

When God Intervenes

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Habakkuk 1:5-11
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Hello, Redeemer family, thank you for being here and thank you for watching, especially if you're in our gym right now. If you're a guest, I'm Jon, I'm one of the pastors here. Thank you for being here.

The ushers are coming up right now. If you need a program, if you look down in your lap and oh, I don't have a program to take notes, I don't have a Bible, I don't have a pen. We've got you covered. Just wave to them, they'll give you what you need. All right? And if you take one of those Bibles, please do not give that thing back to us. We've got plenty. It's yours. It's our gift to you, enjoy it. And here's the secret. I'll give you the page numbers whenever we turn to where we're going in the Bible, all right?

So grab your Bibles now and open to Habakkuk Chapter One. Habakkuk Chapter One. If you got one of those Bibles, here's the page number, 872, 872. Habakkuk Chapter One. All right? If you are able, please stand for the reading of God's Word. Habakkuk Chapter One, drop down to verse five.

This is God's Word for us today. "Look among the nations and see. Wonder and be astounded for I am doing a work in your days that you would not believe if told. For behold, I'm raising up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation who march through the breadth of the earth to seize dwellings not their own. They are dreaded and fearsome, their justice and dignity go forth from themselves. Their horses are swifter than leopards, more fierce than the evening wolves. Their horsemen press proudly on. Their horsemen come from afar. They fly like an eagle swift to devour. They all come for violence. All their faces forward. They gather captives like sand. At kings they scoff, and at rulers they laugh. They laugh at every fortress for they pile up earth and take it. Then they sweep by like the wind and go on, guilty men whose own might is their God." As God's words, you may be seated. As you are, let's pray.

Father, passages like this have been in the Bible for 2,600 years. You inspired the words that Habakkuk wrote down. And so these are, this is Your Word, and has been for 2,600 years. And yet the message of this passage is so lost on 21st century America. The God described here is but a shadow, a whisper of the God that we hear from so many places that speak about proclaiming your truth. And as a result of that, it makes a passage like this hard for us to understand. So please be our teacher, be our guide into truth this morning. And Father, I pray the same thing for Christ Life Church. I pray for Pastor Sam right now; he's done with his English service. He's in the middle of his Korean service right now. So bless him as he's preaching the same sermon in Korean. Use him, please, in that church, in that community, to lift up the name of Christ in such a way that people are drawn to Christ, live for Him, love Him, come to know Him in salvation and are saved. Father, do that there, please. And please do that here now. May it be obvious that You are here and active in this room as a result of our time and Your Word. Do this, please, I pray for the glory of Your name. Amen.

The God of the Bible is the only God. He is the one true and living God in a day when gods were gods over weather or geographical locations or people groups, the God of the Bible, the God of

Israel is the God over all the world, over all creation. Deuteronomy 10:14 says, "Behold to the Lord your God belong heaven, and the heaven of heavens, the earth and all that is in it." The Lord owns everything your eyes are ever going to see. Psalm 24:1, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, everything that fills the earth belongs to Him and those who dwell therein." So it's not just all the stuff on the planet, but all the people, every single one of us is owned by the Lord. Ezekiel 18:4 makes this fact clear. God speaking says, "Behold, all souls are mine." He doesn't just own everything that our eyes are ever going to see. He rules over all of it as well. Daniel 4:25 God "rules, the kingdoms of men and gives it to whom He will." Overall of the human kingdoms that have ever existed. Psalm 9:7 says "The Lord sits enthroned forever. He has established His throne for justice. He judges the world with righteousness and He judges the peoples with uprightness."

In other words, all nations, all the nations that have ever existed are subject to God's rule. As I've been saying for about five years here now, it seems that God is giving America over to our decadence and our unrighteousness. And for many Christians, the question is why? Why is this happening? Why hasn't the National Day of Prayer worked? What's going on? What about all those prayers that we prayed at capital buildings and state courthouses? What about the 10 Commandments plastered on all of our buildings? Why hasn't God sent the revival that so many have prayed for and long for and fasted for? Answer, like Habakkuk's nation, I think our nation is under God's judgment. The nations of the West, including America, have largely rejected even a superficial tip of the hat to the God of the Bible. What they're doing now is they're trading Him in for suicidal, socialist substitutes that have built nothing and have actually destroyed everything it touches. And all of this is an attempt to prove that we're more enlightened, that we're more moral, that we're more virtuous than the gods whose rules and ways have given us all the blessings that we enjoy.

