

HABAKKUK - INTRO VIDEO - LAURIE TACKETT - JULY 14, 2020

Habakkuk begins in perplexity, despair, and complaining to God but God leads him to worship. Spoiler Alert: Here is the way Habakkuk finishes:

*17 Though the fig tree should not blossom,
nor fruit be on the vines,
the produce of the olive fail
and the fields yield no food,
the flock be cut off from the fold
and there be no herd in the stalls,
18 yet I will rejoice in the Lord;
I will take joy in the God of my salvation.
19 God, the Lord, is my strength;
he makes my feet like the deer's;
he makes me tread on my high places. Habakkuk 3:17-19 ESV*

We all need faith like that!! Even if... yet I will praise God! Be encouraged! God will lead us just as He led Habakkuk.

25 Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come. Proverbs 31:25 ESV

She laughs because she does not fear the future but trusts God. This hope is an anchor for our souls.

We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, Hebrews 6:19 ESV

A Brief History

- Genesis- Creation of the World
- The Fall of Man into sin
- The Patriarchs- Abraham, Isaac , Jacob, Joseph- the People of God are established
- God's people taken into Egypt and bondage/slavery
- Moses is used by God to deliver them out
- The people of God wander in the wilderness
- They are given the Law—God's Standard
- They enter the Promised Land and a cycle of sin, judgement and repentance
- The people cry out for a King, so God gives them first Saul, then David, then Solomon
- Then the people split into the Northern and the Southern Kingdoms.
- The Northern Kingdom (Israel) is ruled by a series of godless kings and experience a spiritual and moral decline. They are overtaken by the Assyrians.
- The Southern Kingdom-(Judah), is ruled by some faithful and some unfaithful kings. Under the rule of Josiah they experience a spiritual rebirth but he is killed in battle by the Egyptians. His son, Jehoiakim, succeeds him. He is a wicked king and the people experience spiritual and moral decline. They are overtaken by Babylon. It is into this environment that Habakkuk is writing, crying out to God in the midst of spiritual, moral, and cultural chaos.

Normally the pattern we see in the Word is that God speaks to the prophet and the prophet delivers the message to the people. But here in Habakkuk we are invited to sort of eavesdrop into an emotionally charged conversation between Habakkuk and God. The book is a series of questions asked by Habakkuk; a dialogue with God.

1. Habakkuk Questions and God Responds
 - a. Habakkuk: Do you care, God? How long will I cry out to you? What is going on? 1:2-4
 - b. God: I am on it. I am actually raising up this wicked nation of Babylon (Chaldeans) to overtake you (1:5-11)
2. Habakkuk Questions and God Responds again
 - a. Habakkuk: What do you mean? I thought you were pure and holy? (1:12-2:1)
 - b. God responds (2:2-20)
3. Finally Habakkuk hears and understands and responds back in faith (3:1-19)

Do you see yourself anywhere in this dialogue? You probably have similar questions. God, I don't understand what you are doing in this health situation, this job situation, this child situation, my marriage, our nation—In great perplexity and maybe despair, How long?? God, do you even care?? Praise God—we have the freedom to ask Him!!

The hinge of the book is [Habakkuk 2:4 ESV](#) — [Major Theme and Key Verse](#)

⁴“Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him, but the righteous [the just] shall live by his faith.”

This is repeated in the New Testament.

¹⁷For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous [the just] shall live by faith.” Romans 1:17 ESV

This faith is not nebulous—it has an object—it is the person and work of Christ—it is His work on the Cross. He is the perfect prophet and mediator. Let Jesus work faith in our hearts. God is even now pulling out faith with what might feel in our lives to be a scalpel. However, it is in those moments when we realize we can trust Him that we discover great freedom and joy. Our faith is refined by trials.

²Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, ³for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. ⁴And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. James 1:2-4 ESV

Don't be afraid to lean in and ask honest questions of God. So often there is a discrepancy between our desire and our present reality and the cry of our hearts is, “God, do you care??” As we study together, we will see in the Scripture that in Jesus, the answer is, “Yes, and Amen.”

“God Moves in a Mysterious Way” - Hymn by William Cowper

God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform; he plants his footsteps in the sea, and rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines, of never-failing skill; he fashions up his bright designs, and works his sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints fresh courage take, the clouds that you much dread, are big with mercy and will break in blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense, but trust him for his grace; behind a frowning providence, he hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast, unfolding every hour; the bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err, and scan his work in vain; God is his own interpreter, and he will make it plain.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2pTEboDF090>

Questions for Discussion or Journaling:

1. Icebreaker: What is your name? Do you read spoiler alerts? Are you the type of person who would read the last page of the novel? Are you the kind of person who asks questions during the movie about what is going to happen and actually wants to know the answers?
2. Before we get too far into our study, how would you describe the character of God? Who is He? What are some words you would use to describe Him?
3. After hearing Laurie’s overview of Habakkuk, what key words, verses, and themes stand out to you?
4. What is one question you are asking of God as you begin this study? What do you hope He will show you in these coming weeks?
5. As we begin this study of Habakkuk, where do you find yourself? Are you where Habakkuk started out - in perplexity, despair, crying out to God? Are you feeling like Laurie - on the surgical table and under the scalpel? Or have you already been down this road, maybe more than once, and rejoicing in the Lord, trusting in Him in spite of chaos? Maybe someplace in between? What is your prayer over these next four weeks?