

## **Nahum 3 – April 17, 2025**

### **Links**

- Generation2434 YouTube Video, The Pre-Trib Rapture Is Our Blessed Hope - with JD Farag  
<https://www.youtube.com/live/RBiUVnT2DM>

**Habakkuk 3**  
**I Must Trust God In My Finite Sight**  
**Pastor JD Farag**

KAPONO: Would you join me as we pray? Oh, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus. What a wonderful name, Jesus. Sweetest name on earth. Thank You so much, Lord, that Your word is recorded and found in a book, that we would not be alone, Lord, but we have Your living word living with us and perfectly living in us. And that's why we're here, that we would receive Your word this evening. Would You speak to us, Lord? We thank You so much for this time together. We bless Your name. In Jesus' name we pray.

PASTOR JD: In Jesus' name. Amen and amen. How are you guys doing tonight? Yes. Good answer. That's the right answer. You can be seated now with that answer. Those of you online that are joining us, we're so very glad that you are and trust that you'll be blessed that you did so.

Before we get started, I just want to mention that actually, I just got done today, doing a livestream with Tyler on his Generation2434 YouTube channel, which I've asked our team to put the link to, the YouTube link to, so if you're interested. And I completely forgot to mention this in advance on Sunday, so I'm doing that now, especially given that it's about my favorite all-time topic of the sound doctrine of the pre-Tribulation rapture. He had me at pre-Trib. I'm in.

So anyway, just wanted to mention that to you if you're interested. But tonight, you know what's happening tonight? I'm going to tell you what's going to happen tonight. We're going to finish the entire Book of Habakkuk, all three chapters, *Chapter 3*.

And I'm so glad in retrospect that I just quietly discerned and listened to the Lord's leading and prompting concerning the teaching of this book, just one chapter at a time. I think you're going to see why tonight because this last chapter has a completely different flavor and for good reason.

And that reason is actually what the takeaway is synonymous with the title that I put on the expositional teaching of God's word when we go verse-by-verse, chapter-by-chapter, book-by-book. And I know it rhymes. You got to give me an E for effort. 'I Must Just Trust God In My Finite Sight.'

That's what I hope we'll take home with us tonight because we don't live by sight. We live by faith. Now there is coming a day, soon and very soon, I believe, you too, that our faith

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will be turned to sight and no need for no faith. (Speaking in local accent) How'd I do? Was that good? All right. Thank you very much. We're off to a good start. That's encouraging.

But the reason I chose this title and takeaway is not just because that's kind of the main theme but more so because that's what Habakkuk finally realizes tonight in this chapter. He's finally seeing through the lens of faith and not sight.

Because if you really think about it, starting in the first chapter, his questions were basically this: I don't see it, God. Show me so I can see what You see and know what You know. And so God is always so gracious and gentle and patient. And He hears out Habakkuk, who's really struggling with the wickedness of his people, Southern Judah. And he's starting to question, you know, God, are You seeing what's happening here?

And God patiently waits till he's done. That's polite. And when he's done venting, lamenting — that sounds so spiritual, doesn't it, instead of complaining or questioning? No, that's what pastors call it, lamenting. I'm actually complaining. But I'm the pastor, so I call it lamenting because it sounds more spiritual. But he's really struggling, doubting. He's doubting in his faith. He's doubting in his trust of God and God's ways. Why? Because he just can't see.

And like us — don't get — don't come down too hard on him. Habakkuk puts a mirror up to us in our adamic and sin nature because see, everything within us chafes at the idea of just trusting God and living by faith.

“I know you don't see what I'm doing or know what I'm doing, but I know what I'm doing. Just trust Me.”

“Yeah, but I don't see.”

And then He answers more than adequately His first question of “Why are You letting them get away with it? Are You just turning a blind eye to this?”

And then God says, “You have no idea. I see everything. You see hardly anything. And you're asking Me if I'm seeing this and what am I going to do about this.”

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So then He tells him what He's going to do about it. He lets him in on it. And then that just brings up another question on the part of Habakkuk. "Well, wait a minute, God. Why would You do that that way?"

