

Habakkuk's Prayer
Habakkuk 3:1-19

That's a perfect song to sing before we go to the word of God. Ask that God would speak, and this is how we know He speaks through His word. And so we will get to revisit the book of Habakkuk and finish the book of Habakkuk. We started a little while ago, and we've done two messages in it, and this third chapter will be our third and final message here to cover, regarding this prophet and this book.

A lot of people say that the main point, the thesis statement, if you will, of the book of Habakkuk is Habakkuk 2:4 which goes like this, "Behold, as for the proud one, His soul is not right within him; but the righteous will live by his faith." "...the righteous will live by his faith." And we have the blessing this morning to not only get to read that, obviously, in the word of God and believe that knowing that's what Scripture continues to proclaim all throughout Old and New testament; that it is all based upon our faith in God. That is where righteousness comes from, but we get a detailed, personal, real life example of that in the life of Habakkuk this morning. So not only was he told this by God, but God gave him the opportunity to respond in faith and to act this out, and so that's recorded for us in Habakkuk chapter 3, and that's what we get to see, true faith, this morning. True faith lived out in the life of the prophet, and hopefully faith that, a challenge that, an example that, will challenge us as well.

So, as you're turning there, I just want to remind you a little bit - we haven't covered a ton because the book isn't huge, but just to review how this book started off. It all started with Habakkuk coming to God, boldly addressing God in kind of, obviously, adoration and fear and trembling at the same time, but asking God what's up with all the sin around us? Here we are in the nation of Judah and there's tons of sin. God are you going to do anything about this sin? And then we saw that God responded to him and said, oh, I'm way ahead of you Habakkuk. I'm already doing something about this. I'm raising up this nation called the Chaldeans, the Babylonians, and they're going to come and they're going to punish you for all this sin that is rampant in Judah.

And so we talked about how this... there was a little bit of a shock factor in this because of the day that Habakkuk lived in. The Chaldeans, the

Babylonians, weren't necessarily the major nation of the time. The major kind of powerhouse nation of the time was Assyria. Assyria was the nation with the capital of Nineveh up in the north that was expanding over the known world at that time in Mesopotamia. However, God declares before it happens that the Chaldeans will be the nation that He rises up and the nation that He uses to punish Judah. So over time, history shows and the Bible affirms that the Chaldeans, the Babylonians, did rise up there in the south of the Tigris and the Euphrates river. They made their way up just as God said they would, and they overcame Assyria, especially the capital of Nineveh at the north, and then it was quickly shifted to the Babylonians. They became the new powerhouse nation, and sure enough, God used them just like He said He would as His instrument to punish His people, Judah, for their sin.

So this is God's shocking of the prophet Habakkuk by saying He's raising up this nation, the Chaldeans. So Habakkuk, the bold prophet he is, doesn't just let it go at that. He doesn't say, oh, okay. I see. Thanks. Alright, back to my business. Right? He comes back to God once again; I would say with the proper awe and fear of God, and he says, okay, but why the Chaldeans? I mean, I've heard about these guys. They're worse than we are. I know we have our problems in Judah, but the Chaldeans are terrible people, and You're going to use them to punish us? It just seems a little backwards. How's that work? How's it that You're actually doing that? So God responds again to Habakkuk, and essentially says you need to trust Me, if you trust Me, I know what I'm doing, and if you trust Me, then you'll be fine because the Babylonians aren't going to get off so easy. I do have a day for them as well, a day of judgment, a day of punishment for the Babylonians as well. And that's what chapter 2 unfolded and talked about, the woes that would come upon Babylon who thought that they were accomplishing all that they accomplished on their own when really it was God who gave it all to them. So God would turn them on their heads and punish them as well.

