

**Valley Bible Church**  
**Sermon Notes for January 17, 2016**

**Habakkuk's Prayer**  
**Habakkuk 3:1-19**

I. Habakkuk's fearful request (vv. 1-2)

“*shigionoth*” (v. 1)

-Musical notation or instructions concerning the accompaniment of the psalm

“LORD, I have heard the report about You and I fear.” (v. 2)

-Habakkuk had heard and considered various stories of God's work in the Old Testament

-Deliverance from Egypt

-Law at Sinai

-Provision in wilderness wanderings

-Conquest of Canaan

“O LORD, revive Your work in the midst of the years, In the midst of the years make it known” (v. 2)

-Habakkuk called on God to work in the present day in the way he had worked in the past.

-Habakkuk meant for God to redeem Israel from Babylon as he had delivered Israel from Egypt.

“in wrath remember mercy” (v. 2)

-He asked God to show mercy even in the midst of His punishment of Israel

II. The Lord's flashing radiance (vv. 3-7)

A. His Glorious Description (vv. 3-4)

“God comes from Teman, And the Holy One from Mount Paran.” (v. 3a)

-This was a reference to Sinai (Exodus 19:18-25)

-At Sinai, there was smoke, fire, quaking, trumpet blasts, thundering, and lightning

“His splendor covers the heavens, And the earth is full of His praise” (v. 3b)

-God's splendor is all encompassing, filling the heavens and earth

-Habakkuk 2:14

“For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, As the waters cover the sea.”

“His radiance is like the sunlight; He has rays flashing from His hand,” (v. 4a)

-This is not dull morning light but brilliant lightning bolts

“And there is the hiding of His power.” (v. 4b)

-God’s radiance is both emanating of His glory but concealing of His power

-Job 26:14

“Behold, these are the fringes of His ways; And how faint a word we hear of Him! But His mighty thunder, who can understand?”

#### B. His Terrifying Purpose (v. 5)

“Before Him goes pestilence, And plague comes after Him.” (v. 5)

-Similar to other Theopanies, He is not coming in serenity

-For example, consider the plagues in Egypt and pestilence in Wilderness Wanderings

#### C. His Startling Impact (vv. 6-7)

“He stood and surveyed the earth; He looked and startled the nations. Yes, the perpetual mountains were shattered, The ancient hills collapsed. His ways are everlasting.” (v. 6)

-God startles nations by His very glances

-Isaiah 40:15

“Behold, the nations are like a drop from a bucket, And are regarded as a speck of dust on the scales; Behold, He lifts up the islands like fine dust.”

-Isaiah 40:17

“All the nations are as nothing before Him, They are regarded by Him as less than nothing and meaningless.”

-God startles ancient mountains

-Isaiah 40:12

“Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, And marked off the heavens by the span, And calculated the dust of the earth by the measure, And weighed the mountains in a balance And the hills in a pair of scales?”

-Psalm 114:1, 4

“When Israel went forth from Egypt, The house of Jacob from a people of strange language... The mountains skipped like rams, The hills, like lambs.”

“I saw the tents of Cushan under distress, The tent curtains of the land of Midian were trembling.” (v. 7)

-Exodus 15:14-15

"The peoples have heard, they tremble; Anguish has gripped the inhabitants of Philistia. Then the chiefs of Edom were dismayed; The leaders of Moab, trembling grips them; All the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away.”

-As Cushan and Midian witnessed the Exodus, they trembled

-Cushan and Midian will see Yahweh traveling to deliver Israel and they will tremble again

### III. The Lord’s forceful reckoning (vv. 8-15)

#### A. Lord as Warrior

-“Did the LORD **rage** against the rivers, Or was Your **anger** against the rivers, Or was Your **wrath** against the sea, That You rode on Your **horses**, On Your **chariots** of salvation?” (v. 8)

-“Your **bow** was made bare, The **rods** of chastisement were sworn...” (v. 9)

-“... They went away at the light of Your **arrows**, At the radiance of Your gleaming **spear**.” (v. 11)

-“In **indignation** You **marched** through the earth; In **anger** You **trampled** the nations.” (v. 12)

-“... You **struck** the head of the house of the evil To lay him open from thigh to neck. Selah.” (v. 13)

-“You **pierced** with his own **spears** The head of his throngs...” (v. 14)

-“You **trampled** on the sea with Your **horses**...” (v. 15)

#### B. Nature in Upheaval

-“The mountains saw You and **quaked**; The downpour of waters swept by. The deep **uttered [roar] forth its voice, It lifted high its hands [waves]**.” (v. 10)

-“Sun and moon **stood in their places**; They went away at the light of Your arrows, At the radiance of Your gleaming spear.” (v. 11)

#### C. The Reason for the Theophany

“In indignation You marched through the earth; In anger You trampled the nations. You went forth for the salvation of Your people, For the salvation of Your anointed. You struck the head of the house of the evil To lay him open from thigh to neck.” (vv. 12-13)

God’s purpose in going out:

Valley Bible Church  
3347 West Avenue J  
Lancaster, California 93536  
[www.valleybible.net](http://www.valleybible.net)

- To trample enemies
- To save His people
- To save His anointed one
- To strike the head of the house of the evil

“You pierced with his own spears The head of his throngs. They stormed in to scatter us; Their exultation was like those Who devour the oppressed in secret.” (v. 14)

-Wicked nations were set against God’s people

“You trampled on the sea with Your horses, On the surge of many waters.” (v. 15)

-The sea and the great waters can symbolize the Lord’s enemies  
Psalm 18:16-17

“He sent from on high, He took me; He drew me out of many waters. He delivered me from my strong enemy, And from those who hated me, for they were too mighty for me.”

#### IV. Habakkuk’s faithful response (vv. 16-19)

“I heard and my inward parts trembled, At the sound my lips quivered. Decay enters my bones, And in my place I tremble. Because I must wait quietly for the day of distress, For the people to arise who will invade us.” (v. 16)

-Similar to v. 2 - “LORD, I have heard the report about You and I fear.”

-The dark night of judgment must precede the dawn of salvation

“Though the fig tree should not blossom And there be no fruit on the vines, Though the yield of the olive should fail And the fields produce no food, Though the flock should be cut off from the fold And there be no cattle in the stalls,” (v. 17)

-Invasion would bring covenant curses (destruction of crops and livestock) due to disobedience

Deuteronomy 28:31-34

"Your ox shall be slaughtered before your eyes, but you will not eat of it; your donkey shall be torn away from you, and will not be restored to you; your sheep shall be given to your enemies, and you will have none to save you. Your sons and your daughters shall be given to another people, while your eyes look on and yearn for them continually; but there will be nothing you can do. A people whom you do not know shall eat up the produce of your ground and all your labors, and you will never be anything but oppressed and crushed continually. You shall be driven mad by the sight of what you see.”

“Yet I will exult in the LORD, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation.” (v. 18)

-He will choose to rejoice in the previous vision of salvation  
-The Mosaic covenant promised invasion and restoration (cf. Deut. 30:1-10; 32:34-43)

-Habakkuk became a great display of faith (Habakkuk 2:4)

Hebrews 11:1

“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”

Hebrews 11:13

“All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.”

Hebrews 11:39

“And all these, having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised,”

“The Lord GOD is my strength, And He has made my feet like hinds' feet, And makes me walk on my high places. For the choir director, on my stringed instruments.” (v. 19)

-As a result of faith in God Habakkuk found strength