

TRIUMPHANT FAITH IN TROUBLED TIMES

Habakkuk

Where is God when the world is turned upside down? Why do the righteous suffer and evil seems to triumph? How can God just let things go without judging and stopping evil?

1.TROUBLED FAITH: PERPLEXITY ABOUT GOD’S JUSTICE – Habakkuk 1 and 2

- Habakkuk, probably a godly priest, writing in the 600’s B.C. is troubled by the seeming silence of God in human history. Evil is running rampant and God is not doing anything about it! This is the complaint of Habakkuk 1:1-4. The LORD answers in verses 5-11. The LORD is not silent nor indifferent. He is actively and sovereignly raising up the Babylonians to judge His people. History is under God’s control, and follows God’s timeline. God will accomplish His purposes of glorifying His name and His Son – Ephesians 1:11. Application: Don’t assume God is silent or doesn’t care. He does not answer to us nor do we see all He is doing! His ways are higher than our ways.
- Habakkuk complains next that he does not understand how the Holy God is going to use people who are worse than even Israel to judge them! – Habakkuk 1:12-2:1. Babylon worships their own power and weaponry. Habakkuk is going to sit and see what God will say to this. God’s response is found in 2:2-20. First, God says in verses 2-5 that Habakkuk should write this down. He does. Then the LORD reminds Habakkuk that judgment will come even if we have to wait for it. The LORD also reminds Habakkuk and us that there is a huge difference between the righteous and the arrogant wicked – verse 4. The proud arrogant person will be judged (in God’s time!). The righteous person lives by faith, trusting God alone. This is quoted three times in the New Testament and was the cry of the Protestant Reformation – Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38. Application: We are righteous by faith. Faith alone saves. We live daily by faith.
- God is sovereign and just and will punish both Judah and Babylon for their evil. He pronounces five woes upon the invading Babylonians in Habakkuk 2:6-20: 1. Woe to the greedy plunderers – Habakkuk 2:6-8; 2. Woe to the unjust who rely on wealth for security - Habakkuk 2:9-11; 3. Woe to the violent – Habakkuk 2:12-14; The violent conquerors will come to nothing, but God’s glory will fill the earth! – verse 14; 4. Woe to the seducers who abuse others shamefully – Habakkuk 2:15-17 5. Woe to the idolaters – Habakkuk 2:18-20. Application: God is Sovereign over the nations and will hold everyone accountable in the End.
- In contrast to dead idols, the Living God reigns and is seated in His Holy Temple – Psalm 11:2-5. Humans are to be silent or hush. Silence is for everyone to consider God’s Holiness and Sovereignty – Habakkuk 2:20. God is in control when everything seems to be falling apart.
- *“When the Lord pulls a person down, He does it in order that He may build him up again. When He breaks a person’s heart, it is so He may make it anew.” – C.H. Spurgeon.*

2.TRIUMPHANT FAITH: SEEING GOD’S PERSON AND PROMISES – Habakkuk 3

- When we see God is in His Holy Temple and catch a fresh glimpse of His glory, we will trust Him afresh. Chapter 3 is called a prayer and begins with Habakkuk praying in verses 1,2. It is like a Psalm. Three times the word Selah is found. In verse 2 Habakkuk asks the LORD to renew His great works of deliverance and judgment in the present. He asks the LORD to remember mercy

even in the midst of displaying His wrath. He also says He has seen God's saving acts which he recounts in verses 3-15. Habakkuk sees a vision of God as the Ultimate Warrior and Deliverer.

- God's character is always trustworthy. The righteous live by steadfast trust in God. Notice the attributes of God in verses 3-15: Splendor/brightness – verses 3,4; eternal/everlasting – verse 6; wrath/indignation/fury – verses 8,12; Savior/deliverer of His people – verses 8, 13; Sovereign Warrior/Conqueror – verses 7, 8, 14-15. God's great acts in salvation history are celebrated: in v. 3 Teman and Paran border on Sinai and point to God's deliverance of Israel from Egypt, v. 11 - the sun standing still to His victory through Joshua the victories over Midian, and possible references to the great Flood and the destruction of the world – verses 8-10 – 2 Peter 3:5-7,10. God is faithful to His people – verses 13, 14. He delivered His anointed one and will continue to deliver His people. Application: Because the Holy God did these things in the past, we can trust Him for our present, and our future deliverance!
- Response to God's glory and sovereign deliverance: Habakkuk 3:16b-19. Habakkuk is trembling in awe – verse 16a. But his trust is now in God alone – 16b. Verses 17-19 are one of the greatest expressions of faith in the Bible and expresses the triumph of faith in the Triumphant God! This Triumphant faith includes knowing three things about God: 1. God is our Joy. Even though there is no outward sign of God's blessing at all, the believer can rejoice in the Lord – Philippians 4:4 -7. *"To rejoice in God for His own sake is evidence of pure faith."* 2. God is our Savior. Habakkuk knows the LORD is his own Savior. God will deliver His people and protect them. We who know God through faith in Jesus Christ have more to rejoice in than Habakkuk! God has delivered us from the penalty of sin and in Jesus we have righteousness and forgiveness of sin. We have a sure hope forever! 3. God is our strength. He gives us the strength to go on day by day and live for Him even in troubled times. This strength to live comes only from God. *"Habakkuk himself is a living example of the righteous one who lives by faith."* – F.F. Bruce. Are you living by faith or crushed under life's circumstances? Are you seeing the Glory of God even in the storms of life? Will you praise Him in the storms?
- We pray for blessings
We pray for peace
Comfort for family, protection while we sleep
We pray for healing, for prosperity
We pray for Your mighty hand to ease our suffering
All the while, You hear each spoken need
Yet love us way too much to give us lesser things

Cause what if Your blessings come through raindrops
What if Your healing comes through tears
What if a thousand sleepless nights
Are what it takes to know You're near
What if trials of this life are Your mercies in disguise
We pray for wisdom
Your voice to hear
And we cry in anger when we cannot feel You near
We doubt Your goodness, we doubt Your love
As if every promise from Your Word is not enough
All the while, You hear each desperate plea
And long that we'd have faith to believe

Concluding applications:

- Are you relying on yourself or are you resting in Christ alone for your salvation? The just shall live by faith.
- Do you trust God even when you don't understand or see blessings?
- Have you had questions for God in the midst of tragedy or trials? Did this bring you closer to God, desiring to see Him more clearly?
- OPEN GOD'S BOOK FOR A FRESH LOOK AT HIM!