Now, America doesn't have a covenant like the Jewish people do. However, when it comes to following the universal moral principles that God has built into reality, and that God judges the nations according to, Habakkuk's nation and our nation have rebelled excessively. Israel at this time was no longer following the Bible. Religion had become nationalistic. It was just kind of what you did because you were Jewish. And it had become ritualistic. Just go through the motions, do a couple rituals a couple times a year, maybe a little more than that, and you'll be fine. The idea of daily obedience, daily living for God, that was gone. They'd have a public religious mask that was hiding a private ungodly face.

Habakkuk knew this, and he's been praying about this to God for a long time. And it seemed like God wasn't doing anything about it. The nation was descending into darker and darker forms of wickedness. And it seemed like there was no end in sight. So he's deeply burdened as he writes this book. He's burdened by what he's seeing. He's burdened by everything he's experiencing. He's confused why God's not doing anything about all the violence and injustice taking place. Instead it was replaced by brutality and oppression and pain and conflict, lies, deception. All of that was just becoming normal. Good people were intimidated. Courts would punish the innocent and release the guilty. Judges would ignore the crimes of the powerful and the well-connected. And here's Habakkuk, his righteous soul is in torment seeing all of this going on in the nation that he loves, where no one's being held accountable. So he wants God to step in. He wants God to put a stop to all of this. He's a patriot. He loves his nation. He wants God to rescue his nation from the depravity that it is sinking into. And starting in verse five, Habakkuk learns that God has seen everything, which actually helps us understand how to respond to our nation when God

intervenes. When God steps in, when He responds to prayers against national rebellion, what will it look like when He does? What happens when He intervenes in a nation under His judgment? See, I think the struggle many Christians have today with America is this issue, just like it was for Habakkuk, we want God to intervene. And then when He does, we don't like it very much. Yeah, no, I didn't think you would do things that way.

I mean, I'm sure that like Americans, Habakkuk thought something like give us godly good leaders, leaders who will be about truth and justice and will platform things like decency and righteousness again. You know, like put prayer back in schools, and rid the world of abortion, and help those who really need help, and get government out of our lives, and defend us from bad people and bad nations. You know, all those things, Habakkuk wants what's right, he wants justice. He wants truth to return. But God says no. No, my patience has run out on your nation. I've sent you prophets for hundreds of years and they've all been ignored or worse. My will, my ways, my Word has been pushed to the margins of your life. No, Habakkuk, God is saying, the chickens are coming home to roost. See when God's gifts and patience actually harden people against Him, when they take His blessings for granted, what God does is then He begins to speak in the language of justice and punishment to get their attention. That's what's happening in the book of Habakkuk. And I believe that's what's beginning to happen in America. Listen to how God says He's going to intervene. Look at verse five. "Look among the nations and see, wonder and be astounded, for I am doing a work in your days that you would not believe if told for behold, I'm raising up the Chaldeans." Translation, things are going to get a lot worse before they get better. God was not taking a nap. He wasn't on vacation. He wasn't sipping a latte, distracted by what was going on. He only seemed to be inactive. He only seemed to be doing nothing about the sin. That's what Habakkuk thought was going on, but he was wrong. God didn't have any problems with the conclusions that Habakkuk had come to about his nation. His answer, in fact, shows that God agreed with him. Not only had God seen everything going on, but God saw the problem was actually far worse than Habakkuk thought it was.

