

## *HABAKKUK CHAPTER 2 - LAURIE TACKETT - JULY 27, 2020*

What do you do when your hopes and dreams are so very different from the reality God gives you?

Recall that Habakkuk questioned God in his perplexity as he didn't understand this space where what he saw in reality did not match what he hoped to see from God. So his response was to lament. **BUT as he lamented, he recounted what he knew to be true of God-** Habakkuk was essentially saying, "God I know who you are but I don't understand what you are doing."

*<sup>12</sup> Are you not from everlasting,  
O Lord my God, my Holy One?  
We shall not die.*

*O Lord, you have ordained them as a judgment,  
and you, O Rock, have established them for reproof.*

*<sup>13</sup> You who are of purer eyes than to see evil  
and cannot look at wrong, Habakkuk 1:12-13 ESV*

As Habakkuk watched and waited for God, he physically put himself in a place to hear from God. He "sat like a sentinel on a rampart," which is a defensive wall of a castle. Habakkuk had assumed a battle position. The hardest thing for a soldier who is ready for battle to do is to wait. Recall the movie *Braveheart* - there was a scene when all the troops were lined up, faces painted for war, on their horses, ready for battle, waiting for the enemy to come over the horizon. Mel Gibson rode up and down the line of men saying, "Hold... Hold.... Hold...."

Is God saying this to you?

Where can you physically position yourself to hear from the Lord? This will look different in our lives in different seasons of life and we will be afforded different amounts of time. That is ok. God will use it.

So, in Chapter 2, God responds to Habakkuk. He is saying, "write this down - I have an appointed time - wait for it - it will surely come." The Greek Septuagint translates this verse— He will surely come - pointing to the Messiah.

Fast forward in history to the book of Daniel. Daniel was young when he was taken into captivity by the Babylonians. Belshazzar was the king. Years later at a party a hand appeared and wrote on the wall.

*24 "Then from his presence the hand was sent, and this writing was inscribed. 25 And this is the writing that was inscribed: Mene, Mene, Tekel, and Parsin. 26 This is the interpretation of the matter: Mene, God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end; 27 Tekel, you have been weighed in the balances and found wanting; 28 Peres, your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians." Daniel 5:24-28*

It was that very night that Belshazzar was slain and Darius the Mede crushed the proud and puffed up nation of Babylon as the Medo Persian Empire took over. Later Alexander the Great rose up and established the Greek empire. This began 400 years of silence between the Old and the New Testaments. It seemed like God was silent. "Hold... hold... hold..." and wait. But God is always working. What was He doing?? God was using The Greek empire. He established Greek as the common language. Thus when Rome came into power a unified empire was established, they built a road system, an irrigation system, and people began to travel and sell their wares. All of this made it possible for them to be able to share the Good News of the Gospel.

Galatians 4:4 *"But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law"*

God sent His Son at just the right time so that the early church could spread like wildfire.

Ralph Winters who started the Center for World Missions said this: "Even the most agnostic historian stands amazed that what began in a humble stable in Bethlehem, a backwater in the Roman Empire, in less than 300 years was given control of the Emperor's palace in Rome. It is truly an incredible story. God was right on time."

God knows what He is doing

There are four Greek words that are translated Love and refer to different aspects of love. In the same way, there are two Greek words that are translated Time - Chronos means chronological time, as in, it is 3:00. **Kairos** means the exact right opportune moment. It is used 86 times in the New Testament. Here are a few examples:

- 1 Peter 5:6 *"Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you,"*
- Romans 9:9 *"For this is what the promise said: 'About this time next year I will return, and Sarah shall have a son.'"*
- Gal 6:9-10 *"And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. 10 So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith."*
- Romans 5:6 *"For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly."*

Gandalf the Wizard in *Lord of the Rings* says that a wizard is never late nor is he early. He always arrives precisely when he means to. That is just how Jesus arrived to earth. Trust that God knows His overall timing for everything and He will do His work precisely when He means to.

Habakkuk 2:4 is the crescendo of the book: *“Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him, but the righteous shall live by his faith.”*

What does that mean, to live by faith? The world tells us, “Just be happy—have faith and it will all work out.” Will it? Apart from being in Christ, no.