So, we come to chapter 3 which is our wrap up of the book. And really, chapter 3 is a song. It's a song. It's a prayer. Alright. You've read the book of Psalms. I'm sure you've read different Psalms. You take one of that kind of format and that's what chapter 3 is. It's a psalm that we get from Habakkuk, the prophet himself. So, we're going to go through this and we will see a great example of faith that emerges in the end of this. So, in four different points here... The first point we'll give to you is Habakkuk's fearful request that starts this off. Habakkuk's fearful request that begins this

psalm, this prayer, unto God. This is in verses 1 and 2. We'll read those right now. "A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, according to Shigionoth. Lord, I have heard the report about You and I fear. O Lord, revive Your work in the midst of the years, In the midst of the years make it known; In wrath remember mercy." This is Habakkuk's initial beginning request here as he approaches God one more time in this book, asking God to revive His work. You'll notice the term, the "Shigionoth." There's a term that we're not using every day. But that is simply just the Hebrew term that's used for kind of musical arrangement of the text, or a musical arrangement of how this psalm or this song should be performed. And so, he starts it off identifying himself as the prophet again, and how this song is to, or this prayer is to, unfold musically speaking.

So then we go to verse 2 where he says, "Lord, I have heard the report about You and I fear." And this is a reference, generally speaking, to the events that God did through His people, Israel, and delivering them from Egypt and bringing them into the land of Canaan. These were events that if you were an Israelite, they were just kind of like your pride and joy, right, to tell those stories to your kids to as you tuck them in at night. To tell them once again about how God unleashed ten plagues upon Pharaoh and all of Egypt. To tell them about the Red Sea and how God split it and brought the whole nation across, and then drowned Pharaoh and his army. To tell your kids about how there were disobedient ancestors that God had to punish in the wilderness for forty years as they wandered around. To tell your kids about how God brought all your ancestors into the land of Canaan and destroyed all those nations there to give them the Promised Land under the leadership of Joshua. These are amazing things.

So, Habakkuk didn't experience these things. He's further on down the line, and so here he is and these are just stories that he's heard, and that he's read, and he recalls these to mind, and he says, and I fear, I tremble at how powerful You are God, but here's his request; "O Lord, revive Your work in the midst of the years, In the midst of the years make it known." Do it again, God. That's what he says, God, I have heard these stories. I have read them for myself. I've told them to children. Do it again. And you might think, what do you mean, exactly, do it again? Well, Habakkuk now knows the plan for Judah. God has revealed to Habakkuk that Judah will be overrun by the Babylonians. The Babylonians would come in, they would destroy them and take them out into exile, so all the Israelites living in Judah would get

kicked out of their land and have to go live in the land of Babylon. So this starts to kind of make the wheels turn in Habakkuk's head as he thinks about...we're basically going back into exile. We're going back into slavery. This is just like when we were in Egypt. We're going back to that time of being enslaved to the Egyptians. He's like you know what? God did amazing things when we were enslaved in Egypt, so he calls out to God, do it again. Please, do it again. I know you can. These are amazing stories, and I tremble at even the thought of them, but do it again. Revive your work, and bring us out of Babylon, bring us out of slavery that we know we are rightfully going into, thus his statement at the end here; "In wrath remember mercy." Don't just do away with us completely, God. Do not just remove us from the face of the earth. Remember your promises to your people, to Abraham, to the patriarchs. And remember mercy as you punish us as we deserve. So, this is Habakkuk. Once again, I would say, throughout the book, some people say he's too bold in his approach to God. I'd say he's just right. He's got a proper fear and trembling before the Lord, yet he's bold in approaching the throne of grace as we're told to be. So, he's boldly coming to God, yet understanding his place before God, and how he comes before a holy, powerful, and awesome God. So this is Habakkuk's request that starts off this song, this prayer.

