

## OH LORD, REVIVE THY WORK

### TEXT: HABAKKUK 3:1-19

#### Introduction:

1. Since we interrupted our series the past two weeks on account of our special Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve service, I will briefly review.
2. The book of Habakkuk can be easily outlined into three parts.
  - CHAP. 1 – The prophet Habakkuk is WONDERING.
  - CHAP. 2 – The prophet Habakkuk is WAITING.
  - CHAP. 3 – The prophet Habakkuk is WORSHIPPING.
3. In Chapter 1, we see the PERPLEXED PROPHET who brought his problem to the Lord.
4. In Chapter 2, we see the WAITING PROPHET who received the answer from the Lord.
5. In Chapter 3, we see the REJOICING PROPHET who was strengthened in the Lord.
6. In Chapter 1, the prophet Habakkuk was perplexed, but thank God he is no longer perplexed. He has heard from heaven. Now he is worshipping God. Let me ask you: Are you worshipping God? Is that why you are here this evening? To worship God? I hope so.
7. The third chapter of Habakkuk is a poem, apparently a hymn, an anthem of praise (cf. 3:19). It includes praise, thanksgiving, adoration, and most importantly – a plea for REVIVAL (3:2). Our church needs revival. Our nation needs revival. So tonight I would like to preach on the subject of revival.

**I. IN ORDER TO HAVE REVIVAL, WE FIRST MUST HAVE THE FEAR OF GOD (HAB. 3:2).**

1. Notice what Habakkuk says. "O LORD, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid (3:2). Do you know why there is no fear of God today? People are not hearing from God. Habakkuk heard from God. He said: "I have heard thy speech, and was afraid."
2. Romans 3:17 says this about sinners: "And the way of peace have they not known." Why is that?
3. The next verse, Romans 3:18, says, "There is no fear of God before their eyes."
4. We can never have revival without the Word of God. And we will not see souls saved without the fear of God.
5. And how can we expect to see God bless our church and to see souls saved when Christians are not right with God, when they are not reading their Bibles, when they are carnal and worldly?
6. We have churches full of people who are driven by their emotions, rather than by the Word of God. The Psalmist said, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee" (Psalm 119:11).
7. "Stablish Thy word unto Thy servant, who is devoted to Thy fear" (Ps. 119:38).
8. Jesus prayed for His disciples in John 17:17. He prayed to God the Father, "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth."
9. But many Christians today are not devoted to the Word of God. They are not being directed by the Word of God. We can expect this from the unsaved, but God's children ought to be devoting their time to the careful study of God's Word.
10. Habakkuk said, "O LORD, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid..." (Hab. 3:2). Habakkuk had the fear of God because he heard from God.

11. We need to hear from heaven. Habakkuk heard from heaven (3:2). The fearful report to which he refers is the revelation in chapter 2, concerning Judah's coming chastisement. Are you afraid of God's chastisement? "O LORD, revive Thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy" (3:2).
12. In answer to his prayer, Habakkuk received a glorious revelation of God. He saw what is described as a theophany, i.e. a glorious appearing of God (3:3).
13. This is a vision of the second coming of Christ. Isaiah saw this vision. Daniel saw this vision. Zechariah saw this vision. Many of the OT prophets saw this vision, including Habakkuk.
14. The LORD is seen coming from Teman, one of the great cities of Edom. He is "the Holy One" and He is coming from Mount Paran, between Edom and Sinai (3:3).
15. The LORD is "the Holy One" (3:3). In Chapter 1, Habakkuk was perplexed. He kept thinking that the Babylonians were so wicked and the Jews were so righteous. So why was God allowing these heathen Babylonians to punish His Chosen People? (Cf. Hab.1:1-4).
16. But now Habakkuk understands. He has heard from heaven. He has seen "the Holy One" (3:3). Now he was no longer thinking about how bad the Babylonians were. Now he was no longer thinking about how good the Israelites were. Now he was thinking about how holy God was!
17. There is a direct connection between God's holiness and man's sinfulness. The more we comprehend God's holiness the more we abhor our own sinfulness.
18. When we start thinking like that, then God will start to move. Let's not worry about how bad the heathen are. God will take care of them. Let's just make sure that we are right with God.