God has had a plan in place since before He created the world: The Redemptive Story

1. Creation - Gen 1-2: God created a perfect world.
2. Fall in the Garden - Gen 3: all have sinned and thus suffering, illness, disease, brokenness, and pain all exist, and the worst is our separation from God. Thus all of creation is groaning; every living thing is longing for things to be made right. But He had a plan since before creation for how He would restore the world.

Habakkuk lived right here - after the fall but before the cross

3. Redemption - God sent His Son to die on the cross – paying the penalty for sin – bearing it in His own body - He bought us so that we could have a right relationship with God - and then He rose again.

We are living here - the Almost but the Not Yet - still looking toward the final restoration

4. Restoration - God will return and will make the earth right again and all who follow Christ will live with Him in a glorious new reality.

So, in Habakkuk 2:4 - Pride (puffed up) is contrasted with Faith

Pride: this is trust in self-effort in order to be right with God. It is counterfeit money to purchase righteousness.

Picture a vending machine. We put in our efforts and hope to receive in return what we think we want such as better circumstances, even though what we actually need is for our souls to be right with God.

### **Examples of false currencies: (self effort)**

- Honor roll child/Well behaved child
- My excellent deeds in helping my neighbors during the quarantine
- The flooring in my house is way better than yours
- My righteous political views
- My ministry efforts in various areas

However, while these are all really GOOD things, none of them will purchase righteousness and instead will yield judgment. FAITH in Christ is the only currency at the “bank of God.” Charles Spurgeon called this “Buying without Money” referring to Isaiah 55:1-3

*<sup>1</sup> “Come, everyone who thirsts,  
come to the waters;  
and he who has no money,  
come, buy and eat!  
Come, buy wine and milk  
without money and without price.*

*<sup>2</sup> Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,  
and your labor for that which does not satisfy?  
Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good,  
and delight yourselves in rich food.*

*<sup>3</sup> Incline your ear, and come to me;  
hear, that your soul may live; Isaiah 55:1-3*

If you want to cash in the Jesus check, you will be forgiven, redeemed, and brought under the loving care of a God who orders all things for your good. You bring nothing at all except faith in Jesus, and you receive every spiritual blessing.

God also cares about suffering and injustice. Note in this part of our reading of Habakkuk: 2 of the 5 Woes:

- Habakkuk 2:6-8: Greed and oppressive financial practices
- Habakkuk 2:9-11: Prospering through dishonest means
- Habakkuk 2:12-14: The use of violence and slavery to build cities

God will surely deal with sin.

Remember the story of Jesus healing the paralytic? (Luke 5:17-26) When his friends lowered him to Jesus through the roof, the first thing Jesus did was to forgive his sins!! The man had a problem walking but that was not his primary problem—and it is the same with us. Our first and biggest problem is our sin. We need desperately to escape the just judgment of a holy God. It needs to be well with my soul. God will deal with our circumstances but we must first be right with God.

## **What are you trusting in?**

In John chapter 6 Jesus teaches a hard lesson regarding the bread of life. Few really understood. Many walked away. <sup>67</sup> So Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you want to go away as well?” <sup>68</sup> Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, <sup>69</sup> and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.”

- Lament
- Cry Out to Him
- Recount Who He is
- Trust Him and Live by Faith- He alone has the words of eternal life

<https://youtu.be/zY5o9mP22V0> It is Well- Audrey Assad

<https://youtu.be/T0dIWJ4t4Jg> It is Well- Kristene DiMarco

### **Questions for Discussion or Journaling:**

1. Are you currently in a period where you feel God saying, "Hold...Hold....Hold..." What are you doing in this waiting period?
2. How do you personally position yourself to hear from God?
3. What currency have you been trusting in, perhaps even unconsciously??
4. What do we learn about God's character in Habakkuk's prayer?
5. What does watching and waiting on the Lord look like for you?
6. What does it mean, "The righteous shall live by faith?" How is a person made righteous?
7. How would you define justice? Is your definition different from how you think God defines justice?