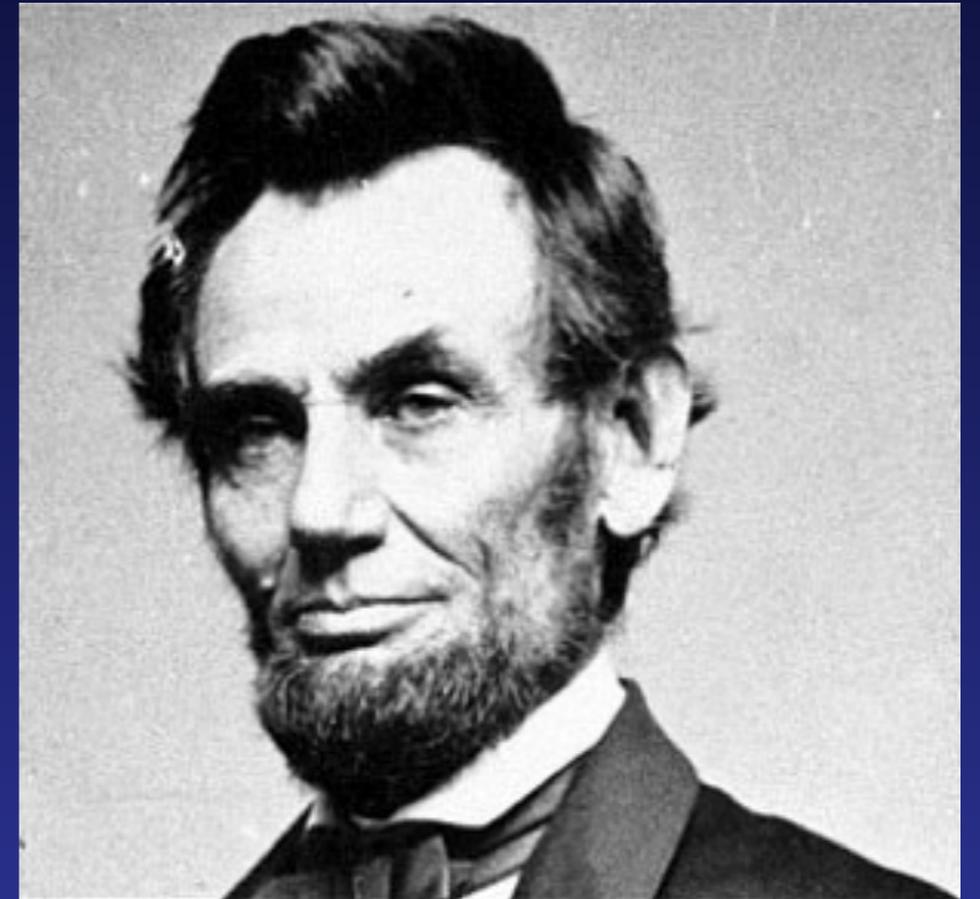


President Abraham Lincoln's
Proclamation for a National Day
of Fasting, Humility, and Prayer,
April 30, 1863



“We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven. We have been preserved, the many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power, as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God.”

“We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us! It behooves us, then to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.”

**What would Abraham Lincoln say of
America in 2014?**

Meet Habakkuk:

*A prophet wrestling with the problem of
God's silence in a world filled with evil*

**The sins of men
and the silence of God**

*If God is sovereign and good, why
does He allow evil to go unpunished?*

Do You Ever Ask?

- Why do the wicked go free and the dishonest people prosper?
- Why do the wicked get power, money and good people don't?
- Why is there so much corruption and violence in America, aren't we supposed to be a Christian nation?
- Where is the USA heading?

Welcome to an age old problem!

Judah, a once great nation under godly leadership disintegrates and is enslaved by a nation whose god is its military power and whose goal is to dominate all peoples.

The nation that abandoned God now finds itself abandoned by God!

Habakkuk: his discovery!

- *“The just shall live by faith”*
- The reality of living by faith in a world where evil abounds
- Turning worry into worship

Habakkuk's Complaint

*“How long, LORD, must I call for help,
but you do not listen? Or cry out to you,
‘Violence!’ but you do not save?*

Why do you make me look at injustice?

Why do you tolerate wrongdoing?

*Destruction and violence are before me;
there is strife, and conflict abounds.*

*Therefore the law is paralyzed, and justice
never prevails. The wicked hem in the
righteous so that justice is perverted.*

The Prophet's Troubling Question? (Habakkuk 1:2-4)

- Why does evil go unpunished?
 - Why do the wicked prosper?
 - Why is there so much evil?
 - Why does God tolerate evil?

God's Shocking Answer!

