



PRESIDENT LEON WILLIS

Having finished his Sunday sermon from Psalm 18 on God as a stronghold who delivers his people from their enemies, Enoch Adeboye then led them to a cemetery.

Wearing a bright green tuxedo, the General Overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God in Lagos, Nigeria, marched three miles yesterday holding a placard that declared: "All Souls are Precious to God."

Adeboye and his congregation, one of the largest in the world, answered the call issued by the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) for a three-day fast this past weekend, concluding in a prayer walk.

Based on reports from its state chapters and local media, CAN estimates 5 million people marched in 28 of Nigeria's 36 states on Sunday.

"With one voice, we said 'no' to killings, 'no' to security negligence, and 'no' to the persecution of Christians in Nigeria. It is a wake-up call to the government."

The prayer was in protest of the beheading of a Brethren pastor Lawan Andimi, and also of the Nigerian government's failure to stop the abductions and killings.

Terrorist attacks, as well as clashes between mostly Muslim herdsmen and mostly Christian farmers, resulted in more than 100 deaths in January alone.

"Lord, have mercy on Nigeria, let there be peace and security," said Adeboye. "God sees all things and knows where the ter-

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God's Deliverance of His People Habakkuk 3:1 (Part 5)

A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, according to Shigionoth, a prayerful song with music expressive of strong emotion.

This was probably designed by the Spirit to be a fit formula of prayer for the people-first in their Babylonian exile, and now in their dispersion, especially toward the close of it, just before the Great Deliverer is to inter-

pose for them. It was used in public worship, as the musical term, Selah (Hab 3:3,9,13), implies.

I want to point out the last major statement made by Habakkuk. *"Though the fig tree should not blossom and there be no fruit on the vines, though the yield of the olive should fail and the fields produce no food, though the flock should be cut off from the fold and there be no cattle in the stalls,*

Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither, shall fruit be in the vines. Destroy the "vines" and "fig trees" of the carnal heart, and his mirth ceases. But those who, when full, enjoyed God in all, when emptied, can enjoy all in God. They can sit down upon the heap of ruined creature-comforts, and rejoice in Him as the "God of their salvation." Running in the way of His commandments, we outrun our troubles. Thus Habakkuk, beginning his prayer with trembling, ends it with a song of triumph (Job 13:15; Ps 4:7; 43:3,5).

Yet I will exult in the LORD, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation. The Lord GOD is my strength, and He has made my feet like hinds' feet, and makes me walk on my high places. For the choir director, on my stringed instruments.

A hind is a female red deer. It is sure footed and can survive the steep rocky places. **The Lord God** will make my feet like hinds' feet ... to walk upon mine high places. Habakkuk has here before his mind Ps 18:33-34, "He makes my feet like, hinds' feet, and sets me upon my high places;" Deut 32:13, "He made him ride on the high places of the earth." "Hinds' (gazelles') feet" imply the swiftness with which God enables him (the prophet and his people) to escape from his enemies and return to his native land. The "high places" are called "mine," to imply that Israel shall be restored to his own land, a land of hills which are places of safety and of eminence.

Summary

Habakkuk was a wrestler, but not with people. He wrestled with God inwardly, not understanding His ways or purpose. *"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places"* (Eph 6:12-13).

The prophet Habakkuk, a rather obscure figure, but his book is one of the gems of the Old Testament. He possibly was contemporary with Jeremiah and Zephaniah in Jerusalem. It seems to have been written shortly before the Battle of Carchemish in 605 B.C., when the Babylonians became the undisputed power in the area. Habakkuk's problem was divine justice. He saw violence, lawbreaking, and injustice go unpunished, so he questioned God about it.

There was iniquity, violence, wickedness, fraud, heathen worship being practiced in the temple, murder, strife and forbidden sexual behavior going on in the country. Habakkuk seeing all of this evil cried out to God to do something about it.

Yet there was not any answer back from God. Habakkuk did not understand. He cries out why will You not answer, and how long will it be?

Finally, the Lord answered by saying, "Look out among the nations" and observe them because "I am doing something in your days that you would not believe it if you were told." Then the Lord explained what He was going to do. He was going to put hooks in the jaws of the Babylonians (Chaldeans) and draw them into battle with the Assyrians. The battle took place in Carshemish in 605 BC and the Assyrians with the aid of Egypt was soundly defeated by the Babylonians. This opened a path directly to Jerusalem.

God was using the Babylonians to punish Judea for their wickedness.

