

# Habakkuk

## Trusting a Sovereign God

Three Week Small Group Series on the Book of Habakkuk



**"...but the righteous shall live by faith."  
Habakkuk 2:4b**





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## Introduction

A Bible study based on a book of the Bible is a great discipleship tool. This Bible Study has been designed to have two main components each week. We recommend that you complete one session per week, but feel free to adapt as needed.

1. Personal Study at Home
2. Small Group Session (optional)

The Personal study at home allows the participant to reflect on the Bible passage at home and work through personal application questions on their own. Then, the person comes to the small group meeting ready to share what God has already been showing them.

The small group conversations and discussions are useful in diving deeper into the topic and seeing things from a different perspective or helping you see something that you may have missed when reading the chapter on your own.

Doing a Bible study can be very simple. Just follow the template given for each chapter and make sure that each member of your group has a copy of this booklet so they can journal their responses and come to the small group meeting ready to share. This helps the small group time stay focused and gives everyone an opportunity to think through what they would like to share, adding value to the small group time.

If you have any questions about facilitating this Bible Study, give the church office a call. Someone from Cell Ministry would be happy to speak to you.

# Session One: Habakkuk 1

## Part One: Personal Bible Study

To do on your own before the small group meeting

### 1. Prepare Your Heart

- Take a moment to prepare your heart and mind for what God has for you today.

### 2. Read: Habakkuk 1 and the Session 1 Study Notes

- Write down 1-3 things that stand out to you and why. You can write down more but highlight 1 for sharing with your small group.

### 3. Questions to Consider

- Habakkuk is concerned about the sin in his culture. In what way should Christians today have a sensitive conscience toward sin?
- What were some of the injustices that enraged Habakkuk? Do you ever feel that God doesn't care about the injustices in your life or in the lives of your friends/family?
- God answered Habakkuk's prayer for justice but not in the way the prophet would have expected. Have you ever questioned what God was doing in your life? Do God's ways sometimes not make sense to you?

### 4. Obedience/Action Step

- What is one practical step that you can take this week to put this passage into practice in your life?
- What is your plan to follow through on this step? (who will hold you accountable, consider texting your small group for accountability).

### 5. Repentance

- Ask Jesus if there is any sin you need to confess. Confess as necessary and take the necessary steps towards obedience.

### 6. Prayer

- Spend some time thanking Jesus for who He is and what He has revealed to you.
- Ask Him if there is anything else He wants to speak to you about.
- Pray and intercede for what He lays on your heart (marriage, kids, ministry, friends, etc.)

### 7. Optional: Pick a verse(s) from this week's Bible passage and memorize it.

## Part Two: Small Group Plan

Do this section with a small group.

### 1. Open in Prayer

### 2. Weekly Connect

- Have each person share 1-2 things that they are thankful for from the past week.
- What was a struggle from the past week?

### 3. Scripture

- Read Habakkuk 1 out loud with your small group.

### 4. Sharing

- Share something from the study notes and the personal bible study that stood out to you and why.

### 5. Obedience/Action Step

- As part of the Personal Bible study, you were asked:
  - What is one practical step that you can take this week to put this passage into practice in your life?
  - What is your plan to follow through on this step? (who will hold you accountable, consider texting your table group for accountability).
- Share with your group how this went for you this past week.

### 6. Prayer

- Share a personal prayer request and pray for each other.
- Pray for churchwide prayer requests as well as our region, province, and nation.

## Session Two Habakkuk 2

### Part One: Personal Bible Study

To do on your own before the small group meeting

#### 1. Prepare Your Heart

- Take a moment to prepare your heart and mind for what God has for you today.

#### 2. Read: Habakkuk 2 and the Session 2 Study Notes

- Write down 1-3 things that stand out to you and why. You can write down more but highlight 1 for sharing with your small group.

#### 3. Questions to Consider

- In Habakkuk 2:3 God says, “*the revelation awaits for an appointed time.*” God is telling Habakkuk that he needs to take a long-term view and warn the people of what will come. Is there something in your life where you need to take a long-term view? Ask God about this, what does He want to say to you about this situation?
- Re-read each of the woes in chapter two. Ask the Lord to show you how you can pray for our society in each of these areas. This may include your own personal repentance as well as intercessory prayer.
- Read the promises in Habakkuk 2:14, 20. God is not blink to injustice or human suffering nor is He powerless to do something about it. Spend some time thanking and worshipping Him for this.

