

# I Will Exult in the Lord!

## A Journey through the Burden of Habakkuk

### 3- The Righteous Will Live by His Faith- Part 1

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Church October 3, 2021

#### **Habakkuk 2:1-20**

**1 I will stand on my guard post And station myself on the rampart; And I will keep watch to see what He will speak to me, And how I may reply when I am reproved.**

**2 Then the Lord answered me and said, “Record the vision And inscribe it on tablets, That the one who reads it may run.**

**3 “For the vision is yet for the appointed time; It hastens toward the goal and it will not fail. Though it tarries, wait for it; For it will certainly come, it will not delay.**

**4 “Behold, as for the proud one, His soul is not right within him; But the righteous will live by his faith.**

**5 “Furthermore, wine betrays the haughty man, So that he does not stay at home. He enlarges his appetite like Sheol, And he is like death, never satisfied. He also gathers to himself all nations And collects to himself all peoples.**

**6 “Will not all of these take up a taunt-song against him, Even mockery and insinuations against him And say, ‘Woe to him who increases what is not his — For how long— And makes himself rich with loans?’**

**7 “Will not your creditors rise up suddenly, And those who collect from you awaken? Indeed, you will become plunder for them.**

**8 “Because you have looted many nations, All the remainder of the peoples will loot you— Because of human bloodshed and violence done to the land, To the town and all its inhabitants.**

**9 “Woe to him who gets evil gain for his house To put his nest on high, To be delivered from the hand of calamity!**

**10 “You have devised a shameful thing for your house By cutting off many peoples; So you are sinning against yourself.**

**11 “Surely the stone will cry out from the wall, And the rafter will answer it from the framework.**

**12 “Woe to him who builds a city with bloodshed And founds a town with violence!**

**13 “Is it not indeed from the Lord of hosts That peoples toil for fire, And nations grow weary for nothing?**

**14 “For the earth will be filled With the knowledge of the glory of the Lord,**

**As the waters cover the sea.**

**15 “Woe to you who make your neighbors drink, Who mix in your venom even to make them drunk So as to look on their nakedness!**

**16 “You will be filled with disgrace rather than honor. Now you yourself drink and expose your own nakedness. The cup in the Lord’s right hand will come around to you, And utter disgrace will come upon your glory.**

**17 “For the violence done to Lebanon will overwhelm you, And the devastation of its beasts by which you terrified them, Because of human bloodshed and violence done to the land, To the town and all its inhabitants.**

**18 “What profit is the idol when its maker has carved it, Or an image, a teacher of falsehood? For its maker trusts in his own handiwork When he fashions speechless idols.**

**19 “Woe to him who says to a piece of wood, ‘Awake!’ To a mute stone, ‘Arise!’ And that is your teacher? Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver, And there is no breath at all inside it.**

**20 “But the Lord is in His holy temple. Let all the earth be silent before Him.”**

To the Glory of God

It isn’t hard to understand that these are very difficult times. We are living and serving Jesus in very powerful days of great upheaval and change. And many of us bounce back and forth between being mad at what we see going on and truly frightened by the Reality of it. I don’t know of anyone, who is not being tried; and stretched; and confronted by powerful forces of Change and Challenge. I’ve never seen anything like it. We exist today in the individual turmoil of Struggle in our own homes; that is surrounded by an even larger Unrest in our Nation; that is encapsulated in an even greater, world-wide Turmoil. Truly, these are difficult times. And so, we turn to God’s Word for Hope and Comfort and Peace.

But when we turn to the Word of God- we find two things:

1. What God is doing
2. How we should *respond* to what God is doing

... but what we DON’T usually find in God’s Word- is WHY God is doing what He is doing.

O, I realize that the people of this Church, at least, understand that *whatever* God is doing- He is doing to His Own Glory. And most of us also understand that, *ultimately*, God glorifying Himself, by what He does in the earth- will *eventually* bring to us the fullness of Joy. Yet we are left ignorant of many of the Details of our own Struggles and just

how our particular Pain has any eternal Purpose or Meaning.

