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Message For a Troubled President

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MESSAGE FOR A TROUBLED PRESIDENT

As impeachment proceedings moved ever closer, the President was besieged with conflicting opinions over how he should handle what came to be known as the Lewinsky Affair. After a night of prayer and sleeplessness, Wintley Phipps sent a note to the President recommending that he read Psalm 69.

The wording seemed appropriate:

*Save me, O God!
For the waters have come up to
my neck.
I sink in deep mire,
Where there is no standing;
I have come into deep waters,
Where the floods overflow me.
I am weary with my crying:
My throat is dry. . . .
Those who hate me without a
cause
Are more than the hairs of my
head:
They are mighty who would
destroy me,

O God, You know my
foolishness;
And my sins are not hidden from*

*You. . . .
Hear me, O Lord, for Your
lovingkindness is good;
Turn to me according to the
multitude of Your tender
mercies.
And do not hide Your face from
Your servant,
For I am in trouble;
Hear me speedily.
Draw near to my soul, and
redeem it; . . .
You know my reproach, my
shame,
and my dishonor; . . .
Reproach has broken my heart
And I am full of heaviness;
I looked for someone to take pity,
but there was none. . . (NKJV).*

The next day the President read a response to the American public in which for the first time he said, frankly, "I have sinned."

Wintley got a handwritten note from Clinton a few days later: "Dear Wintley: I received your message about Psalm 69. I read it with care and gratitude. I appreciate so much your wise counsel, your prayers, and your support. I need them all now." It was signed "Bill Clinton."