

## Daily Bible Study

### *“The Burden Habakkuk Saw – Chapter 3”*

#### *Habakkuk 3*

*January 15– 21, 2012*

**THE LORD’S DAY & MONDAY** – As we continue with our look at the book of the minor prophet Habakkuk we come to the final chapter, **Habakkuk 3**. This chapter finds Habakkuk praying in response to The Lord’s revelations to him. It is written as a song of worship. This prophet who had complained about the seeming unpunished sin of his people, was amazed at God’s disclosure that He had already prepared an instrument to judge Judah, namely, the Chaldeans, Babylon. Habakkuk was shocked and expressed as much to God who answered him with a song of taunting and mockery toward His enemies which Habakkuk was instructed to record. As the prophet realized God’s incredible, just and sovereign plan to destroy His enemies and bring eternal justice, he bows in humble adoration and this majestic prayer hymn of praise follows. **Habakkuk 3**: *“A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, according to Shigionoth. O LORD, I have heard the report of you, and your work, O LORD, do I fear. In the midst of the years revive it; in the midst of the years make it known; in wrath remember mercy. God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah. His splendor covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. His brightness was like the light; rays flashed from his hand; and there he veiled his power. Before him went pestilence, and plague followed at his heels. He stood and measured the earth; he looked and shook the nations; then the eternal mountains were scattered; the everlasting hills sank low. His were the everlasting ways. I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction; the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble. Was your wrath against the rivers, O LORD? Was your anger against the rivers, or your indignation against the sea, when you rode on your horses, on your chariot of salvation? You stripped the sheath from your bow, calling for many arrows. Selah. You split the earth with rivers. The mountains saw you and writhed; the raging waters swept on; the deep gave forth its voice; it lifted its hands on high. The sun and moon stood still in their place at the light of your arrows as they sped, at the flash of your glittering spear. You marched through the earth in fury; you threshed the nations in anger. You went out for the salvation of your people, for the salvation of your anointed. You crushed the head of the house of the wicked, laying him bare from thigh to neck. Selah. You pierced with his own arrows the heads of his warriors, who came like a whirlwind to scatter me, rejoicing as if to devour the poor in secret. You trampled the sea with your horses, the surging of mighty waters. I hear, and my body trembles; my lips quiver at the sound; rottenness enters into my bones; my legs tremble beneath me. Yet I will quietly wait for the day of trouble to come upon people who invade us. Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation. GOD, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like the deer’s; he makes me tread on my high places. To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments.”*

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

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Suggestion for Prayer: *Father, teach me from Your Word this week. Help me to live by faith and to remember that You will do Your perfect will and that I am responsible to obey, repent, and believe.*

**TUESDAY – Habakkuk 3:1-2** “A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, according to Shigionoth. O LORD, I have heard the report of you, and your work, O LORD, do I fear. In the midst of the years revive it; in the midst of the years make it known; in wrath remember mercy.” These first two verses Beloved contain what we would call the “call to worship and invocation”. Habakkuk is here praying and praising God. Habakkuk informs God that he has in fact heard Him and he fears the power of the Lord. The Hebrew literally speaks to the prophet being scared; he is afraid. But not only is he afraid, he is also comforted in the fact of Yahweh’s power to save His people which he asks the *LORD* to *revive*, or make alive again, quicken, or recover *your work*. He also asks that *in the midst of the years* of judgment and punishment the *LORD* would *remember mercy* toward His people. We must always remember that we too, are to fear the Lord and also trust in His promises to deliver us His people from the harm. Read the link between these two things; fearing God and being delivered by Him in **Psalms 111:10** and **Psalms 34:7**.

(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?

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Suggestion for Prayer: *Father, help me to recognize Your power and holiness and fear You with a reverential awe. Thank You also for delivering Your people through the person and work of Jesus Christ Your Son and our Savior.*

**WEDNESDAY – In Habakkuk 3:3-15** we see God continues to give Habakkuk revelation as He transports the prophet back in time as it were, and lets him witness the power of the Holy God and shows him the displays of that power and judgment in and throughout history. **Habakkuk 3:3-6:** “God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah. His splendor covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. His brightness was like the light; rays flashed from his hand; and there he veiled his power. Before him went pestilence, and plague followed at his heels. He stood and measured the earth; he looked and shook the nations; then the eternal mountains were scattered; the everlasting hills sank low. His were the everlasting ways.” The first image God shows Habakkuk is one proceeding from the area of Sinai, as it seems God reminds Habakkuk of the scene and the route He took His people after receiving the Divine Law at the Mount. As God came down to His people at Sinai to establish His covenant with them, so He would come again to liberate them and reaffirm His covenant with them. Moses had said the Lord’s appearance was like a light shining “*from Seir...and from Mount Paran*” (**Deuteronomy 33:2**). Habakkuk’s vision of God coming from afar and moving across the land then climaxes.

