



The GOSPEL for
ALL SEASONS

H A B A K K U K

BY DR. JOHN MORRISON
DR. TYLER SMILEY, SENIOR PASTOR

 **Lakewood**
PRESS

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Letter from the Pastor

What does it mean to trust someone? In order for you to fully and completely trust someone requires two basic truths: 1. That person must know the right thing to do, and 2. that person must have the power to accomplish it. If only one of these points is true, full trust cannot exist: if the person knows what is right, but cannot bring it about, then you'll find only empty and unfulfilled wishes; if the person has the power to accomplish what they will, but is not righteous then only fear can result in light of what that person might do.

The message of Habakkuk is all about trust. That's why the New Testament (Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38) picks up on God's promise through Habakkuk — "the righteous shall live by faith" (Hab. 2:4). Faith fundamentally means trust; and trusting in the Lord by faith means believing that he knows what is right and just and has the power to accomplish it. When you trust in the Lord like that, then there is no situation or circumstance, no power or force, no person or thing in all creation that can take away the hope and joy you have in God.

This kind of faith in God is called "steadfastness" because it is unwavering and steady through all of life. Habakkuk, speaking God's words, called God's people

to trust in the Lord with that depth of faith, despite a torrentially difficult and unsettling time of life. They were called to put their hope in God, being reminded that despite their own sin against God he remains trustworthy and faithful to his promises.

As Christians, we have seen the full trustworthiness of God played out through the cross of Jesus Christ. The Son of God came into the world, gave his life on a cross, was raised from the dead, and in so doing secured for God's people life everlasting. That's how trustworthy our God is.

Over the course of this study, we will be transported to a time some 2,600 years ago where God's unending righteousness, faithfulness, and promises were displayed. We have so much to learn as we see God speak and work through the lens of what he ultimately accomplished through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I am praying for you as we walk this journey together. Let's all take care to hear God's word, discuss it with others, and apply it to our lives.

Peace to you through our ever-faithful Lord,

Dr. Tyler Smiley, Senior Pastor



Habakkuk in Context

Kings of Judah and Key Events

715-687	Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:1-20:21)
687-642	Manasseh (2 Kings 21:1-18)
642-640	Amon (2 Kings 21:19-26)
640-609	Josiah (2 Kings 22:1-23:30)
c. 609-605	Habakkuk writes his prophecy
609	Jehoahaz (2 Kings 23:31-34)
609-598	Jehoiakim (2 Kings 23:35-24:7)
598-597	Jehoiachin/Jeconiah (2 Kings 24:8-17; 25:27-30)
597-586	Zedekiah (2 Kings 24:18-30)
586	Babylonians destroy Jerusalem



WEEK 1 | HABAKKUK 1:1-11

DAY 1

Habakkuk's three chapters invite us on his journey of faith from his crying out to God for justice, to his questioning God's answer, and, ultimately, to his resting in God's promise. The evil and injustice surrounding him leads the prophet to question the Lord and his ways, but God's response shocks Habakkuk and raises even more questions than answers. In the face of all of this, the Lord challenges Habakkuk, "The righteous shall live by faith" (Hab 2:14). Faith is not a one-time decision; rather, to follow the Lord means that we must continue to walk by faith daily.

Habakkuk acknowledges that faith is difficult when destruction and violence abound. Yet, the call of this book is to trust in the Lord and his good purposes no matter the circumstances. On the other side of the cross from Habakkuk, we look back to our God's suffering and death to see that he gives himself to put evil to death and that he himself knows what it is to suffer. In the midst of suffering, we look to the cross and see our God who has joined us and rescued us. The cross of Christ comforts in all of life's circumstances. Habakkuk calls us to rest in the truth that the gospel is good news even in the difficulties of life. Indeed, the gospel is good news for all seasons.

READ | Habakkuk 1:1-3:19

REFLECT

OBSERVE: What does this book reveal about *who God is*?

INTERPRET: How does the New Testament shed more light on your observation?

APPLY: How will you live out this truth from today's reading?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17-18

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, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

PRAY | *Father, as I begin this study, I pray with the psalmist, "Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law" (Ps 119:18). Amen.*

WEEK 1 | HABAKKUK 1:1-11

DAY 2



READ | 2 Kings 18:1-21:26

REFLECT | Understanding the context in which Habakkuk prophesied will help make sense of his message. Following King David, his son Solomon's reign was a time of great peace and prosperity for Israel, but Solomon's turning from the Lord at the end of his life put God's people on a trajectory toward political and religious chaos (1 Kgs 11). In Rehoboam's reign, Israel split into two kingdoms: the Northern Kingdom, called Israel, and the Southern Kingdom, called Judah.

18:1-20:21. The history of the kings of Judah is a mixed bag. Hezekiah was a king, who "did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that David his father had done" (2 Kgs 18:3). Hezekiah showed great faith in trusting the Lord against the Assyrians (18:13-19:37) and in the face of his own illness (20:1-11). Yet, his reign was marred by his own sin; he acted foolishly in showing off Judah's wealth to the Babylonians (20:12-21).