Now, don't think for a second that God didn't know that Habakkuk was going to have a follow-up question. Because He knows what's in the heart. So now he's really struggling with the answer that God gave him to his first question, which is the impetus for the second question, which basically boils down to this: How is it possible that You can take a more wicked nation, namely Babylon, to be the instrument of Your chastisement of Your people, a more righteous nation, Judah? And we talked about that. I won't rehash it.

But God, then — I mean, it's quite breathtaking, actually. Because God does what sometimes I think we would all do well to do, and that is sometimes the best response is no response at all. You've heard that expression, "The silence is deafening." That's why.

Sometimes we speak louder in silence than we do when we're not in silence. Now that's where we left off last week because after the question mark, crickets. Silence. And then we got to the end of *Chapter 2*, and what do we read? How does the chapter end? God sits in His holy place, and therefore there shall be silence. Translated: That's it. That's all I'm going to say. And that's all you're going to say too. Remain silent before Me in My holiness. I've given you all that you can handle. You're on a need-to-know basis. I've told you what you need to know. I've sufficiently and adequately answered and satisfied your questions.

Now, [*Now*] if I go any further, we have two problems. Number 1) I'm infinite. You're finite. You can't handle the... Nah. That's a movie.

[ Laughter ]

2, problem Number 2) If I were to somehow be able to communicate to you everything so you were able to see it all, you don't need to trust Me anymore. You don't need faith anymore because now you're living by sight because now you see.

So God has gently, lovingly brought this prophet to the place where he must just trust God in his finite sight. That's hard. Easier said than done, as they say now. Now, God stops short of letting him know all that he wanted to know and also all that he wanted to see. And God knows what He's doing. And His ways are unsearchable, too high for our understanding, but

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we can always trust, without question, that they're perfect. So is His timing. His timing is perfect.

You've heard it said, "God is never late." Well, He's never early either. Truth be made known, we don't want Him to be early because that might be prematurely thwarting the process, the work that God is doing during that time of waiting patiently.

Now there's going to be a transformation here tonight, beginning in *verse 1*. It's almost like, is this a different Habakkuk? No, same guy. New heart. New mind. Renewed faith. And what we're going to see with the new Habakkuk is his questions turn into prayers and praise. You want to know why? Because now he has trust and faith in God despite not knowing or seeing everything about the ways of God.

And is that not what faith and trust are? I can't see it, but I trust You. What's faith? **"The substance of things hoped for, the [Strong word] evidence of that which is not yet seen."**

In other words, it's the assurance. You have evidence. You have proof that God will do it. You could trust Him. But it hasn't happened yet. So you have to live by faith with the hope and the trust that He will. And this is now where Habakkuk is.

Now, man, we're in for a treat tonight. I will pray. We'll get into this. But as we go through this, it is my hope, and the Lord knows my heart, that all of us, myself included, as always, would fully grasp the paramount importance of faith versus sight and trust versus doubt. Let's pray.

Lord, thank You. This Book of Habakkuk, even the placement in the canon of Scripture of this Book of Habakkuk is perfect because You're perfect. And this transformation, this is what You desire to do in our lives because as Your people, the righteous shall live by faith, not by sight, trusting You, fully trusting You.

So Lord, I — I'm just going to ask that the Holy Spirit, who's our teacher — I'm only the vessel — would prompt me to emphasize what needs to be emphasized. There's a lot here. But also in so doing that the Holy Spirit would speak ever so clearly and personally in that still, small, refining voice in and through Your word. Because You see every heart and everything that everyone brought into this Bible study tonight or are watching online tonight, and You want to speak to that. You want to minister to that. Lord, build up our faith. Let this be

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edifying and encouraging. Let it be a renewing, a strengthening of our hearts, hearts that trust You. Thank You, Lord. In Jesus' name, Amen.

*Verse 1. "A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, on Shigionoth."*

This was the location. And now we have the recording of this prayer which will transform into praise. Listen to what he prays.

