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# A PASTORAL LETTER

TO THE CLERGY AND LAITY OF THE

## Protestant Episcopal Church

IN THE DIOCESE OF TENNESSEE.

O. H. J. H.  
BY THE BISHOP OF THE SAME.

AT THE REQUEST OF THE CONVENTION. A. D. 1861.

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## Pastoral Letter.

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DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN:

The Convention of the Diocese, which recently met at Somerville, by a unanimous vote passed a resolution requesting me to appoint a week-day service for fasting and prayer, to be used in all our congregations once a week, or oftener, at the discretion of the Minister, having a special reference to the dangers which threaten the public peace and tranquility of our country. I sympathize very sincerely in the sentiments which prompted the Convention to make this request, and share very largely in the feelings which urge our people to invoke God's protection and aid in the perils which are imminent over us. Yet would I say, let no man's heart fail him because of the railings and threats that are made against us. Under the lead of a fanaticism which stoops to the use of appeals to the worst passions of human nature—which, in the ardor of its zeal to accomplish its purposes, sets aside the fear of God, and actually rejects and denies the authority of His Holy Word, a very large portion of the people of the Northern States have been roused to make war upon us, and armies are gathering on our borders for the avowed object of carrying fire and sword, ruin and desolation, from the banks of the Ohio to the Gulf of Mexico. Possessed with an unaccountable infatuation, they allege, in justification of their course, grievances of whose existence we are unconscious, and pretend an apprehension of invasion of their territory, and assault upon their rights which we have not even meditated. On the other hand, for forty years past, citizens of the Northern States have, in spite of warning, against en-

treaty, and in opposition to the laws of the Government, been engaged in tampering with our servants, seducing them from their fidelity, aiding them to escape from our care and control, and exciting them to the work of arson and death. We have remonstrated with our Northern brethren every year since the attempted exclusion of Missouri from the Union, and warned them of the sad work of alienation and disruption which their proceedings would surely produce between us. Our warnings and remonstrances have effected no other result than more active and determined efforts on the part of those bent upon our ruin, until these efforts issued, less than two years ago, in the attempt of Northern men, aided by Northern money and Northern sympathy, to seize on an arsenal in the State of Virginia, with the avowed purpose of overthrowing the government of the Southern States, abolishing slavery, and establishing the supremacy and rule of the North upon our ruin. Had the plan succeeded, the work would *then* have been accomplished for which armed hosts are now gathering upon our borders, and fleets hovering on our coasts, to destroy our commerce. Notwithstanding all the past, there were hundreds of thousands in the South, who, in their love of, and devotion to the Federal Union, were willing to brave more, until the proclamation of President Lincoln, inaugurating war, had destroyed the last germ of hope that we could reach a peaceful solution of our difficulties.

To this day and hour we have continued to give assurances to the people of the North, that, by arming, we designed no attack upon them, but simply to be ready for defence against aggression. We have, in every way we could devise to be heard, through Congress, through Peace Conferences, through action of the Legislatures, through Conventions of the People, through private positive declarations, almost supplicated them to let us alone, to let us depart in peace, to forbear hostilities which in all human probability would engender eternal hatred, and end in mutual and utter destruction.

Our assurances have been discredited; our supplications for peace have been met by stern threatenings and preparations for war, such as look to no suppression of an insurrection, but the subjugation or extermination of a whole people. In the language of the Psalmist, "*We are for peace, but when we speak thereof, they make them ready to battle.*" We have, therefore, no alternative, but "to meet force with force" and repel aggression as best we may, and commit our cause to "Him that judgeth righteously." Let us all do our whole duty faithfully, as Christians and citizens, and we need not fear what man can do unto us. "The battle is not always to the strong." "The Lord shall give strength unto his people: the Lord shall give his people the blessing of peace."

While, then, we pray for our sons and brethren who have gone forth to breast the storm of battle for the cause of our people and our God, let us not forget that our sins have brought upon us all the evils that now threaten us. Let us make haste to confess our sins, to repent us truly of our faults, ask God's merciful pardon and forgiveness through Christ, so "iniquity shall not be our ruin." And while doing this for ourselves, let us not forget that Christ died for his and our enemies, as well as for ourselves. Let us, therefore, in the genuine spirit of Christianity pray God to forgive them, and to "turn their hearts."

In compliance with the request of the Convention, I appoint Friday of each week to be observed, by all our congregations, as a day of *Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer*, to Almighty God, to ask his merciful forgiveness of our manifold sins and transgressions, his gracious protection for our country, and his care and direction of our friends and people exposed to the dangers and casualties of war.

To this end the use of the entire Litany, and the following prayers among the occasional prayers, by all our congregations, during the continuance of the war, is appointed:



In Time of War and Tumult.

**O**, ALMIGHTY GOD, the supreme Governor of all things, whose power no creature is able to resist, to whom it belongeth justly to punish sinners, and to be merciful to those who truly repent, save and deliver us, we humbly beseech thee, from the hands of our enemies; that we, being armed with thy defence, may be preserved evermore from all perils, to glorify thee, who art the only giver of all victory, through the merits of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For those in Actual Service.