21:1-26. While Hezekiah acted in faith and did what was right in the Lord's sight, his son Manasseh and grandson Amon failed to follow the Lord. Manasseh "did what was evil in the sight of the Lord" (21:2) and "shed very much innocent blood" (21:16). Likewise, Amon was so evil that his own servants turned on him and murdered him (21:23).

Habakkuk will prophesy a few years later during a period in Judah that rivals Manasseh's and Amon's reign for its evil. He will look out over Israel and see idolatry and injustice, and he will cry out to the Lord to intervene.

- In the reigns of these kings, notice how worship of the Lord leads to faithful and just living while false worship leads to evil and injustice. How does our worship shape how we live? Consider Psalm 115:8 and 135:18.

- Idols are anything we trust in more than God for security, purpose, meaning, or comfort. What do you idolize? How is the Lord calling you to turn from this and to him?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17-18

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, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

PRAY | Praise God with the words of 2 Kings 19:15, "O Lord, the God of Israel, enthroned above the cherubim, you are the God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth, you have made heaven and earth."



WEEK 1 | HABAKKUK 1:1-11

DAY 3

READ | 2 Kings 22:1-25:30

REFLECT | **22:1-23:30.** Josiah's reign began while he was a boy, but it was under his rule that Judah was brought to the worship and service of the Lord. God's Word was recovered, and as a result of hearing what the Law required, Josiah led the people in repentance for their sin. He then led the people to put God's Word into practice. Habakkuk would have been alive and experienced at least some of Josiah's reign. The prophet would have known the blessing of God's people living under God's rule.

23:31-24:7. Following Josiah, Judah's kings quickly fall into evil. Jehoahaz's short reign was marked by evil and defeat, then, following in his footsteps, Jehoiakim "did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his fathers had done" (2 Kgs 23:37).

Habakkuk most likely wrote during Jehoahaz's reign or in the earlier part of Jehoiakim's reign, sometime between 609-605. His prophecy is coming to fulfillment in 2 Kings 24:1-2 where the Lord sends armies to attack and destroy Judah. Scripture makes clear that this was the Lord's doing as judgment for the sins of his people. Particularly heinous were the sins of Manasseh who filled the streets of Jerusalem with innocent blood (21:16, 24:4).

24:8-25:30. The end of 2 Kings marks the fulfillment of Habakkuk's prophecy. The king of Judah, the descendant of the mighty warrior King David, is carried off to Babylon and a puppet king is put in his place. The king is captured, Jerusalem is captured, and the temple is destroyed.

God's people are no longer in God's place. God's king is not on his throne, and the place of God's presence has been wiped from the face of the earth. The promises of God have been turned on their head. It is in anticipation of this destruction and despair that Habakkuk calls on God's people to rejoice in the Lord himself no matter the circumstances of life.

- What was the key to Judah's renewal under Josiah? What practices do you have in place to hear and to do God's Word regularly? What is working? Does anything need to change?
- According to 2 Kings 24:1-7, who was responsible for these foreign armies invading Judah? Why did he send them?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17-18

PRAY | Thank God for the grace of speaking to us in Scripture and that in his Word, "His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire" (2 Peter 1:3-4).

WEEK 1 | HABAKKUK 1:1-11

DAY 4



READ | Habakkuk 1:1-11

REFLECT | **1:1-4.** Habakkuk begins his prophecy by crying out to the Lord. He cries out for justice. The prophet sees violence, iniquity, wrong, destruction, strife, and contention plaguing God’s people. Does God not see? How long will it take him to respond? “The law,” Habakkuk laments, “is paralyzed, and justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous; so justice goes forth perverted” (Hab 1:4). This is not the work of their enemies; rather, their own people are oppressing one another.

In the midst of this lament, Habakkuk displays his faith. He cries out to the Lord, knowing that God is in control and that he cares. He prays to God because it is in his power to save, and the prophet prays because he believes that God cares about injustice and violence in the world.

1:5-11. The Lord answers Habakkuk, but he does not dispute Habakkuk’s assessment of the situation. While the prophet sees the iniquity that is multiplied among God’s people (1:3), God calls upon his people to “look among the nations, and see” what he is bringing about (1:5). The Lord responds, “I am doing a work in your days that you would not believe if told” (1:5). He sees the injustice, he hears their cries, and he is going to respond in way that will shock them. He is raising up the Chaldeans (also known as the Babylonians) to punish his people for their sin. They are a violent and prideful people who worship their own power (1:11), and, yet, God is using them to punish his own people’s injustice and violence.

- What can we learn from Habakkuk’s prayer about the type of concerns that we can take to the Lord? Consider 1 Peter 5:6-7.

- For a biblical example of lament, read Psalm 44. Is there something in your life that is causing you to cry out “How long, O Lord?” How can you take these concerns to God in faith?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17–18

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, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

PRAY | Praise our God that he is control. He sovereignly reigns over all. Praise him that he is so much more than just power; he is our God who cares. He has always been and will always be love.