*[Verse 2] O Lord, "I have heard your speech [Your word] and was afraid; O Lord, revive Your work in the midst of the years! In the midst of the years make it known; [And then, very curiously, he says] in wrath remember mercy."*

Okay, we got to talk about this. This prophet has really had a renewal and a transformation, as only God can. He's accepted the ways of God, though he doesn't understand necessarily. He trusts God enough, and he's come to that place where he realizes that there is no other way for God to do this. So I'm just going to trust that when God does this and that this is the judgment, the chastisement of His people being taken captive to Babylon, Jerusalem, and the temple with it, destroyed for 70 years.

Now, I want to draw your attention to something here that is not so easily seen at first read. He's accepted the judgment. But then he says, "**In wrath, remember mercy.**"

Now what? God needs to be reminded of mercy? Could you imagine? God's like, "Habakkuk, thank you so much. I completely forgot about mercy. You reminded Me, '**In wrath remember mercy.**'" That's not what's happening here.

What is happening here? I think what's happening here is Habakkuk is acknowledging by faith, in trust, yet another truth, and that's that sometimes the judgment of God is the mercy of God. Oh, wait, wait. What?

Let me explain. When God judges He's showing mercy in and through that judgment. He's — forget remembering mercy — showing mercy in His wrath, in His chastisement of His people. Think about it like this. If He wasn't merciful to them, why would He bother with them? No, sometimes it's mercy when righteous judgment comes.

Example. It's the best I got so... You got a dog with rabies. Dogs get rabies, right? Let's just say dogs get rabies, for tonight. It's fate's been sealed. Death is certain. But you've got a

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problem because they now pose a formidable threat of danger and harm to your children. So you're going to, in mercy and righteous judgment, put that dog out of its misery, and simultaneously show mercy as you protect your children.

Do you know that God did that with the Amorites? He gave them 400 years to repent. But their hearts, like with Pharaoh before them, were already hardened, their fate already sealed, their minds already decided.

So when we go into, which we did go through over the years, verse-by-verse, the Old Testament, and you would read these really hard passages about God commanding the Israelites to wipe out all the other "ites": the Amalekites, the Jebusites, the flashlights. I don't think the flashlights were in there. It's to make sure you're still with me.

Well, that doesn't seem fair. Wait, wait, wait, wait. Do you realize that that's the mercy of God? How is that possible? Because you see, everyone is going to be judged according to, recompensed according to that which they did here in this life. Do you realize that, like with heaven, there are different levels of treasures and rewards and crowns? So too in hell.

*Luke's Gospel*, Jesus says that there's different levels of punishment. Some will be beaten with few stripes, some with many stripes. There's different degrees in hell. So that's God's mercy. He's lessening their eternal judgment. That's mercy. But it's judgment. They're not mutually exclusive.

In fact, they, in some ways, could be seen as coming packaged together. In the judgment is the mercy, and in the mercy is the judgment. And I think that this is what Habakkuk is praying here and the reason is, is because that is exactly what he's going to do; remember God's mercy in the past.

Starting in *verse 3*, we're going to travel down memory lane — let me rephrase — mercy memory lane. [*Verse 3*] **"God came from Teman, The Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah."**

Stop. No, actually, that's what that word sort of means. It's a psalm, a song. We're going to see that at the very last verse at the end of the Bible study, about 10:30 tonight. No. You know, in the Psalms, David — the other psalmists as well — but it's a song — you know that. So you're reading — it's poetic, it's musical, played on a stringed instrument. Sometimes we

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even have the specifics of how this psalm song is to be played. We even have the melody that it's to be played to and sung with.

And then so you're reading Psalms. It's a song. And then all of a sudden, you read this word "**Selah.**" Say what? What does that even mean? I'm glad you asked. It means refrain. Pause. Meditate on it, think about it, and praise God for it before going any further. I could use me some selah, in my busy, loud life.

We just pause. Just stop. Stop, stop! Give me a moment. I'm having a moment. Is that how you say it? I'm having a moment. It's a selah moment. I need to meditate on this. I need to think about this. I need to pray about this. I need to praise God for this because God is good, and God can be trusted. And He's never failed me in the past. And I'm remembering all those times in the past.

