

Sunday, March 29, 2020.

While reading in the book of Psalms this morning, often written from a place of crisis, I was reminded of Habakkuk 3:16-19.

Our God, though loving, merciful and very patient, is also Holy and just. He will come against sin. He is good and sin is not.

Habakkuk was a prophet living at a time in which God came against the sin of Israel. As a prophet, God told him what he was going to do and Habakkuk's reaction was very human. He was reduced to the reality of the coming destruction and had to simply wait with a trembling heart, watching for the coming chastisement.

Habakkuk was given time for all his emotions to come out, so that he might look at them, and record them for the reader's sake. He was also privileged to dialog with the Lord about it all. The culminating response is found in 3:16-19.

This is one of the most powerful faith declarations in the whole of Scripture, ranking very close to Jesus' statement in the Garden of Gethsemane, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will. My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Your will be done." - Matt. 26:39, 42.

Habakkuk 3:16-19 has been used as a model many times for millennia by people who are in a personal or even national crisis yet realize that this is much bigger than them. They need God!

Habakkuk's thoughts processed all the circumstances including the nearness of his Holy God, and arrived at the determination laid out in those verses.

We have the privilege of reading his words of determination and letting them guide us as we process our circumstances, so that we might end up at the same determination.

I quoted one line from an article in an earlier letter, "The whole world has a common enemy." The writer was certainly on to something, as they referenced the COVID-19.

But the other common enemy, and not secondary, as I see it, is fear. It seems that our nation, and most/all others have now been crippled by fear. I was at a feed-store yesterday and passed behind an older gentleman who was made to stand 12 feet behind the first person in the checkout line. In a German accent he

blurted out, "The anxiety is worse than the virus! The anxiety is going to kill us!" I looked at him and said, "You are absolutely right!"

Family, we must keep our composure during this time by not losing sight of our hope and trust in God. He is very near at hand. He gives His peace that passes all understanding to those whose trust is in Him. (Phil. 4:4-9)

Love your family and appreciate the beauty and uniqueness of each one. They are a gift from God. Use this time to reflect on Psalm 46:10.

Pray for those who have been devastated by this COVID-19, and for those who are paralyzed from fear. Pray for leaders, world wide. Pray for the countless healthcare workers.

I love you all and can't get my mind off of this church family!  
Pastor Dan