

# Habakkuk 1:12-2:5 Summary

## Called to Be Watchmen: Living by Faith At All Times

In a world filled with questions and uncertainty, we often find ourselves asking God "why" when life doesn't go according to our plans. The prophet Habakkuk faced this same struggle, and his story offers profound insights into what it means to be faithful watchmen in our generation.

### When God's Answers Don't Match Our Expectations

Habakkuk approached God with legitimate concerns about the sin and injustice he saw around him. He expected God to bring revival and restoration to Israel. Instead, God's answer was shocking: He would use the Babylonians to judge His own people.

This response left Habakkuk confused and troubled. In Habakkuk 1:12-17, we see him wrestling with four difficult questions:

- Are you truly the eternal, holy God I know you to be?
- Why do you tolerate those who are treacherous?
- Why do you allow the wicked to swallow up the righteous?
- Will the Babylonians show no mercy?

### Praising God Even When We Don't Understand

What's remarkable about Habakkuk's response is that even in his confusion and fear, he continues to praise God. He acknowledges four unchanging truths about God's character:

- God is holy and eternal
- God has the authority to pass judgment
- God is perfectly righteous in every way
- God is the creator of all things

Notice that none of these praises are based on recent blessings or favorable circumstances. Instead, Habakkuk praises God for who He is, not for what He has done lately. This teaches us that God is worthy of our worship on both our best and worst days.

### The Heart of a Watchman

In Habakkuk 2:1, we see a dramatic shift in the prophet's approach. He declares: "I will stand at my guard post and station myself on the lookout tower. I will watch to see what he will say to me and what I should reply about my complaint."

This language mirrors what we see in Ezekiel 33, where God describes the role of a watchman - someone commissioned to watch over the people, hear from God, and faithfully communicate His message to others.

## **What Does It Mean to Be a Watchman Today?**

As followers of Christ, we are all called to be watchmen in three key areas:

### **Be a Watchman in Your Own Life**

Are you willing to make necessary changes to ensure your life reflects what God calls you to do? Jesus warned His disciples that "the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mark 14:38). We must be vigilant against temptations and habits that don't honor God, addressing them immediately rather than settling for spiritual mediocrity.

### **Be a Watchman in Your Community**

This involves two crucial aspects: seeking accountability and providing it for others. We need people in our lives who can challenge and correct us when necessary. This is why community groups and discipleship relationships are so vital - they provide the context for mutual watchfulness and spiritual growth.

### **Be a Watchman for the World**

The Great Commission calls us to care about God's work globally. This happens through giving to support missionaries, praying for unreached people groups, and being burdened for the lost around the world. When we pray for specific places and people, God develops our hearts to care deeply about their spiritual condition. Join us in praying for the Czech Republic and specifically the city of Prague on a daily basis this year!

## **The Contrast Between the Arrogant and the Righteous**

In God's response to Habakkuk, He presents a stark contrast between two types of people. The arrogant person is characterized by seven complete traits:

1. Inflated ego and self-promotion
2. Lack of integrity
3. Being betrayed by earthly passions
4. Never finding rest
5. Never being satisfied
6. Constantly wanting more power and influence
7. Gathering people for selfish purposes

This paints a grim picture of someone so consumed with worldly pursuits that they have no time for God.

### **The Simple Truth About the Righteous**

In contrast, God describes the righteous person with just one defining characteristic: "The righteous one will live by his faith" (Habakkuk 2:4).

This simplicity is profound. The only way to be truly righteous is through faith in God's plan of salvation. On our own, we cannot achieve righteousness - Romans 3:10 reminds us that "there is no one righteous, not even one."

But there is hope. Jesus lived as the perfectly righteous one, died for our sins, and rose again. When we place our faith in Him, He imputes His righteousness to us. God sees us covered by Christ's perfection rather than our failures.

## Waiting, Watching, and Living by Faith

The righteous are called to three essential actions:

1. Wait - Be patient for God's timing, even when His answers don't come immediately
2. Watch - Stay alert and ready to act when God opens doors and provides opportunities
3. Live by Faith - Trust in God's character and promises rather than relying on our own understanding

## Life Application

This week, examine your life honestly. Are you living more like the arrogant person described in Habakkuk, or like someone who truly lives by faith? Consider these areas:

- Personal Watchfulness: What habits or temptations do you need to address immediately rather than tolerating them?
- Community Engagement: Are you in meaningful relationships where you can both give and receive accountability?
- Global Perspective: How can you develop a heart that's burdened for the lost around the world?

