

THE

Confederated Republic of Israel.

A S E R M O N

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CONFEDERATED REPUBLIC OF ISRAEL

BEWARE THAT THOU FORGET NOT THE LORD THY GOD, IN NOT KEEPING HIS COMMANDMENTS, AND HIS JUDGMENTS, AND HIS STATUTES, WHICH I COMMAND THEE THIS DAY: LEST WHEN THOU HAST EATEN AND ART FULL, AND HAST BUILT GOODLY HOUSES, AND DWELT THEREIN; AND WHEN THY HERDS AND THY FLOCKS MULTIPLY, AND THY SILVER AND THY GOLD IS MULTIPLIED, AND ALL THAT THOU HAST IS MULTIPLIED; THEN THINE HEART BE LIFTED UP, AND THOU FORGET THE LORD THY GOD, WHICH BROUGHT THEE FORTH OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT, FROM THE HOUSE OF BONDAGE.—Deuteronomy viii, 11-14.

OUR position this day is anomalous. In the midst of war we are assembled for praise; while the fate of the nation trembles in the balance, we are convened by our rulers for thanksgiving. There is, after all, no unfitness in the service; we can at all times be thankful that our case is no worse. To-day, that God rules; that he hath not utterly forsaken us; that famine and pestilence are not mingled with war; that our soil has not been invaded; that our credit has not been ruined, nor our commerce cut off, nor our manufacturing population unemployed, nor our seaboard cities burned; that foreign nations have not interfered in our struggle, nor our Northern states

been divided, nor our national spirit broken, we should be devoutly grateful. While thanking God for his mercies, it is proper that we should trace our misfortunes to their sources, in order that we may learn wisdom, humble ourselves, and thus prevent our utter overthrow.

As the passions of men and the government of God under all the varying circumstances of life are the same, "History is philosophy teaching by example." The history of ancient Israel during the period of the Judges describes the follies and the fate of their Confederated Republic, and I have thought it would furnish us with fitting lessons for the hour. The government of Israel resembled that of the United States :

1. Each tribe had a separate government, ensign, military force, and municipal rule, and a chief, probably elected by popular suffrage.

2. These tribes were confederated in a general government.

3. Each tribe had its elders, who seem to have been clothed with executive functions for the regulation of sections of tribes, corresponding to our county officers, and probably chosen by popular vote.

4. The Constitution, though divine in its origin, was first adopted by a convention of elders and then submitted to the whole body of the people for ratification.

5. The Congress was purely democratic, but as the Constitution embraced a perfect code of civil law, it was not called together except on extraordinary occasions; when it was, each man, according to the Athenian model, appeared in the assembly with his weapon at his side.

6. The presidents, called judges, seem to have been pointed out by their personal merits, appointed with the divine sanction, limited by the Constitution, and inducted into office by the unsolicited choice of the people. They were charged with the administration of the general government, the settlement of disputes arising between different tribes, the diplomatic intercourse of the nation, and the command of the army. They had power to convoke Congress, and to issue executive orders; but could neither enact laws, levy taxes, nor appoint officers, except, perhaps, the military. They were simple in their manners, maintaining no retinue, and receiving no revenue, except the presents of a grateful people. Without either avarice or ambition, they felt that to serve their country was their highest recompense. Though by no means faultless, they were of deeply religious spirit, acting as the regents, acknowledging the authority, relying upon the aid, upholding the Constitution, and executing the will, of the invisible King. Had the Israelites adhered to their government, they would have been a prosperous, powerful,

and perfect republic ; but they failed ; and by tracing their failure we may learn our own dangers. Among the steps of their decline mark,

I. First, *a gradual neglect* of the great design for which they were raised up.

Every great nation seems charged with some step in the progress of the world, and it is harmonious and prosperous in proportion as it promotes its providential purpose. Israel was commissioned to give theology to the world ; as Greece, letters ; Rome, law ; and the United States, liberty. The twelve tribes were delivered from bondage, educated in the desert, led over Jordan, and settled in Palestine, with a solemn charge to exterminate the idolatrous nations that inhabited Canaan, and which, if not destroyed, would prove a snare to them. Faith, courage, and regard for the divine law characterized them at the outset ; and their enemies trembled at the blast of their bugles ; their victories were rapid, numerous, miraculous, obtained over fortified places and combined enemies, and without serious losses or reverses. Their infantry, armed only with bow, and sword, and sling, and battle-ax, routed alike cavalry, infantry, and war chariots. By the boldness and suddenness of their onsets, striking panic in the foe, they rendered his superior forces and resources useless. Some of the nations submitted to Israel, others

fled ; and though some were left, the country was surveyed and divided among the twelve tribes, God having assured them that he would enable them to subdue those that remained, and admonished them that if they preserved them they should be as "pricks in their eyes and thorns in their sides."

