

Discussion Questions

Date: March 29th, 2026

Preacher: Josh Ratliff

Sermon Outline

Talking Points

Prayers of Complaint | Habakkuk 1:1-2:1

The Prophet Complains and God Answers (Hab. 1:1-11)

- Justice does not prevail because the people were disobedient. "Bullies were getting away with it!" (vv. 1-4)
- God responds to injustice by upholding His word and disciplining His people. "God disciplines His own kids first." (vv. 5-11)
- **Question for Kids:** Have you ever ignored a warning and had a bad consequence as a result? When God gives us warning, we should listen seriously because we know he loves us.
- **Question for Adults:** What are the benefits of taking unjust situations directly to God and entrusting them to Him? How is He calling you to trust him today?

The Prophet Questions If Evil Will Go On Forever (Hab. 1:12-2:1)

- The prophet seeks to understand his present circumstance in light of what he knows to be true about God. "God, I know you always do what is right even when I don't understand." (vv. 12-13)
- The prophet challenges God's severe response to injustice. "It feels like this punishment is going overboard." (vv. 14-2:1)
- **Question for Adults:** How do Habakkuk's words help us in times when God seems unresponsive to injustice?
- **Question for Kids:** What do you do when you pray and don't see an answer right away? How can we trust God, like Habakkuk, when we don't get the answer we want?

Bottom Line: God does not reject us when we complain and question Him in prayer.

- * What injustices and complaints is Habakkuk bringing to the Lord in prayer? Where do you see injustices like the ones in the text (vv. 1-4) at work in the world today?
- * Where do you tend to go to first with your frustrations or complaints? What can deter you from taking them to God first?
- * Why would God's response be unexpected or even shocking to Habakkuk? (vv. 5-11)
- * What is the difference between discipline and punishment? Why does God discipline His people? Have you ever looked at God's discipline in your life as punishment without purpose? What are some problems that arise with this line of thinking?
- * What truths about God does Habakkuk cling to in the middle of his frustrations? What does this say about Habakkuk's faith in God?
- * Is it possible to question God and trust Him at the same time? How does Habakkuk model this?
- * Where in your life do you feel like God is being silent or His actions are not making sense? How is the Lord calling you to "stand watch" this week, faithfully awaiting His response to your prayers? Who can you invite into your life to encourage you during the waiting? What truths about God do you need reminding of?

Understanding Scripture

1. Read the passage aloud.

- Question: How would the original audience have understood this passage?
- Question: What was God's desire for them?

2. Reread key verse(s) aloud.

- Question: What does this teach us about the human soul, desires, or behavior?
- Question: What does this teach us about the nature, desires, or behavior of God?

3. Ask if anything is difficult to understand in the passage, or simply point it out yourself.

- Back up from the confusing verse and reread the whole section slowly—highlight the author's flow of thought.
- Ask everyone, "What are some possible interpretations?" Encourage curiosity!
- If needed, provide clarification, but admit if you don't have a satisfactory explanation, and volunteer to research answers. Share your findings over text or at the next meeting.

4. Summarize the passage in 1-3 sentences to refocus the group ("Okay, so far we've seen in Amos...")

- Question: What does this say about our relationship with God and/or each other?
- Question: How do the teachings, actions, or person of Jesus shed light on this passage?

Prayer Requests