See, it was Habakkuk's lack of perception that made him think God was just sitting idly by, doing nothing, eating popcorn while the nation was just tearing itself to shreds. Now notice verse five, contrary to Habakkuk's conclusion, you notice the words, God was already doing a work behind the scenes of history. Events had been set in motion to punish the Jews. See those words in verse five, look and see. Those are commands to scan the known world. He said, don't look at your own nation at what I'm doing. Look outside of your nation to the international scene because I'm doing something to answer your complaints. Notice those words also, wonder and be astounded. So those four verbs, look, see, wonder, be astounded. And then there are two pronouns there, your days, your and you, all of those are plural. So God is not just speaking to Habakkuk saying, hey, this is the issue, I'm talking to you right now. He is speaking through Habakkuk to the nation. He's saying I'm doing something and it's so unexpected. There's no way you're going to believe it when it happens. And when it does actually come, it'll completely blow everyone away who hears about it. Notice what it says, you're not going to believe it, at the end of verse five. It's unthinkable, it's preposterous. It's inconceivable. God's actions were not going to meet any of their expectations at all. And what was it? What was it that they were just not going to believe? Well, it was the fierceness of the judgment that was coming. That's what would astonish them. But it shouldn't have surprised them. Why? Because there were at least four other prophets at this time saying the same exact thing. Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Zephaniah, and then Isaiah, a hundred years before that, had all been saying the same thing. Stop the rebellion. Turn from your sins. Go back to following the will and the ways of God. They were ignored or worse.

Isaiah was shown in two for his message. And notice the last half of verse five, it says God is doing a work, which means that whatever's going to happen was not chance or some unfortunate twist of fate. It's a work that God was working in the world. It was going to happen at His initiative. He was doing this. And it wasn't going to take long for it to come, either. Notice it says in verse five, it'll happen "in your days." In the days of the people that were listening to Habakkuk, God's message here would be fulfilled.

Well, what was it that God was doing? Look at verse six. He says behold, which means pay attention, check this out, take a look at this. I'm raising up. I'm rising to power. I'm emboldening. I'm giving the kingdoms of men to the Chaldeans, also known as the Babylonian Empire. God's answer to Habakkuk's questions in verses two and three are, I'm bringing the Babylonian army to punish your nation for their decades, and even centuries, of rebellion against Me. I will fulfill the curses of Deuteronomy 28. I will bring a nation from afar, judge them and remove them from this land. And let me pause right there and say, when we've prayed for God to intervene in our nation, when we pray for God to fix things, when we're like, God, can you look at all of this destruction and disobedience? God, can you turn this around? When we pray for Him to make all the wrongs right? What did we think would happen? We would wake up one day to find that every single celebrity and politician got saved that night. And when we wake up the next day and it's just righteousness everywhere as the sun shines? Whether we recognized it or not, when we were praying those prayers, when you were praying those prayers, if you were, what you were praying for was God's justice. You were praying for what was right to happen. And like Habakkuk did, we prayed for justice and that's what we are getting. So when we think about God intervening, let's point #1) **Recognize God demands justice. Recognize God demands justice.** God is holy. God is pure. He's the essence of all that is good and right. And part of what it means for God to be holy and good and right, is that he is just. Deuteronomy 32:4, speaking of God, says, "All his ways are justice. All his ways are right." Ezra 9:15, "Oh Lord, the God of Israel, you are just" Jeremiah 9:24, God is speaking of Himself, listen to how He describes Himself. God says, "I am the Lord who exercises kindness, justice, and righteousness on the earth. So I do those things on the earth." And then He adds, "For in these things I delight." Think about that. God is not reluctant to show his justice. Like, oh, I really don't want to be just, but okay, here we go. No. God loves it. God delights in it. It makes Him happy to exercise His justice on the earth. Revelation 15:3 says, "Oh Lord God the Almighty, just and true are your ways." See, God's justice means that God always acts towards people according to what is right. And God's holy and good character determine what is right. There's no law outside of God that God must conform to. God is the law. And the law is an expression of his holiness, of his goodness. So God always treats people according to what they deserve for their actions as compared to that law that expresses who He is. Being just means it is necessary. God is obligated to punish crimes against his law called sin. Sin doesn't deserve a reward or a blessing. It deserves punishment. When crimes are committed, it's right, it's appropriate, it's good. It is advantageous. It's wonderful. It's a blessing when those sins are punished.