And then what we see is this vision, this vision that God gave him, and so Habakkuk records a lot of that in the following verses, and so we will split this vision up into two parts. The first part will be the Lord's flashing radiance or the appearance of God; mainly the appearance of God and how He's described in these verses - the Lord's flashing radiance. And then we'll see the actions of God and what he does in this vision. This is God's response to Habakkuk's request. So, we'll look at verses 3 through 7, starting in verse 3; "God comes from Teman, And the Holy One from Mount Paran. His splendor covers the heavens, And the earth is full of His praise. His radiance is like the sunlight; He has rays flashing from His hand, And there is the hiding of His power. Before Him goes pestilence, And plague comes after Him. 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. I saw the tents of Cushan under distress, The tent curtains of the land of Midian were trembling." So this is the beginning of this vision that Habakkuk gets of God in His splendor, in His glory.

So, the first thing we see is this appearance of God, and notice just as we kind of go through this, his glorious description, right, ...glorious description that almost sounds like other places in the Bible when God has revealed Himself. The theological term is theophany. When God reveals Himself to mankind in some way or some form and kind of being there and making His presence known, it's a theophany. And so, this is what Habakkuk has observed, and it sounds similar to what we've read earlier in the Old Testament, alright; "God comes from Teman, And the Holy One from Mount Paran." This region is Sinai. God comes from Sinai. That's a theophany that took place. When God came down to Sinai, you might remember some of the events. There was smoke. There was fire. There was thunder. There was lightning. There were earthquakes. The people were terrified. They said Moses, you go talk to God; we can't handle it. It's too much. So there's this kind of beginning of this vision that reminds Habakkuk of God revealing Himself at Sinai as He comes from that same location.

Verse 3 goes on to say, "His splendor covers the heavens, And the earth is full of His praise." It's all encompassing. It's all over, right? It's not like God simply dwells in the mountain of Sinai. It's not like He's only over the nation of Israel. His splendor, His glory, is to the entire earth and over the heavens. Everyone can see it, this revelation of God. Verse 4 continues, "His radiance is like the sunlight;" and "He has rays flashing from His hand..." This is not like the dull sunlight of the sun just peeking up over the horizon. This is the bright, beating sun. You could also say it could be translated as lightning bolts. If you've been in a good thunderstorm and seen lightning flashing and how amazing that is lighting up the whole sky, this is the appearance of what Habakkuk is seeing of God. It basically starts to resemble some of the other times when God has revealed Himself in the Old Testament, like Ezekiel. Ezekiel in chapter 1 when he sees God, he's basically blinded by it, this glorious appearance of God.

And at the end of verse 4, there's an interesting phrase here in this description; "And there is the hiding of His power." So God has rays flashing from His hands, these lightning bolts going forth from Him, this flash of light, and yet "...there is the hiding of His power." And it's an interesting thought, but really the point is it's just an outward display of God's glory and His majesty but that's not even the fullness of His power. So, you think lightning's amazing? You think this bright, brilliant light

coming forth from God that blinds you is amazing? That's just the beginning of it. That's just the outward display of so much more that is stored up in God's power and who He is. Really, if you were to kind of steal the comment from Job, this is what Habakkuk is saying. In Job 26:14, he said, "Behold, these are the fringes of His ways." These are just the outskirts of His ways. You think the blinding light is a big deal, and it is glorious, that's just the beginning. There's so much more. That just covers what is still underneath this power.

So, you have this magnificent display. This is the uniform of God when He reveals Himself, this glorious display of light that comes forth that's too much for us to handle, and this is what Habakkuk sees. But is it kind of like a beautiful light that you're drawn towards, or is it light that terrifies you and makes you fall to the ground? And if you recall other places in Scripture, it's more of a terrifying light. And what confirms this is verse 5 - what accompanies God in this display; "Before Him goes pestilence, And plague comes after Him." You know, if someone came in uniform today as a law enforcement officer or military... you know, we would have a proper respect for them, right? Because you don't want to do something wrong around a law enforcement officer, right? But you'd see them smiling, having a good time, and so you'd think, okay, this is good, but if they pulled out a gun and started going through and searching places, you'd know this is serious. Right? So this isn't just a nice, cute display of God and light. This is God displaying Himself in terrifying light with plague and pestilence accompanying Him. This starts to sound like Egypt all over again when God just unleashed the plagues upon Egypt to bring His people out. And then He gave this pestilence and disease to His people as they disobeyed Him in the wilderness wanderings for forty years. Right? This is God. He's coming, and He is glorious, but also terrifying in His description, His terrifying purpose.

