

BOOK OF HABAKKUK
THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY HIS FAITH
HABAKKUK 2:1-4

INTRODUCTION

When we ask a question, we are normally searching for an answer. Not only that, we'd like for that answer to be the right answer as well.

We have seen that the Prophet Habakkuk had a lingering question that he was looking for an answer to from the LORD.

As he watched the widespread **faithlessness** and **wickedness** of his homeland, **he wondered why the LORD was allowing it to continue.** He complained about the LORD's seeming lack of concern.

But **in answer to his first question the LORD gave him an answer that distressed him even more!** The LORD told Habakkuk that He was going to send the wicked nation of Babylon as an instrument of judgment.

That was not the answer Habakkuk was looking for because it only brought up another question. **How could the LORD use an even more sinful and evil people than Judah to punish Judah?** For Habakkuk, this seemed inconsistent! It didn't make sense!

But he didn't give up on the LORD. In his confusion about what the LORD was doing, He waited on the LORD for an answer. (Vs 1)

The term "*watch*" there in *verse 1* is a military term. The prophets of the LORD were His "*watchman*" that looked afar off to warn of impending danger. And we saw how he got up out of his circumstances and set himself on a high tower to get away from the distractions and gain a better perspective. He was needing a change in perspective! He had been viewing things from *HIS PERSPECTIVE* but he needed to be viewing things from the *LORD's PERSPECTIVE!*

At this point, we see **Habakkuk stopped asking questions or commenting any more until the LORD caused him to understand what He was doing!**

He did the only thing He knew to do...He waited on the LORD!

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It is as though he finally came to the realization that not all of the LORD's workings can be understood by our own human reasoning!

He put *Proverbs 3:5-6* into action which is always the safe thing to do: *Proverbs 3:5-6*—“5 *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. 6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*”

So, Habakkuk moved to a tower to get himself above and away from the distractions. **He is no longer talking! He is no longer arguing! Instead he is listening for an answer from the LORD!**

I. WE SEE THE LORD RESPONDED TO HABAKKUK WITH THE INSTRUCTION FOR HIM TO WRITE DOWN THE VISION THE LORD WOULD UNVEIL TO HIM! (Vs 2-3)
The LORD wanted His answer to be permanently recorded, because the folks in Habakkuk's day were going to need it and the future generations were going to need it! .

We need this tonight? Wait,...What? Yes, this was not only written down by Habakkuk for those in the his day, but **it is written for us!**

Romans 15:4—“*For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.*”

The LORD's last statement of *verse 3* is very interesting for it means literally, “*Though it delay...it will not delay.*”

And it simply means this: **Though the timing is not ours...there is not a delay in the LORD's timing! What may seem like a delay to us, is not a delay to Him! He is in absolute control!**

Habakkuk AND Judah needed to know that what was coming their way was not just some random unfortunate things that were going to happen to Judah. Also, it was not that the LORD had forsaken them!

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It was about the LORD Himself bringing this about for His purposes!

Okay, well what are WE to carry away from this? I'm hearing believers fretting over when the LORD is going to come get us out of this mess! They want to know why the LORD waiting so long to come!

Though He tarry...He will not tarry! Again, His timing is His own and His timing is always impeccable!

II. WE SEE THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE LORD THAT THE CHALDEANS WERE NOT UPRIGHT THOUGH THEIR PURPOSE WAS CERTAIN! (Vs 4a)

Were the Chaldeans going to be full of pride at what they were going to do? Yes...that was part of Habakkuk's confusion we saw in *verses 15 and 16 of Chapter 1!*

Did it have anything to do with the Chaldean's gods being more powerful than the LORD? No! Because their gods were not gods at all, just dumb idols!

Didn't the LORD see that their souls were not upright in them? Yes! The LORD knew that they were wicked to the core! And it is about to come out how the LORD is going to deal with them!

So basically, Habakkuk had his attention in the wrong place! The LORD was the one Who was going to accomplish His purposes through the Chaldeans! The LORD and His purposes should have been Habakkuk's focus, not the Chaldeans!

And that brings us to the last part of *verse 4*, and the main thought of the message for this evening...

III. WE SEE THAT THE REMNANT WAS TO HAVE THEIR FULL CONFIDENCE IN GOD! (Vs 4b)
"... but the just shall live by His faith."

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The remnant were not to get their eyes on the Chaldeans, but on the LORD and His Word!