Habakkuk was struggling with how a good and just God could see all the injustice and evil going on and not act. Verse five God goes, oh no, no, no, I am acting. And He's not going to be partial. He's not going to punish sin in one nation, but kind of like close his eyes to what was going on in the Jewish nation. Justice is blind in the sense that who a person is, what they have or what they don't have, does not affect the outcome at all. All that matters is what were their actions compared to the law. Did their actions violate God's perfect, sinless, holy, good, and just character? Habakkuk's problem is when justice is delayed, though, it seems like crime really

does pay. It seems like the wicked really do get ahead. It seems like evil can grow and it's no big deal. However, justice should never ever be evaluated on a short-term basis. In this life, yes, a life marked by sin and rebellion, justice will often be imperfect. It'll often be incomplete. But in the life that's coming, in the afterlife, that will be one of perfect, reasonable, fitting, right, justice.

In summer of 2001, I spent a month, the month of July, traveling all over the Czech Republic, Germany and Austria. I was studying the reformation where the events took place. And on the weekends, when we didn't have class, we would do day trips. And so, we all did a day trip to the city of Berlin one weekend. And we did a walking tour. If I remember correctly, it was five or six hours where we just walked around the city and our guide showed us all these cool things. And at one point around lunchtime, he said, hey, we can sit here and go ahead and eat your lunch a little bit. And so we sat down in this kind of field in the midst of a complex. And he started to tell us about the end of World War II. And so he was talking about the Allied forces encircling Berlin and their objective was to capture Hitler. He was hiding in an underground bunker as that was happening. And then the guide said, which you are all sitting on top of right now, underneath us in the ground was Hitler's bunker. And just before the Allied forces breached those defenses, Hitler had said to some of his advisors, I will not fall into the hands of the enemy. He saw what happened to Mussolini when he was captured. And he said, that's not going to happen to me. So to avoid all of this, as the Allied forces were getting closer and closer, and the German forces were being defeated, Hitler excused himself, went into his room and shot himself in the head. And then had his attendants make sure that they took him outside, covered him in gasoline and lit him on fire to burn his body. No one would get the privilege of having anything of Hitler's to put on display as defeated. And I remember sitting there in that moment, as I heard about that and going no, I didn't know about World War II history. I was like, no, he didn't get caught. He didn't get any trials. He didn't sit before a judge and get justice? Oh, yes, he did. For the rest of eternity, Hitler will experience the never-ending justice of God for his numerous and abhorrent crimes against that God.

See most people out there today refuse to recognize that God is just. Oh, He's loving and merciful. He's compassionate and gracious. He's good. He's wonderful. But a God of justice, He is not. There's a problem, though, with that. If God's not just, then God's not good. A good God will express that goodness in punishing evil. The characteristic of God that identifies evil and punishes that evil is His justice. See, most people think that God's just going to overlook their sins when they stand before Him "because He's a really good God and He'll do that kind of thing." However, it is God's goodness that demands He punish every single crime that we have ever committed. And when people say, wait a minute, okay, I know I've done a lot of bad things, but I mean, I'm not Hitler. What they've done in that moment is they've mistaken the amount of justice for the necessity of justice. No one here will ever experience the amount of justice that Hitler is right now and will forever experience for all eternity. However, the necessity of justice awaits each and every one of us. Why? Because it is a verifiable fact that we have all sinned against God. And those crimes cry out for justice to be done. Recognize the God of the Bible, the only God that exists is a God that demands justice. He was demanding justice of this nation. And I think he's demanding it of us as well.

Now, starting midway through verse six, God describes the Babylonian war machine that's coming to execute his justice on the rebellious Jewish nation of Habakkuk today. Verse six, let's look at these descriptions. Verse six, they're bitter and hasty, meaning fierce and ruthless. They're violent. They're careless. And they're rash. They're impetuous. They're hasty. They're in

a hurry. They're not stopping and enjoying their spoils. They're just moving on to the next people to conquer. Notice, they march through the breadth of the earth. Nothing is stopping them. Meaning there's no place where people could hide. There's no way of escape from this army if they're coming. They do this, notice, to seize dwellings not their own, verse six. They're building their empire by conquering peoples and cities and places in nations that don't belong to them, taking their land, taking their cities, taking all of their spoils for themselves and building their war chest. Notice, verse seven, they are a terrifying army. They are dreaded and fearsome. They spark awe mixed with terror. When you found out that the Babylonians were coming for you, it wasn't like, well we've got our army, so let's go. No, it was terror filling every heart. They are a lawless army. Look at verse seven again. Their justice and dignity go forth, notice, from themselves. They follow no standards or laws. They make their own rules. There's no Geneva conventions for the Babylonians. No, all the nations that they conquer wouldn't matter if they were completely mistreated because there would be nobody to cry out to punish those Babylonians for being mean to us. Nope, nobody there. Babylonians conquered them all. They are their own standard. They determine right and wrong.

