
Commonwealth of



1851

Massachusetts.

BY HIS EXCELLENCY

GEORGE N. BRIGGS,

Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts:

A PROCLAMATION

FOR A DAY OF PUBLIC
FASTING, HUMILIATION, AND PRAYER.

By and with the advice and consent of the Council, I do appoint **THURSDAY, THE ELEVENTH DAY OF APRIL NEXT**, to be observed by the people of this Commonwealth as a day of **FASTING, HUMILIATION, AND PRAYER**.

The worship of God is the first duty of man:

Whilst occasions of public thanksgiving and praise, are proper demonstrations of gratitude for mercies received, set times for fasting and prayer, are appropriate observances for erring and sinful beings.

Such days are memorable in the history of the ancient and peculiar people of **GOD**.

Before a summer's sun had shone upon our pilgrim fathers in their wilderness home, they imitated the example of that Hebrew people.

Such services to be acceptable to the **BEING** to whom they are offered, must be sincere—They must be the fruits of contrite and humble hearts. "**GOD** is a **SPIRIT**, and they that worship **HIM**, must worship **HIM** in spirit and in truth."

I request all classes of the people of Massachusetts to regard the day now set apart, with a respect and seriousness, which the occasion demands.

As a people we have been highly blessed. In the midst of these blessings, there are amongst us individual and public evils and vices, calculated to incur the displeasure of the **ALMIGHTY**, and bring upon us "**HIS** righteous judgments." Let us on that day assemble in **HIS** courts, and by **CONFESSION, PENITENCE, AND PRAYER**, invoke **HIS** pardon, and entreat **HIM** to save us from those calamities, which the history of **HIS** providential dealings with the world teaches us that we have cause to fear.

Let us implore **HIM**, that in great mercy **HE** will save us from social and civil disorder, from profanity, intemperance, and their kindred crimes;

from the return and ravages of Cholera, that modern curse of the nations; from fatal epidemics, and from war, pestilence and famine, those ministers of wrath, which have been so often permitted to visit and desolate the human race:

That **HE** will continue to us our free governmental institutions, state and national, and save us from violence and disunion:

That it may please **HIM** to remove from this Republic the institution of Slavery, in such a manner as to secure the best good and the highest happiness of both the master and the slave:

That **HE** will so order the revolving seasons, that the earth in due time may yield to man her abundant productions:

That **HE** will crown with success the honest labor and pursuits of all classes of our people:

That **HE** will smile upon all our seminaries of learning, and make literature and science the efficient aids of liberty and christianity:

That **HE** will eminently bless all the public and charitable institutions of the Commonwealth, for instructing the ignorant, reforming the vicious, relieving the poor and the destitute, and restoring reason to the insane:

That whilst receiving and enjoying **HIS** temporal munificence, **HE** will teach us to become the humble followers of **HIS** SON, and "make us wise unto salvation."

And, finally, that **HE** will hasten the time when the **GOSPEL** of peace shall be preached to all nations, and its mild and divine influence shall be diffused among all people upon the face of the earth.

Given at the Council Chamber, in Boston, this fifth day of March, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty, and of the Independence of the United States the seventy-fourth.

GEORGE N. BRIGGS.

By His Excellency the Governor, with the advice }
of the Council. }

WILLIAM B. CALHOUN, Secretary.

God save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.