And this is something if you're really struggling in a trial right now, remember His mercy to you when He pulled through for you. Oh yeah, it wasn't when you wanted, the way you wanted, how you wanted. But praise the Lord! It was perfect. And truth be known, you wouldn't have wanted it any other way. You don't want to go through it again.

But you wouldn't trade what God did in you and taught to you for all the tea in China. Is that — I shouldn't be using those kinds of... I think of David when he's trying to convince Saul, who's trying to talk him out of going and taking care of this uncircumcised Philistine that's blaspheming the name of his God. "And you guys are just sitting here paralyzed in fear. That's not okay. Let me at him."

Saul's like, "Sit down David. Sit down, boy." He's a teenager at this time, you know. And I love it because David does what Habakkuk is doing here. He remembers how God proved that He could be trusted and was faithful in the past. And if He's the same God yesterday, today and forever, then you can be assured without doubt that He can be trusted in the present and even for the future.

So what does he say? You know, here's Saul saying, "Hey, try on my armor?" (Chuckle) I would have loved to have been a fly on the side of a camel in that tent there. See, that's a — that's — you can't unsee that.

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Saul: remember now, we're told in Scripture that he was tall and handsome and buffed, worked out in 24s all the time, and head and shoulders above everyone else. And he was made king. "We want a king like all the other nations." God's like, "Okay, fine. I mean, I won't take it personal." (Pretends crying)

Solomon is really having a hard time with it. God's like, "Hey, Solomon — not Solomon — Samuel. Samuel, it's not you, it's Me. They're not rejecting you. They're rejecting Me." Because up to that point, it was — God was their King, their everything. And so what? I'm fired?

And the fatal mistake was: We want to be like our peers. We want to — we don't want to — we want to fit in, we want a king like all the other nations. Everybody's doing it. We don't want to stand out. We don't want to be a dork. Do they still use that word? Well, I just brought it back to life. Resurrection.

So that was the first mistake. So we know he's head and shoulders above, tall, handsome, big, buffed. And here's a ruddy, puny teenage boy, shepherd boy. And he's taking that size 48 armor and putting it on a boy that probably wears a size, I don't know, smaller. And so David's like, "You know, I'm not, with all due respect, King, I can't even move. And besides, this is not my color. I'm an autumn, so..."

There's another lesson there, but we've talked about it before, and I don't want to belabor the point. And I want to get to the point. So he says to Saul this: "You don't understand, King. God delivered a lion and a bear into my hands, past. This uncircumcised Philistine is going to be lunch with leftovers."

What's he saying? I trusted God to deliver me from the lion and the bear then. I can trust God now by faith. That's faith. That's trust. And Saul knows nothing of it. David, a man after God's own heart, possesses all of it. He knows God is — it's already — this is faith. He already knows that it's a done deal. He just has to formalize and finalize it. That's what faith is. It's a finalization, a formalization of that which is already done. So you know the rest of the story.

What's your point, Pastor? My point, my pastor point is, that this is what Habakkuk is doing. This is one of those principles you don't break. It breaks you if you go up against it. And by

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that I mean, you recall all the times God showed up and showed Himself faithful, which means that you can trust Him by faith.

So he's going down mercy memory lane, and he's going back to the miracle, and it was a miracle, the exodus out of Egypt, the destruction of the enemies of Israel. Meditate on that. Think about that. Praise God for that. Now we can move on. We got a couple more selahs, I think. I won't take as long now that you know it means refrain, pause, think, wait, meditate.

**“His glory covered the heavens, [Past tense] and the earth was full of His praise. [Past tense] His brightness was like the light; He had rays flashing from His hand, and [Oh, you had to be there] [I wish you could have seen it] and there His power was hidden. Before Him went pestilence, and fever followed at His feet.”**

This is quite poetic, isn't it, and prophetic? Just, I love *verse 6*. Talk about picturesque. The imagery. **“He stood and measured the earth.”** Whoa! You gotta be big to do that. How did He do that? He's God. He can do anything. Is there anything too hard for the Lord? **“He stood and measured the earth.”**

In another place in Scripture it says, by the span, the hand width. My Dad, when I was a kid, he would measure the hand width. This is Egyptian: like this. And I'm going, “Dad, what are you doing?” He says, “I'm measuring.”