They're also an irresistible army. Look at verse eight. Their horses are swifter than leopards. More fierce than the evening wolves. Their horsemen press proudly on. Their horsemen come from afar. They fly like an eagle swift to devour. This army can travel long distances and their speed is too fast for any other army. Their agility is too quick. You'll never get away from them. Their hunger for victory is insatiable like a wolf that is starved all day and ready to hunt as night falls. They'll descend on their enemies like an eagle with such precision that there will be no hope of shelter or escape. They're a fierce army, verse nine. They all come for violence. They're not coming for your city, they're not coming for your property. They're not coming for your spoils. They're coming for violence. They love brutality. They love being ruthless. Interestingly, the same word there in verse nine is used to describe the people of the Jewish nation that Habakkuk is looking out on. So what the idea here that God is saying is that the Jewish people were reaping violence and they were going to reap it when the Babylonians arrive, because that's what they were sowing among their people.

Look at verse nine again. All their faces are forward. The idea there is that their cruelty will move forward without resistance. Nobody can stop them. People will be as easy to conquer and capture as it is to collect sand. How much resistance does sand put up at the beach? You try to pick it up. It's like, no, no, no, stop that. And it fights you, right? Makes it really hard to pick up, right? He said, that's what people are going to be like to them. Sand, no resistance. We will capture them. We will do whatever we want with them. Notice, they're a taunting army, verse 10. At kings, they scoff. They mock them. And at rulers, they laugh. They laugh at every fortress. They pile up earth and take it. The greatest men in the nation, the kings and the rulers are a joke to them. You think you're going to do anything to us? You think you're going to stop us? Not a chance. They're completely dismissive of all protection. Oh, you have that nice wall there. Oh, isn't that special? What does it say there in verse 10? They will pile up the earth. They will build a ramp up to the top of your wall, come right in and take your city. You have no hope at all of stopping them. That's verse 11. They're an unstoppable army. Notice, they will sweep by like the wind and go on. No stopping the wind. Just like the wind, never going to be stopped. They're just going to pass through your nation, destroy everything in their path and keep going. And finally, they are an idolatrous army, verse 11. They're called guilty men. Why? Who's own might is their god. They took their strength and their brute force and their brutality and they gave it the status of a god. Their explanation for their power is that we must be divine. We must be deity and in

fact, you know that story you would read to your kids, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? Remember why they were thrown in the furnace in the first place? Because Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, took a statue, set it up, and everybody was supposed to what? Worship him as if he was a god. Exactly what we see right here.

So, a nation that denied any and every place for God in their lives is being used by God to punish the people that God created to be His special nation on the earth. No wonder verse five, the people who would hear about what God is doing, would wonder and be astonished and not believe if they were told. Think about it. God didn't choose the Babylonians because they were sinful. Wow. They're so godly. They're such a wonderful group of people. Let's get those godly people in here to destroy the wicked Jewish nation. Just the opposite. Notice the middle of verse 11. What are they called again? They're guilty by their cruelty, by their idolatry. The Babylonians were actually guilty before God, but that doesn't mean He can't use them to punish the Jews. God would use their violent tendencies to execute His justice on the Jewish nation. He could use their sins to accomplish something good, like His justice, while still remaining good Himself.

