

An awesome example of God's explicit judgment for all of those who compromise is revealed by the aftermath of the war. One state had its cities and land devastated more than any other - Georgia. For every wound laid on the back of a slave, God used General Sherman to lay a stripe down the middle of the state. Another result of the war was major division in religious bodies. The three denominations who suffered the worst splits were those who held the most slaves - the Presbyterians, the Methodists, and the Baptists. Such is the curse of compromise. Why was the North losing all the battles in the beginning of the war? Because God induced the greatest generals to fight for the South!

The Civil War was God's judgment upon America for her sin. The sin of enslaving our black brothers and sisters almost prevented the Constitutional Convention from continuing. It was swept under the rug for a time but God was not silent in speaking for those who could not speak for themselves. Our nation ignored all of His warnings, signs, and judgments until our nation was torn in two. Because He loved us yet hated our sin, He brought us through the refiner's fire of the Civil War that we might see His face again, that we might hear His voice again and return to Him (Amos 4:6-13).

Today, we see the horrifying work of God's hand in the signs and judgments already upon us because of the legalized murder of little children safe in their mother's wombs. Because we did not hate bloodshed, bloodshed is now pursuing us (Ezekiel 35:18). It is a sin that will not go away! There is no compromise that will resolve this issue. There is only the repentance of God's people. It is the repentance of God's people that will cause Him to hear, forgive our sin, and heal our land.

The pulpits of this land must thunder again, speaking for those who cannot speak for themselves. It is time for us to sign the Emancipation

Proclamation for the unborn children of our land, knowing that it is the gracious and merciful hand of the Heavenly Father calling us to return to Him (Rev 3:19-20). He is purifying us yet a third time by fire.

Flip Benham
Director, Operation Save America;
Operation Rescue National

OPERATION RESCUE

PO Box 740066
Dallas, TX 75374
www.operationsaveamerica.org
972-240-9270

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EMANCIPATION
PROCLAMATION
“A Study in National Repentance”

The Emancipation Proclamation – A Study in National Repentance

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Lincoln wrote shortly before his assassination: "On many a defeated field there was a voice louder than the thundering of a cannon. It was the voice of God, crying, 'Let My people go.' We were all very slow in realizing it was God's voice, but after many humiliating defeats, the nation came to believe it as a great and solemn command. Great multitudes begged and prayed that I might answer God's voice by signing the Emancipation Proclamation, and I did it, believing we never should be successful in the great struggle unless the God of Battles has been on our side."

President Lincoln was seeing God's hand at work in the defeats of the North and the absolute necessity of His blessing upon the battle. In the summer of 1862 the war was not going well for the North. Lincoln realized our country's desperate need for God's divine aide. Pastors and Christian abolitionists had long been urging him to free all slaves but he was reluctant. Finally, after the Union victory in the Battle of Antietam in September of 1862, President Lincoln issued a preliminary proclamation. On January 1, 1863, he signed the Emancipation Proclamation.

For the first time in American history there was now open and public repentance of the national sin of slavery. It was a sin that plagued our nation through the years. It was a sin that would not go away and could not be politically resolved! It could only be repented of.

"Between 1861 and 1863, associations of clergymen representing Methodists, Baptists, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Quakers, Congregationalists, United Brethren, missions boards, and YMCA groups all over the North sent 79 official condemnations of slavery to President Lincoln, thanking him for his stand, and urging him to

further action. Within a few months' time, 125 remonstrances signed by New England clergymen alone poured into Congress. One memorable protest concerning the extension of slavery in the territories was signed by 3,050 New England clergymen and was 200 feet long."

Senator Charles Sumner thanked the ministers, saying, "In the days of the Revolution, John Adams, yearning for independence, said, 'Let the pulpits thunder against oppression,' and the pulpits thundered. The time has come for them to thunder again."

Senator Sumner, of course, was talking about slavery in America. The pulpits of our country did thunder against the sin of slavery. Today, the time has come for them to thunder a third time! This time it is against the slaughter of the innocents.

A religious periodical of the day reported concerning the Civil War: "It became the general [consensus] that we were passing through an ordeal of purification rather than destruction. A profound moral feeling began to pervade the sorrow-stricken mind of the country. Good men betook themselves to importunate prayer. Public fasts were observed; religious assemblies were held in behalf of the country. Almost every pulpit discussed public affairs from a religious standpoint; ... and millions of devout men and women mourned in their closets of devotion over the national sins and perils ... The religious spirit of the nation, instead of decaying, is daily making men's hearts more reverent, more humble, more courageous, and more worthy of our first national heritage of liberty, which God is now a second time purifying by fire!"

Even Henry Clay, the Great Compromiser, could not compromise away the national sin of slavery. There was no "common ground" between those who opposed slavery and those who were for it. God had caused our nation to deal with this sin through a Civil War. Virtually all of our Founding Fathers believed slavery to be an evil that

must be done away with, yet would not deal with it because of their desire to present a united front against England. The sin of American slavery was with us from the beginning but we kept sweeping it under the rug hoping it would go away. It would not go away. God would never allow it!

It was not until the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring our black brothers and sisters fully human and free, that the spiritual battle was won and the chains of this national sin were broken over our land (2 Chronicles 7:14). The spiritual battle having been won, it now began to manifest itself in the physical. It was at the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation that the war began to turn for the North.

From the Presidential signing of the Emancipation Proclamation on, sympathy with the Confederacy was identified as support for slavery. Both England and France, whose governments were friendly to the Confederacy, had such strong anti-slavery sentiment that it precluded their intervening on behalf of the Confederacy.

Upon this national act of repentance, God's hand was free to move and bring healing to our torn nation, but not without much bloodshed. That Lincoln realized the Civil War was a judgment from the hand of Almighty God over the sin of slavery was evident in his Second Inaugural Address. "Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet if God wills it to continue until all the wealth piled up by the bondsman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn by the lash shall be paid by another drawn sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, that the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."