

Second Baptist Church of Doylestown
Bible Study Notes
11-7-18

Habakkuk 3

Habakkuk's Prayer - Verses 1-10

¹A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet. On shigionoth. ²LORD, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, LORD. Repeat them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy. ³God came from Teman, the Holy One from Mount Paran. His glory covered the heavens and his praise filled the earth. ⁴His splendor was like the sunrise; rays flashed from his hand, where his power was hidden. ⁵Plague went before him; pestilence followed his steps. ⁶He stood, and shook the earth; he looked, and made the nations tremble. The ancient mountains crumbled and the age-old hills collapsed—but he marches on forever. ⁷I saw the tents of Cushan in distress, the dwellings of Midian in anguish. ⁸Were you angry with the rivers, LORD? Was your wrath against the streams? Did you rage against the sea when you rode your horses and your chariots to victory? ⁹You uncovered your bow, you called for many arrows. You split the earth with rivers; ¹⁰the mountains saw you and writhed. Torrents of water swept by; the deep roared and lifted its waves on high.

3:1 Habakkuk praised God for answering his questions. Evil will not triumph forever; God is in control, and he can be completely trusted to vindicate those who are faithful to him. We must patiently wait for him to act (3:16).

3:1 This prayer was a song, to be played upon stringed instruments (see the end of verse 19). Habakkuk taught this song to the people before they went into exile. Habakkuk, the prophet who had just delivered to his people the sad news that they would be judged and overtaken by the cruel Chaldeans, now lovingly gives his people a song/prayer that they can take with them into captivity in a pagan land to remember their God, to give them hope.

3:2 Habakkuk knew that God was going to discipline the people of Judah and that it wasn't going to be a pleasant experience. But Habakkuk accepted God's will, asking for help and mercy. Habakkuk did not ask to escape the discipline, but he accepted the truth that Judah needed to learn a lesson. God still disciplines in love to bring his children back to him (Hebrews 12:5-6). Accept God's discipline gladly, and ask him to help you change.

Habakkuk's Prayer - Verses 11-19

¹¹Sun and moon stood still in the heavens at the glint of your flying arrows, at the lightning of your flashing spear. ¹²In wrath you strode through the earth and in anger you threshed the nations. ¹³You came out to deliver your people, to save your anointed one. You crushed the leader of the land of wickedness, you stripped him from

head to foot. ¹⁴ With his own spear you pierced his head when his warriors stormed out to scatter us, gloating as though about to devour the wretched who were in hiding. ¹⁵ You trampled the sea with your horses, churning the great waters. ¹⁶ I heard and my heart pounded, my lips quivered at the sound; decay crept into my bones, and my legs trembled. Yet I will wait patiently for the day of calamity to come on the nation invading us. ¹⁷ Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, ¹⁸ yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior. ¹⁹ The Sovereign LORD is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to tread on the heights. For the director of music. On my stringed instruments.

3:17-19 Crop failure and the death of animals would devastate Judah. But Habakkuk affirmed that even in the times of starvation and loss, he would still rejoice in the Lord. Habakkuk's feelings were not controlled by the events around him but by faith in God's ability to give him strength. When nothing makes sense, and when troubles seem more than you can bear, remember that God gives strength. Take your eyes off your difficulties and look to God.

3:19 God will give his followers strength and surefooted confidence through difficult times. They will run like deer across rough and dangerous terrain. At the proper time, God will bring about his justice and completely rid the world of evil. In the meantime, God's people need to live in the strength of his Spirit, confident in his ultimate victory over evil.

3:19 The note to the "director of music" was to be used when this passage was sung as a psalm in temple worship.

Habakkuk had asked God why evil people prosper while the righteous suffer. God's answer: They don't, not in the long run. Habakkuk saw his own limitations in contrast to God's unlimited perspective and power over all the world's events. God is alive and in control of the world. We cannot see all that God is doing, and we cannot see all that God will do. But we can be assured that he is God and will do what is right. Knowing this can give us confidence and hope in a confusing world.