When God reaches the place from which He would execute judgment, *He stood and measured the earth; he looked and shook the nations; then the eternal mountains were scattered; the everlasting hills sank low. His were the everlasting ways.* His very presence caused the earth to shake and by a mere *look* He *shook the nations*; (caused them “to tremble”). Even the framework of nature feels the power as the *eternal mountains* scatter “to pieces” or into dust. God came down on Sinai with thunder, lightning, and fire amidst shaking mountains (**Exodus 19:16-19**). Though the *eternal mountains* collapsed, God’s *everlasting ways* go on. O what a warning to those who would revere and honor the creation (Mother Nature?) over the Almighty Father, the Creator of Heaven and Earth. Remember **Habakkuk 2:20**;*”But the LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him”*.

*(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?*

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*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, You alone are the all-powerful God, Creator of Heaven and Earth. Thank You for also using Your power to save, rescue and deliver me from my sin and its penalty.*

**THURSDAY – Habakkuk 3:7-15** *“I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction; the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble. Was your wrath against the rivers, O LORD? Was your anger against the rivers, or your indignation against the sea, when you rode on your horses, on your chariot of salvation? You stripped the sheath from your bow, calling for many arrows. Selah. You split the earth with rivers. The mountains saw you and writhed; the raging waters swept on; the deep gave forth its voice; it lifted its hands on high. The sun and moon stood still in their place at the light of your arrows as they sped, at the flash of your glittering spear. You marched through the earth in fury; you threshed the nations in anger. You went out for the salvation of your people, for the salvation of your anointed. You crushed the head of the house of the wicked, laying him bare from thigh to neck. Selah. You pierced with his own arrows the heads of his warriors, who came like a whirlwind to scatter me, rejoicing as if to devour the poor in secret. You trampled the sea with your horses, the surging of mighty waters.”* In **Habakkuk 3:7-9** we see both the current state of the fear and temporary nature of the nation’s power versus The LORD’S. As God moves in his majesty the various nations are struck with fear, as they were in the days gone by when the news of the Exodus of God’s people reached them (**Exodus 15:14–16**). Then Habakkuk sees a vision of God’s cataclysmic judgments from the time of the Flood throughout OT history. In **Habakkuk 3:10-11** we see the use and control of nature in deliverance of His people as reference is made to the time God made *The sun and moon stand still in their place* (**Joshua 10:12-13**), as well as when God brought the hail that destroyed Israel’s enemies near Gilgal (**Joshua 10:11**) most likely accompanied by the *flash* of lightning. The *arrows* and *spear* of The Almighty speed to their targets bringing judgment and devastation as He wills. Finally, in **Habakkuk 3:12-15** we see the purpose of God’s great and fierce wrath. Habakkuk envisions God like a giant who *marched through the earth. In fury; God threshed the nations in anger* as an ox treads the grain to beat out and crush the chaff. This is our Lord, pictured moving throughout the Earth to bring judgment

upon sinful people and bring salvation to Israel. God would do it again. The LORD'S motive in this judgment is clear. His wrath was not against His creation (**verse 8**) rather His purpose was to *crush the house of the wicked* and bring *salvation* to His *people*. Salvation was the goal behind God's destruction. Salvation was for God's people, but it was also *for your anointed*. The word Mashiyach (*anointed*) is never used in the Old Testament for the nation Israel as a whole but for individual Kings or Priests and this is most likely here a reference to the coming Messiah (**Psalm 2:2, Daniel 9:26**). By preserving the people of Israel, delivering them throughout history, here from the coming Babylonians and the captivity, God preserves the line for Messiah. This brief history lesson from the LORD closes in **vs. 15** with reference to the spectacular miracle of God delivering His people from certain death in the face of the pursuing Egyptians at the Red Sea (**Exodus 14:15-18, 15:8-10**). He led them to victory over Egypt and the battle is pictured as personally engaged by Yahweh as *You trampled...*

*(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?*

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*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, thank You for giving me a long list of Your powerful deliverances of Your people. Help me trust You alone for salvation. Thanks for personally working in my behalf.*

**FRIDAY & SATURDAY** – **Habakkuk 3:16-21** “*I hear, my body trembles; my lips quiver at the sound; rottenness enters into my bones; my legs tremble beneath me. Yet I will quietly wait for the day of trouble to come upon people who invade us. Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation. GOD, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like the deer's; he makes me tread on my high places. To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments.*” Habakkuk's body trembles among other things after experiencing this mighty vision from God. He is fearful yet confident in God in the face of the coming enemy. He explains the depth and genuineness of His trust and faith in God as he outlines the absolute worst possible circumstances that could come on a nation and economy; yet he actually says he won't merely endure hard times; he will *rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation*. God is His people's inexhaustible supply, resource, joy; He strengthens the weak and gives peace to those who trust in Him (**Isaiah 26:3-4, 40:29-31**). Habakkuk's hope for final victory was founded on faith in Yahweh. Read **1 John 5:4**.

*(Meditate)What is God teaching me from His Word today? (Apply)How can I put it into practice?*

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*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help me to trust, obey & praise You no matter the circumstances.*