

**Documents from the Gilder Lehrman Collection
With Teaching Strategies prepared by
The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History**

to accompany

**Forever Free:
Abraham Lincoln's Journey to Emancipation**

**An exhibition organized by
The Huntington Library and
The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History**

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To: Librarians hosting *Forever Free*
From: Susan Saidenberg, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History

The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History is delighted to co-sponsor the touring exhibition, *Forever Free: Abraham Lincoln's Journey to Emancipation*, which your library is hosting. Rare documents, letters and broadsides from the Gilder Lehrman Collection were paired with documents from the Huntington Library to develop this exhibition. John Rhodehamel, Norris Foundation Curator of American Historical Manuscripts, The Huntington Library, served as exhibition curator.

One of the goals of this project is to expand educational outreach in your community. Document-based traveling exhibitions, in particular, share the results of research and support the mission of the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. Founded in 1994, the Gilder Lehrman Institute promotes the love and study of American history. The Institute organizes seminars and enrichment programs for teachers and National Park Service educators; creates history-centered high schools nationwide; supports and produces publications and exhibitions for students and the general public; and sponsors lectures by historians.

For further information about the Institute, visit www.gilderlehrman.org.

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“Slave Market of America.” Published by the American Anti-Slavery Society, New York, 1836.

Beginning in the 1830s, abolitionist societies printed millions of broadsides to expose the brutality of slavery. “Slave Market of America” asserts that slavery violates the Bible, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution. The image of Washington D.C., as home of the free is eclipsed by an image of the nation’s capital on the right as “Land of the Oppressed.” (The Gilder Lehrman Collection)

Questions for discussion:

1. What do you see in this picture?
2. We are told that this person is a free citizen. How is it possible for a free citizen to be sold into slavery?
3. How would you describe the attitude of the crowd towards the sale of people into slavery?
4. What does this picture illustrate about the nature of slavery?
5. Why do you think this poster would be an effective tool for the abolitionists?

Frederick Douglass. *Autograph Sentiment signed*, November 19, 1860.

Born a slave, Frederick Douglass escaped to freedom in 1838 and became one of America's most brilliant abolitionists. In 1845, eight years after escaping from slavery, Douglass published his autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass: An American Slave. Written by himself*, which attracted public support for abolition. He dedicated himself to the cause of emancipation and championed civil rights for all Americans. In this autograph manuscript, Douglass reacts to President Abraham Lincoln's public statement that his primary concern was to save the Union.

Questions for discussion:

1. How does Frederick Douglass define liberty?
2. What does Douglass mean when he talks of "... the right of each man to own his body and soul..." ?
3. How does this document reflect the events of 1860?
4. Why is Douglass impatient with Lincoln's position on slavery in 1860?
5. How do Douglass's words speak to us today?

This then is my Autograph and
something more. I am for Liberty, the
right of each man to own his own body
and soul. Whatever may be his colour
wherever he may be born - whether of
one race or a nother - I am for Liberty
now, and always - to the weak as
well as the strong - I am for
Liberty - Universal Liberty, wherever
the haughty tyrant rears his head
or the dejected slave drags a
Chain - Frederick Douglass -

Rockester Novem 10. 1860

Abraham Lincoln, manuscript speech fragment about slavery and American government, ca. 1857-1858.

In this document, Lincoln articulates two principles that informed his vision: a government founded on equal rights, and a faith in self-improvement as key to the future of America. He notes that every slave knows he has been wronged when denied the fruits of his labor: “Most governments have been based, practically, on the denial of the equal rights of men... ours began, by affirming those rights.... We proposed to give all a chance, and we expected the weak to grow stronger, the ignorant, wiser; and all better and happier together.” (The Gilder Lehrman Collection)

Questions for discussion:

1. Based on this document, did Lincoln support or oppose slavery?
2. How does this quote “The ant, who has toiled and dragged a crumb to his nest, will furiously defend the fruit of his labor...” support Lincoln’s beliefs?
3. How does Lincoln prove that slavery is logically wrong?
4. Why does Lincoln believe that the American system of government is a model for the world?
5. What is Lincoln’s view of America’s future?