Notice verses 6 and 7 as well. He's startling in His impact. How He startles; "He stood and surveyed the earth; He looked and startled the nations." So He's just looking at the earth that He's created, taking a peek at it, and then He simply looks, and the nations see, and they get scared. Almost like a little kid that is terrified to see their parent catch them when they're doing wrong. Right? The nations are startled at just God looking. ...goes on to say, "Yes, the perpetual mountains were shattered, The ancient hills collapsed. His ways are everlasting." There's these mountains in nature that people applaud and have this kind of, basically, a fear for these mountains and how amazing

they are, and how some people can't even get to the top of them because you would die. This is not possible to get to the peak of this mountain, and yet for God, He appears and what do these mountains do? They shatter. They collapse. God is the everlasting One. These mountains, no matter how old they are, they don't compare to the creator of them.

And then notice verse 7 as the startling continues; "I saw the tents of Cushan under distress, The tent curtains of the land of Midian were trembling." Both Cushan and Midian were these places that were right next to the Red Sea, and so they were probably two of the people groups that were the first ones to hear about and witness God splitting the Red Sea, delivering the Israelites, and drowning Pharaoh and the army. So they tremble, and rightfully so, at a terrifying display of God's power. So, this is God coming in His radiance, His splendor and glory, and it's terrifying. This is the appearance of God that Habakkuk gets to see.

Well, at verse 8 we get a transition, and we see the Lord's forceful reckoning, the Lord's forceful reckoning, as we see not just the appearance of God, but we see His actions. What does God do? He's already coming and He's glorious, and we get that. We understand that. This is very much like God coming to Sinai, very much like God delivering Israel out of Egypt. So there's these similarities there that is kind of answering Habakkuk's question of God reviving His work, but doing even more so. What does God do? Verses 8 through 15; "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? Your bow was made bare, The rods of chastisement were sworn. You cleaved the earth with rivers. The mountains saw You and quaked; The downpour of waters swept by. The deep uttered forth its voice, It lifted high its hands. Sun and moon stood in their places; They went away at the light of Your arrows, At the radiance of Your gleaming spear. 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. 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. You trampled on the sea with Your horses, On the surge of many waters."

So we've seen the glorious appearance of God and the terrifying appearance of Him, and now we see His actions, the reckoning that He brings to these nations. First of all, when you just look at these verses, you can't help but notice that God is a warrior. God comes across to do battle. He's here to do battle. He is a warrior. Just notice if you look at...starting in verse 8 like we said, "...the Lord [rages] against the rivers, Or was Your anger against the rivers, Or...Your wrath against the sea." And then that... "You rode on Your horses on Your chariots of salvation." This is not a riding of horses or chariots to get from one place to another, it's not a transportation thing. It's getting on horses and chariots to do battle, to do war. Verse 9; "Your bow was made bare, The rods [or arrows] of chastisement were sworn." So God is on His chariot. He's on His horses in anger, in wrath, with a bow and arrow in hands. He has weapons with Him. In verse 11 goes on; "[the] Sun and the moon..." "They went away at the light of Your arrows..." and "...Your gleaming spear." He's here to do war. Verse 12; "In indignation You marched through the earth; In anger You trampled the nations." He's a warrior coming to do battle and coming to win. Verse 13; "You struck the head of the house of evil." Verse 14; "You pierced with his own spears The head of his throngs." And verse 15; "You trampled on the sea with Your horses." God is a warrior. There's no question about it. He's revealing Himself in all His glory, and it's clear what He's here to do battle. His actions are clearly defined by what He's doing. He's here. His attitude, His weapons that accompany Him - He's here to do battle.