WEEK 1 | HABAKKUK 1:1-11

DAY 5

READ | Acts 2:22-24

REFLECT | “God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform.” So begins the eighteenth-century hymn by William Cowper. These words aptly describe the situation in Habakkuk. The prophet cries out for God to act to protect his people, and God responds in a most unexpected way. He will deliver his people, but that deliverance will come through judgment. Habakkuk wrestles with God’s response, and ultimately the book calls upon us to walk by faith, trusting in our Lord’s goodness.

As we reflect on Habakkuk through the lens of the New Testament, we are reminded that our God continues to work in unexpected ways. Indeed, the cross of Christ is God’s most surprising work. God works to deliver his people, but he brings about that deliverance through the judgment of his own Son. Consider how Peter describes the crucifixion: Jesus was “delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God” (Acts 2:23).

God planned to deliver Jesus into the hands of evil men who crucified and killed him (2:23). The Father, Son, and Spirit with one, undivided will determined that they would redeem their people through the life, death, and resurrection of the Son.

This great redemption is a work we have trouble believing even though we have been told it (Hab 1:5). Truly, God performs his wonders in mysterious ways. Yet, even when we cannot make sense of our circumstances the cross reminds us that we can trust the character of our God.

- How are your circumstances challenging your faith in the goodness and love of God?
- How does the cross remind you of who our God is? How can you continue to find rest in the goodness of God this week?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17–18

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, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

PRAY | Thank God for his marvelous plan of redemption through which he freely offers true and everlasting life to all who would trust in Jesus.

WEEK 2 | HABAKKUK 1:12-2:1

DAY 1



READ | Habakkuk 1:1-3:19

REFLECT

OBSERVE: What does this book reveal about *who we are as people*?

INTERPRET: How does the New Testament shed more light on your observation?

APPLY: How will you live out this truth from today's reading?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17–18

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, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

PRAY | *Father, may you this week make your word a lamp to my feet and a light to my path (Ps 119:105). Please guide me by your Word. Amen.*



WEEK 2 | HABAKKUK 1:12-2:1

DAY 2

READ | Habakkuk 1:12-2:1

REFLECT | After the Lord's surprising answer, Habakkuk responds with more questions. In 1:12, Habakkuk's starting point is the character of God. He roots his response in who the Lord is. He does not view God through his circumstances, but, rather, he views his circumstances through the character of God. He reminds himself of God's eternal nature and his holiness. He has confidence in God's promise to preserve his people, and he trusts that God is at work to judge and reprove his people through the Chaldeans.

Yet, questions remain for Habakkuk in 1:13. How can God, who is too pure even to look on evil, use evil people to accomplish his purposes? How can the Lord use the wicked to swallow up those who are more righteous than they? The language of "swallow up" speaks of utter destruction (see Exod 15:12 and Num 16:30). The prophet cannot understand why God would destroy his people when it seems that the Chaldeans should be judged first. In these verses, Habakkuk models responding in faith. His faith is perplexed, but he demonstrates a fundamental trust in who God is. True faith is not afraid of questions, but true faith continues to trust in the goodness of God and his purposes even when circumstances of life raise questions.

- Are there circumstances in your life that are leading you to question what God is doing in the world?

- What truths about who God is and what he is doing in the world comfort you in the face of crisis?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17-18

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, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

PRAY | Thank God that he is worthy of our trust and praise no matter the circumstances of life.

WEEK 2 | HABAKKUK 1:12-2:1

DAY 3



READ | Habakkuk 1:12-2:1

REFLECT | **1:1-4.** In 1:14-17, Habakkuk elaborates on his challenge to the Lord that he began in verse 13. He complains that the Lord is treating his people with complete disregard, as if they were but fish of the sea (1:14). Then the prophet picks up on that fish imagery to describe the evil practice of the Chaldeans who would literally drive hooks through the lips of the people they conquered and string them together as they marched off into exile (1:15). The violence they perpetrated was infamous at this time. They found pleasure and joy in hurting others (1:15). Indeed, these people that God is about to use are people who do not worship him; instead, they worship their own might and power (1:16). Habakkuk wonders if God will allow this to go on forever unchecked (1:17).

As we consider who God is in light of this passage, we remember, “Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases” (Ps 115:3). He is sovereign over all and brings about his will. The good news for us is that what pleases him is ultimately what is best for us. We can trust that he will bring about his good purposes even when we cannot see how.

On a human level, we do well to remember that earthly success is no sure sign of God’s favor. What appears to us as triumph, may be paving the way to defeat. Our priority should be honoring the Lord through biblical faithfulness.

- Have you been assuming that God is unconcerned with a particular area of unfaithfulness in your life because things seem to be going well for you? How does this passage challenge that notion?
- If not by the outward appearance of success, how should we judge our lives?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17–18

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, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

PRAY | Ask the Lord to reveal areas in your life where you have been more concerned with what brings the appearance of success rather than being more concerned with faithfulness to his Word.