“With your hand?”

“Yeah, it's a hand width. Then I just convert it to inches.”

I was like, “Cool. Can you teach me how to do that?” I don't need a measuring tape.

He stood and measured the earth with His, the breadth of His hand, the handbreadth. **“He looked and startled the nations. [Oh, I wish I could have been there for that] And the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills bowed. His ways [O Habakkuk, you got it!] are everlasting. [Verse 7] I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction; The curtains of the land of Midian trembled. O Lord, were You displeased with the rivers? Was Your anger against the rivers? Was Your wrath against the sea, that You rode on Your horses, your chariots of salvation? Your bow was made quite ready; oaths were sworn over Your arrows. [And here's another] Selah”**

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Let me have this one. You need it too. Just let that sink in. Because Habakkuk is remembering the mercy and faithfulness of a God who can be trusted no matter what. He knows that he can trust God with what he doesn't know. He sees that he can trust God for that which he can't yet see. Faith.

**“You divided the earth with rivers.”**

Who does that? God's like, (Raising hand) “I do. In fact, only I can. Because I'm just kind of bragging.” I love it when God brags on Himself in Scripture. You know what I'm talking about? Like because there's nothing. Is there anything too hard for the Lord? Wow. With God all things are possible. Wow. I love it when He does that. O God, who does that? You're the only one that can divide the earth with rivers. Now it gets a little interesting here.

**Verse 10. “The mountains saw You and trembled; the overflowing of the water passed by. The deep uttered its voice and lifted its hands on high. [And get this, verse 11] The sun and moon stood still in their habitation; at the light of Your arrows they went, at the shining of Your glittering spear.”**

What were you doubting God about again? There's no *selah* here, but I'm going to take one anyway. I mean, you — let me see if I got this straight. You're doubting, not trusting a God who did that? Wow. How's that possible? Well, maybe the question should be, okay, yeah, maybe I am. But how do I regain that trust in Him again? Remember.

You know, sometimes I do this. This is why, actually, I have prayer lists, prayer journals. I go back. I've been doing it for decades. Some of them were painful. And God is merciful. So I, you know, sometimes I just, I know not to go back that far and remember that. But there are other ones that God wants me to remember.

“You remember when you were curled up, being the godly man of faith that you are, in the fetal position crying like a baby, terrified, doubting Me, not trusting Me? See, here I am.”

I'm like, “God, get me out of this.”

God's going, “No. Trust Me. I'll see you through this.”

Here I am, curled up in a ball, fetal position. The tear ducts dried up. Forget liquid prayers. The words? Pfff. They were long gone. And then they became moans. And then they were

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tears. And then, then it was just — there was nothing left. I'm just, it's the cry of the heart. God, I mean, this is how it ends? (Singing ♪ 'Thanks for the memories' ♪)

That was Bob Hope. You young people have no clue. And by the way, don't be hard on yourself or get down on yourself because Paul was there in *Acts 27*. I mean, he has a PhD in shipwrecks. He's about to have shipwreck number four, but he ain't ever seen one like this one. He's got Luke and Aristarchus on board. It's a prisoner ship en route to Rome because he has to stand trial before Caesar as a Roman citizen.

But God, like with Habakkuk, did not let him know that he had a layover on the island of Malta for the salvation of the islanders of Malta. But it would involve a shipwreck because He could not do what He needed to do in any other way than that way.

Now, there's a very stunning admission on the part of the Apostle Paul because he already has in his hip pocket a promise from God that he will stand trial before Caesar. And he hasn't stood trial before Caesar yet. He's trying to get there. But there's this one verse Luke writes, by the Spirit, and records.