dent truth— Made so plain by our good Father
in Heaven, that all see and understand it, even
down to brutes and creeping insects— The ant, who he
toiled and dragged a crumb to his nest, will furiously
defend the fruit of his labor, against whatever robber
assails him— So plain, that the most dumb and
stupid slave that ever toiled for a master, does
constantly know that he is wronged— So plain that
no one, high or low, ever does mistake it, except in
a plain peevish way; for although volumes upon
volumes is written to prove slavery a very good
thing, we never hear of the man who wishes to take
the good of it, by being a slave himself—

Most governments have been based, practically, on
the denial of the equal rights of men, as I have, in
part, stated them; ours began, by affirming those
rights— They said, some men are too ignorant, and
vicious, to share in government— Possibly so, said
we; and, by your system, you would always keep
them ignorant, and vicious— We proposed to give
all a chance, and we expected the weak to grow
stronger, the ignorant, wiser; and all better, and
happier together—

We made the experiment; and the fruit is before
us— Look at it— think of it— Look at it, in its
aggregate grandeur, of extent of country, and numbers
of population— of ship, and steamboat, and rail—

Abraham Lincoln, manuscript fragment of “House divided” speech, ca. 1857.

In this draft, Abraham Lincoln formulates some of the ideas that he will advance in his speech accepting the Republican nomination for the U.S. Senate in 1858. Lincoln identifies slavery as a moral and political issue that threatens the continued existence of the United States. Invoking the famous biblical words, “A house divided against itself cannot stand,” he declares, “I believe this government cannot endure permanently, half slave, and half free.” (The Gilder Lehrman Collection)

In the fragment of the speech below, delivered in May 1858, Abraham Lincoln opposes the doctrine of popular sovereignty associated with the Kansas – Nebraska Act, Stephen Douglas, and the Dred Scott decision. Lincoln articulates the views that he will expand upon in his “House Divided Speech,” on June 16, 1858 at the Republican State Convention in Springfield, Illinois. This speech was written before the debates with Stephen Douglas, apparently in response to Douglas’s speech of December 9, 1857.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Why does Lincoln refer to Kansas in the first line of his speech?
2. What does Lincoln mean by “a house divided against itself cannot stand”?
3. Would you agree or disagree with the above statement?
4. Why is Lincoln appalled by the Dred Scott decision?
5. Lincoln said “this government cannot endure permanently, half slave and half free.” Based on your knowledge of Lincoln, what would his hope for the Union be?

11th, Kansas, & neither the whole, nor a
little of the real question—

"A house divided against itself can not
stand"

I believe this government can not endure
permanently, half slave, and half free—

I expressed this belief a year ago; and
subsequent developments have but confirmed me.

I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—
I do not expect the house to fall; but
I do expect it will cease to be divided— It
will become all one thing, or all the other— Either
the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread
of it, and put it in course of ultimate extinction; or
its advocates will push it forward till it shall be
completely lawful in all the states, old, as well
as new— Do you doubt it? Stray the Dred Scott
decision, and then see, how little, even now, remains
to be done—

That decision may be reduced to three points—
The first is, that a negro can not be a citizen—
That point is made in order to deprive the negro
in every possible event, of the benefit of that provis-
ion of the U. S. Constitution which declares that:

"The citizens of each State shall be entitled to
all privileges and immunities of citizens in the
several States."

The second point is, that the U. S. Constitution pro-
tects slavery, as property, in all the U. S. territories, and
that neither Congress, nor the people of the territories,
nor any other power, can prohibit it, at any time prior
to the formation of State constitutions—

This point is made, in order that the territories may
safely be filled up with slaves, before the formation of
State constitutions, and thereby to embarrass the free states

“Emancipation Proclamation,” engraving published in San Francisco, 1864, signed by Abraham Lincoln.

The Emancipation Proclamation was a carefully crafted document in which Lincoln, as Commander in Chief, justified emancipation as a military act against the states in rebellion. In reality, it transformed the war into a moral crusade to end slavery. On January 1, 1863, when the Emancipation Proclamation became effective, slaves in the states in rebellion were declared “forever free.” It was both a tactical war measure and a transformation of the national purpose. Strategically, it undermined the Confederacy and bolstered the Union army with the prospect of African American enlistment. Though it was to weaken the Republican Party in the election of 1864, the Proclamation made the war into a fight to end slavery.