But the reason we can find out what God is doing by reading the Bible- *at least in a general sort of way*- is because we understand that God is Sovereign. And what we mean by that- is that God is absolutely in control of EVERYTHING! From the rise and fall of nations- to the pain in your back. From the dying stars and super novas- to the ants in your yard. From the mysteries under the sea- to the hairs on your head. And from the evil decisions of wicked people- to the sparrow hopping on the ground. God sees and He acts. God knows and He controls. God understands and He does. God allows and He causes.

And what that also means is that the United States Congress is NOT Sovereign- God is. The President and Vice President are NOT Sovereign- God is. The Supreme Court is NOT Sovereign- God is. The actions of the United Nations are NOT Sovereign- God is. Russia, China, and Europe are NOT Sovereign; Satan and the horde of fallen angels are NOT Sovereign; and you and I are NOT Sovereign- God is.

God creates and He destroys. God builds up and He casts down. And everything that has been created- including Man- is subservient to God and His Will. So, when we read Passages like, **2Timothy 3:1-13**, we understand that this is what God is doing:

- 1 But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come.**
- 2 For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,**
- 3 unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good,**
- 4 treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,**
- 5 holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.**
- 6 For among them are those who enter into households and captivate weak women weighed down with sins, led on by various impulses,**
- 7 always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.**
- 8 Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men of depraved mind, rejected in regard to the faith.**
- 9 But they will not make further progress; for their folly will be obvious to all, just as Jannes's and Jambres's folly was also.**
- 10 Now you followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance,**

**11 persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium and at Lystra; what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord rescued me!**

**12 Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.**

**13 But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.**

Now this sounds a lot like what you could hear from the Evening News, doesn't it? And yet- this Passage basically just restates the Problem, right? "*Yea, thanks, Brother Blair for reminding us how bad things are.*" But this Passage is NOT from the Evening News. This "*Bad News*" is found in Scripture. And that makes it true; and inspired; and inerrant. Yet God doesn't ONLY give us the "*Bad News*". That is NEVER the way God operates. God ALWAYS gives us the "*Bad News*"- to *change* us; and *encourage* us and *warn* us- and to let us know what He is doing or going to do in the earth and in people's lives. But then God ALWAYS follows that "*Bad News*" with "*Good News*". And the "*Good News*" that follows the "*Bad News*" is very "*Good*" indeed.

And so, God the Holy Spirit "moved" on the Apostle Paul to NOT stop with verse 13. After God gave Paul the "*Bad News*" of verses 1-13- He moved him to also write verses 14-17 that says,

**14 You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them,**

**15 and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.**

**16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;**

**17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.**

... which is how God's people should *respond* to what God is doing and going to do in the earth.

So, Paul says that when these "**difficult times**" come upon us- we are to, ... **continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of ...**

... and then he goes into how reliable and trustworthy the Bible is.

So, the Apostle does NOT merely tell us that times will get very "difficult". Now yes, he is faithful to tell us that they will get VERY difficult. But that's NOT all he says. He also says that, when "times" do get difficult- God's people will *respond* to that Difficulty by remaining "constant"; and "steadfast"; and they will

CONTINUE in the “**things you have learned**”- and they will CONTINUE in the things you have become “**convinced of.**”

And that means that the “*Bad News*” that the Bible predicts about Sufferings; and Struggles; and Persecutions; and Turmoil; and people getting Lukewarm; and sinful; and apathetic; and worldly; and unconcerned about the Will of God; and more and more Evil- is staggering and heartbreaking and very troubling. But praise God- it’s NOT all that God says. The Bad News and the Promise from God that there will be Difficult Times- are NOT our final State. The “final State” of all genuine believers- is going to be glorious and wonderful and filled with unspeakable Pleasures! 1,000 years before Jesus was born, God the Spirit “moved” on King David to write this in **Psalm 16:11b**:

**... In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.**

Now it is true that saved people may live in ALL or SOME of the Troubles and Trials listed underneath the title of “*Bad News*”. And SOME believers may have SOME or ALL of those things- in abundance! And that is real “Bad”. But we MUST NOT stop with a Statement like that. Because even though that may be true- what else is also true- is that NO believer will have ANY of these “Bad” things in Eternity!