**“When we [Who’s we?] [Luke, Aristarchus, Paul] had all finally [Finally] given up all hope of surviving...”**

Wait, wait! In other words, Paul's curled up in a ball like me, thinking, that's it; this is how it ends. Did you forget? Are you starting to doubt? Have you lost faith? Where's your trust in the promises of God to you, the unbreakable promises that you can trust in? They are faithful and true and Amen. So be it. Done deal.

So what does God do? God, in His mercy, has an angel appear to Paul and say to him, “You're not going to die.” That's a very loose paraphrase. Just let me have it.

“You're not going to die, okay? Remember, you still have to stand trial before Caesar. Remember?”

“Oh, yeah. I remember now.”

“Okay, so you're not going to die. And here's the thing, Paul. Nobody on board is going to die. But you're going to be shipwrecked on the island of Malta.”

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And so can you imagine? Here, if the Apostle Paul has given up hope and everybody on board has given up hope, all hope. Finally, just, that's it. We're gonna — we're all gonna die! (Yelling) And then Paul says, no, you're not. An angel of the Lord of the God I serve appeared to me and told me none of us will die. We are going to be shipwrecked. So take some of the wood, make a surfboard, and surf to shore because we're going to land on the island of Malta. Well, anyway, you know the story.

In fact, *Acts 27:28*. Whoo! Just whoo! That's all I'm going to say one last time. Whoo!

Maybe that's a word for somebody tonight. You need to remember when God was faithful to refuel and reignite that trust in a God who can be trusted. If He did that then, why is He not going to do that now? Yeah, again, it's not going to be in the color you want that you ordered, or it comes in the wrong size. Don't you hate that? Or it's on back order. Or how about this one? Not available. Why not? Anyway, enough of my problems. I said too much.

*[Verse 12]* **“You marched through the land in indignation; You trampled the nations in anger. You went forth *[Verse 13]* for the salvation of Your people, *[Watch that]* for salvation with Your Anointed. *[Mercy]* You struck the head from the house of the wicked, *[Judgment]* by laying bare from foundation to neck. Selah”**

Man, I just... Let that one sink in. So You delivered me. You saved me then. You're the same God then as You are now and will continue to be forever. So it doesn't sound like the problem is You. It sounds like the problem is me. Wow. I mean, I realize you're not necessarily the sharpest knife in the kitchen drawer, but really? Duh!

**“You struck the head from the house of the wicked.”** You cut the head of a snake off. Why did you do that?

**“For the salvation of Your people.”** Mercy / judgment. *[Verse 14]* **“You...”**

This is again, the imagery. And this was put to a song. Could you imagine singing this song, downloading it on, you know, iTunes or whatever those platforms are now? I don't know anything about them. I still listen to mp3's on my... Never mind.

*[Verse 14]* **“You thrust through with his own arrows the head of his villages. They came out like a whirlwind to scatter me; their rejoicing was like feasting on the poor in secret.**

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**You [Verse 15] walked through the sea with Your horses, through the heap of great waters.**

*[No need to fear] [My God is here]*

**[Verse 16] When I heard, my body trembled; my lips quivered at the voice; rottenness entered my bones; and I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble. When he comes up to the people, he will invade them with his troops.”**

You know what's happening here? And we've talked about this before. I won't expound on it tonight, but this is the natural, even supernatural response when one comes into contact with a holy and perfect and righteous God who can be trusted.

Isaiah: “Get away from me. I'm a man of unclean lips. Take the coal. Cleanse my lips. Here I am.” Peter: “Lord, I'm a wretched man. I'm a sinful man. I'm full of sin. Get away from me!”

Fear and trepidation, a good fear and trembling. I think that's lost in the day in which we live today. There's no fear of God in their eyes. There's no fear of the Lord. What's the fear of the Lord? It's to hate evil. It's to hate to do anything evil that would hurt the heart of God. You fear doing anything evil because it will grieve the heart of God.

The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. Wise up, buckaroo. By the way, I did check on “buckaroo.” It's Latin for little boy. I thought it was slang, so I had to check into it, and if it was, I was going to repent. But I'm not going to repent because it wasn't wrong. So buckaroo. No, Lord, I need wisdom.