This extremely rare lithograph, with suitably patriotic decoration, was designed by a fourteen-year-old boy from California. Abraham Lincoln signed it. (The Gilder Lehrman Collection)

Questions for discussion:

1. What did Lincoln mean when he said that emancipation was “...essential to the preservation of the Union?”
2. The daughter of a fugitive slave wrote President Lincoln that by issuing the Emancipation Proclamation the “...action of yours will make the Angels sing your praises...” Why did she place Lincoln in the company of angels?
3. Why was it a political risk for Lincoln to issue the Emancipation Proclamation?
4. Why did many believe that the Emancipation Proclamation would become a turning point in the Civil War?
5. Although slaves did not receive immediate freedom following the Emancipation Proclamation, it is considered one of the great documents in American history. How can this be explained?



Abraham Lincoln
 President of the **United States**,
 by virtue of the power in me vested
 as **Commander in Chief** of the **Army and**
Navy of the **United States**, in time of
 actual armed rebellion against the authority
 and government of the **United States**, and as a fit and necessary war measure for suppress-
 ing said rebellion, do, on this first day of **January**, in the year of our Lord one thousand
 eight hundred and sixty three, and in accordance with my purpose so to do publicly proclaimed for the
 full period of one hundred days from the day of the first above mentioned order, and designate as the States
 and parts of States wherein the people thereof respectively are this day in rebellion against the **United States**, the
 following, to wit: **Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana** except the parishes of **St. Bernard, Plaquemines,**
Jefferson, St. John, St. Charles, St. James, Ascension, Assumption, Terre Bonne, Lafourche, St. Mary,
St. Martin, and Orleans, including the city of New Orleans — Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia,
South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia except the forty eight counties designated as **West Virginia**,
 and also the counties of **Berkeley, Arcomac, Northampton, Elizabeth City, York, Princess Ann, and Norfolk**,
 including the cities of **Norfolk and Portsmouth**, and which excepted parts are, for the present, left precisely
 as if this proclamation were not issued.

And by virtue of the power, and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all
 persons held as slaves within said designated States and parts of States are and henceforward
 shall be free; and that the executive government of the **United States**, including the military
 and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence,
 unless in necessary self defense; and I recommend to them that in all cases when allowed, they
 labor faithfully for reasonable wages.

And I further declare and make known that such persons, of suitable condition, will
 be received into the armed service of the **United States**, to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other
 places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.

And upon this, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the **Constitution**,
 upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of