#### 4. Obedience/Action Step

- What is one practical step that you can take this week to put this passage into practice in your life?
- What is your plan to follow through on this step? (who will hold you accountable, consider texting your small group for accountability).

#### 5. Repentance

- Ask Jesus if there is any sin you need to confess. Confess as necessary and take the necessary steps towards obedience.

#### 6. Prayer

- Spend some time thanking Jesus for who He is and what He has revealed to you.
- Ask Him if there is anything else He wants to speak to you about.
- Pray and intercede for what He lays on your heart (marriage, kids, ministry, friends, etc.)

#### 7. Optional: Pick a verse(s) from this week’s Bible passage and memorize it.

## Part Two: Small Group Plan

Do this section with a small group.

### 1. Open in Prayer

### 2. Weekly Connect

- Have each person share 1-2 things that they are thankful for from the past week.
- What was a struggle from the past week?

### 3. Scripture

- Read Habakkuk 2 out loud with your small group.

### 4. Sharing

- Share something from the study notes and the personal bible study that stood out to you and why.

### 5. Obedience/Action Step

- As part of the Personal Bible study, you were asked:
  - What is one practical step that you can take this week to put this passage into practice in your life?
  - What is your plan to follow through on this step? (who will hold you accountable, consider texting your table group for accountability).
- Share with your group how this went for you this past week.

### 6. Prayer

- Share a personal prayer request and pray for each other.
- Pray for churchwide prayer requests as well as our region, province, and nation.



## Session Three: Habakkuk 3

### Part One: Personal Bible Study

To do on your own before the small group meeting

#### 1. Prepare Your Heart

- Take a moment to prepare your heart and mind for what God has for you today.

#### 2. Read: Habakkuk 3 and the Session 3 Study Notes

- Write down 1-3 things that stand out to you and why. You can write down more but highlight 1 for sharing with your small group.

#### 3. Questions to Consider

- How does Habakkuk's prayer inspire you to endure tough circumstances?
- Even though ruin and disaster is coming to Judah, Habakkuk realizes that God's judgments are merciful, which brings strength and joy. Ask the Lord to reveal to you 1-2 things about His character that you can hold onto in the tough times. Thank Him for each one of them.
- Re-read Habakkuk 3:16-19. What lessons does God want to speak into your heart today through these verses?

#### 4. Obedience/Action Step

- What is one practical step that you can take this week to put this passage into practice in your life?
- What is your plan to follow through on this step? (who will hold you accountable, consider texting your small group for accountability).

#### 5. Repentance

- Ask Jesus if there is any sin you need to confess. Confess as necessary and take the necessary steps towards obedience.

#### 6. Prayer

- Spend some time thanking Jesus for who He is and what He has revealed to you.
- Ask Him if there is anything else He wants to speak to you about.
- Pray and intercede for what He lays on your heart (marriage, kids, ministry, friends, etc.)

#### 7. Optional: Pick a verse(s) from this week's Bible passage and memorize it.

## Part Two: Small Group Plan

Do this section with a small group.

### 1. Open in Prayer

### 2. Weekly Connect

- Have each person share 1-2 things that they are thankful for from the past week.
- What was a struggle from the past week?

### 3. Scripture

- Read Habakkuk 3 out loud with your small group.

### 4. Sharing

- Share something from the study notes and the personal bible study that stood out to you and why.

### 5. Obedience/Action Step

- As part of the Personal Bible study, you were asked:
  - What is one practical step that you can take this week to put this passage into practice in your life?
  - What is your plan to follow through on this step? (who will hold you accountable, consider texting your table group for accountability).
- Share with your group how this went for you this past week.

### 6. Prayer

- Share a personal prayer request and pray for each other.
- Pray for churchwide prayer requests as well as our region, province, and nation.

## Study Notes

### Study Notes for Habakkuk Chapter One

#### Intro to Habakkuk

- This book is written as a dialogue between the prophet Habakkuk and God.
- The first few chapters are characterized by Habakkuk making a complaint followed by God's reply.
- The prophet was troubled by the nations rapid moral and spiritual decline and was left puzzled that God would use a more wicked nation (Babylon) to judge a less wicked one (Judah).
- Although Habakkuk may not fully understand, he trusts God's sovereignty, wisdom, and justice. He was reassured that God was in control and that God would deal with the nations.
- The book ends with Habakkuk's praise and worship of God in the midst of the troubling times.