Notice, also, how nature responds. How does nature respond to this? Nature responds in a complete upheaval, alright. In verse 10, "The mountains saw You and quaked..." The shaking of these mountains... "The downpour of waters swept by. The deep uttered forth its voice, it lifted high its hands." So the picture of this sea that is just in complete, tumultuous commotion as it just goes, and the waves go against itself, and the waves get higher and higher like it has hands. And as it crashes into each other, and the waves crash on the shore and rocks, it is roaring its voice. Verse 11; "Sun and moon stood in their places." It kind of brings you back to the book of Joshua a little bit when you remember that day when Joshua told the sun to stand still so they could keep fighting and win the victory. And so this is God's subtle way of dropping these in there to say to Habakkuk, yes, I will revive my work, the work that I did with Israel bringing them out of Egypt, and bringing them into the Promised Land. Those amazing miracles, I will do those again but with a greater affect and impact...as God alludes to these

things. God Himself, going and fighting and nations respond... and the nature responding with trembling just like the nations.

So, we still have to ask this question; why? Okay, why? Why is God going for it? Why is He going for it in this kind of glorious battle-like fashion? What's the point here? Well, verse 8 gives the potential reason that we see is not correct, but verse 8 says, "Did the Lord rage against the rivers, Or was Your anger against the rivers, Or was Your wrath against the sea." Is that why You went out, God, because You want to do battle against the water? You really wanted to just you know, take it to it like when You split the Red Sea, and when You dried up the Jordan river? Is that what it's all about? You're mad at the water? No, that's not why God went out. Our answer comes in verses 12 and 13. Verse 12; "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." So the right reason here; God is going forth to do battle as we've already described, but battle against who? Against the nations, and why? For the deliverance of His people, for the deliverance of Israel, like Habakkuk is concerned about? So God goes forth in this glorious battle scene to trample the nations, all to save Israel in this judgment.

And so you might think, well, why? I mean what's up with the nations. I mean give them a break, alright? I mean, come on, the nations of the nations. You like Israel, that's great. Well, it was clear that the nations did not like Israel at this point, and they had set their goal to devour Israel as verse 14 indicates; "You pierced with his own spears The head of his throngs. They [the nations] stormed in to scatter us; Their exultation was like those Who devour the oppressed in secret." Here's the nations all arrogant, allied together, running in to make war against Israel. This is what they're doing. And so God waits to that last minute and comes in in dramatic fashion, and delivers Israel by trampling these nations who're wishing to do war against Israel. So this is God trampling in verse 15 as well; "You trampled on the sea with Your horses, On the surge of many waters." There are times where in the Psalms or in poetic literature throughout the bible, the waters could actually be a reference to enemies, to people. Psalm 18 verses 16 through 17 says, "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." And several other Psalms kind of use this

symbolism or this imagery here of God delivering us from enemies as if pulling them out of the water, and so here is God in verse 15; “You trampled on the sea with Your horses, On the surge of many waters.” The nations gathering together like a massive kind of body of water to try and swallow up and devour Israel, and God comes and tramples on the nations as He rides the battle horses and chariots to make war.

So, this glorious vision is God saying yes, Habakkuk, I will revive my work. That which I did in bringing you out of Egypt, and bringing you into the Promise Land, the days of old, I will do that and so much more because I’m not just going to let Egypt have it. I’m going to let all the nations have it for the sake of rescuing you, Israel. So God says I will, I will revive my work as you have asked. I will be merciful to you in the midst of My wrath. So this prompts the ending of this beautiful book where we turn our attention back to Habakkuk, where we see Habakkuk’s faithful response...Habakkuk’s faithful response. Verses 16 through 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. 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, Yet I will exult in the Lord, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation. 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.” So, notice first here that Habakkuk’s response to seeing this vision is kind of similar to what he already said in verse 2. He says he trembles. He heard this vision. He saw this vision and he trembled just like he said in verse 2 when he remembered God’s work of old, and he trembles at that thought. So, too, he gets this theophany, this vision, of God, and what He’s doing, and he trembles. His lips are quivering. Decay enters his bones.