Almighty God

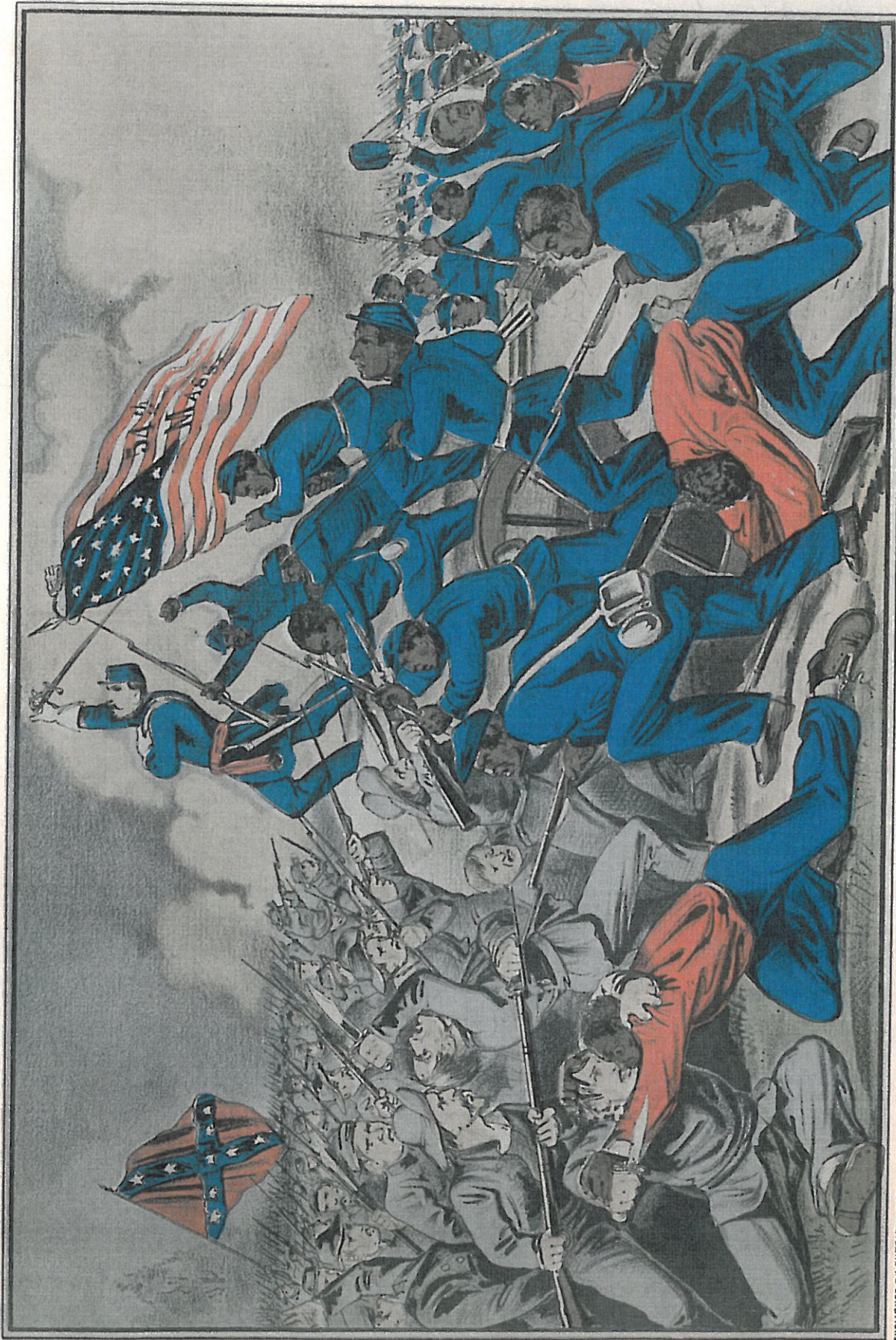
Abraham Lincoln

**“The Gallant Charge of the Fifty Fourth Massachusetts (Colored) Regiment.”
Published by Currier & Ives, New York, 1863.**

The 54th Massachusetts Colored Regiment was organized in February 1863. This infamous charge led by Colonel Robert Shaw, has entered the realm of “legend.” The bravery of African Americans at the Battle of Fort Wagner gained them lasting fame when they launched a heroic but doomed assault on Confederate positions at Fort Wagner near Charleston, South Carolina, on July 18, 1863. This battle is depicted in this print by Currier and Ives.

Questions for discussion:

1. Why is this print called *The Gallant Charge of the 54th Massachusetts*?
2. How does the charge of the 54th argue against bigotry and racism?
3. This Currier and Ives lithograph has been reprinted thousands of times in newspapers. How might this illustration alter public opinion?



PUBLISHED BY CURRIER & IVES,

Reproduced according to a sketch by CURRIER & IVES, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, for the Southern District of New York.

152 NASSAU ST., NEW YORK.

THE GALLANT CHARGE OF THE FIFTY FOURTH MASSACHUSETTS (COLORED) REGIMENT,
On the Rebel works at Fort Wagner, Morris Island, near Charleston, July 18th 1863, and death of Colonel Robt G. Shaw.

Photograph of anonymous private, Company I, 54th Massachusetts Infantry, ca. 1863.

