

Habakkuk 3

A PRAYER OF RESPONSE

v1

“set to wild, enthusiastic, and triumphal music.”

- This is a prayer/song of praise!! Not a sad resignation to circumstance but a determined, resolute, triumphant faith in God!
- This is really important to remember in the closing verses. It is such a tremendous victory song of faith and assurance!

v2

“O Lord, I have heard the report of You and was afraid.”

- The report of terrible and devastating judgement that is to come. Habakkuk was right to be afraid. God's chastisement for sin is no light thing. Sorrow was coming. Consequences were coming. Habakkuk was in awe of God and His mighty work and his heart broke for what was to come.
- The report of God's holy, righteous judgement with His people in past days. His testimony with Achan, Korah, judges and kings...
- *Isaiah 53:1 Who has believed (trusted in, relied upon, and clung to) our message [of that which was revealed to us]? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been disclosed?* - Habakkuk had heard the report and believed it. He was in awe and reverential fear before a holy, righteous judge.

“O Lord, revive Your work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make [Yourself] known!”

- Habakkuk cries out for a revival of God's work. There was spiritual weakness, fading and death in God's people. God's work/will was not being done in His people because they were not seeking His ways or submitting to His Word. Consider all that The Lord has done for and through Israel. Consider the mighty works that He has accomplished. The work that He has started and is/was doing... Oh Lord revive such a testimony today!
- Habakkuk understood that The Lord was doing a work through the ages with His people. Habakkuk understood that there were prophecies to be revealed and the work of redemption still to be accomplished. He understood that there was a work that The Lord was seeking to accomplish that could only be done through His people. He was crying out for The Lord to revive His life and testimony in His people for His glory, not just for their comfort.
- Truly we should have a similar cry in our hearts! For God's work to be revived! For His testimony and witness to be restored in His people. That there would be a sifting of the grain and a removing of the chaff! Revive your work Oh Lord! Raise up Your testimony and Your glory in Your people!
- Make yourself known Lord. Make your power, Your authority, Your salvation and redemption known.
- “the midst of the years” simply means “whilst there is hope”! We cannot revive what is past and there is a day coming when it will be too late... But between those times, in the middle of the years, revive your work Oh Lord! Whilst it is still a day of Grace!

“In wrath [earnestly] remember love, pity, and mercy.”

- Notice here that Habakkuk does not plead for forgiveness or pardon. He has submitted to the Sovereign authority and judgement of God. The prophet is crying out for The Lord to revive His work and His testimony in His people. There is the understanding that this MUST happen.
- Compare this with... *Habakkuk 1:12-13 Are not You from everlasting, O Lord my God, my Holy One? We shall not die. O Lord, You have appointed [the Chaldean] to execute [Your] judgment, and You, O Rock, have established him for chastisement and correction. [13] You are of purer eyes than to behold evil and can not look [inactively] upon injustice. Why then do You look upon the plunderer? Why are you silent when the wicked one destroys him who is more righteous than [the Chaldean oppressor] is?*
- With this submitted and humble heart he prays not for pardon but for love, pity and mercy. This is a beautiful prayer. Habakkuk honours God and reveres Him above all else but also begs for God's people and intercedes for them, not purely for their survival but because they are God's people and they bear His name! They are His testimony and glory!

A VISION OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

v3-6

“God [approaching from Sinai] came from Teman and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah [pause, and calmly think of that]!”

- Ok, so let's pay attention to this “selah” and think about what this means...
- *GILL: as “from Teman”; as he of old came from thence, a city in the land of Edom, Jeremiah 49:7 it was five miles from Petra, in Idumea, where was Mount Seir, from whence the Lord arose, and shone forth from Mount Paran, at the giving of the law, Deuteronomy 33:2 to which the allusion is here.*
- The Lord revealed Himself to His people upon mount Sanai at Paran. The revelation of the law from mount Sanai is not just a list of rules but it is a revelation of Himself and His glory!
- Almighty God revealed Himself to Israel and gave them His law. He gave them His name. He gave them His intimacy and His covenant.

v6

“His ways are everlasting and His goings are of old.”

- Truly God's ways are eternal. His ways are life and joy, peace, unity, wisdom and prosperity.
- His ways are of old to say that they are the ways of creation, they are the ways that are established, they are the ways that are sure and safe. They are the ways that truth and understanding. The children of Israel had seen this firsthand. Habakkuk remembered The Lord's dealings with His people. He had spent much time meditating on it. He remembers His God and remembers His faithfulness and His power displayed to the world through His people.

v7-15

“I [Habakkuk, in vision] saw the tents of Cushan [probably Ethiopia] in affliction; the [tent] curtains of the land of Midian trembled.”

“You marched through the land in indignation; You trampled and threshed the nations in anger.”

- Habakkuk had a vision of God's dealings with His people. He describes here the journeys from Egypt, through the wilderness to the Promised Land.
- He puts into descriptive and dramatic imagery the power and might of God's testimonies among His people. Consider especially the phrase “Was your wrath against the Red Sea?” Consider what The Lord did to the Red Sea for His people. He violently parted the waters, yet He had no wrath against that sea. So, consider the terror and greatness of His wrath.

"You marched through the land in indignation; You trampled and threshed the nations in anger."

- Truly The Lord went before His people and gave them the land. The battle was The Lord's and He fought for them! Every enemy, regardless of size or numbers, was destroyed.