And that is the main difference between people, who have experienced the Miracle of the New Birth and those who refuse to repent and obey Jesus. ALL of the “Bad” that we will experience- will end forever when we are with the Lord. So, we can ONLY suffer in this one brief Life.

But what we also need to know is that lost people may also have SOME or ALL of those “Bad News” things here. Because, you see, this World is broken. So, it isn’t merely “the saved”, who suffer. Every human on earth suffers- to some extent.

The difference is that when saved people suffer- God orchestrates and guides and controls that Suffering- in such a way- that the Fires of their Sufferings- mold and shape and form them into more of the Image and Likeness of Jesus. But when lost people suffer- they sink deeper into despair and just get angry and bitter and destroyed by it all.

But we need to know that when lost people enter into Eternity- the eternal Pain; Sorrow; Suffering; Anguish; and Agony they will live in forever- will make ALL the “Bad” things down here- pale by comparison. Because for them- Hell will be infinitely WORSE than ANYTHING “Bad” down here.

Likewise, the unspeakable Pleasures and Joy and Happiness that saved people will experience in Heaven with Jesus- will make ALL the “Bad” things

down here- pale by comparison. Because being with Jesus is infinitely BETTER than ANYTHING down here- including what we call, “Good”. And that is why the Apostle Paul said this in

**Romans 8:18,**

**For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.**

So, when we don’t understand what God is doing; or when it looks like God isn’t even listening to us; or when it seems like He is *purposely* ignoring us- the infallible Promise, from a God, Who CANNOT lie- is that there is “*Good News*” coming for the believer. And that “*Good News*” is absolutely wonderful- and very Good indeed!

And yet many times, that “*Good News*” is hidden from us- at least at the beginning. And there are other times when the “*Good News*” that God has promised- is delayed. But there are also times when the “*Good News*” will NEVER be seen by the individual during his entire lifetime on earth- and he will only realize that “*Good News*” in Heaven with Jesus.

Yet the “*Good News*” is guaranteed. It WILL happen. It is a Promise from God. And so, whether the “*Good News*” is initially hidden; or delayed; or never realized in this Life- is up to the discretion of a Wise and Good God- Who operates all things according to the Counsel of His Own Will.

And so, God’s bond-slaves are left to trust; and to hope; and to believe that God is not a liar; and that what He has promised- He will bring to pass. And that is why God told Habakkuk,

**... the righteous will live by his faith.**

Now in our “journey” through this amazing Book- we saw last time that this Prophet has been very, very discouraged. He has seen great Idolatry and rampant Sin being carried out by the very people on whom God has “set His Love”. The people of God have forsaken the Law of God; they have built themselves idols; and they are acting as though God didn’t choose them; and favor them “**above all peoples**” of this world (**Deuteronomy 10:15**).

And Habakkuk has cried out to God about it- over and over and over again. And yet there has been no Answer. In fact, it looks as though things are actually getting WORSE! Now, even though the Bible does not tell us this- there is no doubt in my mind that, in addition to him crying out to God- Habakkuk has also been getting in the face of his countrymen and personally rebuking them for their Sin and indifference to God and God’s Ways.

And yet the Heavens are silent. *“So, where is God? Why doesn’t God stop this? Don’t these things dishonor God? Why is He allowing it and seemingly allowing Evil to triumph over Righteousness?”*

### **Habakkuk 1:2-4**

**2 How long, O Lord, will I call for help, And You will not hear? I cry out to You, “Violence!” Yet You do not save.**

**3 Why do You make me see iniquity, And cause me to look on wickedness? Yes, destruction and violence are before me; Strife exists and contention arises.**

**4 Therefore the law is ignored And justice is never upheld. For the wicked surround the righteous; Therefore justice comes out perverted.**

... and this went on and on until Habakkuk was in complete despair and anguish of soul.