The tribes having entered upon their possession, forgot their great mission. They engaged in trade with the idolaters, cultivated their acquaintance, formed matrimonial alliances with them, made excuses for their idolatrous practices, lost their sublime faith in the true God, and even became fond of idolatry itself, which they found so tolerant of their vices and passions. When they agreed to let it alone they did not consider that every hour contributed to interweave it more thoroughly with the commerce, the capital, the social influences, the politics, the interests, and the sinful passions of the nation ; but thought that, having received such a shock in the revolution, and being arrayed as it certainly was against truth, good conscience, providence, political economy, and the advancing civilization of the age, it would gradually die out, and that they should thus get rid of it without conflict or expense. Let those reproach them who have never felt the love of ease or of gain, the power of lust, or the lack of faith.

But mark the result. The people whose fathers heard the thunder, and felt the earthquake, and saw

the lightning, and listened to the voices of Sinai; the tribes that stood on Ebal and Gerizim, and responded with simultaneous amens to the curses and blessings pronounced by the Levites on those who should violate or keep the law, and who marked their paths and possessions with pillars and altars as monuments of their deliverances and covenants; the people who commemorated the true God not only in their tabernacle and national feasts, but in their habitations and persons, and even the very fringes of their garments, mingled with the heathen and learned their works, and served their idols, "which were a snare unto them; yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan, and the land was polluted with blood. Thus they were defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions."

Scarcely had their great Washington, Joshua, been laid to his rest when, almost within sight of his sepulcher, within hearing of Shiloh, where Aaron's grandson still officiated as high priest, a rich widow determined to imitate the pagan aristocracy and have a shrine and a god of her own. The loose morality of this *family* is shown in the fact that her son stole the money that she had accumulated for this purpose, and when frightened by her curses, he restored

it, and fell at once into her scheme. Soon they had a graven image, a molten image, an ephod, a teraphim, a tabernacle, an ark, and a *priest to suit*.

The rapid degeneracy of the *nation* is signified in the circumstance that a Levite should consent to be consecrated by this idolater of Israel to his mountain idol. This debased son of Levi seems to have been a man of low principle and restless disposition, who had lost character, wandered out of his place, and as an adventurer, *out of pocket*, was ready to do anything for money. The low wages for which he sold himself (ten shekels a year, with clothes and victuals) show how destitute of religion his consecration had left him. It is easy to conceive what ingenious defenses these guilty parties might set up. The tabernacle and the rites were probably according to the Levitical law, and by a natural sophistry they might conclude that what God had authorized another to do they might do themselves; the priest was in the regular succession and *must have a living*. These separate shrines, they might say, would sustain a very important branch of manufactures, cultivate a feeling of chivalry, stimulate to the acquisition of wealth, generate a higher order of character, and, as they might be made consistent with a knowledge of the true God, would reconcile the surrounding nations to Mosaic institutions, and be an important means of Judaizing the world. They might even

plead the example of Jacob's family, and perhaps of Jacob himself, if they could imagine an image on the top of his staff.

II. The second step of decline was *filibustering*. This term, in recent usage, applies to bodies of armed men who unlawfully invade territory for the purpose of revolutionizing its government. The Danites, who, in the division of the country under Joshua, had received an ample inheritance, being straitened in their settlements and too tolerant of idolatry to conquer the residue of their lands, sent an exploring expedition to the northern extremity of the country, where they could plant a colony which, being removed from the supervision of their brethren, might be more unrestrained in its evil tendency. On their way they stopped at Mount Ephraim, and made the acquaintance of Micah's priest, whom they found a more convenient oracle for their purpose than that of Shiloh. Proceeding to Laish, they found, on a fertile soil, a colony of Sidonians — humble, inoffensive, quiet, separated from the mother-country by lofty mountains, and having no alliances, offensive or defensive, with surrounding nations. It was evident that they could destroy this people, and, possessing their territory, do what they pleased, there being "no magistrate in the land who could put them to shame."