Well, **“the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” “The fear of the Lord is to hate evil.”** So this is to be expected, is what I'm saying. And it's application to us personally in our lives is this. There is a holy reverence and fear when you come into contact with a holy God who is to be feared and revered.

You know, I shriek in horror when I hear someone say — and if you've said this, I'm not going to look at anybody. In fact, I'm going to close my eyes. Hope I don't fall asleep. I cringe when I hear people say, “Yeah, the man upstairs.” Oh, no, you didn't. Oh, yes, he did. The man upstairs? Really, now? What? Are you going to have a beer with Him?

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You know what you just did? You profaned God. You know what profane means? I don't think we know what it means. We think profane is profanity, cursing. It's not that. To profane is to bring down and lower and make common. You just made God Almighty a man that's upstairs, bringing Him down to your level. That's profane. That's profane. I don't want to be anywhere around you.

I would like to be around Habakkuk because what a great example. Remember now, this is a man of God. This is a prophet of God. This man walks with God. He's close with God. He has a heart for God. He fears God. So this is to be expected. Would to God that this would be our response. I'm not talking about, necessarily, the physiological reactions. But sometimes it does cause a reaction physiologically, psychologically, emotionally, mentally.

Well, let's try to finish up and wrap it up. This is another descriptive, picturesque...

**Verse 17. "Though the fig tree may not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines; though the labor of the olive may fail, and the fields yield no food; though the flock may be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls."**

You know what that sounds like to me? Famine and death. Nothing to eat. Starvation. Why would he say that? Because of what is going to say now.

**Verse 18.** The first two words. **"Yet I will rejoice in the Lord. I will joy in the God of my salvation."** Wait. You just got done telling me we're all going to die and starve to death, and you're rejoicing in the Lord? Does this sound a little bit like James? **"Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, when you encounter various kinds of trials."**

Are you kidding me? Consider it pure joy when I encounter fiery trials? Are you sure that's the correct translation from the original? So you go look it up. I think it's supposed to be translated: Consider it pure hell when you encounter various kinds of trials. So you go to the original and it's even stronger. It's like exuberant joy. And you're like, yeah, no can. Joy is this — what a cruel thing to say.

Well, you didn't finish it. Because the next word after **"consider it pure joy when you encounter various kinds of trials,"** he tells you why you can consider it pure joy when you encounter various trials. [Paraphrase] Because you know where God is going to go and what God is going to do in and through that trial.

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You know what it is? You might be surprised. He's actually answering your prayer. You forgot. Oh yeah, He'll remind you. Remember when you prayed and asked Me for patience and endurance? Here you go. This is the answer to the prayer. You asked Me for patience and endurance.

Well, no. But I didn't think — I didn't read the fine print on that prayer. And besides, it was an old prayer. I forgot all about it. But apparently, you didn't. So wait a minute. So I didn't think that You were going to answer that prayer for patience and endurance like this. If I had known it was going to be in and through a trial, I would have never prayed it to begin with. I would have just prayed maybe something more along the lines of, Lord, can you get me a prescription for a patience pill?

Oh come on. Lord, give me patience and give it to me now. How's He going to teach you patience unless He puts you in a situation to learn to be patient? I've always thought it humorous that when you go to the doctor's office, you're referred to as the patient. I'm like, where? Oh, I'm the patient, meaning I have to be patient because He's very busy, you know. And you're the patient. And be patient, Patient because he might — he's running like an hour late, Patient.

So what are you going to do? I guess you're going to be patient and learn patience as the patient. Because that's what James said. He says because you know that God is teaching you patient endurance in and through that trial you're going through.

Because you had — it's *1 Corinthians 10:13*. The Apostle Paul, real quick. **“No trial [Temptation; same word in the original] has overcome you [Seized you] but such as is common to man. But God, with the trial will provide a way of escape, so that you may be able to bear up under it.”**

You know this verse, but it's been so reduced to a cliché of “God won't give you more than you can handle.” And their life is beautiful and wonderful and no trial. And here you are hanging on for dear life in the trial of your life. And I don't know. I'll speak for myself. I don't warm up to that, you know, word from the Lord. You know, “God won't give you more than you can handle.” (Fake smile) I know that. In Jesus' name.

