

Pastor Clifford
August 9th, 2020

They That Wait

Isaiah 40:27 “O Jacob, how can you say the LORD does not see your troubles Israel, how can you say God ignores your rights? ²⁸ Have you never heard? Have you never understood? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of all the earth. He never grows weak or weary. No one can measure the depths of his understanding. ²⁹ He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless. ³⁰ Even youths will become weak and tired and young men will fall in exhaustion. ³¹ But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.”

Waiting on God is such a prominent topic in the scriptures that one can only conclude that it must be foundational to the life of his children.

What is waiting on the Lord or how does one do it practically?

Let me introduce you to an Old Testament prophet named Habakkuk:

- He was a contemporary of Jeremiah.
- He was preaching to the southern kingdom of Judah.
- His record is basically a conversation between him and God.

Habakkuk's situation is not unique to him in that all of us have faced the situation of having to wait on the Lord. Habakkuk is experiencing a challenge when it comes to timing and outcome.

Habakkuk presents his case

Habakkuk 1:2-13

How long, O LORD, must I call for help?
But you do not listen!
"Violence is everywhere!" I cry,
but you do not come to save.

Must I forever see these evil deeds?
Why must I watch all this misery?
Wherever I look,
I see destruction and violence.
I am surrounded by people
who love to argue and fight.

The law has become paralyzed,
and there is no justice in the courts.
The wicked far outnumber the righteous,
so that justice has become perverted.

The Lord's Response

⁵ The LORD replied,
"Look around at the nations;
look and be amazed!
For I am doing something in your own day,
something you wouldn't believe
even if someone told you about it.
⁶ I am raising up the Babylonians,
a cruel and violent people.

Habakkuk is not fond of the answer

12 O LORD my God, my Holy One, you who are eternal—surely you do not plan to wipe us out? O LORD, our Rock, you have sent these Babylonians to correct us, to punish us for our many sins. **13** But you are pure and cannot stand the sight of evil. Will you wink at their treachery? Should you be silent while the wicked swallow up people more righteous than they?

(*Isaiah 55:8,9* My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts,” says the LORD. “And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. **9** For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.)

While Habakkuk waits he begins to move towards God – An active posture.

Habakkuk 2:1-3

“I will climb up to my watchtower and stand at my guard post. There I will wait to see what the LORD says and how he will answer my complaint. Then the LORD said to me, “Write my answer plainly on tablets, so that a runner can carry the correct message to others. This vision is for a future time. It describes the end, and it will be fulfilled. If it seems slow in coming, wait patiently, for it will surely take place. It will not be delayed.”

But the righteous person will live by his faith.

Habakkuk’s conclusion: It results in worship and thanksgiving.

Habakkuk 3:2

LORD, I have heard the report about You *and* I fear.
O LORD, revive Your work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make it known; In wrath remember mercy.

Habakkuk 3:12, 13

In indignation You marched through the earth;
In anger You trampled the nations.

13 You went forth for the salvation of Your people,
For the salvation of Your anointed.
You struck the head of the house of the evil
To lay him open from thigh to neck.

Habakkuk's resolve to wait.**Habakkuk 3:17-19**

Though the fig tree should not blossom
And there be no fruit on the vines,
Though the yield of the olive should fail
And the fields produce no food,
Though the flock should be cut off from the fold
And there be no cattle in the stalls,

18 Yet I will exult in the LORD,
I will rejoice in the God of my salvation.

19 The Lord GOD is my strength,
And He has made my feet like hinds' *feet*,
And makes me walk on my high places.

Take away:

- We must trust that God knows best.
- Our ways are not His.
- Waiting is not necessarily inactive.
- Waiting results in worship.