

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

- 1) 01 March.....Nahum 1-3..... Don't Mess with God
- 2) 08 March..... Zephaniah 1-2..... Everyone is Accountable
- 3) 15 March..... Zephaniah 3..... Our Great Salvation
- 4) 22 March..... Obadiah 1..... Compassion for Lost People
- 5) 29 March..... Zechariah 1-12..... The Promised Messiah
- 6) 05 April..... Luke 24:1-12..... The Declaration
- 7) 12 April..... Luke 24:19-35..... The Promise Fulfilled
- 8) 19 April..... Zechariah 13-14..... A Refined People
- 9) 26 April..... **Habakkuk 1-2..... Hard Questions, Hard Answers**
- 10) 03 May..... Habakkuk 3..... Awestruck
- 11) 10 May..... Haggai 1-2..... Seek God First
- 12) 17 May..... Malachi 1..... True Hope
- 13) 24 May..... Malachi 2..... Faithful
- 14) 31 May..... Malachi 3..... A Pure People

INTRODUCTION

- Habakkuk prophesied during the reign of King Jehoiakim in a time when Babylon was on the verge of conquering Jerusalem
- Habakkuk had a different approach compared to other prophets. Instead of speaking to the people on behalf of God, he spoke to God on behalf of the people
- In Chapter 1, Habakkuk asked 7 questions of God, and God responded with harsh answers to demonstrate His sovereign control over His wayward children and even over the whole world
- In chapter 2, God poses 4 questions to the Chaldeans, which also have quite a bit of applicability to many debt-ridden families and nations today who have a materialistic mind-set, including America

Passage	Comments
Habakkuk 1:1-4	<p>Tough Questions to a Tough God</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Jews were experiencing economic, judicial, and military upsets. Homeland territories were being lost to invaders. Many innocent lives were being killed or enslaved. Injustice was prevalent in the land. Turmoil from internal and external sources was escalating • Habakkuk presented some tough questions to God <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ vv1-2. "How long must I pray before you answer?" ♦ v3. "Why do you make me look at injustice and wickedness?" What does this look like today? ♦ v3. "Why do you tolerate evil?" • At what point would we lose our faith? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ When our first prayer doesn't get answered? ♦ After 6 months or 6 years or 6 decades of unanswered prayers? ♦ Would we hang tough no matter how many of our prayers God chose not to answer? • Habakkuk sees the consequences of God's silence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Good laws are ignored (even the speed limit) 2. True justice is ignored (the weak suffer) 3. Justice is perverted (everyone suffers) <p style="background-color: #ffffcc; margin: 5px 0;">"If the foundations are destroyed what can the righteous do?" Ps 11:3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you were God, what would your answers be?
1:5-11	<p>God Answers with Shock & Awe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v5. Look, observe, be astonished, and wonder...IOW, be prepared to be amazed • vv6-10. God will allow the Chaldeans, a nation more wicked than Israel, to sweep through and clean house <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ v6. They will take what they want, when they want it ♦ v7. They have their own brand of justice ♦ v8. They use advanced technology ♦ v9. Their sole purpose is to rape, pillage, & plunder ♦ v10. They dare anyone to stop them (recall ISIS) • v11. BUT, God has His own plans for them

Passage	Comments
1:12-17	<p>Habakkuk Has a Chance to Ask More Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v12. Habakkuk tries to bring his perspective on what is reasonable – after all, God is a reasonable, logical, loving, and a merciful God, is He Not? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Some translations say "You (God) will not die" ♦ Other translations say "We (Israelites) will not die" ♦ Habakkuk acknowledges God's justification to allow the Chaldeans to "correct" the Israelites sinful ways • v13a. "Why do You look with favor on those who deal treacherously?" Is God doing this today? • v13b. "Why are you silent when the wicked slay the righteous?"Where is this happening today? • v14. "Why have you allowed men to run amuck?" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do we respond to sceptics when they ask "if God is so good why does He allow evil?" • v17. Finally, Habakkuk asks "When will all this brutality end?"
2:1-20	<p>God Asks Four Questions To Make People Think</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v1. Habakkuk fully expects to receive an answer, and he expects to be "reproved" – IOW, he realizes his perspective is not God's perspective on things – YET • vv2-3. God responds with "Write things down" - WHY? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ "Though (justice) tarries, WAIT FOR IT" - HOW? • v4. "The righteous will live by FAITH" ..cf Rom 1:16-17 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ We live not by sight or experiences, but by obeying God's word, even when we don't feel like it • v5. Intoxicating wine is highlighted for its ability to turn reasonable people into unruly mobs on a large scale • v6. Question #1 – "How long will you make yourself rich with loans and gather stuff you don't own?" • v7. Question #2 – "Don't you know your creditors will suddenly come collecting and you become plunder?" • v13. Question #3 – "Don't you realize it is God that makes you toil for life's necessities till you are weary?" • v18. Question #4 – "What profit is it for you to learn untruths from your worthless idols (i.e., money)?" • Other notable passages in this chapter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ vv9-10. We do harm to ourselves when we seek evil gain and when we devise evil against others ♦ v20. Take heed (listen) & be silent before the Lord

CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS

- We see Habakkuk asking God some hard questions that we probably have pondered ourselves...and God responded back with some tough answers. Are we willing to do what Habakkuk did and patiently wait on God to accomplish His will in His time?

NEXT WEEK: Habakkuk 3. There comes a day when God will right all wrongs. Until then, where does our faith reside – In our tough circumstances, or in our unchanging God?

