

## Wrestling With God; Habakkuk 3:17-19

### I. Solutions

- A. We have often heard, “We don’t see problems, we see challenges.”
- B. Working through challenges brings solutions.
- C. They are our solutions, we struggled through to get them.
  - 1. We always think our solutions are right.
  - 2. Most of the time our solutions favor our desires.
  - 3. We may even have our wants and desires in mind when we come up with the solution.
- D. We ask God for solutions, then we don’t like His answers.

### II. The Problem

- A. Habakkuk has a problem that needs a solution.
- B. Habakkuk 1:2–4 (ESV) <sup>2</sup> O LORD, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not hear? Or cry to you “Violence!” and you will not save? <sup>3</sup> Why do you make me see iniquity, and why do you idly look at wrong? Destruction and violence are before me; strife and contention arise. <sup>4</sup> So the law is paralyzed, and justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous; so justice goes forth perverted.
  - 1. Habakkuk is angry with God because Israel has twisted the Law of Moses to their own purpose, “justice never goes forth.”
  - 2. Habakkuk has a problem... don’t we all!
  - 3. We have problems, trials, temptations, tragedies, traumas, and we want solutions for them.
    - i. There is too much month for my money.
      - a. The other day the box of 5 dozen eggs at Walmart was \$48!
      - b. Just 6 months ago (or less) it was \$12.
      - c. I bought 3 dozen eggs from Diana and jokingly told the Elders I needed an armed escort to my car.
      - d. The cost of utilities to heat and power your home have increased.
      - e. Have you checked the price of gas lately?
    - ii. We have friends and family who are sick, some terminally.
      - a. Some are taken from us without warning (and we think too soon).
      - b. Some are sick for years, suffering with pain and illness.
    - iii. We are struggling with sinful behaviors.
      - a. Romans 7:14–19 (ESV) <sup>14</sup> For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. <sup>15</sup> For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. <sup>16</sup> Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. <sup>17</sup> So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. <sup>18</sup> For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. <sup>19</sup> For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.
      - b. These struggles affect our self-worth, our very identity.

- C. Like Habakkuk, we wrestle with God, share our struggles with Him, and beg Him for solutions.

### III. God's Solution

- A. An awesome, loving, and holy God answers Habakkuk.
- B. Habakkuk 1:5–9 (ESV) <sup>5</sup> “Look among the nations, and see; wonder and be astounded. For I am doing a work in your days that you would not believe if told. <sup>6</sup> For behold, I am raising up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, who march through the breadth of the earth, to seize dwellings not their own. <sup>7</sup> They are dreaded and fearsome; their justice and dignity go forth from themselves. <sup>8</sup> Their horses are swifter than leopards, more fierce than the evening wolves; their horsemen press proudly on. Their horsemen come from afar; they fly like an eagle swift to devour. <sup>9</sup> They all come for violence, all their faces forward. They gather captives like sand.
  - 1. Wait a minute! Did Habakkuk hear that correctly?
  - 2. The unholy, gentile Chaldeans are going to provide a holy God's justice?
  - 3. The Chaldeans were the rulers of Babylon (from around 626 BC)
  - 4. We know, from history, that the Babylonians under King Nebuchadnezzar sack Jerusalem and take them off into captivity.
  - 5. God did the very same thing to Israel in 722 BC with Assyria; this is not something new.
  - 6. It seems that God's statement in verse 5 is a little sarcastic.
  - 7. Listen to Habakkuk's reply.
  - 8. Habakkuk 1:12–13 (ESV) <sup>12</sup> Are you not from everlasting, O LORD my God, my Holy One? We shall not die. O LORD, you have ordained them as a judgment, and you, O Rock, have established them for reproof. <sup>13</sup> You who are of purer eyes than to see evil and cannot look at wrong, why do you idly look at traitors and remain silent when the wicked swallows up the man more righteous than he?
  - 9. Habakkuk 2:1 (ESV) <sup>1</sup> I will take my stand at my watchpost and station myself on the tower, and look out to see what he will say to me, and what I will answer concerning my complaint.
  - 10. It may seem like Habakkuk is looking up, but he is not. He is looking down at himself and what he thinks is right and just.
- C. God, who is always faithful, answers us, too.
  - 1. Often, we, like Habakkuk, are not happy with God's solutions.
  - 2. We are not happy because we are looking down at ourselves and not up at God.
  - 3. It may seem like we are looking up, but it is only with our own struggles in mind.
  - 4. We are living in our emotions, and how whatever we are going through affects us.
  - 5. Accept it and rise above it.
  - 6. God's character demands that we accept it and rise above it!

### IV. God's Character

- A. Something has profoundly changed in Habakkuk from chapter 1 to chapter 3.
- B. Habakkuk remembers God's character!
  - 1. Redeems.
    - i. From the very beginning God had a plan in place to buy us back.
    - ii. Knowing we would reject Him and say yes to our own passions and desires, God set a plan in motion to change that, to redeem us.
  - 2. Sacrifices.
    - i. That plan of redemption involved the sacrificial death of Jesus.
    - ii. The body that was crucified bore our (my) sins.
    - iii. The blood He shed washed away our (my) sins.
  - 3. God knew what we needed and provided that for us even though it meant the death of His Son, Jesus.
  - 4. God is the Alpha and the Omega, The Unchangeable, The Merciful, The Wise, The Faithful.
- V. Wrestling with God
  - A. We do like to wrestle, don't we?
  - B. We do like our solutions (mostly because they are beneficial to us).
  - C. We wrestle with God over those solutions.
  - D. Like Habakkuk, we must profoundly change!
  - E. We must change our view from ourselves to God, from down to up.
  - F. When we accept God's solutions, then, just like Habakkuk, we can say...
  - G. Habakkuk 3:17–18 (ESV) <sup>17</sup> 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, <sup>18</sup> yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.