When you take all of that imagery that God paints here for Habakkuk, when you take all of that and put it together, the idea here I think is that when God intervenes, ***we must realize God's justice is thorough. Realize God's justice is thorough.*** God was not bringing the Babylonians to be an army that was going to be equal to the Jewish army. Well, we'll just see who wins, guys. You know, it's pretty equal. Both teams, you know, they look pretty much the same. The Babylonians were coming to completely decimate the Jews. They were not a slap on the wrist. These words right here were not like, you better stop that Jewish people. Don't make me get up. Don't make me tell your father. No, the warnings of grace were over. Justice had arrived. And when God intervenes like he did in Habakkuk's day, His justice is thorough. It's complete in every detail. Nothing superficial. Nothing incomplete. He misses nothing. He overlooks nothing. He loses nothing. He is careful and methodical and exact. Why? Because he's Omniscient. He knows everything. The Babylonians were there to do one thing, satisfy God's justice for the sins of the nation, and nothing could stop, resist, or even slow them down. And the same is true of God. When God acts as judge, the books will be opened. And those books by the way, are the recordings of omniscience of all human deeds. Revelation 20 verse 12, "And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne and the books were opened and the dead were judged by what was written in the books." Listen, "according to what they had done." That last phrase is key. According to what they had done.

Matthew 12:36, Jesus takes it to the absurd where He says, people will give an account "for every careless word." Every word. Ecclesiastes 12:14 could not be clearer. "God will bring every deed into judgment." Every single one. Proverbs 5:21, "A man's ways are before the eyes of the Lord. The Lord sees everything." All of our ways, all of our decisions and our actions. He sees them all, but then He adds and He ponders all His paths. It's more than God is aware of what's going on. All our actions, all our decisions, God is scrutinizing. He ponders them. He scrutinizes them. And what is He doing? He's comparing all of them to what is written in the Bible.

The Babylonians were instruments. God used to exact His justice on His rebellious, riotous, evil idolatrous people, the Southern kingdom of Judah. However, just as the Babylonians ignited terror in people's hearts, so should God's justice. Why? Because just as their war machine was irresistible, so is God's justice. Just as their armies were fierce, so is God's justice. Just as their armies were unstoppable, nothing can stop God's justice. When rebel's rebel against God, His

justice is thorough. There's no hope of escape. There's no hope of leniency. There's certainly no hope of fighting against God and actually winning. Hebrews 10:27 says there is just the fearful expectation of judgment and a fury of fire that will consume His adversaries.

Question. If you let that truth sink in, the crimes we've committed, namely, our sins, were all against the God whose justice is more terrifying, more irresistible, more fierce, and more unstoppable than the Babylonian army, any army in the past, or any army that's coming. He's not going to miss a thing. His justice will be exhaustive, meticulous and perfect. Every single wrong that we've ever done must be made right. There will be no DB Coopers. You heard about him? The guy who hijacked a plane, grabbed a bunch of money, put a parachute on, jumped out. Nobody ever found him. That was like 60 years ago. Nobody ever found him. There will be no DB Coopers when God's justice comes, right? There'll be no criminals who get away with their crimes because they can't be found. Ah, sorry, can't prosecute you, not enough evidence. That's not going to happen. Oh yeah, you know, well, you convicted me for this crime, but God, they didn't see all of this over here. Listen to how Jesus put it, "Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed or hidden that will not be known." 1 Corinthians 4:5, "The Lord will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness. And he will disclose the purposes of the heart."

Another question for you. Does the thoroughness of God's justice bother you? Does it make you uncomfortable? Does it, I don't know, scare you? Does it trouble you? Does it make you anxious? Does it induce fear? Listen, it should. It should. You've gotten away with nothing. Every single crime you've committed against Him will be punished to the fullest extent of the law. This means that since you've sinned against an infinite God who's infinitely holy and infinitely good, your just and right punishment must also be infinite. Infinite. Sins become infinite when they're committed against an infinite God. And infinite sins get infinite punishment. And he won't miss a single solitary one of them that you've committed. Not even one. Not even one. Paul brought this fact to the attention of his hearers in Acts 13. And I want you to see this as we close.

