

HABAKKUK CHAPTER 3 - LAURIE TACKETT - AUGUST 3, 2020

David Brainard was expelled from Yale in the 1700s for a careless remark. His life included a series of unfortunate events that included depression, loneliness, and finally TB and he died at the age of 29. However, he was friends with the famous theologian Jonathan Edwards who read Brainard's diaries and later published them. This was a story of suffering with faith and this published book later compelled many who had great impacts in the world for the Lord: including William Carey, David Livingston, and Jim Elliot who was speared to death through his missionary work with the Auca Indians of Ecuador in the 1950s. Elliot said this: *"Is it not for all its sting a wonderful way to live? To dream and want and pray, almost savagely, and then to commit and wait and see Him quietly pile all our dreams aside and replace them with what we could not dream: The Realized Will."*

What do you do when you pray so hard for something only to realize that your will is very different from God's will? What do you do when God does not answer your prayers the way you hope He will? Habakkuk was in this place and finally came to a conclusion in Chapter 3.

By way of review:

Habakkuk was living in this tension between what he desired and what he saw as his reality. He was part of the Southern Kingdom of Judah that was facing destruction by the wicked nation of Babylon and he was lamenting and crying out to God - Do you care? God responded, I do care, I am working, and I am well aware of the wickedness of the Babylonian nation. Habakkuk asks again - so why would you do this?? He waits and watches for God's reply. God replies with a series of woes - showing that He cares very much about injustice and noting that there will be judgment. The thing we all need first, though, is to escape personal judgment and to be delivered from our own sins.

Hab 2:4 "See, the enemy is puffed up; his desires are not upright - but the righteous person will live by his faithfulness"

Our only hope is faith in Christ.

Habakkuk is a minor prophet of the Old Testament. He saw dimly into the future.

1 Peter 1:10-11 *"Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, ¹¹inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories."*

There were actually layers of deliverance.

1. Freedom from Babylon
2. Redemption of sins by Jesus on the cross
3. Full Deliverance when Christ returns and God restores all things and His Glory is revealed. The New Heavens and the New Earth will be established forever and all our troubles here will be truly light and momentary in the rear view. We still eagerly await this deliverance.

2 More Woes:

Hab 2:15 *"Woe to him who makes his neighbors drink - you pour out your wrath and make them drunk, in order to gaze at their nakedness"* -- God will judge those who use alcohol to cause drunkenness and then abuse people.

*¹⁸"What profit is an idol
when its maker has shaped it,
a metal image, a teacher of lies?
For its maker trusts in his own creation
when he makes speechless idols!
¹⁹Woe to him who says to a wooden thing, Awake;
to a silent stone, Arise!
Can this teach?
Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver,
and there is no breath at all in it."* Hab 2:18-19

This speaks to idolatry and the things we are trusting in. This is a major shift because Habakkuk shifts from trusting in his own earthly ease, circumstances, and security to trusting in God alone. We are all prone to trust in what we can see. But idols never deliver and when they don't we will be anxious and fearful.

To identify your possible idols, fill in this blank: All I want is.....

Pursuing idols require sacrifice and there is a wake of destruction in this because they are dead. Why do I get angry when I don't get what I want? What is it that I want so much that I will fight to get it? All I want is.....

James 4:1-2a *"What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel."*

So Habakkuk can set his desire on God, submit and trust God and make this shift: Vs. 20: *²⁰But the Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him."*

Habakkuk 3—Habakkuk's response:

*²O Lord, I have heard the report of you,
and your work, O Lord, do I fear.
In the midst of the years revive it;
in the midst of the years make it known;
in wrath remember mercy.
³God came from Teman,
and the Holy One from Mount Paran. (reference to Mt. Sinai where God gave the Law)Selah*

His splendor covered the heavens,
and the earth was full of his praise.
⁴His brightness was like the light;
rays flashed from his hand;
and there he veiled his power.
⁵Before him went pestilence,
and plague followed at his heels.[a]
⁶He stood and measured the earth;
he looked and shook the nations;
then the eternal mountains were scattered;
the everlasting hills sank low.
His were the everlasting ways.
⁷I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction;
the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble.
⁸Was your wrath against the rivers, O Lord?
Was your anger against the rivers,
or your indignation against the sea,
when you rode on your horses,
on your chariot of salvation?
⁹You stripped the sheath from your bow,
calling for many arrows.[b] Selah
You split the earth with rivers.
¹⁰The mountains saw you and writhed;
the raging waters swept on;
the deep gave forth its voice;
it lifted its hands on high.
¹¹The sun and moon stood still in their place
at the light of your arrows as they sped,
at the flash of your glittering spear.
¹²You marched through the earth in fury;
you threshed the nations in anger.
¹³You went out for the salvation of your people,
for the salvation of your anointed.
You crushed the head of the house of the wicked,
laying him bare from thigh to neck.[c] Selah
¹⁴You pierced with his own arrows the heads of his warriors,
who came like a whirlwind to scatter me,
rejoicing as if to devour the poor in secret.
¹⁵You trampled the sea with your horses,
the surging of mighty waters.
¹⁶I hear, and my body trembles;
my lips quiver at the sound;
rottenness enters into my bones;
my legs tremble beneath me.
Yet I will quietly wait for the day of trouble
to come upon people who invade us.

