



THE PROPHETS

Date: 7.28.24 | Title: Habakkuk | Scripture: Habakkuk

LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING

Middle School Students

The Bible is God's message about Himself and His salvation plan through Jesus.

God deserves respect, obedience, and honor.

God wants us to live for His glory.

God sent Jesus to be the atonement for our sins.

Jesus fulfills Old Testament prophecies and promises.

High School Students

The Bible is God's message about Himself and His salvation plan through Jesus.

God deserves respect, obedience, and honor.

God wants us to live for His glory.

God is a righteous judge.

God sent Jesus to be the atonement for our sins.

Jesus fulfills Old Testament prophecies and promises.


Jesus gave His life for us on the cross and He is the only way for salvation.



MEMORY VERSE

**“Long ago, at many times and in many ways,
God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in
these last days he has spoken to us by his Son.”**

Hebrews 1:1-2a



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BACKGROUND INFO FOR LEADERS

Habakkuk wrote this book, but little else is known about the prophet. There is no definite information regarding the date of his writing, but Habakkuk, like Micah, represented God to the southern kingdom of Judah and predicts the Babylonian exile- the result of the cycle of sin and a failure to trust in and obey the Lord. Habakkuk lived during the reign of King Josiah (640-609 BC). This was a time of national deterioration- Godly people were suffering and wicked people were prospering. Several significant cultural and religious events occurred around this time: Josiah's religious reforms (622 BC), the fall of Nineveh (612 BC), and Babylon's attack on Jerusalem (605 BC). Josiah's religious reforms were largely unsuccessful; much of the nation continued in idolatry and corruption, the two major sins Habakkuk addressed in his book. Habakkuk prophesied at the same time as Nahum, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, and Obadiah.

Habakkuk is an unusual prophetic book because it never addresses the people of Judah directly but is a dialogue or conversation between the prophet and God. Though Habakkuk was presumably of solid enough character that God chose him to deliver a message, he had questions and doubts. The first two chapters are organized around Habakkuk's prayers and complaints about Judah's troubling moral and spiritual deterioration, and the Lord's replies. Habakkuk couldn't believe that, after all the ways Judah had turned against God, that God hadn't done anything about their behavior. Yahweh raised up the Babylonians to judge Judah (1:5-11), which provides Habakkuk to wonder about Yahweh's justice, since the Babylonians are more evil than Judah (1:12-2:1). Habakkuk did not understand how a good and just God would use a more wicked nation to punish a less wicked one. In 1:12-2:20, God makes it clear that both nations are to be judged and appropriately punished for their evil acts. Yahweh instructs Habakkuk to wait and trust in him, for the righteous live by faith (2:4). The key phrase "but the righteous will live by his faith" summarizes the path of life God sets for his people and is quoted three times in the NT (Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38). Although Habakkuk may not fully understand, he relies on the wisdom, mercy and justice of God to bring about the proper resolution in ways he never could have imagined.

BACKGROUND INFO FOR LEADERS

In the midst of Habakkuk's disappointment and confusion, he did the right thing: He decided to wait on God, to watch and see what the Lord would do. "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" (Habakkuk 2:1). As Habakkuk waited, he reminded himself of what he knew to be true about God. "Are you not from everlasting, O Lord my God, my Holy One?... You are of purer eyes than to behold evil and cannot look on wickedness" (Habakkuk 1:12-13). Those who trust in false gods will not be delivered by their idols, for idols lack breath and life (2:18-19). Yahweh reigns from his heavenly temple, and He will assess and judge all those who practice evil (2:20).

God's answer followed Habakkuk's patient faith. In 2:2-2, God assures Habakkuk that he will punish all the wicked at the right time. "The Lord answered me and said: 'Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it'" (2:2). "Though it tarries, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry" (2:3). God isn't limited to a human perspective on time and requires His people to trust that whenever He acts, it's in His good and perfect time, taking every possible factor into account. God would deal with Babylon, but He was also telling Habakkuk to look beyond even that moment in the future, to a time when God will make everything right. "The earth will be filled with knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (2:14).

