



Sermon Text: Habakkuk 3

Sermon Date: November 20, 2016

As we enter the final chapter of Habakkuk, we witness a dramatic transformation occur within Habakkuk's heart. He began chapter one with a prayer of complaint; he now ends with a prayer of faith. Even though his circumstances have not changed, his joy is securely resting on the God of his salvation.

We walked through Habakkuk's prayer in four parts.

PETITION (VERSE 2)

Knowing the painful work the Lord is about to do in bringing the Babylonian invasion, Habakkuk asks God for three things. In the years between Judah's judgment and Babylonian's downfall, He asks God to preserve life, to provide understanding, and to remember mercy.

REMEMBRANCE (VERSES 3-15)

To strengthen his faith, and that of the believing remnant who would sing his prayer-song, Habakkuk remembers God's mighty acts in saving His people. He builds a collage of God's past actions to feed his faith for the future. In verses 3-7, Habakkuk centers his prayer on **God's coming**. God is glorious and powerful. Before His majesty, unshakable mountains are flattened and made prostrate. In verses 8-15, Habakkuk focuses on **God's combat**. God is unstoppable. The nations quiver and shake. The very elements of nature are at his disposal. He thrashes his opponents and utterly destroys them. God comes as a warrior executing justice upon all the earth.

CONFESSION (VERSE 16)

Even after remembering the mighty acts of God's salvation in the past, Habakkuk's fear persists. His body trembles and his soul aches at the thought of the suffering he will endure. Such is often the case for most saints: our faith in God intermingles with our frailty and fear. It is good to know that we can bring such honest confessions to God in prayer. Even though Habakkuk is afraid, he is resolved to wait quietly for God to defend his cause. His arguments have ceased. Even though he trembles, he now entrusts himself to God.

ADORATION (VERSES 17-19)

And this trust leads Habakkuk to the place of adoration. Even though the Babylonians will strip the land of all luxuries and daily necessities, Habakkuk will still rejoice in the Lord. God will give him eternal victory, even in the midst of earthly defeat. Like Habakkuk, we are more than conquerors through Christ Jesus. The very things Habakkuk faced—tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, and sword—are the things Paul rejoiced could never separate us from God's love for us in Christ (Romans 8).

THREE GOOD PURPOSES FOR PAIN AND SUFFERING

It is a severe mercy when God strips us of everything but Himself, and we discover that He is more than enough for our joy. Pastor Justin ended by highlighting three good purposes for suffering in the life of a Christian.

1. **Suffering purifies our faith.** It burns away the dross and imperfections so that our faith in God is purified and strong. Suffering makes us more like Jesus.
2. **Suffering personalizes God's promises.** It makes us cling, not only to God's promises generically, but to God's promises to me in *this* trial. Pain takes our theological formulations and transforms them into personal proclamations.
3. **Suffering proves God's sufficiency.** God detaches our joy from our wavering circumstances so that we will find it in Him. He knocks out the various supports we were resting on so that we fall onto Him and discover that He is all we need.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **What stood out to you from the sermon and the biblical text from this Sunday?**
2. **Is your joy resting in God alone? What other things (family, job, health, etc.) is your joy dependent upon?**
3. **As you look back on the book of Habakkuk, what is the truth/application you will take away from it?**