And we can relate to this. For example, many of us have been crying out to God for Revival for many decades. Now a real, genuine Revival is truly something to behold. It isn’t a three-day Meeting that is scheduled in advance. A “Revival” or a spiritual “Awakening”- is when God the Holy Spirit comes down and deals with a group; or a church; or even a nation. And the Result is that people begin to love what God loves; and hate what God hates. A real, spirit- birthed Revival brings about a deep and profound Conviction and Confession of Sin; which makes Repentance both easy and common. A real Revival brings about a powerful pursuit of biblical Holiness; and a clear separation of the believer from the world; and what the world has to offer.

In a genuine Heaven-sent Awakening- people would rather pray than eat. And there is a profound hunger for God’s Word. According to what I have read- in a Revival- it is not uncommon at all for people to pray all night long- accompanied with long, protracted seasons fasting. And the Transformation is so powerful and so all-encompassing that even Crime and Violence in the Community is radically reduced. So, a real Revival is actually a taste of what Life will be like when Jesus comes back.

Back when I was first saved- I read about how God moved on the people of Wales back in 1904 and how over a million souls were saved during the next two years.<sup>1</sup> I read about the “Prayer Revival” of 1857 in New York City where no less than 10,000 people gathered spontaneously to pray every day.<sup>2</sup> And God pricked my heart. And ever since then I have begged God that we could experience a Revival like that. Yet 50 years later- that Prayer has not been answered. Why?

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<sup>1</sup> [Welshrevival.com](http://Welshrevival.com)

<sup>2</sup> [1857 Prayer Revival - BEAUTIFUL FEET BEAUTIFUL FEET \(romans1015.com\)](http://1857PrayerRevival-BEAUTIFULFEETBEAUTIFULFEET(romans1015.com))

In the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, when the Christian Church in America rose up to cry out against the treatment of black people in this Country- God heard us. And He answered. And things radically changed- almost overnight. And yet, it doesn't seem as though God has heard us about the Holocaust of Abortion. Again, we ask, "*Why?*"

We cry out and the Heavens are silent. And many times, we go into despair as to why God doesn't seem to hear us. "*Why wouldn't God want to send us another Awakening? Wouldn't a Revival of Holiness and the Fear of the Lord and a radical departure from Sin and Worldliness honor God? Why wouldn't God want to deal with human hearts until the horror of Abortion would not merely be illegal- but would be unthinkable? Why does God allow so much Lukewarmness and outright Sin to be in His Church? Why doesn't God stop it?*"

We cry out against sexual Perversion becoming normalized- yet it seems that the evil ones have the upper hand. We stand and watch the systematic dismantling of Western Civilization and we pray and get mad and scared and yet it seems as though God is silent. Where is the Fire of God in our day- surging in the hearts of God's people and raining down on the modern- day equivalents of Sodom and Gomorrah? Why doesn't God publicly move in such a way that even the lost world would have to acknowledge it? Is our King simply ignoring us? Why does He tarry?

But just about the time when the Prophet was going to throw his hands up and quit- God moved and answered Habakkuk's cry. Now, normally, when God moves and answers our Prayers- it is exhilarating. It is a time of great celebration and rejoicing. God has moved! He has spoken! Our Prayers have been heard! Halleluiah! Praise the Lord! God is so Good! And we are so happy; and we praise our King; and the grass is green again and the skies are blue!

But *this* time, when God answered the cry of His Prophet- it was completely astonishing to him. God said,

### **Habakkuk 1:5-11**

**5 "Look among the nations! Observe! Be astonished! Wonder! Because I am doing something in your days— You would not believe if you were told.**

**6 "For behold, I am raising up the Chaldeans, That fierce and impetuous people Who march throughout the earth To seize dwelling places which are not theirs.**

**7 "They are dreaded and feared; Their justice and authority originate with themselves.**

**8 "Their horses are swifter than leopards And keener than wolves in the evening. Their horsemen come galloping, Their horsemen come from afar; They fly like an eagle swooping down to devour.**



**9 “All of them come for violence. Their horde of faces moves forward. They collect captives like sand.**

**10 “They mock at kings And rulers are a laughing matter to them. They laugh at every fortress And heap up rubble to capture it.**

**11 “Then they will sweep through like the wind and pass on. But they will be held guilty, They whose strength is their god.”**

