

Awestruck | Habakkuk 3 | 5/2/15

- Habakkuk remembers God's previous work | Habakkuk 3:1-2
 - **Read Habakkuk 3:1-2**
 - Habakkuk after hearing God's response could have responded in a couple of ways.
 - He could have rejected God's answer and demanded that God answer him directly.
 - We know that God did not provide an answer to all of the "why's" that Habakkuk had for God.
 - In fact God's response caused Habakkuk to have more questions.
 - But Habakkuk took the path God desired and He accepted God's direction to have faith in Him.
 - God's Word of wisdom and His single response that summed up His answer was simply to have faith.
 - Habakkuk 2:4
 - "Look, his ego is inflated; he is without integrity. But the righteous one will live by his faith."
 - To live by faith is critical for the Christian today as it was for Habakkuk.
 - We have a God who is unchanging and He desires our faith to trust in Him today just as he did back then.
 - We must be able to have faith in God in the good times and the bad. Even in times where faith is hard because our worldly perspective sees our situation as impossible.
 - Habakkuk's faith is now seen in His prayer to God in chapter 3.
 - Habakkuk's faith in God is shown and strengthened when he reflects on what God had done previously.
 - Habakkuk has asked God to revive His work in these years.
 - He was aware that the situation of the Israelites was not necessarily unique because God has worked on His people previously.
 - Habakkuk was aware of the Scripture that Moses had written, he was well aware of all that God had done for them in the past.
 - He remembered the bad times and the discipline that followed.
 - Just like in the life of a Christian the Israelite people had their ups and downs with God.
 - At times they were obedient and at others they were disobedient.
 - When they disobeyed the punishment of God was clearly seen.
 - After hearing the Word of God regarding the discipline that God was bringing upon the people he has now accepted this fact and is putting his faith in God.
 - He likely remembered the good that had come out of that Godly discipline.
 - Example:
 - The Israelites wondered around the wilderness for 40 years because they did not obey God.
 - He remembered the good times and the mercy of God.
 - Habakkuk was also aware of the blessings and the mercy of God.
 - He also would have been keenly aware of all the good that God had done for the people.

- That even though they were really underserving that God had in their past experiences came through for them.
 - That God had provided and had been a blessing upon them.
 - He also remembered the mercy of God.
 - While God did bring discipline and punishment upon the people God still showed them mercy.
 - God will discipline the one He loves but he is also merciful and He will forgive us.
 - God could have just punished the Israelites and removed them from the face of the earth but that is not what He did. He showed them mercy.
 - Habakkuk knows that God's judgment and discipline is coming, however he also asks for God to be merciful with them.
 - Example:
 - God showed mercy upon the Israelites when he lead them out of Egypt. When he spared them from total destruction when Haman tried to deceive King Ahasuerus into indirectly killing them all.
- The Christians response to God
 - Christians also have the same questions that Habakkuk had. We have all of these "why" questions that we desire answers for.
 - However we know that God will not always answer our questions just as he did not for Habakkuk or Job.
 - However God's desire for Christians today as well as Christians from centuries long since past is that we are to live our lives by faith.
 - To help us strengthen our faith we too need to reflect on what God has done for us.
 - When we get into that tough position and we seem at a loss we know that we must put our faith in God knowing that He will be there and He will get us through.
 - **It is critical that we do not ever forget what God has already done for us.**
 - We get caught up in the here and now and we can forget what God has already done for us.
 - **If we think that God is silent and we feel that He is not listening or responding to us the first thing we must do is reflect on what God has done before.**
 - This reflection will give us encouragement and hope knowing that God is there and that God WILL answer and listened to us.
 - That God cares deeply for us and we can put our faith and trust in Him even when we do not understand the "why".
 - The Christian can ask for God's mercy.
 - Just as the prophets and Christians from ancient times we too can ask God for His mercy.
 - To ask God for His mercy is to humble ourselves before Him.
 - Psalms 51:17
 - "The sacrifice pleasing to God is a broken spirit. God, You will not despise a broken and humbled heart."
 - Our past experiences are an encouragement for others.