#### Habakkuk 1:1-2:1

- The book starts with Habakkuk's first complaint against the Lord – "How long, O Lord?" (vs. 2).
- **Habakkuk 1:2** *How long, LORD, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, "Violence!" but you do not save?* (NIV)
- In verses 2-4 Habakkuk asks God why He seems to delay judgment.
- Habakkuk saw violence and injustice around Him in the nation of Judah and wondered where God was and why He didn't set things right.
- There was trouble and sin everywhere – violence, injustice, wrongdoing, strife, conflict. This distressed him so much that he cried out to God asking Him to set things straight.
- In verses 5-11 God responds to Habakkuk's observations.
- The troubled prophet is told to look at the nations and be amazed. God will raise up the Babylonians to judge Judah (vs. 6).
- **Habakkuk 1:6** *I am raising up the Babylonians, that ruthless and impetuous people, who sweep across the whole earth to seize dwellings not their own.* (NIV).
- The Babylonians eventually did come against Judah as sent by the Lord. God allowed their sinful desire to conquer Judah to come to fruition as judgment against Judah. As a result of their sin the children of God were exiled out of the Promised Land.
- The judgment would be terrible and dreadful (vs. 7).
- Habakkuk then brings a second complaint against God, "Why do it this way, O Lord?" (vs. 12-17).
- The prophet wonders why God would use a nation more wicked than Judah to bring judgment on them.
- First Habakkuk was troubled that there was no judgment against Judah, now he is troubled by the agent of judgement – the Babylonians (who were more wicked than Judah).
- It was like the cure was worse than the disease.
- This was even more problematic to Habakkuk because He knew the character of God to be holy
- **Habakkuk 1:13** *Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrongdoing. Why then do you tolerate the treacherous? Why are you silent while the wicked swallow up those more righteous than themselves?* (NIV)

- **Habakkuk 2:1** *I will stand my watch and set myself on the rampart, And watch to see what He will say to me, and what I will answer when I am corrected. (NKJV)*
- Habakkuk resolutely waits for God's reply. The prophet has raised two important questions and now He is willing to wait for God to speak to him about it.
- Habakkuk shows a humble attitude of inviting God to correct his thinking.
- The attitude that Habakkuk has is one where he invites God to speak to him and correct his thinking.
- It was like he was saying, "God, I don't understand what you are doing, but I know that you are right in all things. Please speak to me and correct me."

## Study Notes for Habakkuk Chapter Two

### Habakkuk 2:2-20

- God begins by telling Habakkuk to record their dialogue for the benefit of others (vs. 2).
- The revelation given to Habakkuk was not just for himself but also for others, for future readers like us.
- In verses 4-8 God speaks on how to deal with the proud.
- Habakkuk had wondered why sinful Babylon would be used to bring judgment to Judah. In answering, God first assures him that He sees the proud.
- **Habakkuk 2:4** *Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith.* (NKJV)
- If there is a sin that is universal it is pride.
- In contrast to the proud, there are the “just who live by faith” (vs. 4b) which is one of the most quoted Old Testament statements in the New Testament. (Rom. 1:17, Gal. 3:11, Heb. 10:38).
- **Habakkuk 2:5** ... *He is a proud man, and he does not stay at home. Because he enlarges his desire as hell, and he is like death, and cannot be satisfied...* (NKJV)
- God sees the proud man and how the proud man cannot be satisfied.
- **Habakkuk 2:8** *Because you have plundered many nations, All the remnant of the people shall plunder you...* (NKJV)
- Here God assures Habakkuk that He knows how to deal with nations like Babylon. He promises that just as the plundered many nations, so one day others would plunder them. Habakkuk could take comfort in the fact that God would deal with them.
- Verses 9-20 speak of four woes to sinful man.
- First, woe to the greedy (vs. 9-11).
- **Habakkuk 2:9** *Woe to him who covets evil gain for his house, that he may set his nest on high...*(NKJV)
- God addresses the greedy man and tells him that he is ripe for judgment.
- The greedy man thinks in terms of nothing but gain but ends up losing his own soul.
- Habakkuk pictures a beautiful house built by a greedy man and the very stones of the house cry out from the wall against the man’s greed (vs 11).
- Second, woe to the violent (vs. 12-14).
- **Habakkuk 2:12** *Woe to him who builds a town with bloodshed, who establishes a city by iniquity...* (NKJV).
- The violent man thinks that his might makes right, so he feels free to abuse others for his gain. As a correction and a rebuke, God reminds the violent man of His ultimate triumph.
- Third, woe to the drunk (vs. 16-17).
- **Habakkuk 2:15** *Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbors, pouring it from the wineskin till they are drunk...* (NIV).
- Through this woe God is rebuking both the drunk and those who promote drunkenness. Though they think that alcohol makes them feel good, God rightly says they are filled with shame instead of glory (vs. 16).
- The drunk and those who promote drunkenness loved their own cup full of drink; now God promises a cup for them, a cup of judgment and just recompense for their sin.