So, now God reveals His Will to His Prophet. He is going to solve the Problem of His Own people sinning and turning away from Him- by raising up a people- the Chaldeans- who are even MORE Evil! So, the “*Bad News*” of God’s people becoming Lukewarm and of turning away from God and His Law has now become even “*Worse News*”: Habakkuk’s Good and Holy and Righteous God- is going to raise up a perverse and wicked nation to come and dominate the people He set His Love on! And Habakkuk is completely bewildered at this and so, he voices his displeasure at what God has shown him,

**Habakkuk 1:12-2:1**

**12 Are You not from everlasting, O Lord, my God, my Holy One? We will not die. You, O Lord, have appointed them to judge; And You, O Rock, have established them to correct.**

**13 Your eyes are too pure to approve evil, And You can not look on wickedness with favor. Why do You look with favor On those who deal treacherously? Why are You silent when the wicked swallow up Those more righteous than they?**

**14 Why have You made men like the fish of the sea, Like creeping things without a ruler over them?**

**15 The Chaldeans bring all of them up with a hook, Drag them away with their net, And gather them together in their fishing net. Therefore they rejoice and are glad.**

**16 Therefore they offer a sacrifice to their net And burn incense to their fishing net; Because through these things their catch is large, And their food is plentiful.**

**17 Will they therefore empty their net And continually slay nations without sparing?**

**2:1 I will stand on my guard post And station myself on the rampart; And I will keep watch to see what He will speak to me, And how I may reply when I am reproved.**

Now I have told you many times that the Chapter and Verse divisions in your Bible are NOT inspired. They were put there by well- meaning people many

hundreds of years after the Canon of Scripture had already been determined. And they are there to help us read and study the Bible. But they aren't perfect. And many times, they actually *hinder* our effort to understand what God has said. And, in my opinion, this is one of those times. Verse 1 of Chapter 2- should remain in Chapter 1 because it is the final statement of Habakkuk before God reveals His Will to His Prophet.

And so, the rest of Chapter 2- is God speaking to Habakkuk. And he begins in Verse 2 with this Statement,

**Record the vision ...**

... which is an Old Testament way of saying,

*“Write it on the wall”.*

In other words, God is aware that what He is telling Habakkuk is strange and bewildering to him. And yet this is God's Will. So, in His Benevolence to a man He loves- God tells him,

**Habakkuk 2:3b**

**... the vision is yet for the appointed time; It hastens toward the goal and it will not fail. Though it tarries, wait for it; For it will certainly come, it will not delay.**

In other words, God is saying, *“As strange and as odd as this seems to you- I AM absolutely going to do this. And even though it may not happen by this Thursday- it WILL happen. So, write it on the wall- this is GUARANTEED to come to pass. I am going to raise up a wicked and evil people to come and invade the Promised Land and destroy everything in their path. And they will come and tear down everything you people have built and you will be carried off and be held by them.”*

Now typical of God- He speaks in a way that, on the surface, appears to be filled with Mystery and Contradiction. At first God says,

**Though it tarries...**

... and then He says,

**... it will not delay.**

Well, wait a minute! To “tarry” means: *to delay*. And to delay means: *to tarry*. So, God tells Habakkuk, “*Even though what I am going to do tarries- it will not delay.*” Now why does God talk like that? Does He simply enjoy speaking in Riddles and in Mysteries and in seeming Contradictions? No. But there is an ingredient to this apparent Contradiction that helps us to understand. As soon as God says, “*Even though what I am going to do- tarries*”, He then tells His Prophet,

**... wait for it ...**

And telling His Prophet to “*wait for it*” gives us insight into both the Ways of God and the Nature of Faith. You see, God delights in His people setting such a high Value on Him; and what He has said- that we alter the way we live our lives to accommodate God’s Will. That pleases God. That honors God. For anyone, who lays claim to be saved- to live their lives with a laid back; nonchalant Attitude about God; and what God has said- NEVER honors God. So, we should always live our lives in such a way that we are “*sitting on ready*” to accommodate what God has spoken.