19. Let's make sure we are right with God, then God will take care of everything else.
20. Habakkuk began to realize that the distinction between the Babylonians and the Israelites was relatively unimportant in the light of God's holiness, in the light of God's majesty, and in the light of God's glory.
21. Now Habakkuk saw it – the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man. Do you see it? Your own sinful heart?

## II. AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE JUDGMENT OF GOD

1. To properly understand the second coming of Christ, we have to trace it out throughout the Bible. And when we do that we see it is a time of judgment.
2. For example, we see here that our Lord will come from Edom (3:3; cf. Isa. 63:1-6).
3. But yet, in the midst of this terrible scene of judgment and anger and fury and vengeance, we read these words: "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save" (Isa. 63:1).
4. And Habakkuk asks God, "in wrath remember mercy" (Hab. 3:2; cf. 3:13).
5. But the multitudes are rejecting God's mercy. They reject salvation. They are determined to do things their way. And so God sends the pestilence (Hab. 3:5).
6. You will recall Jesus said: "And there shall be famines, and pestilences" (Matt. 24:7). This includes herpes and AIDS.
7. The "burning coals" (Hab. 3:5) refer to burning plagues (cf. Num. 11:1-3; Ps. 18:12-14).

8. Proud and arrogant men, haughty unbelievers, knaves and fools are trying to bring in peace on earth without the Prince of Peace. One of the ways they are attempting this is through the UN and their New World Order. But God is going to judge the Christ-rejecting nations (Hab. 3:6).
9. If Habakkuk knew that judgment was sure in his day, how much more should we?
10. God is looking down from heaven upon a world that has rejected the Gospel. A world that has rejected the Lord Jesus Christ and has deified man.
11. A world that has thrown off all restraints – restraints against adultery, divorce, homosexuality, abortion, etc.
12. Psalm 2:2 says, “The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.”
13. This world hates Jesus. They are shaking their fists at God and saying, “We will not have this man to reign over us” (Luke 19:14).

### **III. THE PROPER RESPONSE OF GOD’S PEOPLE (HAB. 3:16-19).**

1. Habakkuk said, “When I heard...” (3:16).
2. We have heard God’s Word preached from this pulpit week after week. Now what do we do? (cf. Acts 2:37-41).
3. Habakkuk trembled when he heard from God. But he was “resting” in the LORD (3:16). Are you resting in the Lord? Jesus said, “Abide in me, and I in you” (John 15:4).

4. Are you abiding in Christ? Or are you in a state of conflict? Are you in the flesh? Are you defeated? Gripping? Murmuring?
5. Habakkuk was rejoicing in the LORD, in the God of his salvation (3:18). Is He the God of your salvation?
6. I recently read an article about Florence May Chadwick (November 9, 1918 – March 15, 1995), the American swimmer who was the first woman to swim the English Channel from England to France in both directions. She did this in 1950.
7. In 1952, Florence was the first woman to attempt to swim the 26 miles between Catalina Island and the California coastline. As she began swimming, she was flanked by small boats that watched for sharks and were prepared to help her if she got hurt or grew tired.
8. After about 15 hours a thick fog set in. Florence began to doubt her ability, and she told her mother, who was in one of the boats, that she didn't think she could make it.
9. She swam for another hour before asking to be pulled out, unable to see the coastline due to the fog. As she sat in the boat, she found out she had stopped swimming just one mile away from her destination.
10. Two months later, Chadwick tried again. This time was different. The same thick fog set in, but she made it the second time because she said that she kept a mental image of the shoreline in her mind while she swam. The second time, she was not distracted by the fog.

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. Spurgeon often preached about revival, and he saw revival.
2. In a message preached from Habakkuk 3:2 (November 11th, 1856), Spurgeon said, "Look at our prayer-meetings, with here and there a bright exception. Go in. There are six women; scarcely ever enough members

come to pray four times. Look at them. Prayer-meetings they are called; spare meetings they ought to be called, for sparely enough they are attended. And very few there are that go to our fellowship-meetings, or to any other meetings that we have to help one another in the fear of the Lord.”

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