



The Twenty-Third Sunday after Trinity
The Collect.

O GOD, our refuge and strength, who art the author of all godliness; Be ready, we beseech thee, to hear the devout prayers of thy Church; and grant that those things which we ask faithfully we may obtain effectually; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

12. Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction. 13. Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he? 14. And makest men as the fishes of the sea, as the creeping things, that have no ruler over them? 15. They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag: therefore they rejoice and are glad. 16. Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous. 17. Shall they therefore empty their net, and not spare continually to slay the nations? (Hab 1:12-17) and 1. I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved. (Hab 2:1)

Despite dungeon, fire and sword (Hymn: Faith of our Fathers), the righteous of God shall not die as Habakkuk is inspired of the Spirit to declare. God is not only the Holy One, but One on whom each of the Elect can call upon as "mine Holy One!" Though we may not understand His Hand of Judgment, we must face all ordeals of life

with that same spirit of Job: Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him (Job 13:15)

Just as God has ordained men and nations for blessings, He also ordains the same for Judgment. The purpose of judgment is never to finally destroy, but to correct. As we suffer judgment, we must turn from that behavior that led to the judgment and embrace the love and Law of God to our health. Judgment will not endure forever, so our wickedness must cease! Please hear, America. I have never understood how a nation so completely blessed by the beneficent Providence of God could so miserably turn from that Loving Providence and turn to the filthy rags of the world. Have we lost our Anchor of Faith – our heritage in God as our Maker and Founder? We have chosen darkness over Light, and the darkness shall cover the land ere the Sun of Righteousness again arises over our heaven-blessed Land.

God's eyes are too pure to regard, or to look upon, wickedness. It is for this reason that the wicked shall be cast into outer darkness. God cannot admit the filthy dregs of the world into His Heavenly Home. Even so, the LORD is altogether aware of the evil thoughts, deeds and fruits of the wicked. If they persist in evil without amendment, He will crush them with a final judgment! We see the very issues that Habakkuk raise against the people of God being expressed in our own society of America and elsewhere. His Hand is a hairs-breadth away from lowering His crushing judgment against wicked powers and immoral leaders who rule without the mandate of God. Do we not have such leaders today in America in profusion?

The view that man has no ruler over them in verse 14 is apparent only. They all have rulers and belong to one or the other of two families only – the Family of God, or the Household of Satan. In view of the national character of modern America, to which family would you consider her to presently belong? Is it time for national repentance?

15.They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag: therefore they rejoice and are glad. Modern education and social media are the angle and net of the ungodly and wicked of our day for the souls of our young. Their nets are vulgar and immoral philosophies taught to the very young and which are impossible to overcome apart from the fervent conviction of Christ through teaching and preaching. These social engineers boast that they need only one generation of indoctrination to eliminate every vestige of moral restraint. They must be doing cartwheels at their recent success resulting from the abject silence of parents and churches.

16.Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous. Modern and corrupt philosophy has become the god and altar of their very existence. While the citizens remain silent, they redouble their approach to deceit and mockery of the eternal principles for family and life laid down by God.

17.Shall they therefore empty their net, and not spare continually to slay the nations? Shall the usurper be allowed to empty his net, full of the souls of men, women, boys, and girls, with impunity? Shall we allow him not only to corrupt the minds and souls of our youth, but keep them as his own? What shall the Lord do to such a wicked and adulterous generation? Shall He allow them immunity from judgment? Will He remain silent? Shall the judgment of the Lord not go out to all nations who profane His Word and Will?

These are questions which the prophet asks in earnest. He has labored hard at

preaching repentance and deliverance. Now he desires the only remedy for a rebellious nation – Judgment! He has poured his righteous heart out to the Lord. More than anything else, he now desires an answer: 1. I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reprov'd. As ministers and prophets, we are all like unto our military counterparts in the Army of God. Habakkuk uses military watch terms to describe his awaiting the Word of the Lord. He will stand – not retreat! He will watch – not slumber! He will take the high ground of the tower from which to watch and wait upon the Lord. He will await his orders from the High Command of God and consider how to respond to those orders if he is reprimanded for lack of understanding. There is no time left for America! We must either stand now on the part of God, or slink into the darkness of the present day and side with those who say we are no longer a Christian nations! We must either be alert to all of the abuses taking place in our midst, or close our eyes to a blinding cloud of ignorance, and a tolerance for evil! We must search the Scriptures for present-day wisdom in dealing with a greater crisis (including every past war), or succumb to the godless philosophy that stalks the landscape! The specter that stalked Europe (see Communist Manifesto by Marx) has now come to our own fair shores! When God reproveth, shall we hear and make amendment; or shall we persist to the washed-out bridge at the near distance?