WEEK 2 | HABAKKUK 1:12-2:1

DAY 4

READ | Habakkuk 1:12-2:1

REFLECT | After questioning God for a second time, Habakkuk boldly asserts, “I will take my stand at my watchpost and station myself on the tower, and look out to see what he will say to me, and what I will answer concerning my complaint” (Hab 2:1). What audacity! The prophet says that he will take his stand and wait for God to respond, and, then, he will give yet another round of questioning to God. His expectation now has become that the Lord’s response will raise even more questions for him.

Rather than seeing Habakkuk’s announcement here as brash or arrogant, it seems better to view it as one of complete trust. He knows that he can be fully open and honest with God. He can speak his true thoughts because he knows that the Lord is who he says he is. He serves the Lord, whom he describes as “my God, my Holy One” (1:12). There is a personal, intimate connection between Habakkuk and the Lord that fuels his boldness when he prays.

- What gives you boldness when you pray?

- Read Luke 18:1-8, Ephesians 3:11-12, and Hebrews 4:14-16. What do each of these passages teach us about how to pray?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17–18

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, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

PRAY | *Father, thank you that in Jesus name and by the power of your Holy Spirit I can come before you with freedom and confidence, knowing that you hear my prayers and in answer them with all love and wisdom and power. Amen.*

WEEK 2 | HABAKKUK 1:12-2:1

DAY 5



READ | Romans 8:31-39

REFLECT | Despite the injustice in the world and the perplexing response from the Lord, Habakkuk continues to trust God. His response to the circumstances of life is grounded in his understanding of the Lord's character. Even when God gives him an answer that he has trouble understanding and certainly does not like, Habakkuk continues to respond in faith because he knows who God is.

From our side of the cross, we enjoy an even clearer picture of who our God is. We can assert confidently with Paul, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Rom 8:31). The Father did not spare his own Son but sent him for us (8:32). God knows all that we have done wrong and ever will do wrong, and yet he has justified us; there can be no condemnation (8:33-34). Even now, the crucified and resurrected Lord lives to make intercession for us (8:34). Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ (8:35).

When we look at the cross, we have the clearest picture of who are God is. He is the God who loved us and gave himself for us. He is the God who not only sees our suffering but has entered into it that he might deliver us from it. He saw the pain of sin and death, and so he came and put death to death through his death on the cross. Nothing can separate us from the love of God.

- Look at Romans 5:5. What role does the Holy Spirit play in enabling us to experience the love of God in Christ?
- When you face the challenges of life, what steps can you take to call to mind the love of God in Christ and to meditate on the love that he has for you?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17-18

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, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

PRAY | Pray Romans 8:38-39, thanking our God that nothing can separate you from his love in Christ Jesus our Lord.



WEEK 3 | HABAKKUK 2:2-5 DAY 1

READ | Habakkuk 1:1-3:19

REFLECT

OBSERVE: What does this book reveal about *sin and God's judgment*?

INTERPRET: How does the New Testament shed more light on your observation?

APPLY: How will you live out this truth from today's reading?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17–18

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, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

PRAY | *"Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your statutes!" (Ps 119:12). Father, may you open my heart and mind to your Word this week that I might walk in a manner worthy of you. Amen.*

WEEK 3 | HABAKKUK 2:2-5

DAY 2



READ | Habakkuk 2:2-5

REFLECT | In second chapter, the Lord responds to Habakkuk's questions. God discloses that he plans to bring hope to his people despite the impending devastation he has promised. He begins this revelation of hope, first, by describing the nature of this vision (2:2-3), and, second, by contrasting the proud with those who walk by faith (2:4-5).

The Lord makes it clear that this vision is not just for the prophet; he must write it down and proclaim it to others. This record is to be clear so that "he may run who reads it" (2:2). In the prophets, there exists a close tie between running and prophesying (Jer 23:21; Zech 2:4), for the prophets were to run to proclaim their message. Habakkuk must write down this vision of hope so that it may be proclaimed to many for generations to come.

The reason God gives for writing down this vision comes in verse 3: its fulfillment will not be immediate. This revelation from God "awaits its appointed time" and will seem slow in its coming (2:3). Yet, the delay does not mean uncertainty. "It will surely come" (2:3). Indeed, from the Lord's perspective, this vision "hastens to the end. . . . It will not delay" (2:3). This "appointed time" will be the "end," the last days when God makes all things new. Devastation is coming quickly upon God's people, but he will one day bring this vision of hope to fulfillment.

"Wait for it," instructs the Lord (2:3). In light of the promised destruction and the coming hope, God calls upon his people to wait. As verse 4 will make plain, this waiting for the Lord is part of what it means to walk by faith.

- Read Psalm 130. What do you notice about how the psalmist waits for the Lord?
- Do you have trouble waiting on God and his timing? What does this impatience reveal about your view of God? How can you wait in faith?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17-18

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, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

PRAY | Ask the Father to work in you, by his Spirit, to give you a patient faith that waits for him.



WEEK 3 | HABAKKUK 2:2-5

DAY 3

READ | Habakkuk 2:2-5

REFLECT | Habakkuk 2:4-5 summarizes the rest of the vision of hope in chapter two. Destruction will come to the proud, but the righteous shall live by faith. This contrast between the proud and the righteous begins in 2:4.