We are to always “be prepared”; to “be ready”; to “be watching” as well as “waiting”. And then, when the Promises of God seem to be hindered or delayed- or when the Answer God gives seems WORSE than the Problem- we “wait for it”. We “endure”.

Now to more fully understand what God was speaking to Habakkuk here- we need to look at the *superior* Revelation in the New Testament and read what the writer of **Hebrews** was talking about in the Life of Moses when he said this in **Hebrews 11:27**:

**By faith he [Moses] left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen.**

Notice that the writer says that Moses left Egypt “by Faith”. So, Moses believed. And even though the Egyptian Pharaoh wanted to kill Moses- the Bible says he left his homeland and went into the wilderness, “**NOT fearing the Wrath of the King**”. Yet **Exodus 2:13-15** says,

**13 He went out the next day, and behold, two Hebrews were fighting with each other; and he said to the offender, “Why are you striking your companion?”**

**14 But he said, “Who made you a prince or a judge over us? Are you intending to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?” Then Moses was afraid and said, “Surely the matter has become known.”**

**15 When Pharaoh heard of this matter, he tried to kill Moses. But Moses fled from the presence of Pharaoh and settled in the land of Midian, and he sat down by a well.**

So, did the writer of **Hebrews** forget about this Passage in **Exodus**? Because it sure looks like Moses was afraid. So, did Moses leave Egypt out of fear or didn't he?

The key to understanding this is found in the word "**endured**" in verse 27. So, let's read verse 27 again:

**By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen.**

In other words, it wasn't basically Fear that caused Moses to leave Egypt, it was "Endurance." Endurance? Endurance in what?

The word, "Endurance" implies that you are on a Path of God's Choosing- and you are tempted to forsake that Path because things get very difficult. Yet you don't yield to the Temptation to quit- and you hang in there. Why? You, "endure." Another way of saying this is what God told Habakkuk,

**“wait for it”.**

... which is simply another way of saying,

**... the righteous will live by his faith.**

... and the result of your “enduring”; your “perseverance”; or your “waiting”; or your “living by faith” is that you see God's Promise come to pass.

So, what is the writer referring to when he says in **Hebrews 11:27** that Moses "**left Egypt . . . for he endured . . .**"? What Path had God given to Moses that required Endurance to stay on; and even lead him out of Egypt for 40 years before he came back to rescue his people? The Answer is found in **Hebrews 11: 24-26**:

**24 By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,**

**25 choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,**

**26 considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.**

Now these verses describe a radically dangerous and costly Path that God had put Moses on- *way before* he felt threatened by the Pharaoh. Now mark what I just said. I said that these verses describe a radically dangerous Path that God had put Moses on- BEFORE he felt threatened by Pharaoh. What was this Path? Look again at verses 24-26:

**24 By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,**

**25 choosing rather [there's the chosen Path] to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,**

**26 considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.**

Now here the writer of **Hebrews** expresses the dangerous and painful Path that Moses had chosen in two ways:

1. (Verse 25) It is, **“choosing rather to endure ill- treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of Sin.”**
2. (Verse 26) It is, **“considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt...”**

Now don't miss this! God put Moses on this Path- BEFORE the Threat of Pharaoh. So, the Bridges had already been burned between Moses and Egypt BEFORE Pharaoh ever threatened him. The Choice had already happened in Moses' heart- not physically- not yet- but *spiritually* and *morally* Moses was completely separated from Egypt; and was fully yielding to his Divine Calling already in his heart.

So, now the only Question was- NOT would he choose rightly- because he had already done that. The only Question left for Moses was, *“Would he endure?”* Would Moses “persevere”; would he “wait for it”; would he “live by Faith” in this chosen Path of Suffering for the people of God and the Glory of the Messiah; or would he cave in - like so many cave in today to their own “Egypt” - the passing Pleasures of this world?

