

Trusting in God

Habakkuk 3:16-19

2/15/04

Intro

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The book of Habakkuk begins with the prophet wrestling with God, which is a reflection of the meaning of his name. But it ends with him embracing God, which is also another meaning to his name.

He is wrestling with God because it seems to him that God isn't doing anything about the wickedness around him. God responds by telling him that the Chaldeans will be used of God to bring justice. This troubles him even more that God's people would be taken by a nation more wicked than they.

But finally the prophet comes to chapter 3 which is a prayer written as a poem to be put to music.

The last four verses contain some of the most beautiful and most powerful words of encouragement for anyone who is in the midst of the painful times.

These, then, are the principles for trusting God in times of trouble.

I. Troubles Will Come

A. But how do we respond?

- When things look bad, oftentimes we are too likely to aggravate the problems by how we react to them.
- In other words, to aggravate is to make the problems worse by our reaction.

Illus – don't add acid to a wound when it needs healing balm.

Ephesians 4:29, "Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear."

B. Begin with God's faithfulness

- In the earlier part of the chapter the prophet remembers the faithfulness of God to Israel.
- Habakkuk refers to the faithfulness of God:
 - In Egypt when God brought the plagues
 - In crossing the Red Sea
 - In His mighty power in helping Joshua.

Deuteronomy 7:9, "Know therefore that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments."

Illus – We need to remember God’s faithfulness in the provision He gave us in Jesus; and in all He has done in our lives in our past.

- **I can easily list many things the Lord has done to reveal His hand in my life**
- **The Lord just keeps building on that list.**

Illus – When Jordi said, “Let’s just be friends.”

C. “I must wait quietly”

- Habakkuk knew there was nothing he could do; he could only wait for the trouble to come.
- If there is anything we can do, we should do it with all our heart.

James 4:17, “Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.”

Illus – the Lord opens the doors, but we must do the knocking.

Luke 11:9, “So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.”

- Waiting quietly also is reference to peace in the heart.
- Many people often regret their reaction to troubles and wish they had been more patient.

II. “Still, I Will Exult in the Lord”

A. Still – will I continue to exult

- If are made happy because we have “things,” then we are most pitiful when those things are gone.
- But if we are first content in God, then, when all is taken, **we still are content in Him.**

Philippians 4:11-13, “Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.”

B. Rejoicing in the God of my salvation

- This is the principle ground of our joy – the God of our salvation.
- Our eternal salvation is what puts everything in this life in perspective.

Psalm 56:9-11, “This I know, that God is for me. In God, whose word I praise, in the LORD, whose word I praise, in God I have put my trust, I shall not be afraid. What can man do to me?”

Isaiah 12:2-3, "Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; for the LORD GOD is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation. Therefore you will joyously draw water from the springs of salvation."

III. The Lord is My Strength

A. Strength in the inner man

- It's not that the problem will magically disappear,
- But it's that He will be my strength in the trouble.

John 16:33, "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."

- **God Himself is our strength...**

Deuteronomy 8:3, "He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD."

B. Feet like hind's feet

- A hind is a deer, a female deer.
- This is a reference to **"sure footing"**

Psalm 17:5, "My steps have held fast to Your paths. My feet have not slipped."

- **In discouragement, despair, and darkness, don't fall down.**

Illus – keep sure footing both while going down and coming up – walk in grace.

Set your feet on a solid rock at every step.

Keep your integrity in troubled times.

Proverbs 10:9, "He who walks in integrity walks securely."

C. To walk on high places

- Low places are coming, yes, **but God will make me walk in high places once again.**

Illus – God will sometimes even use the low places to bring you to high places; if you maintain your faith, hope, and your character.

It's seeing you handle challenges and trials like a champion that oftentimes causes you to rise as a result of the low times.

Conclusion

"He who promised is faithful," and this is the message of Habakkuk as well. Trust God especially in times of trouble.