The soul of the proud one is “puffed up” and “is not upright within him” (2:4). He is swollen with his own pride as he seeks to exalt himself. He is proud and self-reliant, and so he never humbles himself before God to receive his grace. In this self-deception, the proud one is not righteous; rather, the Lord pronounces that he is not upright.

In contrast to the proud, “the righteous shall live by faith” (2:4). Faith is closely connected to humility. Only as we recognize our own sin and weakness will we turn to God in faith. The proud rely on themselves, their own efforts, and their own hard work under the false belief that they can live apart from God. The righteous, however, humbly depend upon God.

The Christian life begins by grace through faith and continues by grace through faith. One is justified before God, declared righteous before him, by faith. It is entirely a gift of God’s grace. Then, having been justified, the Christian lives by grace through faith. “The righteous shall live by faith.” Faith is the way of life for those who follow Jesus.

- How would you describe faith to someone unfamiliar with Christianity?

- What does it look like in your life to live by faith each day? How are you to depend upon yourself rather than upon God?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17–18

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, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

PRAY | Thank God the Father for the gift of righteousness that he counts as ours through Jesus Christ. Thank him for the gift of the Holy Spirit who empowers us to walk by faith each day.

WEEK 3 | HABAKKUK 2:2-5

DAY 4



READ | Habakkuk 2:2-5

REFLECT | While the righteous live by faith, the proud continue on the path to judgment. Habakkuk 2:5 continues the contrast between those who trust the Lord and the proud who reject him. The proud are deceived. Like those who have had too much wine, they do not recognize their own condition. They do not see where their lives are headed, but in their arrogance, they strive after more and more. Their greed can never be satisfied.

The end of 2:5 served as an ominous reminder to God's people in Habakkuk's day. The Chaldeans would gather for themselves all nations and collect all people as their own. While judgment would one day come upon the Chaldeans for their wickedness, God's own people in Judah were about to experience God's judgment at the hands of the Chaldeans.

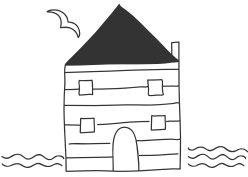
Judgment was coming for God's people because they themselves had become puffed up in their souls. They had stopped living by faith, and, instead, they pursued the self-indulgent fulfillment of their own greed. Violence and iniquity had become commonplace among God's people. They had forsaken justice for the sake of their own gain, and so God pronounced his coming judgment.

It is easy to see the evil and sin in others, but the book of Habakkuk reminds us that our own pride deceives us. We can mask our self-indulgence and greed in pious language, but our actions disclose our hearts. We reveal our own arrogant pursuit of comfort and indulgence when we turn a blind eye to the conditions that led to Habakkuk's prayer: violence, iniquity, strife, contention, and injustice (1:2-4). When our endless pursuit of more blinds us to the needs of others, we demonstrate that we have more in common with the proud destined for judgment than with those of humble faith. When we see such sin in our lives, the Bible calls us to repentance and to a renewed walking by faith in the Lord.

- Where do you see your life marked more by greed and the pursuit of more rather than with concern for those in need?
- How does the gracious gift of the gospel free us to work in faith for the good of others?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17-18

PRAY | Pray that God would work by his Spirit to reveal your sin to you, to guide you in repentance, and to conform you into the image of Christ for his glory.



WEEK 3 | HABAKKUK 2:2-5

DAY 5

READ | Galatians 3:10-14

REFLECT | In Galatians 3:10-14, the Apostle Paul cites Habakkuk 2:4 as he calls on New Testament believers to place their faith in Christ Jesus and his finished work. Paul reminds us that true, saving faith has Jesus Christ as its object. True faith is faith in Jesus.

God's people in Habakkuk's day were facing the curse of the law for their disobedience (see Deut 28:15-68, esp. vv. 49-50). The Lord was sending in the Chaldeans to judge them for their sin. We all should bear the curse of God's judgment for our own sin and rebellion, but the hope of the gospel is that Christ Jesus redeemed us from the curse of God's wrath by bearing that curse for us. He was cursed that we might be blessed with the promised Holy Spirit through faith.

"The righteous shall live by faith" (Hab 2:4). We are justified before God by faith, we live in this world by faith, and we will have life everlasting by faith. As we remember the importance of faith, we can rest in the promise that it is not the strength of our faith that saves us. Rather, it is the object of our faith, Jesus Christ, who saves us.

- Do you believe that apart from Christ you deserve to be judged by God? Why or why not? How would you support your answer with Scripture?

- Are you trusting in Jesus to be reconciled to God or do you believe that God will accept you as you are apart from Jesus? Based on Galatians 3, how would Paul respond to your answer?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17-18

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, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

PRAY | Thank God the Father for his gracious gift of God the Son, Jesus Christ, who enables us to experience the blessing of life in his presence through God the Holy Spirit.