In Chapter 3 Habakkuk responds using language of the exodus in a prayer that the Lord will again work on behalf of his people. Habakkuk asks for a new demonstration of God's wrath and mercy, as he has done so powerfully in the past. The book concludes with Habakkuk waiting for "the day of trouble to come upon people who invade us" (3:16), which almost certainly also involves salvation for Israel. The judgment coming from Babylon is described poetically as fig trees not blossoming, the lack of produce from vineyards and olive trees, and shortage from the herd (3:17). Judgement is not forever, for Habakkuk will "rejoice in the Lord". This is rooted in Yahweh's saving work on behalf of his people (Ps. 28:7; 32:11; 35:9; 64:10; 68:4; 97:12; Isaiah 41:16; 61:10; Joel 2:23; Zeph. 3:14; Zech. 10:7). Habakkuk specifically mentions that his joy is in "the God of my salvation" (3:18).

God is certainly worth of Habakkuk's praise and worship (3:17-19). By the end of the book, Habakkuk is a changed person- he has learned to wait and trust in God, who works out all things for His glory. He realizes that God is sovereign, and his justice is far beyond Habakkuk's comprehension.

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LOCATE THE SCRIPTURE & TELL THE STORY



**TELL
THE
STORY**



Tell the story: Use the Background Info for Leaders as you teach today's lesson.

Re-tell the Bible Story: put events in order, draw a comic strip, build it with blocks or playdough, act it out, etc.

Read directly from Scripture, use the message, or the summary provided in the lesson

Attributes of God: Use the attributes of God list and determine the characteristics of God that we see in today's story. How can knowing these characteristics of God to be true, change the way we live in Christ?

Share the GOSPEL:

Habakkuk is one of the most important writings in all of Scripture—so much so that one of its verses is cited multiple times in the New Testament as a central tenet of the gospel. The great doctrinal books of Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews all refer to, mention, or build on the famous verse “the just shall live by his faith” Habakkuk 2:4, using it to point to the all-important truth that Jesus justifies His people by their faith in the finished work He did on the cross. God's people had failed in trying to achieve salvation by being good and obeying God's law; Habakkuk's prophecy here pointed to the new covenant God would make through Jesus Christ— a promise of salvation based not on human works but on faith in His work.

Re-Tell
The Bible
Story

Put the events in order, draw a comic strip, build it with blocks or playdough, act it out, etc...



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“Storying” Questions: As you ask these questions, have your students find the answers in the actual verses of scripture instead of recalling them from your re-telling of the story. We always want to encourage all of our students to go directly to God’s Word over a commentary on or summary of scripture.

1. What is unique about the book of Habakkuk in comparison to other prophetic books?
2. What questions does Habakkuk have for God? (1:1-4)
3. What is God’s response about dealing with the sin of Israel? (1:5-11)
4. What is Habakkuk’s next complaint? (1:12-17)
5. How does Habakkuk decide to precede? (2:1)
6. What does God tell Habakkuk about how the righteous should live? (2:2-4) What does this look like?
7. What assurances does God give Habakkuk in 2:2-20 about how He will punish the wickedness?
8. How does Habakkuk change by the end of the book? (3:17-19)
9. What does this book teach us about God’s response to sin?
10. How does this impact our walk as believers?
11. What does this book teach us about our questions in light of who God is?

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

ATTENTIVE - God hears and responds to the needs of his children.

COMPASSIONATE - God cares for his children and acts on their behalf.

CREATOR - God made everything. He is uncreated.

DELIVERER - God rescues and saves his children.

ETERNAL - God is not limited by time. He exists outside of time.

FAITHFUL - God always keeps his promises.

GENEROUS - God gives what is best and beyond what is deserved.

GLORIOUS - God displays His greatness and worth.

GOOD - God is what is best and gives what is best. He is incapable of doing harm.

HOLY - God is perfect, pure, and without sin.

IMMUTABLE/UNCHANGING - God never changes. He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

INCOMPREHENSIBLE - God is beyond our understanding. We can comprehend Him in part but not in whole.

INFINITE - God has not limits in His person or on His power.

