

VICTORY IN A TROUBLED WORLD

Passage: Habakkuk 3:17-19

Date: 2020-06-07

INTRO: I had a little break in my preaching schedule and studied a verse that I have long pondered. For the first time I felt I gained an understanding of it. I had spent so much time on the verse, and had written down so much I thought I might use it for a message because of the amount of time I spent on it. I was almost done and then I got up the other morning, and after my Bible reading and prayer time, I caught up with the latest news. And then I thought of how tiring it is to hear bad news after bad news.

And then I thought of the subject of rejoicing in the Lord. Maybe it was time to do a message on taking time to rejoice in the Lord. I want to take us to Habakkuk 3 this morning. I have spoken on Habakkuk 3:17-19 before, and because my time was short in preparing for this message I will give some of the history I have given you in another message so that we get the background to this little book. This history will help us to understand the context in which our text takes place.

The background of Habakkuk's book takes us to a dark period of Israel's history. The nation had been going down for years. God had sent warning through the prophets to both the northern kingdom and the southern kingdom. Then in 722 BC, because of failure to heed God's warnings, the northern kingdom went into captivity. Judgment had come. Yet all the while God kept warning the southern kingdom. But alas, they went the way of their wayward sister. And in 586, not long after Habakkuk wrote, disaster struck the nation. Babylon came and the horrors that befell the nation would fill books. And in this book, Habakkuk gets a preview of what is going to happen. He lived in a day when everything looked dark.

God has warned the southern kingdom over and over again as He had also done to the northern kingdom. And during the reigns of Hezekiah and Josiah, the nation put away their false gods and

restored the laws of God and enjoyed a time of peace and prosperity. But when Josiah's son Jehoiakim began to reign, the nation once more fell into persistent sin and grew in its wickedness. And Habakkuk, writing in about 607 B.C., writes just a few years after Nineveh was destroyed and about 20 years before the southern kingdom is also led captive by Nebuchadnezzar. This is the same Nebuchadnezzar who took Daniel captive, and you can read of Nebuchadnezzar's reign in the book of Daniel.

I. THE CONTEXT OF OUR TEXT

So, let me now give you a brief overview of this little book. I am giving this as I have given it before. It is the context of our text. We begin by reading 1:1-4:

1 The burden which the prophet Habakkuk saw.

Whenever I read of the burden of a prophet I groan. It seems to me that blessed is the man who can live life without such a burden. Verse 2:

2 O LORD, how long shall I cry, And You will not hear? Even cry out to You, "Violence!" And You will not save.

3 Why do You show me iniquity, And cause me to see trouble? For plundering and violence are before me; There is strife, and contention arises.

4 Therefore the law is powerless, And justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous; Therefore perverse judgment proceeds.

The state of the nation is on Habakkuk's mind. It is this that is his burden. Such a burden can make everything else in life more difficult. It can bring discouragement. It can plunge one into a deep the valley. Now, Habakkuk has two things that perplex him. The first could be worded like this: "O Lord, how long shall I cry, and You will not hear?" Well God begins to answer in verses 5-6. He says to Habakkuk beginning in verse 5:

5 *"Look among the nations and watch – Be utterly astounded! For I will work a work in your days Which you would not believe, though it were told you.*

6 *For indeed I am raising up the Chaldeans, A bitter and hasty nation Which marches through the breadth of the earth, To possess dwelling places that are not theirs.*

I think we could read verse 5 like this: *"Look among the nations and watch – Be utterly astounded! For I am already working a work in your days."* Then God says, "If I told you the work I am already preparing for, you would not believe it though it were told you." So horrible will the outcome of this work be that Habakkuk would go into shock because of this news. God will raise up the Chaldeans and He will discipline the southern kingdom and it will be very severe.

If you want to read what God is preparing to do on this earth not long from now we too would be utterly astounded. Read Revelation 6-19, and ponder the events described there, and it can but leave on astounded.

