

Come Follow Me  
Elo Viz production  
Week 49  
Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah

These 3 books are some of the last of what's known as the minor prophets. They call them minor simply because of their size. But the teachings and principles contained inside are massive. We only have time to focus on just one of them today, and a principle that I believe all of us struggle with at times.

We don't know much about Habakkuk. It is believed that he lived somewhere about 600 B.C. because he makes a reference to the Babaloynian empire. But that is just a guess.

The Book of Habakkuk and the prophet Habakkuk are very different from books and prophets. It doesn't say that he was called to cry repentance to a certain people or nation, not that he didn't, it just doesn't tell us that he actually preached to anybody. The entire book is a dialog between him and God. Habakkuk asked God questions and God responds. What we will see though is that Habakkuk is struggling with the same things that we are struggling with today. His main question to God is "why do bad things happen to good people?" Though he uses different words, the question is the same: Habakkuk 1:1

“1 The burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see.

2 O Lord, **how** long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear! *even* cry out unto thee *of violence*, and thou wilt not save!

3 Why dost thou shew me iniquity, and cause *me* to behold grievance? for spoiling and violence *are* before me: and there are *that* raise up **strife** and contention.

4 Therefore the law **is slacked**, and judgment doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore wrong judgment proceedeth.”

He is saying: God, are you seeing what's happening here? Do you not hear the cries of you people as they experience violence, the injustice? Why wont you save them? There is corruption everywhere among your chosen people. Why do you not do something about it?

Then, God responds to him. Wouldn't it be great if we asked God something and we get a response back? The truth is we do, sometimes we don't hear it. But, listen to God response: verse 5

“5 ¶ Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously: for *I* will work a **work** in your days, *which ye will not believe, though it be told you.*

God says: Oh, I'm doing something. I'm working on something that you would not believe even if someone told you.

6 For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans (Babylonians), *that* bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces *that are* not theirs.

7 They *are* terrible and dreadful: their judgment and their dignity **shall proceed of themselves**.

8 Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves: and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far; they shall fly as the eagle *that* hasteth to eat.

9 They shall come all for violence: their faces shall sup up *as* the east wind, and they shall gather [the captivity](#) as the sand.

10 And they shall scoff at the kings, and the princes shall be a scorn unto them: they shall deride every strong hold; for they shall heap dust, and take it.

11 Then shall *his* [mind](#) change, and he shall pass over, and offend, *imputing* this his power unto his god.

This is God's answer to Habakkuk; What I am doing is preparing the Babylonians to come in and destroy this people. Then He describes what kind of people they are; they are a massive army that lays waste everywhere they go, annihilating every nation they conquer. And they think it is because of their pagen God that they are having success. Habakkuk, this is what I'm doing to correct the injustice and evil among my people.

This does not help Habakkuk. God's response only raises more questions. Verse 12-13

“12 ¶ *Art* thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction.

13 *Thou art* of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth *the man that is more righteous than he?*

He is saying: You mean to tell me you are going to use an evil barbaric heathen nation to devour a people more righteous than they are? Are you sure this is the right thing to do?

Jeremiah said it this way, Jeremiah 12:1

“1 Righteous *art* thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee: yet let me talk with thee of *thy* judgments”... He goes on to say in the rest of the verse:

“Wherefore doth the way of the [wicked](#) prosper? *wherefore* are all they happy that deal very treacherously?”

Isn't this the same thing we all ask of God. We see all the evil and injustice in the world and we say as the Psalmist:

“Why standest thou [afar](#) off, O Lord? *why hidest* thou *thyself* in times of trouble? (Psalms 10:1)  
“I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent.” (Psalms 22-2)

“Hide not thy face *far* from me; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.”  
(Psalms 27:9)

“be not silent to me” (Psalms 28:1)

This principle will help us in all these questions that we have. When we don't understand the judgments of God. When we see things happen that don't make sense. When we think God should step in and do something instead he waits in the distance. When we need Him to act now, He asks us to be patient. We can take the same answer that God gave to Habakkuk.

“4 Behold, his soul *which* is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his **faith**.”  
(Habakkuk 2:4)

If we could see the answers to all things it would literally kill us. Sometimes God, in His mercy only shows us what is important for us to know right now. Sometimes in His mercy, he doesn't answer at all. But here He gives us an answer for us to live by everyday. “Have faith”

“we know that all things work together for **good** to them that love God,” (Romans 8:28)

When bad things happen, we are only seeing a small portion of the injustice that is being done. We see through human eyes and judge from human experience the dealings of this world. At those moments we must remember that God knows all things and is working everything for your good.

A friend of mine shared a story with me recently. I don't know who the author is, If anyone does message me on our website and I'll add their name to the transcript. The lesson is this:

“I was in Dollar Tree last night, and there was a lady and two kids behind me in the LONG line. One was a big kid, and the other one was a toddler. The bigger one had a pack of glow sticks, and the toddler was screaming for them. The Mom opened the pack and gave him one which stopped his tears. He walked around with it smiling; but then the bigger boy took it, and the toddler started screaming again. Just as the Mom was about to fuss, the older child bent the glow stick and handed it back to the toddler. As we walked outside at the same time, the toddler noticed that the stick was now glowing; and his brother said, “I had to break it so that you could get the full effect from it.”

I almost ran, because I could hear God saying to me, “I had to break you to show you why I created you. You had to go through it so you could fulfill your purpose.”

That precious child was happy just swinging that “unbroken” glow stick around in the air, because he didn't understand what it was created to do - which was “glow”.

There are some people who will be content just “being,” but some of us...we have to be “broken.”

We have to get sick.

We have to lose a job.

We go through a divorce.

We have to bury our spouse, parents, best friend, or our child...

In those moments of desperation, God is breaking us.

But... When the breaking is done, then we will be able to see the reason for which we were created. So when you see us glowing, just know that we have been broken but healed by His Grace and Mercy!"

This story teaches us a great deal about life. It also shows us that we may not understand all that God has in store for our lives. When we get a flat tire, and we feel discouraged, we may not realize that God was keeping us from a major accident. In His grace he gave us a flat tire. When we lose our job we may feel abandoned and helpless. But God in His mercy may be preparing you for something so much greater. He is asking for us to give Him the benefit of the doubt. To trust Him. To have faith in Him.

When speaking to His apostles and teaching them of His mercy, Jesus said:

"I will not leave you **comfortless**: I will **come** to you." (John 14:18)

This is what Habakkuk finally comes to understand. Chapter 3 is his song of praise to God. He quite literally praises his way out of anguish. Acknowledging that God has been merciful in the past. And because He has been merciful in the past, He will also be in the present and in the future. And he ends with this:

**17 ¶** Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither *shall* fruit *be* in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and *there shall be* no herd in the stalls:

**18** Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

**19** The Lord God *is* my **strength**, and he will make my feet like hinds' *feet*, and he will make me to walk upon mine **high places**.

Might we find a way to praise God through our anguish. To be faithful through those things that we don't understand. And to be trusting in a God that will never leave our side. Is my prayer:

In the Name of Jesus Christ, Amen.