

“When disaster strikes, how are God’s people supposed to respond besides weeping? ... There is one thing God’s people can do more effectively than anyone else. Pray.”



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New Orleans, La.

WHEN DISASTER STRIKES

Hurricane Katrina would have been fearsome as a stand-alone hurricane, but the breaking of the levees in New Orleans and the unprecedented flooding and human misery that followed have given her notoriety as the worst natural disaster in our nation’s history and the worst overall disaster since the Civil War.

When disaster strikes, how are God’s people supposed to respond besides weeping? Giving to the relief effort? Opening our homes? Volunteering our time?

There is one thing God’s people can do more effectively than anyone else. *Pray*. The Old Testament prophet Habakkuk set a clear example for us. He knew the mounting sin in his nation was pushing God beyond the limits of His patience. When God confirmed that His judgment would fall

in the form of a disaster so catastrophic that Habakkuk wouldn’t believe it if he heard it (Habakkuk 1:5), Habakkuk turned to God and poured out his heart in prayer.

As we listen to Habakkuk pray, we learn that when disaster strikes we need to turn to God and keep our focus on Him.

Read Habakkuk 3

STAY FOCUSED ON GOD’S AVAILABILITY

- Read Habakkuk 3:1.
- What disaster has struck you or a loved one?
- Write out the phrases of encouragement that you find in the following verses: Isaiah 43:1-4; Psalm 46:1-7, 91:14-

16, 145:18; 1 Peter 3:12.

- Describe other situations when people have turned to God during a disaster. See Genesis 18:16-23; 2 Chronicles 20:1-6, 12; Nehemiah 1:1-4.

STAY FOCUSED ON GOD’S CONSISTENCY

- Read Habakkuk 3:2.
- From each of the following passages, describe God’s awesome deeds: Genesis 1:1-31, 6:11-8:22; Exodus 14:5-31; Joshua 6:1-20; 1 Samuel 17:1-50; 1 Kings 18:16-39; Daniel 3:1-30, 6:1-28.
- Put Habakkuk’s request of God into your own words.
- Do you think God’s power has been diluted over the years? See Isaiah 59:1 and Hebrews 13:8.
- What has God done for you in the past that you want Him to do again?

STAY FOCUSED ON GOD’S GLORY

- Read Habakkuk 3:3-4.
- Describe God’s glory from the following verses: Psalm 19:1-6; Job 38:1-12, 16, 19, 22-24, 28-30, 32, 36; Exodus 15:11-13, 24:15-17, 34:29-35, 40:34-35; John 1:1-3, 14.
- How was God’s glory revealed through disaster in John 17:1-5 and 1 Peter 1:6-9?

STAY FOCUSED ON GOD’S MAJESTY

- Read Habakkuk 3:5-6.
- How does Isaiah describe God’s majesty in Isaiah 40:21-31?
- Give other aspects of God’s majesty from Exodus 15:6, 11; Isaiah 26:10; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-10; Psalm 29:4, 111:3, Ephesians 1:19-23; Matthew 28:18-20.
- Give one demonstration of His power in your life.

STAY FOCUSED ON GOD’S ETERNITY

- Read Habakkuk 3:6b.
- Write out your own definition of eternity. See John 17:3 and Revelation 1:8.
- Give phrases from the following verses that describe God’s eternity: Deuteronomy 33:27; Psalm 16:11, 21:6,

111:10, 119:89, 119:160; Isaiah 26:4; Jeremiah 10:10; Daniel 4:3, 34; Romans 1:20.

- When disaster strikes, what does it mean to you that God and His ways are eternal? See John 3:16, 4:14, 5:24, 6:40, 10:28.

STAY FOCUSED ON GOD’S AUTHORITY

- Read Habakkuk 3:7-16.
- From verses 7-16, list the personal pronouns “you” and “your,” along with the nouns, adverbs and verbs that immediately follow.
- What encouragement does this give you?
- Read Luke 5:21-26; John 5:26-27; Romans 12:19; Revelation 18:20, 19:1-2, 11-16, 17:13-14, 12:10. What further encouragement do you receive from these verses, especially in times of disaster?

STAY FOCUSED ON GOD’S SUFFICIENCY

- Read Habakkuk 3:17-19.
- Write out an application for each of the difficult situations in verse 17.
- What’s the worst thing that could happen to you or to the person you’re praying for?
- What was Habakkuk’s choice at the conclusion of his prayer? Give phrases.
- How are we instructed to make that same choice in Psalm 43:1-5; Philippians 4:4, 4:11-12; Hebrews 13:5?
- As his national situation worsened, on what did Habakkuk rely, according to verse 19?
- What phrase indicates Habakkuk was determined to live by faith, not somehow, but triumphantly?
- When disaster strikes nationally, locally or personally, what encouragement do you receive from 2 Chronicles 7:13-15, 2 Peter 1:3-4, 2 Corinthians 12:7-10?
- If God doesn’t _____, yet I will praise Him. Fill in the blank.

This month, as you celebrate Thanksgiving, would you stay focused on God and express your gratitude for His blessings by spending sincere, heart-felt time in prayer—especially for those experiencing disaster? **■**