To his point the Danites sent a colony, headed by six hundred soldiers. On their way they called at Micah's house, and stealing his tabernacle, captured his priest, who was all too willing to be captured in view of greater power and higher wages. When Micah and his neighbors pursued after his property and fugitive, they gave them to understand that they "might get hurt," for men who can steal can murder. That such men wanted a religion of any kind may seem strange to those who have not reflected that all men have some faith in supernal and infernal powers, and in their influence over human destiny, and that no man, however wicked, can deliberately sin without intention of propitiation and hope of pardon. Hence the intense wickedness of those priests who reconcile the conscience of men to immorality, either by a false faith or a false hope of impunity. Arriving at Laish, the filibusters put the unsuspecting inhabitants to the sword, burned their city, and settling upon their lands *annexed* to Israel a state recognizing idolatry in its organic law, and thus gave the sin which previously had only a domestic character a *political* importance. In this way a rival temple was set up, which continued all the time that the house of God was at Shiloh. The original design was not to renounce God, but to localize his presence under the symbols and forms of surrounding nations; but it was a twofold violation of the law — the use

of a forbidden ritual and forbidden symbols in divine worship, and the acceptance of ministrations from one who could not legally be a priest. The progress from this deflection from correct principle became rapid, and the result permanent. It gave countenance and support to the idolatry existing in other states, was afterward merged in one of the golden calves set up by Jeroboam, and was not finally eradicated until the captivity.

Such a violation of law could hardly have occurred if the state rights party had not gained upon the federal one. A king would have prevented this, and so would a judge, had not the local government rendered weak the general one. It is not difficult to conceive that there were some blind or wicked enough to maintain that this *extension* of idolatry would not increase the number of idols, but, by diffusing sin, might even weaken it. The artists, however, who made the molten and graven images must have known better. How melancholy to see this people, to whom God had proclaimed himself the King eternal, infinite, immutable, invisible; to whom he had given the tables of the law and the angel of his presence; forget the purpose for which they were separated from other nations, lose the animating spirit of their body politic, and ignore the foundation of their declaration of independence!

III. The third step in their decline was *secession*. Idolatry had become a disturbing element in the republic. Not only were the remains of the idolatrous nations to be found all through the land, but the Israelites themselves had become infected. Probably there were various opinions in regard to idolatry in those territories not yet incorporated; some politicians being for non-committal, others for non-intervention, allowing the inhabitants to settle the question for themselves; others for protection, regarding idols as a species of property recognized by the Constitution; others for non-extension and gradual removal. Where, therefore, it was strongly entrenched in a tribe, it was natural that this tribe should grow restive and seek emancipation from the bonds of the federation. It would seem that the worst fruit of idolatry first ripened in Benjamin, whose city of Gibeah had become a Sodom. In its lust it had committed murder upon the wife of a Levite. It was a clear case, but there was neither apology nor redress. The common flag had been cloven down, for if a citizen of one tribe could not be protected in another there was an end of the commonwealth. A congress was convened at Mizpeh to deliberate upon the case, but the guilty tribe was not represented; it had *seceded*. The case was stated, and the vote was unanimous—not, mark! to extinguish idolatry; that did not come into question, and

some of the tribes involved in it had contributed their quota of troops; but to maintain the "Union, the Constitution, and the laws." Four hundred thousand soldiers were organized and the requisite tax levied. But before proceeding to extremities commissioners were sent among the Benjamites to ask that the guilty parties should be given up. The inference is clear that the tribe must have been seeking an occasion to break the federation, or they would have complied, and it is strengthened by the consideration that they were prepared to resist even the vast armament brought against them. They had an army of twenty-six thousand seven hundred men, which probably had the superiority in organization, arms, generals, military stores, and skill. It is mentioned that they had seven hundred sharpshooters, who could sling stones at a hair-breadth and not miss. Before any attack was made the children of Israel asked God, "Which of us shall go up first to the battle against the children of Benjamin?" The case was so plain that they did not ask *whether* they should go, but which should lead the van. They marched toward the rebel capital, and were repulsed with a loss of twenty-two thousand men. It is easy to conceive the mortification which must have ensued. With a larger force, greater resources, a good cause, and the approbation of God, they had been worsted in their first campaign. But the