- Fourth, woe to the idolater (vs. 18-20).
- **Habakkuk 2:19** *Woe to him who says to wood, 'Come to life!' Or to lifeless stone, 'Wake up!' Can it give guidance? It is covered with gold and silver; there is no breath in it."* (NIV)
- The folly of the idolater will be exposed by the majesty of the living God. In contrast to lifeless idols, the Lord is alive and well.
- Through this chapter God reminds Habakkuk that He knows that Babylon is filled with the proud, the greedy, the violent, the drunk, and the idolater – and God knows how to deal with them all.
- **Habakkuk 2:20** *The LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him.* (NIV)

## Study Notes for Habakkuk Chapter Three

### Habakkuk 3

- The first two chapters of Habakkuk give us the prophet's questions and God's answers. Now that God has answered Habakkuk, the prophet says a prayer to close the book.
- Habakkuk simply prays for revival. He knows how God once worked and how His people once responded. Revival is a work of God, and God responds to the prayers of His children.
- In wrath, remember mercy (vs. 2) – Habakkuk prays knowing well that they don't deserve revival, so he prays for mercy.
- Verses 3-15 speak of the power of God on behalf of His people.
- **Habakkuk 3:3** *His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of His praise...* (NKJV)
- As Habakkuk prays for revival, he begins by praising God who brings renewal.
- In this song of praise, Habakkuk glorifies the power and majesty of God.
- **Habakkuk 3:13** *You went forth for the salvation of Your people, for salvation with Your Anointed.* (NKJV)
- As Habakkuk remembers how God has saved in the past, it makes him full of faith for what God can do right now and in the future.
- He also declares that salvation is brought "with Your Anointed" - the Messiah, Jesus Christ.
- In Verses 16-19 Habakkuk concludes the book by affirming God's strength and his trust in the Lord, even in a crisis.
- Habakkuk shows the proper response of man under the sovereign power of God – *my heart pounded, and my lips quivered* (vs. 16). The prophet recognized his own weakness and low standing before the God of all majesty and power.
- The coming invasion of the Babylonians would be terrible, yet God was in control and therefore even in the midst of the coming calamity, Habakkuk could trust.
- **Habakkuk 3:16** *...Yet I will wait patiently for the day of calamity to come on the nation invading us.* (NIV).
- In a vision, Habakkuk sees the Judean countryside desolate, perhaps from the invading Babylonian army or perhaps from natural calamity. In the midst of this almost complete loss, Habakkuk can still rejoice in the Lord.
- **Habakkuk 3:17-18** *Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails, and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, <sup>18</sup> yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior.* (NIV).
- Just because man faces difficult trials does not mean that God's power and majesty is diminished.
- Sometimes we think, "If God is so great and powerful, how come I am going through a hard time?"
- Habakkuk knew this was the wrong question and the wrong attitude.
- Instead, he says: "I know you are strong and mighty, and even though we are in a desolate circumstance, I will praise You still, and even rejoice in You."
- Habakkuk cannot find joy in the fig tree, or in the vines, or in the fields, or flock. Yet he can rejoice in a God that is unchanging.
- It wasn't that Habakkuk shut out the problems and pretended that they weren't there. He saw the barren fields, the empty cattle stalls, and the rest of the problems. And remembered that God was greater than them all.

- **Habakkuk 3:19** *The Sovereign LORD is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer; he enables me to tread on the heights. (NIV)*
- Knowing God's strength, Habakkuk can trust God for strength.
- His strength was not in the fig tree or in vines or fields or flocks, but only in the Lord God.
- There is a saying that what we praise is our strength. If we praise achievements, resources, wealth, talents, ideas, a person - then that reveals what we value as strength.
- We demonstrate that the Lord God is our strength when we praise Him.
- The final image is of a deer running about on high hills, never losing a step or falling.
- So, the prophet declares, "God will set my steps as I trust in Him. He will not let me slip or fall and I will skip about full of life and joy."



## References

[https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik\\_david/StudyGuide2017-Hab/Hab-1.cfm](https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Hab/Hab-1.cfm)

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ESV Study Bible

NIV Study Bible