*“Look at the nations and watch—
and be utterly amazed.*

*For I am going to do something in your days
that you would not believe, even if you were told.
I am raising up the Babylonians, that ruthless and
impetuous people, who sweep across the whole
earth to seize dwellings not their own.
They are a feared and dreaded people; they are a
law to themselves and promote their own honor.”*

Habakkuk 1:5-11

God's Shocking Answer!

*“They fly like an eagle swooping to devour;
they all come intent on violence.*

*Their hordes advance like a desert wind
and gather prisoners like sand.*

They mock kings and scoff at rulers.

*They laugh at all fortified cities;
by building earthen ramps they capture them.
Then they sweep past like the wind and go on—
guilty people, whose own strength is their god.”*

Habakkuk 1:5-11

God's Shocking Answer

- I am doing something!
- I am raising up a foreign nation, the Babylonians, to come and discipline Judah.

Habakkuk's Alarm

“O LORD, are you not from everlasting?

My God, my Holy One, we will not die.

O, LORD you have appointed them to execute judgment;

O Rock, you have ordained them to punish.

“Your eyes are too pure to look on evil;

you cannot tolerate wrongdoing.

Why then do you tolerate the treacherous?

Why are you silent while the wicked

swallow up those more righteous than themselves?

Is he to keep on emptying his net,

destroying nations without mercy?”

The Prophet's Troubled Reaction

- Why does God use wicked people to punish His own people? Why use evil to cancel out evil? Are God's ways just?
 1. Why would a holy God tolerate evil people and remain silent? 1:12-13
 2. Why would God allow wicked people to destroy more righteous people? 1:14-15
 3. Why would God excuse a people whose only god is their own strength? 1:16-17

Waiting for God's Answer (2:1)

*I will stand at my watch
and station myself on the ramparts;
I will look to see what He will say to me,
and what answer I am to give to this complaint.*



God's Promise and Plan, Chap. 2

God has a plan! Judgment day is coming!

God will make things right! Be patient!

*“Write down the revelation
and make it plain on tablets
so that a herald may run with it.*

*For the revelation awaits an appointed time;
it speaks of the end and will not prove false.*

*Though it linger, wait for it;
it will certainly come and will not delay.”*

God's warning: Five "Woes," 2:6-20

1. Woe for those that profit from evil,
2:6-8
2. Woe for those that plot to do evil,
2:9-11
3. Woe for those that participate in evil,
2:12-14
4. Woe for those that promote evil,
2:15-17
5. Woe for those that reject God,
2:18-19

God's reassurance for Habakkuk (and for us today)

The righteous will live by his faith
(2:4)

Don't worry, just wait!
God has everything under control!

*The earth will be filled with the
knowledge of the glory of the LORD,
as the waters cover the sea. (2:14)*

*“The LORD is in His holy temple;
let all the earth be silent before Him.”
(2:20)*

The Response of Faith: Worry Turns to Worship

LORD, I have heard of your fame;

I stand in awe of your deeds, O LORD.

*Renew them in our day, in our time make them
known; in wrath remember mercy. (3:1-2)*

*I heard and my heart pounded, my lips
quivered at the sound; decay crept into my
bones, and my legs trembled. Yet I will wait
patiently for the day of calamity to come on
the nation invading us. (3:16)*

The Response of Faith: Worry Turns to Worship

*Though the fig tree does not bud
and there are no grapes on the vines,
though the olive crop fails
and the fields produce no food,
though there are no sheep in the pen
and no cattle in the stalls,
yet I will rejoice in the Lord,
I will be joyful in God my Savior.*

(3:17-18)

The Response of Faith: Worry Turns to Worship

I will wait patiently for the day of calamity!
*Though there is no tangible evidence of God's
lovingkindness in my circumstances, still*
I will rejoice in the LORD!
I will be joyful in God my Savior!
I will do this and I can do this because:
The sovereign LORD is my strength!
He enables me to go on the heights!

Lessons to learn from Habakkuk

Its okay to be honest with God:

Ask God to help you understand!

You can have confidence in God:

He is present in hard times. He cares!

Its essential to be submissive:

Trust God. Let Him be God!

Lessons to learn from Habakkuk

Sometimes you have to be patient:

God's timing is perfect, wait for Him!

Waiting is hard, but learn to be joyful:

Rejoice while waiting, it's a choice you make not a feeling you get!

Don't try to be strong by yourself:

Faith sustains when strength fails!

Lean heavily on God!

God's perfect plan and promise for the Christian in 2014

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

God's perfect plan and promise for the Christian in 2014

In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

1 Peter 1:3-7

A Probing Question?

If I lost my family and friends,
my job and all my possessions,
if I lost my home and my
health, if all I had left was God,
Would He be enough?