Israelites "encouraged themselves." They had need to do so. How many wives were made widows! how many orphans sent up their wail! how many sisters bathed the cold faces of their brothers! how many betrothed bent in agony over new-made graves! But the nation flinched not. They set the battle again in array in the same place and manner. The generals seem to have been infatuated. **And** the children of Israel again went up to the house of the Lord, this time bathed in tears, asking now, not who shall go up first, but whether they shall *go up at all*, and intimating their doubts in their form of speech, "against Benjamin, *my brother*." Yet the answer of God is distinctly, "Go up against him." He was unwilling that his heritage should be cleft asunder; that a cause of irritation should exist in its center; that an avenue of approach to Jerusalem should be left to the Mesopotamians, Moabites, and Ammonites; that the Jordan should be shut off from the west, and that a wedge of foreign territory should separate from their brethren the two tribes and a half on the east. But the second march upon the rebel capital is also a failure. The Israelites are repulsed with a loss of eighteen thousand men. Terrible must have been the thoughts of the people at this disaster. Many doubtless attributed all the blame to the general, and he probably was incompetent or infatuated; but he is lost sight of in the

history. There was a deeper cause: the Israelites themselves were involved in idolatry; the Danites, who had sent off a colony of idolaters, were in the army, and the nation had forgotten its vows to God. They deserved punishment, and God was using their brethren to inflict it. It might be amusing, if we had the perfect history of the times, to trace the actions and reactions of parties and prejudices at this time. While some were venting all their indignation against the secessionists, others were venting theirs against the iconoclasts as the troublers of Israel. But the great body of the nation was at length aroused to a sense of its sin, and "went up and came into the house of God and wept, and sat there before the Lord, and fasted that day until even, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings."

It were not surprising if at this time there were submissionists; men who would buy peace at any price, even by nationalizing idolatry and sodomy too, and the whole people are evidently in a more doubtful mind than ever. Their prayer *now* is, "Shall I yet *again* go up against the children of Benjamin, *my brother*, or *shall I cease?*" (recognize their independence.) "And the Lord said, Go up; for tomorrow I will deliver them into thine hand." Probably a change of generals, and certainly a change of tactics now took place. Instead of fighting the old battle of "Bull Run" over again, they send out two

or three columns against the rebel capital, and while the main body engages the enemy in front and draws him from his intrenchments, a force enters Gibeah, while another attacks the enemy in the rear. The rout of the Benjamites was perfect; they were inclosed, slain, trodden down, and the whole tribe was exterminated except seven hundred warriors who escaped to the rock Rimmon. The idols and groves were swept, as everything else in Benjamin, with the besom of destruction. The radical party had triumphed, and doubtless they now insisted that the ax should be laid to the root of the tree, that the whole land should be purged of the disturbing element of idolatry which had proved so hostile both to the tribal union and the national life. But a reaction ensued, and the conservatives again came into power. This was very natural. Suppose a father inflicting righteous punishment upon a son. The son turns upon him; the struggle becomes one of life and death; the son is overcome. The father, who in the heat of passion would have drawn the last drop of his child's blood, now that he stands over him a victor, and looks upon his wounds and broken bones and gushing blood, and puts his arm beneath his strengthless head, and kisses his pale and corpse-like cheek, and hears his soft whisper of sorrow and submission, feels an entire revolution in his heart. Forgiveness flows, and properly;

Who by repentance is not satisfied
Is nor of heaven nor earth, for these are pleased;
By penitence the Eternal's wrath's appeased.

But the feelings stop not here; the father says; "Forgive *me*, my boy, my precious one, I have gone too far! O God, have I killed my son! Live, my son, live; or I myself will die." Such was the feeling in Israel. "And the people came to the house of God, and abode there till even before God, and lifted up their voices, and wept sore, and said, O Lord God of Israel, why is this come to pass in Israel, that there should be to-day one tribe lacking in Israel?" If in the ecstasy of peace and the joy of reconciliation, the radicals had proposed the removal of all idolatry, even though they had spoken the words of God, "Thine eye shall have no pity upon them, neither shalt thou serve their gods, for they will be a snare unto thee," what would have been the reply? "Fools! murderers! madmen! taxes! desolation! sword! fire! famine! Will ye blot out another tribe? Will ye utterly ruin the land?" So the people departed, leaving idolatry all through Canaan, and legalized in an Israelitish tribe. What was the result?