The Lord has sought to relieve Habakkuk's perplexity. He has told Habakkuk that He is about to deal with the southern kingdom, and He will use the Chaldeans to do so. But this answer has only served to raise a second cause for perplexity with Habakkuk. We find this in 1:12-2:1:

12 *Are You not from everlasting, O LORD my God, my Holy One? We shall not die. O LORD, You have appointed them for judgment; O Rock, You have marked them for correction.*

13 *You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours A person more righteous than he?*

Habakkuk is saying, "Lord! You have appointed Israel for judgment! Now Lord, you cannot behold evil or look on wickedness. How can You think of using a nation more wicked than Judah to punish her!" Verse 14:

14 *Why do You make men like fish of the sea, Like creeping things that have no ruler over them?*

15 *They take up all of them with a hook, They catch them in their net, And gather them in their dragnet. Therefore they rejoice and are glad.*

16 *Therefore they sacrifice to their net, And burn incense to their dragnet; Because by them their share is sumptuous And their food plentiful.*

17 *Shall they therefore empty their net, And continue to slay nations without pity?*

I would put it like this: "Lord, Judah is wicked, but they are not anywhere near as wicked as Babylon. How can You use someone more wicked to punish someone less wicked? This seems out of character for You. I don't understand. Why would You make some people, including Israel like fish in the sea, and use someone as ungodly as these Babylonians to catch people less wicked than they are like fish in a net. And to top it off Lord, when they are all done with the net, they sit down and worship the net. How can You use a nation like this for such purposes?"

Look now at how he closes his time of questioning in 2:1:

1 *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.*

Well, the Lord begins to answer Habakkuk in verse 2 like this:

2 *Then the LORD answered me and said: "Write the vision And make it plain on tablets, That he may run who reads it.*

3 *For the vision is yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; Because it will surely come, It will not tarry.*

4 *"Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith.*

Here we have an amazing contrast. The proud, the Babylonians, are contrasted with those who live by faith. But the nation of Israel was falling farther and farther into unrighteousness. This nation will have to suffer. But in the midst of that suffering that would come at the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the just still need to live by faith. At about the time Habakkuk wrote or shortly thereafter, Daniel and his friends were taken captive to Babylon. The days were dark and the future looked bleak, and soon it would prove to be bleak. Israel would go into captivity.

Maybe I could summarize these two chapters like this. First, Habakkuk asks how long he is to pray before the Lord does something. And the Lord says, "I am already at work. I will bring the Chaldeans upon Judah to discipline her." And then Habakkuk asks, "Lord, how can you use a nation more wicked than Judah to discipline her?" And the Lord says, "I will use a nation worse than Judah to discipline her, and when I have done that, I will deal with that nation. I will destroy her."

We now come to chapter 3. Here is how I see this book. Habakkuk had a real battle going on in his mind. He could not understand what God was doing and how God would let the Babylonians destroy their beloved country and their beloved city, Jerusalem. It raged in his heart. May I ask, do you have things that rage in your heart? Then you are a candidate to experience what Habakkuk, or shall we call him the Wrestler (as his name seems to mean), experienced with God. He, like Jacob of old, wrestled with God until he prevailed and found peace with God in the midst of his very troubling circumstances.

We go now to chapter 3. Verse 1 says:

1 *A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, on Shigionoth.*

Well, chapter three is a prayer of Habakkuk. In verses 2-7, Habakkuk describes God when He is about to execute justice on a wicked nation. And here, there might be a foreshadow of the tribulation when He will execute justice on the whole world. All that is happening in the world right now will soon meet with God as He is described here in the tribulation time. In verses 8-15 Habakkuk describes what will happen.

And verse 16 says this:

16 When I heard, my body trembled; My lips quivered at the voice; Rottenness entered my bones; And I trembled in myself, That I might rest in the day of trouble. When he comes up to the people, He will invade them with his troops.

So Habakkuk said, "When I heard, my body trembled..." The word 'body' would better be translated 'belly'. I ask you what kind of news makes your belly tremble? What did Habakkuk hear? Well, he heard that God was already preparing the Chaldeans to discipline disobedient Judah. Judah will be invaded by Nebuchadnezzar and when you know the Chaldean people you can picture the gruesome scene that is to follow. And Habakkuk's belly trembled.