Habakkuk, hearing the word of the Lord, went to the eastern wall of Jerusalem and sat down on the rampart (place on the wall) and kept watch for the approach-



PAUL TILLEY
VICE-PRESIDENT

Full Gospel Fellowship
Of Churches and Ministers International of Oregon
P.O. 493160
Redding, CA 96049
Phone: 530 319-7535
Fax: 530 224-1380
Email: fgoregon@charter.net

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rorists are hiding.

“We pray that God send his light to Nigeria and expose the evildoers in the country.”

“O Lord, in Jesus Name, expose all the government functionaries and security chiefs who have compromised and who are giving vital information to the terrorists, killer herdsmen, and kidnappers in the country,” stated a point prayer guide for the fast.

“All the suppliers of ammunition to the insurgents, we pray that you our God would expose, no matter how highly placed they may be.”

Day 1 of the three-day fast called on Nigerian Christians to confess and repent of their sins. Day 2 called on God to pour out his spirit for revival. Day 3 called for the prayer walk, asking God to fight their battles.

The Bible based Christians in the USA need to take a close look at what is happening in Nigeria, and many other countries enduring the same persecution.

Churches need to develop a strategy to handle persecution from atheistic governments, and God-haters.

**Full Gospel
Fellowship of
Oregon
PO Box 493160
Redding, CA. 96049
Ph: 1-530-319-7535
Fax: 1-530-224-1380**

ing army. He was told to record the vision and write it on tablets to be displayed in several parts in the city. The Lord told him, “For the vision is yet for the appointed time; it hastens toward the goal, and it will not fail. Though it tarries, wait for it; for it will certainly come, it will not delay.

He sat down on the wall in faith and wrote, “But the righteous will live by his faith.”

It was approximately 24 years before the vision was fulfilled when the Babylonians laid sieged to the city of Jerusalem in 586 BC.

Habukkuk, after listening to the Lord’s description of the invasion, saw the outcome of God’s plan and wrote it down, “For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.”

In the final chapter of the book, Habakkuk wrote an emotional song. This song was meant to be an encouragement to the people that were dispersed and in captivity. It was a song that covered many of the major events that God did for the nation of Israel, and their end as a nation was not yet. By the power of the Lord a major remnant returned and rebuilt the temple in 534 BC.

A perplexed prophet, a patient God, and a God of restoration!

The Importance of Adjustments

“The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD saying, Arise and go down to the potter’s house, and there I shall announce My words to you. Then I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was, making something on the wheel. But the vessel that he was making of clay was spoiled in the hand of the potter; so he remade it into another vessel, as it pleased the potter to make. Then the word of the LORD came to me saying, Can I not, O house of Israel, deal with you as this potter does?” declares the LORD. Behold, like the clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel” (Jeremiah 18:1-6).

The sovereignty of God is demonstrated in this context of scripture. As we adjust to His will, he remakes us into a better vessel of honor. We need to constantly adjust in order to travel the road toward excellence and glory in God’s kingdom.

We need to adjust in our:

1. Concept of God. “He is greater, better, stronger, richer than we think right now. *“Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, Thou art very great; Thou art clothed with splendor and majesty, Covering Thyself with light as with a cloak, Stretching out heaven like a tent curtain” (Psalm 104:1-2).*

“Thine, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Thine is the dominion, O LORD, and Thou dost exalt Thyself as head over all. Both riches and honor come from Thee, and Thou dost rule over all, and in Thy hand is power and might; and it lies in Thy hand to make great, and to strengthen everyone” (1 Chron. 29:11-12).

2. Conduct and character. Know that there is room for improvement. *“Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Philip. 3:12-14).*

3. Purpose for being. Our purpose is greater than we realized. *“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them” (Ephes. 2:10).*

4. Relationships. It is God’s intention for us to dwell in peace with one another. *“So then let us pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another” (Romans 14:19).*

5. Ministry. Weed out what is not God. *“What is the outcome then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification” (1 Cor. 14:26).*

6. Worship. There are other higher more intimate levels of communication to God. *“He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty” (Psalm 91:1).*

One must be flexible to adjust, and then willing to make that adjustment. In typing, justification of lines is the adjustment that is needed to bring each line even on the right hand side of the paper. Stretching and contracting is a part of the Christian walk.

Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Elijah, David, Peter, Paul, all needed adjustment to fulfill their purpose in God. While I was in other countries adjustments were mandatory to achieve success. The weather, the culture, living conditions, and the way things were done.

Adjustment does not bring humiliation, but correction to arrive at the prescribed goal. Note that a sea captain and an aircraft pilot will constantly make adjustments in their course.