The people, that passed safely through the serpents and scorpions of the desert, and drank water from the rock and ate manna in the wilderness, who might have been terrified by *Omnipotence* and

anointed of *heaven*, become divided, distracted, a prey to surrounding nations: eight years crushed under Mesopotamia, eighteen under Moab, twenty under Jabin, seven under Midian, eighteen under Ammon, twenty under the Philistines. In their sufferings they repented and turned to God, and he raised up a deliverer; but they soon relapsed and suffered again, and repented again. So that the rectitude of God's providence is as clear in their case as history and prophecy can make it.

IV. The fourth step of decline was *gradual disintegration*. Without formal secession, the nation, having lost its spirit and principle, lost its political unity. The separate interests and power of the tribes gradually absorbed those of the general government, which could not be concentrated even in times of national peril. When Ehud blew his trumpet Ephraim only responded to its call; all the other tribes resisted the draft. When Barak sounded to arms, Reuben abode among his sheepfolds listening to the bleating of his flocks, and Gilead refused to cross the Jordan with his quota. While noble Zebulun and Naphtali fought the kings of Canaan by the waters of Megiddo, Dan remained in his ships, Asher continued on the sea-shore, and Meroz was earning the bitter curses of the angel of the Lord because she came not to the help of the Lord against

the mighty. When Gideon blew his horn, of the thirty thousand that gathered after him only three hundred had patriotism and courage worthy to blow his war-cry down the mountain.

V. *Political corruption* come in apace. Abimelech went to Shechem to plot the overthrow of the partial federal government which yet remained. By appealing to family pride and interest he won over the leading men of the capital, and aroused the jealousy of the rash and chivalrous tribe of Ephraim. In this state of excitement he grossly misrepresented the designs of the children of Gideon. This great man had said to his grateful country, when she desired to make him a king, "I will not rule over you, neither shall my sons;" nor is there any evidence that they forgot their father's command. The friends of Abimelech do not name a single mental or moral qualification which he has for government, but appeal simply to personal interests and party spirit, "He is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh," but upon this ground they expect the *offices*. "Genuflexion before either the idol or the dollar atrophies the muscle which walks and the will which goes." Sometimes even conscience cannot stand before selfishness: "I exist, I must eat; I am in love, I must have money; I am old, I want rest; I have a family, I must have an *office*; I have a good *post*, let me alone."

The conspiracy organized, it must have means. Corrupt politicians can steal; and if they can have no access to the treasury they may to the Church. The purse of Abimelech is filled with the offerings in the house of God. Money provided, an army is soon improvised. Vain and light persons are ready to do anything for a *consideration*. Abimelech proceeds to Ophrah, and making a night attack captures and slays all his brethren but one. The multitude side with the victorious party, and Abimelech is crowned a petty and contemptible monarch. How beautiful and instructive the parable which Jotham utters on the occasion from the top of Gerizim: The trees make a king; their first choice is the olive. But the olive says, "Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honor God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees? And the trees said to the fig-tree, Come thou, and reign over us. But the fig-tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees? Then said the trees unto the vine, Come thou, and reign over us. And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees? Then said all the trees unto the bramble, Come thou, and reign over us. And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow: and if not, let fire come out of

the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon;" that is, "I will rule or ruin."

Here is the great danger in republics: good men refuse offices, and wicked men seek them. The olive was wrong, the fig-tree was wrong, the vine was wrong; each should have been willing to make sacrifices for the general good. The rest of the trees were wrong in taking the forward and worthless candidate; they must have known that discord, quarrels, strifes (devouring fires) must result.

The more corrupt politics become, the more good men *do*, yet the less they *should*, shrink from them; they should be willing to meet the lies, the misrepresentations, the chicanery of the canvass, the storms of the arena, and the schemes and bribes and perjury of scoundrels, yea, even the fires of death, for the sake of their country.

We need not enumerate the treasons and revolutions which followed.