**O**, GOD OF HOSTS! the mighty Lord, who reignest over all the kingdoms and nations of men, hear our humble prayers for all those, thy servants, who have by thy wise providence been called to take up arms in defense of the rights and liberties of our country. Inspire their hearts with true courage, and arm them with power and strength to do valiantly, and to quit themselves like men, against those who wish to oppress us. Establish in their hearts the fear and love of Thy holy name, that they may evermore feel and believe that Thou art their shield and buckler, that Thou wilt cover their heads in the day of battle, and give them victory over their enemies. Do Thou, especially, O Lord, guard and defend Thy servants from those temptations to youthful sins which war against the soul. Preserve them in health and safety; send the fear of Thee before Thy servants, and let their enemies flee before them. Save and protect all those whom they love and leave at home, and in Thy good time bring them back in peace and safety, with a grateful sense of Thy mercy and goodness to them, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

As many of you, beloved brethren, have husbands or sons, fathers, brothers, or friends, who have gone forth at the call of their country and of duty, to the defence of all that is dearest to us on earth, I recommend to all families the use of the following, or some other form of like import, to be used at morning and evening devotions, or in the closet.

**O**, ALMIGHTY GOD! who sittest on the throne judging righteously, whose power is irresistible, bless and prosper, we pray Thee, the great work in which this Commonwealth is now engaged. Go forth with our armies, and give them victory and success over our enemies. Suffer not our sins to provoke Thee to withdraw from us Thy defence and protection, but send us in Thy good time, such a peace as may tend to the glory of Thy great name, the preservation of Thy Church and true religion amongst us, the honor, safety, and welfare of Thy people.

Especially do we commend to Thy merciful protection our dear

(*son, brother, husband, father, as the case may be.*) In Thee alone is all our hope and confidence. Protect him from all accidents, sickness, and misfortune. Guard him in the midst of all temptations. Cover his head in the day of battle. Inspire him with a love and veneration of Thy holy and revered name, and with a firm reliance on Thy wise providence when at the post of duty, and in the hour of danger. Let Thy fatherly hand ever be over him, that through Thy mighty protection, both here and ever, he may be preserved in body and soul, through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

And, O Lord, who art the Savior of all men, we pray Thee to be merciful to them that hate us, and who, without any just cause, are our enemies. Disappoint their devices and give them repentance and better minds. Let Thy love rule in their hearts, and endue them with an humble and charitable spirit; and grant, that we, being delivered from the hands of our enemies, may serve Thee in peace and quietness, without fear, all our days, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

As many of our friends and relations now in arms have few opportunities for religious worship, and probably not many books in camp to inspire devotional feeling, I append to this Pastoral Letter the following extracts from the book of Psalms, and Prayers, which I trust may find their way to them, and through the grace of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter and Sanctifier, carry a blessing to their souls.

In the blessed bonds of Gospel faith and love, I remain, dear brethren, your faithful friend and affectionate Pastor,

JAMES H. OTEY.



## Selections from the Psalms.

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**T**HE Lord is my light and my salvation, whom, then, shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom, then, shall I be afraid?

When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.

Though an host of men were laid against me, yet shall not my heart be afraid; and though there rose up war against me, yet will I put my trust in Thee.

One thing have I desired of the Lord, which I will require, even that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the fair beauty of the Lord, and to visit His temple.

For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in his tabernacle: yea, in the secret place of His dwelling shall He hide me, and set me up upon a rock of stone.

And now shall He lift up mine head above mine enemies round about me. Therefore will I offer in His dwelling an oblation, with great gladness: I will sing and speak praises unto the Lord.

Hearken unto my voice, O Lord, when I cry unto Thee; have mercy upon me, and hear me.

My heart hath talked of Thee. Seek ye my face: Thy face, Lord, will I seek.

O hide not Thou Thy face from me, nor cast Thy servant away in displeasure.

Thou hast been my succor; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.

When my father and my mother forsake me, the Lord taketh me up.

Teach me Thy way, O Lord, and lead me in the right way because of mine enemies.

Deliver me not over into the will of mine adversaries: for there are false witnesses risen up against me, and such as speak wrong.

I should utterly have fainted, but that I believe verily to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

O tarry thou the Lord's leisure; be strong and He shall comfort thine heart; and put thou thy trust in the Lord.

The angel of the Lord tarryeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.

The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers.

The countenance of the Lord is against them that do evil, to root out the remembrance of them from the earth.

The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth them and delivereth them out of all their troubles.

The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart, and will save such as be of an humble spirit.

Plead Thou my cause, O Lord with them that strive with me, and fight Thou against them that fight against me.

Lay hand upon the shield and buckler, and stand up to help me.

Bring forth the spear, and stop the way against them that persecute me: say unto my soul, I am Thy salvation.

Whoso dwelleth under the defence of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

I will say unto the Lord, Thou art my hope and my strong hold; my God, in Him will I trust.