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But you see what's happening here? And we're almost done. You see what's happening here? He was questioning. Now he's rejoicing. What's changed? No, Babylon's still coming, by the way, about 35 years. No, actually, maybe sooner. I'm getting messed up with Zephaniah. I'm getting ahead of myself. That's next week, Lord willing, we start the book of Zephaniah. What? We're done with Habakkuk. That's the next book. Whatever. Maybe that was too soon, too much. I don't know.

So Babylon's still going to take them captive. So the circumstances haven't changed. No. But Habakkuk has. And we can too. We can still rejoice in the Lord. Not the circumstances. Not the situation. No. We're rejoicing in the Lord because the joy of the Lord is my strength.

And that's what he says in *verse 19*, the last verse. **“The Lord God is my strength.”** *Philippians 4:13* Paul says, **“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”** Not in my own strength. His strength. Because when I'm weak, then I'm strong in His strength and the power of His might. He boast in his weakness. When was the last time you had somebody boast about their weakness, their weaknesses? Yeah, hey, man, let me tell you, man, I'm really proud of this weakness. What are you smoking, dude? Who does that? Paul. Because when I'm weak, that's when I'm strong. The strength of the Lord. The joy of the Lord. And listen to this.

And this is *Isaiah 40*, one of my favorite, most encouraging passages in all of Scripture, like with all of Scripture. But it's where Isaiah, very picturesque, describes that **“Those who wait on the Lord will mount up with wings like eagles. They shall run and not grow weary. They shall walk and not faint.”**

He will renew their strength. They're exhausted and God rushes in. “You're weak. I'm strong. You want some of this?” “I'll take some. I'll take like double order, triple. I'll take the supersize. Supersize me.”

Listen to this. **“The Lord God, [Verse 19] is my strength. He will make my feet like deer's feet, and He will make me walk on my high hills. [And then he signs off with to whom this is written as a song to] To the Chief Musician. [The Lord his God] With my stringed instruments.”**

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It's believed that Habakkuk was of the Levite tribe, the priestly tribe, and even the musical side. The sons of Korah wrote some of the psalms. They're beautiful. They're inspired, of course, but magnificent. Their Dad was swallowed up by the earth when he formed a coup with 250 recruits against Moses in *Numbers 16*. They're sons.

That's a lesson right there. Their sons would go on to write the most beautiful worship and praise songs and psalms, glorifying God. The sons of Korah. I'm not going to hold the sins of the father against the sons. We're told in Exodus 20 that He visits the iniquity of the sins of the fathers upon the second and third generation. Oh, generational curses! Stop! Why does He visit the sins of the fathers upon the children on the second, third generation? To show them mercy. Mercy.

Now, this is a God I can trust. I almost want to, on Habakkuk's behalf, just ask for forgiveness, for questioning Him and not trusting Him in the first place. But we had to start there to get here. And that's the way it is in our lives. Sometimes we've got the start point, and there's no shortcuts. I wish there were. You know, when you're running in track in high school, and you cut across the field and finish first? (Chuckling)

I mean, how foolish is that? And it was like they didn't notice that. Look, there he goes again. Really? No. There's no shortcuts in this walk of faith. We have to go through it. Because it's by going through it that we learn to trust Him and put our faith in Him and live by faith. I must just trust God in my finite sight with the eyes of faith.

Okay. I'm done. I didn't do too bad. No, I did bad. That's very bad. Kaponono, come up. Stand up. Let's — and it wasn't even communion. Oh, well. You guys are used to it. You have treasures in heaven.

Father in heaven, oh, wow. Just whoo! I feel like we were kind of on a wild roller coaster ride there. Just the turnaround, the transformation. Not in the situation, but in the prophet and the person. And that person is us. O God, You know the circumstances. You know everything about every situation, every detail. Lord, like Habakkuk, will You see us through? And as You do, we want to put our trust in You by faith. Thank You, Lord, for this, for Habakkuk. In Jesus' name, Amen.