So, a very important Question that we need to ask and answer is this:

**Was Moses' flight from Egypt a capitulation to a self-Serving, fearful, Pursuit of Ease and Comfort and Safety away from the Threats of Pharaoh?**

And verse 27 gives us the answer. Verse 27 says, “No.” The first part of **Hebrews 11:27** says:

**By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king ...**

The Bible says here that Fear was NOT Moses' basic mindset. Well then what *was* the mindset of Moses as he fled from Egypt? Look at the very next part of verse 27:

**For he endured ...**

Endured in what? Moses endured in the very same deep Motive that caused him to choose ill-Treatment with the people of God and Reproach for the Sake of Christ, namely,

**... he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen.**

In other words, Moses endured, "by Faith." Moses was doing what God told Habakkuk- “Live by Faith”. And so, Moses endured by looking to God's Promise- rather than Pharaoh's Threat.

And it was this same Faith that was the very same Motive that drove his radical Choices in verses 24-26. And you can see the Power and the Results of this radical kind of Faith in what Moses did in verses 25 & 26:

**25 choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,**

**26 considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.**

The Bible says here that Moses chose ill-Treatment with God's people; and he chose the Reproach of Jesus Christ, "**for [because] he was looking to the reward.**"

Moses believed God. Moses believed God when things were Good; and Moses believed God when Pharaoh threatened his Life. Moses was looking to the

Reward. Moses didn't see the Promises of God as being a "pie in the sky" fantasy- but Moses was looking- NOT merely for the Promises themselves- but notice that Moses was looking TO the Reward. In other words, Moses trusted not only that God was NOT a liar; and not only that God's Promises were true- but Moses trusted in the fact that he personally was going to receive *exactly* what God had promised him- even though the King of Egypt was trying to kill him at that moment!

So, it was Moses' Trust in the Reality of the Promises of God that gave him both the Desire and the Power to endure. So, the phrase, "**he was looking to the reward.**" in verse 26 correlates with the phrase, "**seeing him who is unseen**" in verse 27.

Moses had, "by Faith", burned the bridges in his mind (by "**the Assurance of things hoped for**"), and then, "by Faith", he burned them in his flight (by "**the Conviction of things unseen**").

Yes, absolutely, Moses experienced Fear when the word spread that he had killed an Egyptian while saving a Jew - just as his parents had experienced that same Fear when they saved their baby boy and risked their own lives.

But what the writer of **Hebrews** is telling us in this Passage is that hiding their baby was *NOT* an act of fearful, self-Serving Unbelief in Moses' parents. And Moses' leaving Egypt was *NOT* an act of fearful, self-Serving Unbelief either. It was Moses, "Living by Faith".

So, their Actions were actually an "enduring"- in *spite* of Fear- in the full Obedience of Faith. So, Moses wasn't driven merely or even mainly by Fear. No, Moses looked to the unseen God to work out some Purpose for his people, and forty years later- he would discover what that Purpose was- and he would be back.

So, when we get into it- many of the Mysteries and Riddles and Hard Sayings in the Bible become quite clear. And so, when God tells Habakkuk,

### **Though it tarries... it will not delay**

We understand that what God is going to do- seems to tarry- but only in one sense. While at the same time- it does not delay- in another sense. At the very moment that God was speaking this to His Prophet- God was also raising up the Babylonian Empire.

Now we need to remember that the Chaldeans and the Babylonians are the *same* people. And Habakkuk lived and ministered 2,600 years ago- in the generation leading up to the three Babylonian invasions of the southern Kingdom of God's people (called, "Judah"). The northern Kingdom (called, "Israel") had already been conquered by Assyria back in 722 BC. Now, a century later, God is casting down the Assyrian Empire and raising up Babylon. And Habakkuk is

stuck in the middle between these two Empires- trying to figure out how any of it is going to cause God's people to turn from their Sin.

So, in 612 BC., the Babylonians conquered Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian Empire (which had ruled over God's people from a distance for almost an entire Century). And then in 609 BC., Judah's young, promising King (Josiah), was killed in battle against Egypt. Finally, in 605 BC., the Babylonians finished their full conquest of the Assyrians, and that same year, marched into Jerusalem for the first of what would be three different Invasions of the "City of David" and the "Habitation of Peace" (605; 597; and finally, 586 BC.), each time taking a bunch of Jewish exiles back to pagan Babylon.