Even as they were authorized to enlist in the Union Army, African Americans still faced discrimination. They were relegated to separate regiments commanded by white officers, and they received less pay than white soldiers. Nonetheless, the pride evident in this soldier's portrait confirms Frederick Douglass's prediction that Americans would respect the black soldier once he had "an eagle on his button, a musket on his shoulder, and the star spangled banner over his head." (The Gilder Lehrman Collection)

Questions for discussion:

1. Does this picture represent a revolutionary change in the United States?
2. How did African Americans dispel the myth that they lacked courage under fire?
3. Why did many African Americans enlist in the army despite receiving lower wages than their white counterparts?
4. Why did Lincoln say that African American participation in the war effort was critical for the Union victory?



“Men of Color, To Arms! To Arms!” Philadelphia, ca. 1863.

During the early years of the Civil War, Frederick Douglass lobbied Abraham Lincoln to organize black regiments and proclaim emancipation. The President postponed the decision, awaiting a decisive Union victory, which he got at Antietam in September 1862. After the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect in January 1863, Douglass toured the country leading recruitment drives, entreating African Americans to “join in Fighting the Battles of Liberty and the Union.” (The Gilder Lehrman Collection)

Questions for discussion:

1. Explain the purpose of this broadside.
2. Why do the authors use the expression, “Now or Never”?
3. Why is this broadside a unique document?
4. If you were a young African American in 1863, would you have enlisted?
Why?

MEN OF COLOR

TO ARMS! TO ARMS!

NOW OR NEVER

This is our golden moment! The Government of the United States calls for every Able-bodied Colored Man to enter the Army for the

Three Years' Service!

And join in Fighting the Battles of Liberty and the Union. A new era is open to us. For generations we have suffered under the horrors of slavery, outrage and wrong; our manhood has been denied, our citizenship blotted out, our souls scared and burned, our spirits cowed and crushed, and the hopes of the future of our race involved in doubt and darkness. But now our relations to the white race are changed. Now, therefore, is our most precious moment. Let us rush to arms!

FAIL NOW, & OUR RACE IS DOOMED

On this the soil of our birth. We must now awake, arise, or be forever fallen. If we value liberty, if we wish to be free in this land, if we love our country, if we love our families, our children, our home, we must strike now while the country calls; we must rise up in the dignity of our manhood, and show by our own right arms that we are worthy to be freemen. Our enemies have made the country believe that we are craven cowards, without soul, without manhood, without the spirit of soldiers. Shall we die with this stigma resting upon our graves? Shall we leave this inheritance of shame to our Children? No! a thousand times NO! We WILL Rise! The alternative is upon us. Let us rather die freemen than live to be slaves. What is life without liberty? We say that we have manhood; now is the time to prove it. A nation or a people that cannot fight may be pitied, but cannot be respected. If we would be regarded men, if we would forever silence the tongue of Calumny, of Prejudice and Hate, let us Rise Now and Fly to Arms! We have seen what Valor and Heroism our Brothers displayed at Fort Hudson and Milliken's Bend, though they are just from the galling, poisoning grasp of Slavery, they have startled the World by the most exalted heroism. If they have proved themselves heroes, cannot WE PROVE OURSELVES MEN!

ARE FREEMEN LESS BRAVE THAN SLAVES

More than a Million White Men have left Comfortable Homes and joined the Armies of the Union to save their Country. Cannot we leave ours, and swell the Hosts of the Union, to save our liberties, vindicate our manhood, and deserve well of our Country. MEN OF COLOR! the Englishman, the Irishman, the Frenchman, the German, the American, have been called to assert their claim to freedom and a manly character, by an appeal to the sword. The day that has seen an enslaved race in arms has, in all history, seen their last trial. We now see that our last opportunity has come. If we are not lower in the scale of humanity than Englishmen, Irishmen, White Americans and other Races, we can show it now. Men of Color, Brothers and Fathers, we appeal to you, by all your concern for yourselves and your liberties, by all your regard for God and humanity, by all your desire for Citizenship and Equality before the law, by all your love for the Country, to stop at no sacrifice, listen to nothing that shall deter you from rallying for the Army. Come Forward, and at once Enroll your Names for the Three Years' Service. Strike now, and you are henceforth and forever Freemen!