WEEK 4 | HABAKKUK 2:6-20

DAY 1



READ | Habakkuk 1:1-3:19

REFLECT

OBSERVE: What does this book reveal about *God's mercy and grace*?

INTERPRET: How does the New Testament shed more light on your observation?

APPLY: How will you live out this truth from today's reading?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17-18

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, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

PRAY | *Father, please "keep steady my steps according to your promise, and let no iniquity get dominion over me" (Ps 119:133). Amen.*



WEEK 4 | HABAKKUK 2:6-20

DAY 2

READ | Habakkuk 2:6-20

REFLECT | After introducing the vision of hope in 2:2-5, the Lord now elaborates on the hope that he will bring for his people. This hope is a worldwide plan for redemption that will come as God deals with wickedness in the world. The hope of a future in God's glorious presence will come to fruition as sin and wickedness are judged and removed.

2:6-12. In these verses, God outlines the reversal that is coming for the proud. The “all these” of verse 6 are those who were conquered and shamed by the Chaldeans, the proud of 2:5. Now, the Lord will exact his justice. There is fairness in God's judgment: for their plunder, they will now be plundered (2:8). In verse 8, they are judged for their violence against other people and against all of creation. Their treatment of others and of the world itself is considered by God. As verses 9 through 12 progress, it is clear that the proud have been trying to build their own dynasty and legacy. They have trusted in their wealth and power to put others to shame and to bring honor to themselves. They have trampled over others in an attempt to make their name great.

2:13-14. Such pride, which is fueled by greed and crushes others, will suffer under God's judgment. All of this striving and oppression ends only in fire and vanity (2:13). They will be judged by God and their work will come to nothing. The “for” at the start of 2:14 helps us see the why: they will be put to shame because they sought their own glory instead of the Lord's. Any effort contrary to the glory of God will fail. All people and all of creation were made with the express intent of glorifying our creator. While this intent has been marred by sin, one day God's glory will cover the whole earth as has been his plan from the beginning.

- How can we do good, even biblical things, for our own glory instead of God's? Reflect on what motivates you to serve others and to pursue the things of God.

- Consider Romans 12:1 and 1 Corinthians 10:31. What would it look like for you to orient your life this week toward God's glory rather than your own?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17-18

PRAY | *Father, Son, and Spirit, thank you that you have made me in your image so that I can reflect your glory back to you for your praise and honor. Amen.*

WEEK 4 | HABAKKUK 2:6-20

DAY 3



READ | Habakkuk 2:6-20

REFLECT | **2:15-17.** As the Lord continues to reveal this vision to Habakkuk, it is clear that he will punish evil doers, and his punishment will fit the sin. Those who shamed their neighbors will be shamed instead of honored. Looking on nakedness is likely a figure of speech for significant sexual immorality, which is made all the worse because the proud have made others to join in their sin. Where they shamed others, they will be shamed. Where they poured out their wrath, the Lord will now pour out the cup of his wrath on them. The violence they did will be turned back on them and overwhelm them. This was violence against all of creation: beasts, humans, earth, and cities. God will punish them in accordance with their deeds.

2:18-19. The root of this immortality and injustice is idolatry. We are made to worship, but when we worship created things rather than the Creator, our lives become marred by sin. The problem at hand is not merely ethical; it is spiritual in nature. That is, the problem goes much deeper than wrong action; its source is the wrong object of worship. We become what we worship (Ps 115:8, 135:18).

2:20. The root problem for those under God's judgment is not their immorality and injustice but their idolatry. Thus, the solution is to remember that God is enthroned over all the earth and to come before him in silent, humble reverence.

- Where are you prone to look to created things rather than to the Creator for meaning, comfort, security, joy, and/or purpose? Why do you turn to these idols rather than trusting in the Lord?
- What should repenting from such idols look like for you this week? What steps can you take to grow your trust in the Lord rather than these created things?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17–18

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, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

PRAY | Praise God that he is the only one worthy of your worship and faith. Confess where you have sought to glorify the creature rather than the Creator. Ask God for grace to trust in him.



WEEK 4 | HABAKKUK 2:6-20

DAY 4

READ | Habakkuk 2:6-20

REFLECT | Habakkuk's first cries out to the Lord because of the immorality and injustice among God's people. The Lord's surprising answer is that he will judge his own people by another nation that seems to be even more immoral and unjust. From Habakkuk's vantage point, it seems that the Lord is taking them from violence to more violence, increasing the injustice and oppression along the way.

Verses 14 and 20 in the second chapter of this prophetic book anchor Habakkuk's hope. Indeed, the truth of these two verses secures the hope for all of God's people. 2:14 points forward to the future when the Lord's original design for creation will come to fruition: the whole world will be filled with his glorious presence. The dwelling place of God will be with man (Rev 21:3). Sin and evil will be wiped away, and we will experience true, everlasting communion with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Habakkuk 2:20 describes the present reality that guarantees this future hope: "The Lord is enthroned in his holy temple." Scripture repeatedly states this truth with clarity, "The Lord sits enthroned forever" (Ps 9:7). As Hezekiah prays, "O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, enthroned above the cherubim, you are the God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth" (Isa 37:16). Our God is enthroned in his heavenly temple ruling and reigning over all things.