Ask yourself these questions:

- Do people who know me well see someone who lives by faith or by sight?
- Am I prepared to act when God opens the doors I've been praying for?
- What changes do I need to make to better reflect the character of a faithful watchman?
- How can I be more intentional about caring for the spiritual well-being of those around me?

*The call to be a watchman isn't just for prophets or pastors - it's for every believer. In a world full of uncertainty and moral confusion, we have the privilege and responsibility to stand guard, live by faith, and point others toward the hope found only in Jesus Christ.*

# Habakkuk 1:12-2:5- Discussion Guide

## Summary

Habakkuk 1:12-2:5 explores the concept of being a 'watchman' - someone called to wait, watch, and live by faith. Pastor Daniel led us to examine Habakkuk's second prayer where he questions God's plan to use the Babylonians to judge Israel, yet still praises God for who He is. Despite not understanding or liking God's answer, Habakkuk positions himself as a watchman, ready to receive and relay God's message to the people. The sermon contrasts the characteristics of the arrogant man (inflated ego, lack of integrity, never satisfied) with the righteous person who simply lives by faith. The message challenges believers to be watchmen in their own lives, communities, and for the world, emphasizing that true righteousness comes only through faith in Jesus Christ.

## Intro Prayer

Father God, we come before You this morning asking that You would open our hearts and minds to what You want to teach us today. Just as Habakkuk positioned himself as a watchman, ready to hear from You, help us to be attentive to Your voice. Quiet the distractions in our lives and help us to focus on You. We pray that through our time together, You would challenge us, encourage us, and equip us to be faithful watchmen in our own lives, our communities, and for Your kingdom work around the world. Speak to us now, Lord. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## Ice Breaker

What's one thing you've had to wait for recently that required patience, and how did you handle the waiting?

## Key Verses

- Habakkuk 1:12-17
- Habakkuk 2:1-5
- Ezekiel 33:2-7
- Mark 14:38
- Romans 3:10-12

## Questions

- How does Habakkuk's example of praising God even when he doesn't like God's answer challenge your own response to difficult circumstances?
- What's the difference between questioning God to understand Him better versus arguing with God? How can we ensure our questions come from the right heart?

- Habakkuk positions himself as a watchman, ready to hear from God and act. In what areas of your life do you need to be more prepared to act when God opens doors?
- Looking at the seven characteristics of the arrogant man, which ones do you find yourself most tempted by, and how can you guard against them?
- What does it practically look like to 'live by faith' in your daily life? Where do you tend to rely on your own strength instead of trusting God?
- How can we be better watchmen for the people in our community - both in terms of accountability and spiritual guidance?
- The sermon mentions being burdened for the world and praying for unreached people groups. How can we develop a heart that cares about God's work globally?
- What would change in your life if you truly embraced the calling to be a watchman in your own life, community, and for the world?

## Life Application

This week, choose one area where you need to be a better 'watchman' - whether in your personal life, relationships, or community. Take one specific action to prepare yourself to be ready when God opens doors for ministry or service. Additionally, commit to praying daily for the people of Prague and the Czech Republic, asking God to raise up laborers and bring revival to that nation.

## Key Takeaways

- God is worthy of our praise even when we don't understand or like His answers - we should praise Him for who He is, not just what He does
- Being a watchman means being prepared and ready to act when God speaks or opens doors for ministry
- We are called to be watchmen in three areas: our own lives (personal holiness), our communities (accountability and discipleship), and the world (missions and prayer)
- The righteous person is characterized by one thing: living by faith, which comes only through trusting in Jesus Christ for salvation
- True righteousness is not achieved through our own efforts but is imputed to us through faith in Jesus Christ

## Ending Prayer

Father God, thank You for calling us to be watchmen and for the example of Habakkuk who waited faithfully for Your word. Help us to live by faith and not by sight. Convict us where we need to change and prepare us to be ready when You open doors for ministry. Give us hearts that are burdened for our communities and for the world. We specifically lift up the people of Prague and the Czech Republic, asking You to raise up laborers and bring revival to that nation. Help us to be faithful watchmen who wait, watch, and live by faith. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## Daily Devotions Day 1:

