



Insights – Habakkuk

Date: Sunday 8th May

Speaker: Adam Pipe (City Centre Site), Pete Spafford (South Site)

Key Verses: Habakkuk 1:2-11; Habakkuk 1:12-2:20; Habakkuk 3:1-19

Talk Summary:

Habakkuk was written about 605BC during the reign of King Jehoiakim (608-598 BC) just before the Babylonians invaded Judea. We know very little about Habakkuk. His name literally means ‘someone who embraces’. It was a wrestling term. We might call him ‘Clinger’. Habakkuk was a man who clung to God, who dared to argue with God, and who insisted on getting answers from God, even if he didn’t like the answers when they came. As we read Habakkuk we can see that Habakkuk goes on a personal journey with God throughout this book and is changed by him.

1. **Wrestling: Habakkuk’s First Question and God’s Answer: 1:2-1:11**

Habakkuk looks around him in the land of Judah and sees violence, destruction, and injustice (1:2-4). Habakkuk cries out to God asking him why does he allow this. Habakkuk, true to his name, was not afraid to wrestle with issues that tested his faith. He openly and honestly directs his problems to God and waits to see how God will respond. Habakkuk offers lament over the shattered and violent world he experiences. We need to learn to lean into lament. God can handle all of our questions, concerns and doubts and he wants us to talk to him about them. We can say anything to God in prayer. God’s answer to Habakkuk is that the Babylonians are coming and will punish Judah (1:5-6).

2. **Waiting: Habakkuk’s Second Question and God’s Answer: 1:12-2:20**

Habakkuk thought God was going to end injustice, not raise up another people who had built their entire empire on violence and injustice. Habakkuk questions God again and says that he will wait for God’s answer (2:1). God tells Habakkuk to write down what he has told him and to tell the people to wait for God to act (2:3). We have to be prepared to wait upon God for him to answer our prayers. God’s timing is different to our timing. Habakkuk goes on a waiting journey, at the start of chapter 2 he is sat on top of his watchtower in a bit of a grump with God, but by chapter 3:16 he says that he will wait patiently for God to sort things out. Two keys to waiting in chapter 2: faith (2:4) and hope (2:14).

Jesus is the ultimate demonstration of God's faithfulness and our hope is that a day is coming when he will put all things right. Chapter 2 ends with verse 20 'The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent.' God is effectively saying, 'I'm in control and I've got this'

3. **Worshipping: Habakkuk's Song of Praise to God: 3:1-19**

Chapter 3 is a song of praise to God. Habakkuk has journeyed from wrestling with God and is now in a place where he can worship God. Habakkuk asks God to do again what he has done in the past (3:2). In 3:17 we can see the journey Habakkuk has been on. He starts off the book shouting at God saying "how can you let this happen?" and ending the book saying "whatever happens, however bad things get yet I will rejoice." For some of us we need to say in the midst of disappointment, in the midst of pain, in the midst of work problems, in the midst of ill-health yet I will rejoice. Verse 20 reminds us that God is our strength who enables us to stand for him.

Worship

Worship is not just singing, it is thanking God for who he is and what he has done and is lived out through a life of trusting obedience. Discussing this together is an act of worship.

(Small group worship resources can be found at bvc.so/sgworship)

Lament. In Habakkuk we see the prophet offering up prayers of lament. A lot of the psalms are prayers of lament. You may want to use Psalm 13 (note that it ends in praise). Invite people to pray through Psalm 13 or write their own psalm of lament and feedback to the group.

- What are you thankful for this week?
- Where has God been at work in your life?
- When have you taken risks in faith and obedience this week?

If you have a time of singing you can skip the above questions but please do ask this question each week:

- What has God been speaking to you about this week? *(Go around the group quickly don't spend a long time on it)*

Discussion Questions (choose some which are most relevant to your group)

- What stood out to you from the talk?
- Habakkuk cries out to God about all the violence, conflict and injustice around him. What issues/situations are you most passionate about and cause you to cry out to God?
- Habakkuk prays asking God questions and listens for his answers, is that something we do often? What do your prayers look like?
- What is a question you would like to ask God today?
- John Mark Comer says, 'Prayer isn't a place to be good; it's a place to be honest' - do you agree with that? In what ways is that challenging to your own prayer life?
- What do you find hard about waiting for God to act/answer?
- How do faith and hope help us as we wait upon God?
- In chapter 3:2 Habakkuk prays for revival. What things do you long to see God do again?
- What is your next step on your Habakkuk journey today?

Witness - *How would you share what you have learned with a non-church friend?*

We want to be investing in authentic relationships with those who don't know Jesus yet and inviting them to anything where they might meet other Christians and Jesus. Pick one of the below each week:

- How would you share what you have learned with a non-church friend?
- What church events coming up would your friends appreciate an invitation to?

- Upcoming Events (go to bvc.so/whats-on for details)
 - Young Adults Night – 14th May
 - Big Church – 22nd May