JEALOUS - God will not share his glory with another. all glory rightfully belongs to him.

JUST - god is fair in all his actions and judgements. He cannot over-punish or under-punish.

LOVING - God feels and displays infinite, unconditional affection toward his children. His love for them does not depend on their worth, response, or merit.

MERCIFUL - God does not give his children the punishment they deserve.

OMNIPOTENT/ALMIGHTY - God holds all power. nothing is too hard for God. What He wills He can accomplish.

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

OMNIPRESENT - God is fully present everywhere.

OMNISCIENT - God knows everything, past, present, and future - all potential and real outcomes, all things micro and macro.

PATIENT/LONG-SUFFERING - God is untiring and bears with His children.

PROVIDER - God meets the needs of his children.

REFUGE - God is a place of safety and protection for his children.

RIGHTEOUS - God is always good and right.

SELF-EXISTENT - God depends on nothing and no one to give him life or existence.

SELF-SUFFICIENT - God is not vulnerable. He has no needs.

SOVEREIGN - God does everything according to His plan and pleasure.

TRANSCENDENT - God is not like humans. He is infinitely higher in being and action.

TRUTHFUL - Whatever God speaks or does is truth and reality.

WISE - God knows what is best and acts accordingly. He cannot choose wrongly.

WORTHY - God deserves all glory and honor and praise.

WRATHFUL - God hates all unrighteousness.



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PRAYER PROMPTS

God thank you for allowing our simple minded questions. Help us to trust in your character and the history of salvation as we live by faith in You alone! Help us to flee from sin and to live in righteousness!

IF TIME ALLOWS:

Help the students in your group practice memorizing the books of the Bible:


- Torah: Genesis-Deuteronomy
- History: Joshua-Esther
- Poetry: Job-Song of Solomon
- Major Prophets: Isaiah-Daniel
- Minor Prophets: Hosea-Malachi
- Gospels: Matthew-John
- Paul's Letters: Romans-Philemon
- General Letters: Hebrews-Revelation

MISSIONS EMPHASIS:

For the months of August, September and October we will be collecting money for the Connie Maxwell Children's Home. Please visit their website for pictures and descriptions of some of the services they offer that you can share with your group. A generous donor will match all of our donations. Encourage your class to collect money and donate it in the giving funnel in the upstairs lobby. Students can donate with their families as they arrive, or you can go together as a class on the way back to the Worship Center at the end of SS.

REVIEW UNIT VERSE:

Work on memorizing this weeks verse with the students in your group. You can use the first letter of each word in the verse to help with this. For example, the unit verse would look like this:



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Application Questions

LOOK UPWARD



- How does this story apply to your relationship with God?
- What does it teach you about Him- His will and His heart?
- What aspect of His character is He inviting you to experience and enjoy?
- How will you benefit by applying the truths of this story in your relationship with God?
- What practical steps can you take to live out these truths in your relationship with God?

LOOK INWARD



- How does this story apply to your heart and your own spiritual growth?
- What does it teach you about yourself, your needs, or your goals in life?
- In what aspects of your personal life is God inviting you to grow and mature?
- How will you benefit by applying the truths of this story inwardly?
- How will those around you benefit?
- What practical steps can you take to allow these truths to help you grow spiritually?

LOOK AROUND



- How does this story apply to your relationship with others?
- What does it teach you about how to see others and relate to them?
- What is god inviting you to do differently in your relationships?



Application Questions

LOOK OUTWARD

- How does this story apply to your ministry and mission in life- to your role in God's kingdom, in society, and in the world?
- What does it teach you about God's purposes for the world?
- What part of His mission is He inviting you to participate in?
- How will you benefit by applying the truths of this story in your ministry?
- How will the world benefit?
- What practical steps can you take to live out these truths in the world?

LOOK FORWARD

- How does this story apply to your future, both in this age and in eternity?
- What does it teach you about God's plan for your life, now and forever?
- What aspects of eternity is God inviting you to participate in?
- How will you benefit in the future by applying these truths now?
- How will God's kingdom benefit?
- What practical steps can you take to impact eternity now with these truths?