God's current rule and his future plan provide an unshakeable foundation for our faith in him. We trust in God in light of these realities and not the calamities that surround us. When Jesus teaches us to pray, he teaches us to pray these realities: "Our Father who art in heaven" reminds us that God the Father sits enthroned in heaven. "Your kingdom come, your will be done" is a prayer for God's plan to cover the earth with his glorious presence to come to fruition. When you pray the Lord's Prayer, remember the truth of God's reign and our future hope.

- Why is it such good news for us that God sits enthroned over all things?
- What comfort do you find in knowing that God's plan is for the knowledge of his glory to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17-18

PRAY | Pray the Lord's Prayer (Matt 6:9-13).

WEEK 4 | HABAKKUK 2:6-20

DAY 5



READ | Revelation 21:1-27

REFLECT | Revelation 21 describe the future fulfillment of God’s promise in Habakkuk 2:14. In Revelation 21, John is given a vision of what it will look like when the earth is filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord. Among the images that John brings together in this chapter are garden and temple. The New Creation when God’s glorious presence fills the earth will be a worldwide garden temple. It will be Eden restored and expanded to a cosmic level. Our God will walk with us as he walked with our first parents. He will dwell with us and be our unceasing light.

While this is the future hope for which we long, we learn in the New Testament that we can even now experience the firstfruits of this New Creation. We can see a glimmer of what God is going to do, for even now, Christ’s church is “being joined together [and] grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit” (Eph 2:21–22). Paul even describes the church as “God’s field, God’s building” (1Cor 3:9); we are his garden temple. The church can be the temple because we have been united to Jesus Christ, who is the true temple of God, the true place where God dwells with us (Jn 2:18-22).

As the temple of God, the people of the church may now “be filled with all the fullness of God” (Eph 3:19). We experience the fullness of the presence of our Triune God. God’s glorious presence is a blessing to be enjoyed and shared. Just as Adam was called to expand the original garden temple (Gen 1:28, 2:15), so we too are called to take God’s glorious and gracious presence to the world by declaring and displaying the gospel. Others will come to share in the gift of God’s presence as they hear the gospel, respond in faith, and are united to Christ.

- In our present age, the Lord uses his church as the people whom he sends into the world to join in his mission to fill the earth with the knowledge of his glory. What steps can you take to more faithfully display the gospel in your life this week? To whom can you declare the hope of the gospel this week?
- We desire to take the gospel to our neighbors and the nations. Consider taking the time right now to develop a regular rhythm of praying for those around the world who have little to no access to the gospel. Pray for the Lord of the harvest to raise up more workers (Lk 10:2).

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17–18

PRAY | *Gracious Father, there are many who do not know you—who have no knowledge of your glory. Please raise up workers for the harvest that many would come to faith in your Son as they hear the gospel and are moved by your Spirit. Amen.*



WEEK 5 | HABAKKUK 3:1-19

DAY 1

READ | Habakkuk 1:1-3:19

REFLECT

OBSERVE: What does this book reveal about *the work of Jesus*?

INTERPRET: How does the New Testament shed more light on your observation?

APPLY: How will you live out this truth from today's reading?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17–18

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, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

PRAY | *Father, as I turn to Habakkuk this week, may you “teach me good judgment and knowledge, for I believe in your commandments” (Ps 119:66). Amen.*

WEEK 5 | HABAKKUK 3:1-19

DAY 2



READ | Habakkuk 3:1-19

REFLECT | One commentator describes Habakkuk 3 as “a poetic elaboration on 2:4.” Here in this chapter, the prophet practices living by faith. He shows in these verses what it means to walk by steadfast trust in the Lord. Significantly, Habakkuk writes these truths as a song to be sung by God’s people (3:1). Walking by faith is not to be done in isolation but in the community of faith. When the Lord deepens our faith, we are to share that work with others.

Habakkuk spends the bulk of this chapter recounting God’s past work and remember his great might. He begins by asking God to act in these might ways again (3:2). Then, he recalls the Exodus (3:3-5) and speaks of God’s mighty, eternal power over the earth and over all nations (3:6-7). The prophet pulls together a variety of God’s past acts as he remembers the Lord’s bringing his people into the promised land. This past work of redemption serves as the template for the redemption Habakkuk prays the Lord will bring.

One way God works to strengthen our faith for today is by bringing to mind his past faithfulness. Our trust in him grows when, we remember through Scripture and our own experience where God has worked in his kindness toward us.

- What biblical examples of God’s kindness and faithfulness spur you on to continued trust in God?

- What are some examples of God’s kindness and faithfulness from your own life that you remember to grow your faith?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17–18

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, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

PRAY | Thank God that he has shown over and over again that he is worthy of our trust.



WEEK 5 | HABAKKUK 3:1-19

DAY 3

READ | Habakkuk 3:1-19

REFLECT | Habakkuk has heard from the Lord, and he has recounted many of God's past redeeming work. Now, as he comes to the end of his prophecy, he calls upon God's people to respond in two ways: wait and rejoice (3:16-19).