Let's think about this...**the LORD was just doing what He had previously revealed He was going to do!** He is not doing anything other than what He revealed to the Prophet Moses that He would do if His people forsook Him! (*e.g. Deuteronomy 28:15-68; 29:19-29*)

Deuteronomy 28:49-50—"49 The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; 50 A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young:"

And the LORD reiterated these things to others so that they would not forget! (From Solomon's day at the dedication of the Temple.) *2 Chronicles 7:19-22* – "19 But if ye turn away, and forsake my statutes and my commandments, which I have set before you, and shall go and serve other gods, and worship them; 20 Then will I pluck them up by the roots out of my land which I have given them; and this house, which I have sanctified for my name, will I cast out of my sight, and will make it to be a proverb and a byword among all nations. 21 And this house, which is high, shall be an astonishment to every one that passeth by it; so that he shall say, Why hath the LORD done thus unto this land, and unto this house? 22 And it shall be answered, Because they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, and laid hold on other gods, and worshipped them, and served them: therefore hath he brought all this evil upon them."

But Judah did forget, therefore the Chaldeans would do the work of the LORD without their even knowing it!

So, what are we to carry away from verse 4 in our day? The LORD is well aware of the pride of the wicked! Their souls that are lifted up in pride are not upright in Him! The LORD knows that!

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But, the just shall live by his faith! *(i.e. Get your eyes off of your circumstances and get them on the LORD and His Word, take the LORD at His Word and trust Him!*

Let's just take a portion of what we know from God's Word!
(e.g. 2 Timothy 3)

The LORD revealed to Paul, Timothy and us that **perilous times** were coming! (They are here!)

The LORD revealed to us that **persecutions** were coming to those who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus! (It's happening!)

The LORD revealed to us that **evil men and seducers would wax worse and worse deceiving and being deceived!** (Is there any doubt about this happening before our very eyes? Why are we surprised?)

The LORD revealed to us all these things and more...but we have been blessed to live apart from the worst of it for so long we've become accustomed to how we have been blessed and now that it is upon us, we respond with perplexity! (Just like Habakkuk!)

So, what are we suppose to do? Well, in that same Chapter the LORD has also revealed to us that:
We are to continue in the things which we have learned...

There are many more things we could look at in His Word...that's just from one chapter!

In other places we have recently seen that: *(Book of Jude)*
We are to beware of apostasy...
We are to contend for the faith...
We are to stay focused on Him and His will!

So, let's get in the Word and keep our eyes on the LORD!

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The LORD wants us living by faith! A life of believing Him and depending upon Him! We began in Him by grace through faith and we are to continue in Him by grace through faith!

Ezekiel 12:25–“25 For I am the LORD: I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall come to pass; it shall be no more prolonged: for in your days, O rebellious house, will I say the word, and will perform it, saith the Lord GOD.”

*Romans 1:17–“For therein [i.e. in the Gospel] is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, **The just shall live by faith.**”*

2 Corinthians 5:7–“(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)”

*Galatians 3:11–“But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, **The just shall live by faith.**”*

*Hebrews 10:37-38–37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. 38 Now **the just shall live by faith:**”*

When we are NOT living by faith as we should, sometimes the LORD will go to extraordinary means to get us there!

God is always working for our best.

The truth is, however, that when God works for our best, sometimes, and even oftentimes it can be a very painful process.

ILL Notebook: Discipline (Alligator)
Some years ago on a hot summer day in south Florida a little boy decided to go for a swim in the old swimming hole behind his house. In a hurry to dive into the cool water, he ran out the back door, leaving behind shoes, socks, and shirt as he went. He flew into the water, not realizing that as he swam toward the middle of the lake, an alligator was swimming toward him.

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His mother — in the house was looking out the window — saw the two as they got closer and closer together. In utter fear, she ran toward the water, yelling to her son as loudly as she could. Hearing her voice, the little boy became alarmed and made a U-turn to swim to his mother. It was too late. Just as he reached her, the alligator reached him. From the dock, the mother grabbed her little boy by the arms just as the alligator snatched his legs.

That began an incredible tug-of-war between the two. The alligator was much stronger than the mother, but the mother was much too passionate to let go. A farmer happened to drive by, heard her screams, raced from his truck, took aim and shot the alligator.

Remarkably, after weeks and weeks in the hospital, the little boy survived. His legs were extremely scarred by the vicious attack of the animal. And, on his arms, were deep scratches where his mother's fingernails dug into his flesh in her effort to hang on to the son she loved. The newspaper reporter who interviewed the boy after the trauma, asked if he would show him his scars. The boy lifted his pant legs.

And then, with obvious pride, he said to the reporter, "But look at my arms. I have great scars on my arms, too. I have them because my Mom wouldn't let go."

Most of us can identify with that little boy because many of us have scars, too. Now, some of those scars are from our own foolishness that we got ourselves in and, because they are unsightly, they cause us deep regret.

But some wounds are there because God, in His mercy, has refused to let go of us! He loves us too much to leave us in our foolish sin! He will go through extraordinary means to get us where we need to be, even if it at times might be painful for us.