Acts Chapter 13. If you got a Bible from an usher that's page 1021, 1021, Acts Chapter 13. Like Habakkuk, Paul was also speaking to Jewish people. And like Habakkuk, Paul was speaking to Jewish people who were rebelling against God. This time they were rebelling against God by rejecting Jesus as their Messiah. Jesus had already died on the cross. Jesus had already been raised from the dead to prove that God accepted the work that Jesus had done. Jesus had proved that he is the promised Messiah. All of the prophecies made about him were made about him. They were true. He fulfilled them all. And all of that proof is what Paul was bringing to these Jewish people. But by the time we get to verse 38, time for proof was over. It was now time to respond. Verse 38, "Let it be known to you, therefore brothers, that through this man, through Jesus, forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. And by Him, by Jesus Christ, everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses." Listen in Jesus, all of your crimes can be acquitted. All of your sins can be forgiven. God is never going to ignore His justice. The moment He does that, He stops being good. So what He does is He takes all of His justice against all of our sin and he drops it completely on Jesus at the cross. Every single part of it, all his meticulous justice that was deserved for us, that was preserved for us was spent on Christ. All of it. That's one of the main teachings of the cross, right? God's justice, his thorough, meticulous perfect justice against sin was all dealt with. All of it. Every crime, every sin dealt with on the cross. Jesus receives justice. He gets what people deserve for all of their sins. The justice that we deserve, he receives. Your sins were punished in

Jesus. He receives your justice if you will, look at verse 39, if you will, what? Believe in Him, trust in Him, surrender to Him, give your life to Him. That's the idea. That's the whole message of Christianity. It's not just God wants to help you hit more home runs, or make more money at your job, or feel better about yourself. That's not Christianity. Christianity is your crimes have placed you under the wrath of God. Every second of every day, you exist under that. And there's no hope of escape. No hope of good works. No hope of good intentions. Nothing will rescue you. But then Jesus steps in. He takes the wrath, the justice that we deserve. So that we could go free, but it means you must believe in Him. You must surrender to Him. You must give your life to Him. And if you don't, if you reject Him, notice how Paul ends the sermon in verse 40. He ends on a note of justice, "Beware therefore, lest what is said in the prophet should come about. Look, you scoffers, be astounded and perish from doing a work in your days, a work that you will not believe, even if one tells it to you." So Paul quotes Habakkuk 1:5 as a warning to any who would reject Christ. You will stand before God alone. Instead of mercy, you get a just God whose justice will be so thorough and meticulous and obvious over your life that at the end of your judgment, you will agree that you should be cast into hell forever. Don't do that. Don't flirt with that. Don't even tempt God's justice. Don't deceive yourself into thinking you have time, you have some special deal with God, you don't. He offers the only deal that's special enough to avoid His perfect won't miss a thing justice. And that is Christ. Come to Him. Unlike the Jews in Habakkuk's day, when mercy and patience had run out, God's mercy and patience has not run out for you. Jesus will take your sins. He will take your justice. When a nation is under God's judgment, that doesn't stop Him from being merciful to sinners and calling on them to come repent, believe, give your life to Christ. The door of the ark is still open. Judgment hasn't come yet. Flee to Christ. Run to Him, come to Him, cry out to Him. And you will be saved, listen. You will be saved from God, from His justice. Jesus will remove the fear of God's punishment and He will set you free from God's justice. Listen, if you're not sure where you're at on this whole thing, you should not leave here today without making sure you're right with God, whether that's praying right now, whether that's talking to somebody next to you, talking to one of the guys in the blue shirts, come talk to me, one of the other pastors, who cares? Do not leave here today without knowing that you know that you know that you know that you will stand before God, not as a criminal, but as His child. It's up to you. Let's pray.

Jesus. It is, words don't even describe what it means that you took the justice of God upon yourself for all who would ever believe in You. You're the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Jesus, we will spend endless ages worshipping you for that one act of obedience on the cross. And so, for many of us today, as we've meditated on the justice of God, it has filled our hearts with gratitude and worship towards you, Jesus, because you took it all. You paid it all. There's nothing left for us to do. We can't do anything to earn our salvation. You earned it all. All we can do is hope and trust and rest and believe in you. And for the others here, who aren't sure where they're at with you or are sure that they are not followers of yours, they don't trust in you, I pray that you'd scare the hell out of them with this truth, pray you will torment their minds, that they will not be able to ignore it, that they will not be able to distract themselves from it, but like their heartbeat, it will be a constant drumming that they're standing under the weight of their own justice. And that only you will set them free. Jesus, that would be evidence of your kindness and your grace and your goodness and your mercy towards them if you would do that. So I beg you, please, please do that. Turn their eyes to you. I pray in your name. Amen.