- Not only do we use our past experiences to strengthen our own faith, but they are also used to be an encouragement to others.
 - When you have a friend that is asking God “why” you can be the one to remind them of God’s love and mercy.
 - You can remind them that God will never leave them or forsake them and that they can be encouraged to also put their faith in God.
- **How has reflection on God’s previous work in your own life strengthened your faith when you were in a time of weakness?**
- **Why do we seem to “forget” God’s previous grace and mercy in a time of trial?**
- Habakkuk reflects on the glory of God | Habakkuk 3:3-6
 - ***Read Habakkuk 3:3-6***
 - Habakkuk after some reflection proceeds to proclaim the glory of God.
 - He leaves no question as to where his faith stands. Habakkuk acknowledges the glory and magnificence of God.
 - Gone are the questions as to the “why”, gone are the questions of asking God why He is silent.
 - Habakkuk is now proclaiming a holy and glorious God.
 - That God is omnipresent
 - That God is everywhere and there isn’t anything that escapes His vision.
 - Psalms 33:13-14
 - “The LORD looks down from heaven; He observes everyone. He gazes on all the inhabitants of the earth from His dwelling place.”
 - God is always there and He is always aware of what is going on in our lives.
 - That God is omnipotent
 - That God is all powerful. He is not weak, He can do anything that He wills.
 - Job 38:1-7, 31-36
 - There isn’t anything that God cannot do therefore we must put our faith in Him.
 - That God is eternal
 - God has always existed. Habakkuk states that his pathways are ancient.
 - There has never been a moment in time that God was not aware of.
 - Psalms 90:2
 - “Before the mountains were born, before you gave birth to the earth and the world, from eternity to eternity, You are God.”
 - So when God makes His promises we know that he will not forget, but that He will fulfill.
 - **Does reflection on the glory of God strengthen your faith?**
- Habakkuk believes that God will punish the wicked and save His people. | Habakkuk 3:11-13
 - ***Read Habakkuk 3:11-13***
 - Habakkuk knew that God would uphold His promises.
 - God would not let the wicked go unpunished.
 - He knew that if God said that if the wicked in the world would ultimately be judged that they would be.
 - That God would uphold His promise and the Babylonians would have to answer for their evil.
 - God would save His people.
 - Habakkuk also believed that God would ultimately save His people.
 - That while yes they had disobeyed God and they would be punished that He would not completely cut them off.
 - Christians who have faith in God will remember the promises of God.

- God's promises in Scripture are also for the Christian today.
 - God's judgment for the wicked will take place no matter if we perceive that they are getting away with it. In the end the wicked will have to remit payment.
 - The righteous will see glory.
 - God's promises to never leave us or forsake us, God's promises to take us to Heaven with Him to spend eternity are promises of God that give us hope.
- Faith and confidence in God no matter the circumstances | Habakkuk 3:16-19
 - **Read Habakkuk 3:16-19**
 - Habakkuk's faith peaks in these final verses.
 - Habakkuk's makes a commitment that no matter the circumstances that He will have faith and rejoice in God.
 - Joy even in despair
 - He speaks to hypothetical circumstances that if one was to endure he would certainly suffer.
 - He speaks to a time of their being no food and poverty. This would certainly be a time that if experienced would put ones faith to the test.
 - However Habakkuk speaks to a promise regarding the condition of his heart if he was to suffer or endure these trials.
 - That the questions of "why" would not be the first that would come from his lips.
 - He would not be angry with God because of his circumstances or blame God.
 - Instead he would rejoice in God and acknowledge that the Lord is his strength.
 - Total dependency and faith in God will be Habakkuk's way of life.
 - To put his complete faith in God and to completely depend on Him will be the way of life for Habakkuk.
 - He has discovered the secret to living the Christian life as God has intended.
 - That no matter what happens weather it is good or bad that he would rely on God in everything.
 - The Christian's unwavering faith.
 - Habakkuk's example is certainly one for the Christian to follow.
 - How wonderful it is for the Christian who can truly embrace the truths of God and give Him the praise no matter the circumstances.
 - When the Christian truly believes in the character of God and they remember His promises the Christian has hope and confidence that cannot be taken away from them.
 - God will strengthen the weary
 - Isaiah 40:29-31
 - Nothing can separate us from the love of God.
 - Romans 8:35-39
 - This is the faith that all Christians should strive to have.
 - Not the faith that is blown over with the first trial, but instead a faith that can withstand a hurricane.
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 - True faith is not grounded on worldly blessings.
 - The faith that God desires and the faith that Habakkuk is proclaiming does not set its foundation on worldly blessings.

- If we base our faith on solely the gifts of God then we are missing the whole point of what faith truly is.
- **When you have been able to show unwavering faith in God how has this helped you endure both the trials of life and also to look forward to the future?**