And you might think, Habakkuk what’s the big deal? God said He’s going to destroy the nations for you. He’s going to destroy the nations for Israel. He’s going to deliver you. Isn’t that good news? That’s a good thing. But Habakkuk knows the reality. The reality is some other things have to take place first. The Babylonians still need to come, and they still need to punish Israel. They still need to take them into captivity, and they need to experience the punishment that God has in store for them in all their sins. So

there's this bittersweet that's going on inside of Habakkuk. He trembles at the thought of what God is going to do because not only is it awesome, but the day of judgment and punishment have to come before the dawn of salvation. He has to go through the judgment before salvation can come for his people.

Then we see the kind of, almost like the potentially depressing scene, continue in verse 17. This is a very depressing bleak scene; "Though the fig tree should not blossom...there be no fruit on the vines, Though the yield of the olive should fail...the fields produce no food...the flock[s] should be cut off from the fold And there be no cattle in the stalls." That's pretty depressing. Basically, there's no food. Alright. I mean that's their source of food, all the crops that they could grow, all the animals that they could raise, and they're gone. And this is Habakkuk probably recognizing what is still to come for them in terms of the covenant curses.

And when God started this whole thing with Him and Israel, He made this covenant official, and He told them you will be My people, Israel, and when you obey Me, I'll bless you. When you disobey Me, I'm going to have to bring some bad stuff upon you. I'm going to have to punish you, and some of those punishments will be...I'm not going to allow the produce of your fields to be as plentiful as you'd like. In fact, I'll cut it off. But that was God's design, as I cut that off, as I cut off your food supply, you look to Me, an you go, oh, that's right, sorry, God, we have been disobeying. So this is God's plan when Israel disobeyed; He would invoke the covenant curses upon them, so they would recognize... But Habakkuk already knows it's too late. This is God's plan. He's raising up the Babylonians to come and destroy them. And so, he recognizes this is the scene. This is what's in store for them; a bleak time of having no food and all their basic necessities taken away from them as the Babylonians come. So a difficult situation even though he's just received good news. And so, the question is how is Habakkuk going to respond to this? What will be his final note? How will he go out from this information and from this understanding that God has given him?

Well, let me just put forth a scenario to you – kind of bring it back to our day for a second. What if I were to tell you, hey, we received an actual kind of understanding from the Lord that the entire Antelope Valley will be saved. All the Antelope Valley is going to be saved. And initially, you're going to

go, well, that's fantastic. That's great. I mean, that is awesome. That's what we're working for here, right? We're trying to make disciples here. We're trying to go out and see the gospel spread through everyone around us in the entire A.V. That's a lot of people. That's great news, alright. That's fantastic news. And what I said, let me add to that, though, but what if I told you it's not going to happen in your life time? You might go, okay, that's a bummer, you know, because obviously I was looking forward to like a better crime rate, and, you know, this whole like, better schools, and, oh yeah, and obviously people glorifying God. You know, I'm looking forward to those things, but you know what? I guess my kids can have it, and I guess that's good. You know I'll be kind of okay with that, I guess. I say, okay, yeah, but what if I add a little more to the scenario. What if I told you that things are actually just going to get worse for you in your lifetime, like they're going to get terrible? They're not even going to look up. You're not even going to see it turn around and get better. It's going to happen beyond your lifetime, when things ever turn around. You might go, oh, okay, wow, alright, well, man, that'd be cool to live a little later, to be in that time when all A.V. gets saved, but, okay, I guess I have to go through, wow, things going to get worse. I'm not going to even live to see it. Okay, that's too bad. You might be tempted to respond, and kind of go, I don't even know if this is true, or, okay, that doesn't really change my life that much. I'm not that excited, and I'm not thinking, oh, okay, I'll go out and share the gospel now because I'm well, it's going to happen later; I guess. It's not a part of me.