E. B. Bassett,	Rev. J. Underdue,	P. J. Armstrong,	Rev. J. C. Gibbs,	Elijah J. Davis,
William D. Forten,	John W. Price,	J. W. Simpson,	Daniel George,	John P. Burr,
Frederick Douglass,	Augustus Dorsey,	Rev. J. B. Trusty,	Robert M. Adger,	Robert Jones,
Wm. Whipper,	Rev. Stephen Smith,	S. Morgan Smith,	Henry M. Cropper,	O. V. Catto,
D. D. Turner,	N. W. Depee,	William E. Gipson,	Rev. J. B. Reeve,	Thos. J. Dorsey,
Jas. McCrummel,	Dr. J. H. Wilson,	Rev. J. Boulden,	Rev. J. A. Williams,	L. D. Child,
A. S. Cassey,	J. W. Cassey,	Rev. J. Asher,	Rev. A. L. Stanford,	Jacob C. White,
A. M. Green,	James Needham,	Rev. Elisha Weaver,	Thomas J. Bowers,	Morris Hall,
J. W. Page,	Ebenezer Black,	David B. Bowser,	J. C. White, Jr.,	J. P. Johnson,
L. R. Seymour,	James R. Gordon,	Henry Minton,	Rev. J. P. Campbell,	Franklin Turner,
Rev. William T. Catto,	Samuel Stewart,	Daniel Colley,	Rev. W. J. Alston,	Jesse E. Glasgow,

A Meeting in furtherance of the above named object will be held

And will be Addressed by

U. S. Steam-Power Book and Job Printing Establishment, Ledger Buildings, Third and Chestnut Streets, Philadelphia.

Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address

In his Second Inaugural Address, on March 4, 1865, Abraham Lincoln identified slavery as the basic cause of the war, attributing its duration to God's terrible judgment against those who "gave the offence of slavery." The Civil War was the bloodiest in the nation's history. Some 620,000 soldiers died and comparable casualties were wounded. Looking to the future, Lincoln concluded "**With malice towards none and charity for all [let us] do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace among ourselves...**"

Questions for discussion:

1. Explain Lincoln's belief that the Civil War was God's punishment for the sin of slavery.
2. By the time of the Second Inaugural Address, it was clear that the Union would triumph. How does Lincoln envision that victory?
3. Why is this speech often considered religious as well as political?

THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS
OF PRESIDENT
ABRAHAM LINCOLN,

DELIVERED AT THE NATIONAL CAPITOL,
MARCH 4th, 1865.

Fellow Countrymen :

At this second appearing to take the oath of the Presidential Office, there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. Then a statement somewhat in detail of a course to be pursued seemed very fitting and proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declarations have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the great contest which still absorbs the attention and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new could be presented.

The progress of our arms—upon which all else chiefly depends—is as well known to the public as to myself; and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured.

On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago, all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it; all sought to avoid it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to destroy it without war—seeking to dissolve the Union and divide the effects by negotiation.

Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive, and the other would accept war rather than let it perish, and the war came.

One-eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the Southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was somehow the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union by war, while the Government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it.

Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease, even before the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph and a result less fundamental and astounding.

Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both should not be answered. That of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes. Woe unto the world because of offences, for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh. If we shall suppose that American Slavery is one of these offences—which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offence came—shall we discern there is any departure from those Divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the 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.

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, to bind up the nation's wound, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and orphans; to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.

“The Fifteenth Amendment Celebrated.” New York, 1870.

The passage of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments fulfilled the Civil War’s promise of freedom. The Fifteenth Amendment gave constitutional status to the Emancipation’s promise of freedom. The artist depicts African Americans’ hopes for their future under freedom: the right to education, a stable family life, jobs, and the vote. Surrounding the scene of celebration in Washington D.C. are portraits of Douglass and Lincoln, icons of the quest for freedom. (The Gilder Lehrman Collection)

Questions for discussion:

1. How do the different frames in this illustration celebrate the Fifteenth Amendment?
2. As a result of the Fifteenth Amendment, African Americans gained the right to vote. Why was this so important?
3. The print includes portraits of individual Americans. Name as many of the individuals as you can and indicate how each is connected to the Fifteenth Amendment.
4. How does this lithograph depict Americans living in freedom?



THE FIFTEENTH AMENDMENT.