being shown that there has been a difference of purpose between the Almighty and them. To deny it, however, in this case, is to deny that there is a God governing the world.

By the help of an all-wise Providence, I shall endeavor to do my duty, and I shall expect the continuance of your prayers for a right solution of our national difficulties and the restoration of our country to peace and prosperity.

It is particularly fit for us to recognize the hand of God in this terrible visitation, and in sorrowful remembrance of our own faults and crimes as a nation and as individuals, to humble ourselves before Him and to pray for his mercy.

Being a humble instrument in the hands of our Heavenly Father, as I am, and as we all are, to work out His great purposes, I have desired that all my works and acts may be according to His will; and that it might be so, I have sought His aid.

It is the duty of nations as well as of men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God . . . and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proved by all history, that those nations only are blest whose God is the Lord.

If God now wills the removal of a great wrong, and wills also that we of the North as well as you of the South, shall pay fairly for our complicity in that wrong, impartial history will find therein new cause to attest and revere the justice and goodness of God.

It is fit and becoming in all people, at all times, to acknowledge and revere the supreme government of God; to bow in humble submission to His chastisements; to confess and deplore their sins and transgressions, in the full conviction that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.