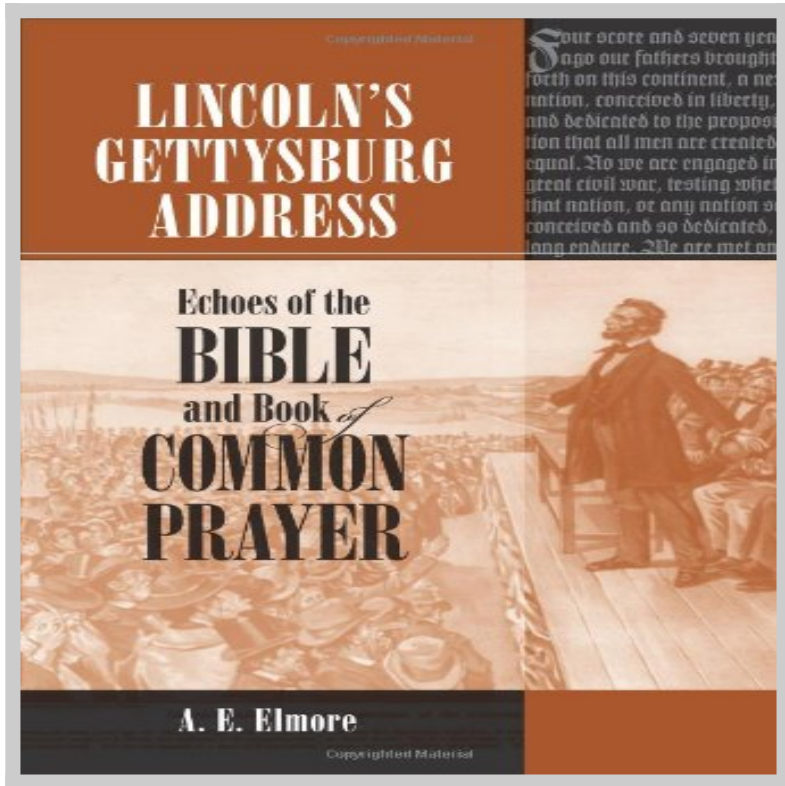


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Lincolns Gettysburg Address Echoes Common Book Preview

While it has long been determined that Abraham Lincoln's writings were influenced by the King James Bible, until now no full-length study has shown the precise ways in which the Gettysburg Address uses its specific language. Refuting the view that the address was crafted with traditional classical references, this revealing investigation provides a new way to think about the speech and the man who wrote it. A. E. Elmore offers chapter and verse evidence from the Bible as well as specific examples from the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer to illustrate how Lincoln borrowed from these sources to imbue his speech with meanings

that would resonate with his listeners. He cites every significant word and phrase—“conceived, brought forth, struggled, remaining, consecrate, dedicate, hallow, devotion, new birth, to name a few”—borrowed by Lincoln from these two religious texts for use in his dedication of the Gettysburg National Cemetery.

Elmore demonstrates how Lincoln transformed the lovely old language of the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer into something as close to classical perfection as any public speech has ever achieved. He further reveals how Lincoln used the language of his political and military enemies to promote his antislavery agenda and to advance the gospel of equality originally set forth in the Declaration of Independence.

Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address focuses on a number of overlooked themes and ideas, such as the importance of literary allusion and the general public’s knowledge of the Bible in the age of Lincoln. It provides fresh answers to old questions and poses a new one: Was Lincoln a common thief who made use of words from previously published materials as well as his contemporaries, or was he a genius whose literary and political skills were unmatched? No one who reads this highly engaging study will ever think about Lincoln or the Gettysburg Address the same way again.