

Message on the Anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation

January 1, 2026

On January 1, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln signed the legendary Emancipation Proclamation, one of the most significant documents in human history and a grand edict that paved the way to the liberation of millions of slaves and the full glory of the American promise.

As the bloody Civil War raged into its second year and the Nation fought to preserve the Union, President Lincoln made a "fit and necessary" military decree that would redefine the entire conflict. With the Emancipation Proclamation declaring that those held in slavery in the rebellious States "shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free," the purpose of the war shifted, and every Union advance now carried with it the blazing torch of liberty, justice, and dignity for all.

The Emancipation Proclamation set the stage for the ultimate abolition of slavery, culminating in the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment nearly 2 years later. It endures to this day as a monumental testament to the divine truth that equality is a sacred birthright granted not by government but by the hand of Almighty God. It signaled the dawn of a new day in our Nation's journey toward liberty and the inalienable rights of every citizen. Its signing remains a morally defining moment in our national story and an enduring legacy of President Lincoln's conviction that our country—which launched a revolution in the pursuit of freedom and human dignity—is "the last best hope of Earth."

Today, in President Lincoln's honor, we recommit to the eternal truth that the United States of America is blessed by God; is bound together by justice; and was, is, and will forever be a great Nation.

Categories: Letters and Messages : Emancipation Proclamation, message on anniversary.

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