VI. The next step is *anarchy*. At length there seems to have been no common head of the confederacy elected; therefore, no provision for the common defense and general welfare. The consequence was that Israel fell completely under the power of the Philistines. God in his mercy miraculously called, and supernaturally endowed, a deliverer, Samson; but the nation, in a mean and cowardly

spirit, surrendered him to his foes. There remained now no bond but the religious one to unite them, though the high priest seems to have exercised some judicial and executive functions; but on his death the disintegration and degeneracy was complete. The state rights doctrine triumphed, the national bonds were sundered, only contemptible independent republics were left, the public spirit had died out; the theocratic influence, in the absence of its appropriate channels, ceased to manifest itself, and there was "no open vision." Jehovah, however, did not totally abandon his people, but renewed his oracles by the child Samuel. After twenty years of national prostration, desolation, and humiliation, when all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord, the prophet convened a Congress at Mizpeh, the federal city, at which he was elected president, and under the rule of this prophet-judge Israel was delivered from its enemies, and began to enjoy prosperity and national consideration. As Samuel drew near to his end the elders, or governors, of Israel, fearing the disturbing influence of tribal jealousies, the renewal of secession, the horrors of civil war, the desolations of anarchy and subjugation from foreign powers, held a convention at Ramah, and demanded a king. Samuel was displeased, thinking it a reflection upon himself; but God advised him to yield, and said, "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me." The last

republican chief, however, determined that if Israel had a monarchy, it should have a Constitution. He therefore "wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord." The monarch was chosen by lot; the people shouted, "God save the king!" and thus ended the first confederated republic, which, though originated under the care and protection of the theocracy, yet through successive steps of degeneracy, all originating in a neglect of the *primal purpose* of the nation and the first principle of its declaration of independence, *perished*. The change of the form of government, though it concentrated the energies of the nation, did not necessarily exalt it. When Saul forgot his great functions, and spared idolatry instead of hewing it in pieces, he and the people sunk; and it was not until David swept the land utterly of its idols that Israel arose in its might and majesty, striking terror by its arms, awakening admiration by its splendor, and entrancing the world by its harp.

As the Psalmist said of Israel, so we may say of our country: "God hath not dealt so with any nation." How did he hide our land from the ages until the time of the Reformation, and settle it with men of God sifted from the best races, and cast out the heathen before them, and lead them to wide plains, and lofty mountains, and broad streams "blessed of God for the precious things of heaven,

for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, and for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon, and for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills, and for the precious things of the earth and fullness thereof, and for the good-will of Him that dwelt in the bush!" As God called and isolated Israel to proclaim his name and preserve his promise, so he called and isolated this nation, endowed with Grecian culture, Roman law, and Hebrew theology perfected in Christianity, to lead the world up another *step of progress* by proclaiming the natural rights of man, and demonstrating his capacity for self-government.

The nation is but the development of this principle. Our laws, our constitutions, our free schools, our free press, our free churches, our revolution, our Declaration of Independence, our national Constitution, our manners and customs, our welcome to all exiles, our incorporation of all colonies, are but the outgrowth of this principle, as the tree with its branches and fruit is but the development of the seed. As Israel was strong in proportion as it adhered to the principle for which it was raised up, so are we. Unhappily, in our early history slavery intruded into our paradise. Our fathers saw its inconsistency, but they let it alone, thinking it would soon perish. Alas! it has grown with our growth,

and strengthened with our strength; it has persecuted liberty, and arisen stronger from every conflict with her. It has already forced the nation down four great steps of descent: filibustering, political corruption, secession, and civil war; and if it shall succeed in the present conflict, it will soon precipitate us through the remaining steps to utter despotism. If a nation's institutions are the outgrowth of its principles, you cannot have one nation with opposite political principles. We have had two nations in one body politic; the one tending to a general equality of condition, the other to a division of society into nobles and serfs; the one promoting individualism, the other clanship; the one absorbing power in the few, the other distributing it among the many; the one limiting knowledge, the other diffusing it; the one despising labor, the other honoring it; the one impairing, the other purifying public morality; the one arresting, the other promoting the progress of civilization and religion. This difference has been showing itself more and more in the literature, the arts, the sciences, the religion, the social habits, the prevailing temper of the opposite sides of the land. Such a state of things cannot last long. It is as though a man were breathing carbonic acid gas in one lung, and vital air in the other, the one carbonating the blood, the other oxygenating it. Such a struggle may continue for a while, especially if the

vital lung be the larger; but sooner or later the over-taxed organ will give out.

Great events depend upon the passing moments. For my part I thank God this day for nothing more than that the President of the Union has declared that sooner than this nation shall perish, and the hope of mankind in free government expire, slavery shall die.

Now unto Him with whom are the shields of the earth and the destiny of the nations be all honor, might, majesty, and dominion, now, henceforth, and forever. Amen.