The call is now to wait. "Yet I will quietly wait for the day of trouble to come upon people who invade us" (3:16). Habakkuk calls upon himself and his hearers to "quietly wait." This call to wait does not deny the reality of suffering. Habakkuk's body trembles, his lips quiver, his legs shake, and his body is wasting away (3:16). Knowing the Lord will act does not make the grief any less painful or the crisis any less acute. Habakkuk does not dismiss the harsh realities of his circumstances to wait upon God.

Yet, he waits in faith. We wait in faith, like Habakkuk did, by hearing from God in his Word and remembering his past work biblically and personally. We wait in faith by waiting in his Word. We find rest in his character and his promises.

Habakkuk is waiting for God's judgment on his enemies. God's judgment upon his own people is coming soon, and then, the Lord will, in turn, judge those who do violence to his people. There is something within us that longs for justice, and justice comes through the judgment of evil. One day, Christ will come again to judge the living and the dead. An honest assessment of our own lives would lead us to fear that day, but through the cross we have hope. Jesus has taken on the judgment we deserve so that we can experience the everlasting blessing of life with God. We wait with hope because our judgment has been paid by God the Son.

- What aspects of God's character do you need to call to mind as you wait upon him? What of his past work gives you hope for the future?
- Read 2 Peter 3:9. Why does it seem that Christ is slow to return? Why is he waiting? Do you share God's desire that your enemies would become your brothers and sisters in Christ? How can you use this time of waiting to pray for those who do not know Christ and to pursue them with the gospel?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17-18

PRAY | Ask God for patience and hope as you wait for him. Pray that he would give you his heart for those who do not know him and that you would redeem the time by making the gospel known.

WEEK 5 | HABAKKUK 3:1-19

DAY 4



READ | Habakkuk 3:1-19

REFLECT | Habakkuk calls upon God's people to rejoice in their waiting for the Lord. "Yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take my joy in the God of my salvation" (3:18). The circumstances do not lend themselves to rejoicing. This is a period of economic devastation and famine (3:17). The prophet calls us to a joy that is beyond our circumstances. It is a joy in God himself. We rejoice in the Lord. We take joy in the God of our salvation.

It is a supernatural work to find joy in the Lord in all circumstances. We need God to help us to take joy in him no matter what we face. Thus, Habakkuk confesses, "God, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like the deer's; he makes me tread on the high places" (3:19). We need God to strengthen us to find our joy in him.

God strengthens us to find joy in him through his Word and by his Spirit. In God's Word, the psalmist reminds us of our true priorities: "Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever" (Ps 73:25-26). We are prone to make the things of this world our highest priority, but we will find true joy in all circumstances when we realize that God himself is who we need.

- Reflect on Psalm 73. What do you notice about how the psalmist finds joy in the Lord?
- By God's grace, how can you work to grow your joy in the Lord?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17-18

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, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

PRAY | Pray for the grace to find joy in God no matter life's circumstances.



WEEK 5 | HABAKKUK 3:1-19

DAY 5

READ | Hebrews 12:1-2

REFLECT | Habakkuk has challenged us to live by faith in the face of immorality and injustice. Even as the world collapses around us, we walk with steadfast trust in the Lord because his character remains unchanging even in the chaos of our circumstances. When we live by faith, we will walk with patience and with joy.

The author of Hebrews has a similar message to an early church that was facing persecution for their faith in Christ. He calls upon them, “Run with endurance the race that is set before us” (Heb 12:1). Then, he explains that one can run in that way by “looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith” (12:2). We live by faith each day as we look to Jesus, “who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross” (12:2). We can have patience and joy in our afflictions as we look to Jesus who endured the cross for the joy that was before him.

Jesus invites us in to share in his joy. On the night he was betrayed, Jesus returns again and again to the theme of his followers’ joy. “These things,” Jesus explains, “I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full” (Jn 15:11). His desire, even as he faced his coming crucifixion, was for his joy to be in us and for our joy to be full. Indeed, the goal of his life, death, and resurrection is to redeem his people that we might share in the life and joy that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have had with one another from eternity past. As Jesus prays to his Father just before his death, “But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves” (17:13). Only through faith in Jesus will we share in his joy.

- Read Philippians 4:4-13. How was Paul able to always rejoice and to find contentment in all circumstances?
- Is your life marked by joy and contentment? Why do you think that is? How can you work to allow the gospel of Jesus Christ to fuel your joy and contentment?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Habakkuk 3:17–18

PRAY | Ask the Father to bless you and others with the joy and peace of Christ through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.



Habakkuk calls us to trust in the Lord and his good purposes no matter the circumstances. His three chapters take us on his journey of faith from his crying out to God for justice, to his questioning God's answer, and, ultimately, to his resting in God's promise. "The righteous shall live by faith" forms the central message of the book. No matter what we face, we can walk with steadfast trust in the Lord because his steadfast love endures forever.



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