Well, isn't that just kind of similar to what Habakkuk had just got? I mean he just got this information of God delivering Israel in a fashion that was greater than the Exodus. That's amazing news to receive. Of all the stories you knew being an Israelite, you've just been told the greatest one, that it's yet to come, and you're excited, obviously, but then you face the reality that it's not going to happen in your lifetime. You still have to undergo the judgment of the Babylonians. And in fact, what Habakkuk has in store for him - it's just persecution, and no more food, and then death. Right? He has to go through exile. That's what he gets in store for his life, so how is he going to respond? Verse 18 is beautiful. It's the response of faith. Habakkuk states, "Yet I will exult in the Lord, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation." He had options, but he makes it very clear; I will choose to rejoice. I will choose to rejoice in God. And notice what he calls God; "I will rejoice in the God of my salvation." And you might think, what are you talking about Habakkuk? You're not going to get saved, right? You're going

to get destroyed. The salvation is going to officially come later on down the line. But this is Habakkuk saying, God has told me His word, and His plan, His promises, and what He will do, and that's enough; and I will trust Him because I know God. I trust my God. I'm going to choose to rejoice in my God. He is the God of my salvation. I look forward, and I still anticipate that day, no matter what's to come in my life. Bring on the hardship. It does not matter. I still have complete faith and hope in God, and I rejoice in Him.

It's a challenging response. We don't really like hardship. We sing, "Blessed be Your Name," and it's easy to bless the name of the Lord when things are going well, but we're in the wilderness when we're facing the tough times, when we're facing the lack, physically speaking. When everyone feels like they're against us, to still respond in faith and rejoice in the God of our salvation, that's a challenge, but that's the life of faith. That's what the righteous person will do. They will respond in faith no matter the circumstances.

So, Habakkuk makes his choice to rejoice in God, to exalt in Him, and look at the result in verse 19; "The Lord God is my strength, And He has made my feet like [the] hinds' feet, And makes me walk on my high places." He just soars up above it all. Because of his God, because of his faith in God, he finds strength, a renewed strength, that it does not matter what you throw at Habakkuk. It doesn't matter at all. He will scale the tallest mountain and rise above all the circumstances and filth you might throw at him because that's the power of placing your faith in the God of our salvation. When your faith rests in God, and you don't need all the answers perfectly lined up for you, you don't need all the explanations laid out, and then it makes sense, then you'll have faith; but simply trusting in God and who He is, and who He said that He is, then you will rise up, and the circumstances will not matter. You'll find strength to rise above it all and to be on the mountain and nothing will assail you at that point. This is the life of faith that we can have.

This is what the bible describes over and over again. This is what Hebrews 11 will talk about, this understanding of faith, those old testament examples, besides Habakkuk. How did they endure? What did they do? Like Hebrews 11 tells us; all these died in faith without receiving the promises. God made these amazing promises, and they didn't get to see the Messiah, but, like Habakkuk, they rejoiced in the God of their salvation. They placed everything of them in God alone. They trusted in Him, and so that's why it

(Hebrews 11:13) can go on to say, "...having seen them and welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth." They're able to look outside of this present body and day. This is the definition of faith in Hebrews 11:1; "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." Obviously, my prayer that that would be true of my life as well as this entire congregation. We don't get to see everything. We don't get to have the privilege of everything getting laid out in front of us, and all the explanations to every question we have, but what we do have is God. And I'm certain He's proven Himself over and over and over again. The bible is chock full of stories of examples of God's faithfulness. So, I will choose to rejoice in my God. I hope you will as well.