- *Romans 8:37 Yet amid all these things we are more than conquerors and gain a surpassing victory through Him Who loved us.*

"You went forth and have come for the salvation of Your people, for the deliverance and victory of Your anointed [people Israel];"

- God did all this for His people. He destroyed nations, altered creation,

- *2 Corinthians 2:14 But thanks be to God, Who in Christ always leads us in triumph [as trophies of Christ's victory] and through us spreads and makes evident the fragrance of the knowledge of God everywhere,*

"You smote the head of the house of the wicked, laying bare the foundation even to the neck. Selah [pause, and calmly think of that]!"

- The enemy has been dealt with at the root, at the foundation. Utterly destroyed! The enemy has no authority and no power!

- We really should pay attention to these "Selah" moments. This truth should be meditated on and is cause for much rejoicing, much hope and assurance! Hallelujah!! All victory is His! All life, authority and power are His! All things are under His feet!

RESPONSE TO THE VISION

v16

"I heard and my [whole inner self] trembled... Rottenness enters into my bones...I tremble. I will wait quietly for the day of trouble and distress"

- Referring back to verse 2, Habakkuk heard the report of The Lord and He trembled greatly!

- *Lamentations 3:19-20 Remembering my affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall. [20] My soul has them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me.*

- The judgement of God's holiness and righteous wrath is truly a terrible and fearsome thing. The rottenness, the shame, the emptiness, the cry.... They are awful emotions and experiences, but they describe a Godly sorrow...

- *2 Corinthians 7:10-11 For godly sorrow produces repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world produces death. [11] For behold this same Godly sorrow, that you sorrowed after a Godly sort, what carefulness it created in you, yes, what clearing of yourselves, yes, what indignation, yes, what fear, yes, what vehement desire, yes, what zeal, yes, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.*

- I've been learning to be grateful for this sorrow. For feeling empty, broken, weak and useless... Realising my own lack I become so much more aware of how much I need The Lord Jesus Christ! It stirs me to cry out to Him for His mercy, His cleansing, His power, His strength and His life! The more I recognise the wretch in me the more amazing His Grace becomes!

17-19

"Though the fig tree does not blossom and there is no fruit on the vines, [though] the product of the olive fails and the fields yield no food, though the flock is cut off from the fold and there are no cattle in the stalls"

- Let's take a moment to appreciate and understand what is being said here... Habakkuk is describing the situation that is realistically laid before him. That if everything is to be lost, if all joy is taken away and all hope is to fail. If tomorrow holds only suffering, pain and grief... YET I WILL PRAISE HIM!

- I will lift my voice and sing, I will set my heart and my eyes upward to my God and rejoice with thanksgiving for all that He is and all that He has done! I will turn my attention from my troubles to The Creator God! I will magnify The Lord and not myself!! I will trust, I will praise, I will sing of His unchanging faithfulness and holiness and love!

"Yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will exult in the [victorious] God of my salvation!"

- Remember this is set to enthusiastic, triumphal music! This is not written with resignation. He is not being pessimistic or depressed. He is rejoicing!

- *Psalm 42:5 Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why should you moan over me and be disquieted within me? Hope in God and wait expectantly for Him, for I shall yet praise Him, my Help and my God.*

- Habakkuk will not stop praising! Even in the midst of all that was about Him; Even in the midst of all that was to come. Despite what he saw around him Habakkuk was rejoicing! The ungodliness around him would not affect his praise and glory of his God! His focus was not on the world but his eyes were focused upward on the glory and salvation of Almighty God! His whole person was looking at The Lord and rejoicing in all of His testimonies, all of His promises and in His precious ways.

- Habakkuk was rejoicing in the "work" mentioned in verse 2. The work started since the promise in Geneses 3:15 and the work that The Lord was fulfilling through His people, through His seed ever since. He knew and had faith that The Lord would be faithful to complete His work no matter what the circumstances and surroundings would look like.

- *Hebrews 12:2 Looking unto Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

- Oh may we learn to have such faith and to keep our eyes on our precious Saviour, Redeemer and loving Heavenly Father. May we learn to rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing and give thanks in all things!

- *1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 Rejoice evermore. [17] Pray without ceasing. [18] In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*

"The Lord God is my Strength, my personal bravery, and my invincible army;"

- What an incredible claim. Strength of strength is mine!! The creator of strength is my strength! He is my might, my power and ability.

- I love the individuality of this. It is an intimate claim. Habakkuk is talking only of himself. He is not now speaking on behalf of Israel or those who fear God. He is confessing the faith of his own heart. God is HIS God. This is HIS relationship and HIS hope! Praise The Lord we can all talk so intimately of The Almighty, Creator and Saviour God!!

- *2 Kings 6:17 Then Elisha prayed, Lord, I pray You, open his eyes that he may see. And the Lord opened the young man's eyes, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.*

- He is our invincible army!! There is nothing and no one that can stand against Him. His invincibility is our secret place, it is where we are invited to abide! There is nothing that the devil or the world can do to harm me without His given permission! Oh my Lord is truly Sovereign, mighty and worthy of my absolute trust and devotion! He is my judge, my reprobation and my rebuker "YET" He is also my "strength" / "bravery" and "invincible army" Oh I WILL PRASIE HIM!!

"He makes my feet like hinds' feet and will make me to walk [not to stand still in terror, but to walk]"

- Walk, not stand still and not to run... But to walk. A steady, consistency at a pace that is manageable. It is not a flustered flurry or panicked rush... but a walk of peace, security and inevitability. A walk of faith that knows it's expected end! Hallelujah!