But before these Invasions came- God revealed *exactly* what He was going to do- to Habakkuk, who could not for the life of him figure out why God would do this. So, these Revelations DON'T come to the Prophet while he was minding his own business, but rather when he is complaining to God about the Wickedness he sees all around him in his own Nation.

So, like Job before him- Habakkuk questions God's Justice. But unlike Job- Habakkuk is actually very feisty about it. And God makes the Prophet's discouragement- the occasion of revealing His Plans to him. So, if you didn't know any better- it looks like God really doesn't care if Habakkuk is distraught. God uses this man's complete Bewilderment as the very Means to give him God's future Plans as well as very graciously putting Habakkuk in his place.

So, unlike any other prophetic Book- the **Book of Habakkuk** doesn't address the people of God. This Book is a dialogue between Habakkuk himself and God. And like many of us- Habakkuk simply does NOT get God. The Ways of God upset him and tear him apart. He loves God and worships Him. But this Prophet does NOT understand why God does what He does- and it bothers him. And in just three short Chapters- Habakkuk goes from absolute Despair to joyful Trust. How?

**... the righteous will live by his faith.**

And "living by Faith" is, "waiting for it". And it is also "Enduring" and "Persevering" on the dangerous Path of Obedience and Love. And that is what the Bible calls, "Faith." Believing that God is not a liar. And trusting that what God has promised- He will do.

And this phrase is so important; so profound; so earthshaking; such a "game-changer"- that the Apostle Paul used it as the basis of his exposition of Salvation in **Romans 1:16&17:**

**16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.**



**17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."**

... and this tells us that what God was doing here with Habakkuk - is much bigger and much more important than this one man.

When I ask people to tell me why God dealt with the Old Testament Joseph the way He did- I get some interesting Answers. "*To preserve Israel*"; or "*Because He loved them*"; or "*Joseph was a type of Jesus*". And all of that is true. But why did God desire to preserve Israel? So, they could remain a people- until Jesus could be born as a Jew- in fulfillment of OT Prophecy. But why was that important? So, Jesus could live a sinless Life; die a vicarious Death; and rise again the 3<sup>rd</sup> day. But why was that important? So, all of God's elect could be saved.

So, why did God deal with the OT Joseph the way He did? The final Answer is,

“So, the Glory of God's Grace could be displayed and praised forever by God saving His elect by what He alone does for them”

... so, God dealt with Joseph so that you and I could go to Heaven!

Now as I have told you before- I went on a verse- by- verse “journey” through the **Epistle of Romans**, several years ago. And we examined every word of every verse of all 16 Chapters. It took me 9 years and 9 months to get through it. And when I began the “journey” I was a Pentecostal. And when I finished- I wasn't. I'm still not sure exactly what I am now- I really don't fit in with any religious “Camp”. But I know this- I am infinitely MORE biblical now than I was then. And I am closer to Jesus now than I was then. And I love God MORE now than I did then. And I was saved back then. That is the Power of the **Epistle of Romans**.

But I had read that the Protestant Reformation began on the heels of Martin Luther preaching through **Romans**. And I read where the First Great Awakening of the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century was brought about after Jonathan Edwards preached through **Romans**. And I wanted Revival in my own heart; and in my Church; and in my City- and so I began to teach through **Romans**. And it changed my life!

But if you had asked me before I went through **Romans**- what the major theme of the Book was- I would have told you, “*Grace*”. But I was surprised that the most common theme in the **Epistle of Romans** is, “*Righteousness*”.

And right here- in the very part of **Romans** where God the Holy Spirit “moved” on the Apostle Paul to use this Statement by God to Habakkuk,

**"BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."**

... the Point that Paul is making by quoting this Statement is:

**For in it [the Gospel] the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith**

So, why is God dealing with Habakkuk here- 600 years before Jesus was born? “*Well, God is telling this Prophet what He is about to do.*” Yes. True. Yet there is more. Much more. Because by dealing with this man’s Despair the way He did- God was bringing Salvation- not only to this one man- but to all who would one day be granted this Gift of Saving Faith. And, Lord willing, we will get into that more deeply next time.

Amen. Let’s pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.