For He shall deliver thee from the snare of the hunter, and from the noisome pestilence.

He shall defend thee under His wings, and thou shalt be safe under His feathers; His faithfulness and truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

Thou shalt not be afraid for any terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day; for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the sickness that destroyeth in the noon day.

A thousand shall fall beside thee, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee.

Yea, with thine eyes shalt thou behold, and see the reward of the ungodly.

For Thou, Lord, art my hope; Thou hast set thine house of defence very high.

The Lord sitteth above the water flood, and the Lord remaineth a king for ever.

The Lord shall give strength unto His people; the Lord shall give His people the blessing of peace.

## Prayers.

### The Soldiers' Prayer in Camp.

**O** ETERNAL GOD, who by Thy unsearchable wisdom, by Thy Almighty power, and secret providence dost determine the issues of human counsels, the events of war and the returns of victory and peace, let the light of Thy countenance and the blessed influences of Thy mercy be once more shed upon this afflicted land. Pity the evils which we suffer under the power and tyranny of war, and although we acknowledge Thy justice in our sufferings and adore Thee in thy judgments, yet we beseech Thee to hearken to our prayers and provide a remedy for our calamities. Let not the defenders of a righteous cause go away ashamed, nor their counsels be brought to nought. Look with compassion upon our infirmities and remember not our sins, but support us with Thy staff, lift us up with Thy hand, and refresh us with Thy presence. And if a threatening cloud should still overshadow us, illuminate our minds with divine truth, that with the eye of faith and hope we may see beyond it; catching a glimpse of those mercies which in Thy secret providence and adorable wisdom Thou mayest still vouchsafe to Thy unworthy servants amidst the saddening scenes and hardships of war. Give us grace and strength diligently to do our duty and cheerfully to submit to Thy will; and as we do put our whole trust and confidence in Thy mercy, and have laid up all our hopes in Thy bosom, let us never be put to shame or confusion before our enemies: but as Thine are the strength and the power, O Lord of Hosts, do Thou make bare Thy mighty arm and give us the victory. Place a guard of angels, O Lord, about the Commander-in-Chief, and uphold him with the defence of Thy right hand, that no unhallowed arm may do him violence; support him in all his dangers and trials, and give to all under his orders the spirit of confidence and obedience. Bless all the subordinate officers and confederates under his command. Direct their counsels, govern their actions, unite their hearts and strengthen their hands. Inspire all in the army with ready submission to lawful authority, with a sense of justice and integrity in all their dealings; with courage to resist and overcome the furiousness of our enemies; with compassion to spare the vanquished, and with a ready will to protect the

oppressed, that approving themselves to Thee, the Almighty Ruler and Sovereign Disposer of all things, they may receive a full reward for their fidelity and obedience, and, at last, the gift of eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord! Amen.

Prayers to be used before Battle.

**O** MOST POWERFUL and glorious Lord God, the Lord of hosts, that rulest and commandest all things; thou sittest in the throne judging right: and therefore we make our address to thy Divine Majesty, in this our necessity, that Thou wouldst take the cause into thine own hand, and judge between us and our enemies. Stir up thy strength. O Lord, and come and help us; for thou givest not always the battle to the strong, but canst save by many or by few. O let not our sins now cry against us for vengeance; but hear us, thy poor servants, begging mercy, and imploring thy help, and that thou wouldst be a defence unto us against the face of the enemy: make it appear that thou art our Saviour and mighty Deliverer, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**L**ORD be merciful to us sinners, and save us for thy mercy's sake.

Thou art the great God, who hast made and rulest all things: O, deliver us for thy name's sake.

Thou art the great God to be feared above all: O save us, that we may praise thee.

Thou, O Lord, art just and powerful: O defend our cause against the face of the enemy.

O God, thou art a strong tower of defence to all who fly unto thee: O save us from the violence of the enemy.

O Lord of Hosts, fight for us; that we may glorify thee.

O suffer us not to sink under the weight of our sins, or the violence of the enemy.

O Lord, arise, help us, and deliver us, for thy name's sake. Amen.

A Thanksgiving after Victory.

**O** ALMIGHTY GOD, the Sovereign Commander of all the world, in whose hand is power and might, which none is able to withstand: we bless and magnify thy great and glorious name for this happy victory, the whole glory whereof we do ascribe to thee, who art the only giver of victory. And, we beseech thee, give us grace to improve this great mercy to thy glory, the advancement of thy Gospel, the honor of our country, and, as much as in us lieth, to the good of all mankind. And we beseech thee, give us such a sense of this great mercy, as may engage us to a true thankfulness, such as may appear in our lives, by an humble, holy, and obedient walking before thee all our days, through Jesus Christ our Lord: to whom, with thee, and the Holy Spirit, as for all thy

mercies, so in particular for this victory and deliverance, be all glory and honor, world without end. Amen.

**O**UR FATHER, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

2 Cor. xiii. 14.

**T**HE grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. Amen.



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