Then he says, "My lips quivered at the voice." And to that he adds, "Rottenness entered my bones." And then he says, "I trembled in myself." What lay before the Jewish people was very frightening. While Habakkuk's people lived in pleasure and pride, Habakkuk foresaw the future and he quaked all over because of what he had heard. When our future is uncertain it can make us quake. What caused Habakkuk's body to undergo such trauma was what now lay in the future for his nation.

Do you struggle when you see the injustice and unrighteousness that is happening in our world? Read Revelation 6-19 to see what God is now already preparing

to bring about. If one grasps how horrific it will be, one's tummy might well quake and one's lips tremble.

And what I see at the close of this chapter is that Habakkuk was content to rest in the fact that in the end full justice would take place. God was and would do the right thing. He could trust in God.

With all that is happening in our world today, there is cause for depression. But I want to encourage us to something from the last words in this little book.

II. THE TEXT

What we have looked at in brief gives us the context of verses 17-19. These verses are out text. All of our life is lived in some context. In all of life there are those circumstances where we need to continue to learn to live by faith. Today we have the coronavirus and it is affecting the whole world. All of our lives have all been disrupted to some degree. Then all of us have personal circumstances to learn to trust God in. All of us have those things that can zap joy out of our lives, and all of us can learn to rejoice in the midst of life's various trials.

So we want to learn from Habakkuk, because no matter how dark life was, he ends his book on a very positive note in verses 17-19. So let us look at those verses:

17 Though the fig tree may not blossom, Nor fruit be on the vines; Though the labor of the olive may fail, And the fields yield no food; Though the flock may be cut off from the fold, And there be no herd in the stalls -

18 Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

19 The LORD God is my strength; He will make my feet like deer's feet, And He will make me walk on my high hills.

Here is the picture I get. Judah will be invaded by Babylon with the purpose of discipline for their sin and to bring about repentance. Yet Habakkuk will wait quietly because the Lord has also promised to deal with Babylon. And now, when the invasion takes place, life as usual will come to an end. The fig tree will likely no longer blossom. It was such an integral part of Israeli life. The vine, such a treasured commodity in Israel would likely no longer be grown. The labor of the olive, which yielded the precious olive oil would no longer be available, and the fields would not produce food. The flocks would be cut off from the fold and the herd would no longer be in the stalls. It was a bleak and dark picture. Life as they had known it for so long would now come to an end. Everything would change.

But Habakkuk says, "Yet, in spite of all this, I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Now I ask, how can one rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of one's salvation when the picture before one is so bleak? Well, Habakkuk had the promise of God and so do we.

So let me point out where the real battle is fought. It is fought in the mind. Here God or the devil wins. In the Bible, the mind is called the heart. And it is in our minds that rejoicing takes place. So we want to learn from Habakkuk first, what to do when life has circumstances that are dark and difficult.

A. What To Do - Rejoice

Habakkuk, in the midst of the darkness, said, "In spite all the darkness around me, in spite of it all, I will rejoice in the Lord." So we ask, just what is rejoicing? The word used in Habakkuk is *awlaz*. This word has been said to have the thought of, to exult, or triumph, or exuberate, or glory, or jubilate. The NT word is *chairō*. The Theological Wordbook of the OT says of this and related words, "These words describe

an emotion of joy which finds expression in singing and shouting. It is inappropriate for one in anguish (Jer 15:17) and for one who has sinned (Jer. 11:15). By contrast it is the natural response of the faithful (Ps. 149:5)... (II:670).

There are three key NT words that have the same root word. They are grace, thanksgiving and rejoicing or joy. Colin Brown's Dictionary says that, "words formed from the Greek root Char indicate things which produce well-being..."

Circumstances such as described by Habakkuk want to take joy out of life. Instead of rejoicing there may be depression or heaviness. I think that rejoicing might have a fairly wide range of what one senses. It might range from a state of rest and contentment to singing or shouting with joy. But always there is a sense of well-being. To rejoice in the Lord must take into consideration the circumstances around one and a certain knowledge that causes one to be content or to sing or praise the Lord.

Rejoicing in ignorant bliss is not true rejoicing. One has to learn to rejoice in spite of the darkness or difficulties. Habakkuk, fully aware of what was happening and what was coming said he would still rejoice in the Lord. To rejoice requires some information from somewhere that causes one to triumph over the problems one is facing.