### Praising God When Life Doesn't Make Sense

**Devotional:** Have you ever prayed for something good, only to have God's answer leave you more confused than before? Habakkuk experienced this exact struggle. He cried out to God about the injustice around him, expecting revival and restoration. Instead, God told him that judgment was coming through the Babylonians - hardly the answer he was hoping for. Yet in the midst of his confusion, Habakkuk did something remarkable. He continued to praise God. Not for what God had done recently, but for who God is eternally. He praised God's holiness, His righteous authority, His perfect character, and His creative power. These truths about God's nature don't change based on our circumstances or understanding. When life feels overwhelming or God's ways seem unclear, we have a choice. We can withdraw from God in frustration, or we can follow Habakkuk's example and anchor ourselves in the unchanging character of God. His love, faithfulness, and wisdom remain constant whether we're experiencing our best days or our worst days. Sometimes the most profound act of faith is continuing to worship when we don't understand. It's declaring that God is worthy of our praise not because everything makes sense, but because He is God and we are not. This kind of worship transforms us from the inside out, shifting our focus from our circumstances to our Creator.

**Bible Verse:** "Are you not from eternity, Lord my God? My Holy One, you will not die. Lord, you appointed them to execute judgment; my Rock, you destined them to punish us." - Habakkuk 1:12

**Reflection Question:** In what areas of your life are you struggling to praise God because His ways don't align with your expectations, and how might focusing on His unchanging character rather than your circumstances change your perspective?

**Quote:** "God is worthy of our praise on our best days and on our worst days. Whether we are the wealthiest person in the world or the poorest, the most influential or the least influential, whether everything's good and we feel like life's perfect, or if everything is bad and we just want to curl up in a ball and cry, God is still worthy of our praise."

**Prayer:** Lord, help me to worship You not just when life makes sense, but especially when it doesn't. Remind me that Your character never changes, even when my understanding is limited. Give me the faith to praise You in all seasons of life.

## Daily Devotions Day 2:

### Learning to Question Without Fighting

**Devotional:** Questions aren't the enemy of faith - they can actually deepen it. Habakkuk had serious questions about God's plan, and he wasn't afraid to voice them. But here's what made his questioning different: he wanted to understand God more, not argue with Him. There's a world of difference between questioning to learn and questioning to fight. When we question to learn, we approach God with humility, recognizing that His ways are infinitely higher than our ways. We're genuinely seeking understanding, even if we don't like the initial answer. When we question to fight, we're essentially putting ourselves in the position of judge over God, demanding that He explain Himself to our satisfaction. Habakkuk shows us that it's okay to bring our confusion, disappointment, and even frustration to God. He's patient with our questions and doesn't punish us for honest wrestling. In fact, God often uses our questions to draw us closer to Himself and to reveal more of His character and purposes. The key is our heart posture. Are we approaching God as students eager to learn, or as prosecutors trying to build a case against Him? Are we willing to accept that His answer might challenge our preconceptions? God welcomes our questions when they come from a heart that ultimately wants to know and trust Him more deeply.

**Bible Verse:** "Your eyes are too pure to look on evil, and you cannot tolerate wrongdoing. So why do you tolerate those who are treacherous? Why are you silent while one who is wicked swallows up one who is more righteous than himself?" - Habakkuk 1:13

**Reflection Question:** When you bring questions to God, are you genuinely seeking to understand His heart and ways, or are you demanding that He justify His actions to you?

**Quote:** "Habakkuk does not use questions to fight God. He wants to understand God more. He wants to understand what God's saying more. He doesn't like what God's saying, but he also isn't arguing with God."

**Prayer:** Father, teach me to bring my questions to You with a humble heart that seeks understanding rather than arguments. Help me trust that Your patience with my wrestling will ultimately lead me to greater faith and deeper relationship with You.

## Daily Devotions Day 3:

### Becoming a Watchman in Your Personal Life

**Devotional:** After wrestling with his questions, Habakkuk made a crucial decision: he positioned himself as a watchman. A watchman in ancient times had one primary job - to stay alert, watch for danger or important messages, and warn others. Habakkuk was ready to hear from God and act on what he received. As believers, we're all called to be watchmen, starting with our own lives. This means being vigilant about sin, spiritual mediocrity, and anything that might compromise our relationship with God. It's easy to become comfortable with small compromises or to gradually drift away from the passionate faith we once had. Being a watchman in your personal life requires honest self-examination. Are there areas where you've become spiritually lazy? Habits that are slowly eroding your character? Relationships or activities that are pulling you away from God rather than drawing you closer? A watchman doesn't ignore these warning signs - they address them quickly and decisively. This isn't about perfectionism or earning God's love through good behavior. It's about recognizing that our spiritual health affects every other area of our lives. When we're alert to God's voice and quick to respond to His correction, we position ourselves to experience His best for our lives and to be effective witnesses to others.