These are the things Habakkuk Realizes:

1. God is awesome and utterly sovereign
2. He Remembers His past faithfulness
 - Exodus - deliverance through the Red Sea - Exodus 14
 - Joshua - God made the sun stand still in battle to give Israel the victory - Joshua 10
 - God marches forward to for His people
3. He moves from saying "He did this" to "You did this:" It is a shift from God being distant to God being near. He is awesome, and yet near to the broken hearted and He is approachable. He is the Lion of Judah and the Lamb that was slain.

THUS: Habakkuk 3:17-19—Habakkuk's hymn of Faith

*¹⁷Though 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,
¹⁸yet I will rejoice in the Lord;
I will take joy in the God of my salvation.
¹⁹God, the Lord, is my strength;
he makes my feet like the deer's;
he makes me tread on my high places.*

To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments.

Many of us have multiple plates spinning in the air at one time. If just one falls, we have a lot to manage trying to keep the others going while dealing with the one that fell. In Habakkuk's life, every plate had fallen. As a culture, we have had multiple plates fall at once. These verses in Habakkuk show that multiple plates have fallen at once.

BUT Recall what He has done, that He is for us, and that He is near to us.

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

Anchors that keep us:

- ANCHOR: *"I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living!"* Psalm 27:13
- ANCHOR: *"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?"* Romans 8:31
- ANCHOR: *"in God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can man do to me?"* Psalm 56:11
- ANCHOR: *"He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?"* Romans 8:32

God is for you and near to you. He has delivered you from sin - how much more?? You are set apart for eternal glory with Him - ANCHOR. Habakkuk 3 is anchored in hope. He has gone from flapping around in Chapter 1 to being anchored.

Psalms 73 is a psalm about Asaph which reminds us of Habakkuk. Notice the similar pattern:

*¹Truly God is good to Israel,
to those who are pure in heart.
²But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled,
my steps had nearly slipped.
³For I was envious of the arrogant
when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.*

*¹²Behold, these are the wicked;
always at ease, they increase in riches.
¹³All in vain have I kept my heart clean
and washed my hands in innocence.
¹⁴For all the day long I have been stricken
and rebuked every morning.
¹⁵If I had said, "I will speak thus,"
I would have betrayed the generation of your children.
¹⁶But when I thought how to understand this,
it seemed to me a wearisome task,
¹⁷until I went into the sanctuary of God;
then I discerned their end.
¹⁸Truly you set them in slippery places;
you make them fall to ruin.
¹⁹How they are destroyed in a moment,
swept away utterly by terrors!
²⁰Like a dream when one awakes,
O Lord, when you rouse yourself, you despise them as phantoms.
²¹When my soul was embittered,
when I was pricked in heart,
²²I was brutish and ignorant;
I was like a beast toward you.
²³Nevertheless, I am continually with you;
you hold my right hand.
²⁴You guide me with your counsel,
and afterward you will receive me to glory.
²⁵Whom have I in heaven but you?
And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you.
²⁶My flesh and my heart may fail,
but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.
²⁷For behold, those who are far from you shall perish;
you put an end to everyone who is unfaithful to you.
²⁸But for me it is good to be near God;
I have made the Lord God my refuge,
that I may tell of all your works.*

73:3 - he watches the wicked prosper and doesn't understand. Like Habakkuk

73:23 - a shift takes place for Asaph like Habakkuk. Judgment awaits those who are disobedient but as for Asaph, God is for Him.

This is the pattern. The same pattern of lament followed by hope with trust in God. We see this in Habakkuk, David Brainard, Jim Elliot, you and me.

God uses Suffering to draw us to Himself.

Charles Spurgeon - *"Mark then, Christian, Jesus does not suffer so as to exclude your suffering. He bears a cross, not that you may escape it, but that you may endure it. Christ exempts you from sin but not from sorrow. Remember that and expect to suffer."*

Spurgeon also says this: *"He is always to be found in the thickest part of the battle. When the wind blows cold he always takes the bleak side of the hill. The heaviest end of the cross lies ever on his shoulders. If he bids us carry a burden, he carries it also. If there is anything that is gracious, generous, kind, and tender, yea lavish and superabundant in love, you always find it in him."*

We expect to suffer but never alone. Christ is with us always.

Habakkuk 2:14 *"For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."*

How is this going to happen?

When He returns in the end:

¹⁰*so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,*
¹¹*and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* Phil 2:10-11

Every knee will bow – His Glory will be revealed in the end - But in the now, the already but not yet, how will He display His glory? It is done through His people. We are the means of displaying His glory now. He also uses creation. If we choose to be silent even the rocks will cry out. But He chooses to use us. We can know Him and the world can know Him through us - Mercy, goodness, kindness - who He is all shows through us. We are jars of clay but yet He chooses to use us.

Habakkuk 3:16 - He physically trembled BUT He ends with total trust in God in worship. Some things will cause us to tremble. BUT:

When your desire does not match your reality, live in that space between by lamenting to God, knowing He is close to the brokenhearted, repent of pride/being puffed up, watch and wait for Him, recount what He has done already, trust what He will do in the future, and submit in Trust to Him in worship. It's a wonderful way to live.