**Bible Verse:** "I will stand at my guard post and station myself on the lookout tower. I will watch to see what he will say to me and what I should reply about my complaint." - Habakkuk 2:1

**Reflection Question:** What areas of your personal spiritual life need more vigilant attention, and what practical steps can you take this week to be a better watchman over your own heart?

**Quote:** "Are you willing to make changes that are needed to ensure that your life reflects what God calls you to do?"

**Prayer:** Lord, make me alert to the condition of my own heart. Help me to be quick to respond when You point out areas that need attention. Give me the courage to make necessary changes and the wisdom to guard my spiritual life carefully.

## Daily Devotions Day 4:

### Living by Faith, Not by Sight

**Devotional:** God's message to Habakkuk revealed a fundamental truth that echoes throughout Scripture: the righteous live by faith. This wasn't just advice for Habakkuk's time - it's a timeless principle that defines how believers are meant to navigate life. Living by faith means trusting God's character and promises even when our circumstances suggest otherwise. It means making decisions based on what God has said rather than what we can see or feel in the moment. This kind of faith isn't blind optimism - it's confident trust in a God who has proven Himself faithful throughout history. The contrast is stark. Those who live by sight are driven by what they can control, accumulate, or achieve through their own efforts. They're restless, always grasping for more, never truly satisfied. But those who live by faith find their security in God's unchanging nature and His perfect timing. Living by faith doesn't mean we ignore reality or make foolish decisions. It means we interpret our reality through the lens of God's truth rather than letting our circumstances dictate our faith. When we can't see the path ahead clearly, we trust the One who can. When the future feels uncertain, we rest in the certainty of God's love and sovereignty. This is how we find peace in chaos and hope in difficulty - not by trying to control everything around us, but by trusting the One who controls all things.

**Bible Verse:** "Look, his ego is inflated; he is without integrity. But the righteous one will live by his faith." - Habakkuk 2:4

**Reflection Question:** In what specific situations are you currently trying to live by sight rather than by faith, and how would your approach change if you truly trusted God's perspective over your own?

**Quote:** "I want to challenge us today to live by faith and not by sight. To watch for God, to wait for God, to dive into God's word this new year, to grow close to God, to tune our heart to God, we could say, and to be a watchman and an example for the world around us."

**Prayer:** God, help me to live by faith and not by sight. When I'm tempted to rely on my own understanding or control, remind me to trust in Your perfect wisdom and timing. Strengthen my faith to see beyond my circumstances to Your unchanging character.

## Daily Devotions Day 5:

### Becoming a Watchman for the World

**Devotional:** Habakkuk's calling as a watchman extended beyond his personal life to include a burden for others. As believers, we're called to be watchmen not just for ourselves and our immediate communities, but for the world around us. This means developing a heart that breaks for what breaks God's heart. One of the most powerful ways to be a watchman for the world is through prayer. When we pray for people and places we may never visit, something remarkable happens - our hearts become burdened for those people. We begin to see them through God's eyes, understanding their lostness and their need for salvation. Some of the most effective missionaries in Christian history never left their home countries, but they prayed fervently for the lost around the world. Their prayers moved heaven and opened doors for the gospel in distant places. When we pray, "God, would you move in this place?" He often answers by first moving in our hearts, creating a burden that drives us to pray more, give more, and care more. Being a watchman for the world also means being ready to act when God provides opportunities. Whether it's supporting missions financially, sharing the gospel with someone in our own community, or simply being an example of Christ's love, we must be prepared to respond when God calls. The world is watching how we live, and our lives can either draw people toward God or push them away. As watchmen, we have the privilege and responsibility of pointing others toward the hope we've found in Christ. This is why our Mission at Cornerstone is to Connect People With Jesus!

**Bible Verse:** "Then he said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.'" - Mark 16:15

**Reflection Question:** How is God calling you to be a watchman for the world around you, and what specific steps can you take to develop a greater burden for those who don't yet know Christ?

**Quote:** "I'm convinced that some of our most effective missionaries in the history of Christianity have never met the people that they reached, but they prayed really hard and consistently."

**Prayer:** Father, give me a heart that breaks for the lost around the world. Help me to be faithful in prayer for those who need to hear the gospel, and make me ready to act when You provide opportunities to share Your love. Use me as a watchman in my community and beyond.