B. How To Do It - In The Lord

So the question now is, how does one rejoice when life is difficult? How does one rejoice when coronavirus rules the world? How does one rejoice when one knows dark days lie ahead? Where does one find information that will help one to triumph over difficulties, disappointments and disillusionment?

So we ask, where did Habakkuk find this information that would cause him to triumph no matter what might happen in the future? Well, the answer he gives is that he will rejoice in the Lord. We could take verse 17, which says:

17 Though the fig tree may not blossom, Nor fruit be on the vines; Though the labor of the olive may fail, And the fields yield no food; Though the flock may be cut off from the fold, And there be no herd in the stalls-

And instead of reading it like that, we could put our own situations in it like this:

17 Though all that has happened, and all that is happening now, and it looks like this or that is about to happen and everything looks bleak-

18 Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

But that brings us now to a difficult question: Just how does one rejoice *in the Lord*? Habakkuk gives us first the place where we should place our attention. It is on the LORD.

Now it is not that Habakkuk did not question the Lord in his life. But when he did, he went to the Lord for the answers. He said:

2 O LORD, how long shall I cry, And You will not hear? Even cry out to You, "Violence!" And You will not save.

3 Why do You show me iniquity, And cause me to see trouble? For plundering and violence are before me; There is strife, and contention arises.

4 Therefore the law is powerless, And justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous; Therefore perverse judgment proceeds.

If one follows the news today that is what is happening all over the world. Sometimes I wonder, "Should a person just not keep up with the news and live in unknowing bliss?" But Habakkuk did not do that. He saw what was happening and he was concerned. And in his concern he went to the Lord for answers.

And God said, "I am going to bring the Chaldeans on this land and deal with their sinfulness." And then Habakkuk said, "Lord, would you do such a thing as use a nation more corrupt than Your people to punish them?" And the Lord said, "When I have used the Chaldeans to spank My people, I will deal with them." And when Habakkuk saw what the Lord would do with the proud, high and mighty Chaldeans, he sings God's praises in chapter 3. He has questioned God and found Him perfectly upright.

Now I find it easy to complain about the political world sometimes. But how often do I go to the Lord and ask, "Lord, what is going on? How do you let a man like Justin Trudeau be a leader of our country? How do you let the democrats in the US operate so corruptly, and they get away with it all? How do you let world leaders treat Israel so badly? How do you let Putin get away with evil year after year? How do you let Erdogan get away with all he is doing? How do you allow people to strangle men like Khashoggi and justice never seems to happen?"

God told Habakkuk what He would do when Habakkuk asked. I know what God will do in the future when I search the prophetic Scriptures. Do I find my comfort in the Lord?

In Habakkuk 3:17-19 we can learn some secrets for times like we are in. Habakkuk was resolved to rejoice in the Lord and joy in the God of his salvation.

Let me read verses 17-19 again. Here we have Habakkuk's resolve: "I will rejoice in the LORD, I

will joy in the God of my salvation." He would take his eyes off his troubles and put them on the Lord. That is not easy. We have an illustration of this in the life of Christ. One day Jesus was with his disciples across the Sea of Galilee. And in the evening He sent them back while He remained behind. After they were out on the sea a storm came up and they rowed all night and never got across. And in the fourth watch, toward morning Jesus came along, walking on the water. We begin in verse 25:

25 Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea.

26 And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear.

27 But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid."

28 And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water."

29 So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus.

30 But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"

31 And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

There we have a picture of Habakkuk's day. Everything looks dark. But there is a master of the sea walking on the troubled waters. And what lesson do we learn here that Habakkuk had already learned? Don't take your eyes off of the Lord. Keep your eyes on the Lord.

And in the middle of the storm, the Lord can reach out His hand and hold us up. And verse 32 says:

32 And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

The lesson for that time was over. All of our lives we need to learn this lesson in new ways. So Habakkuk said, "I will rejoice in the LORD." Now I want to make a proposition. Some years ago I studied worship. My conclusion is that praise and worship are two very different things. Worship is when we have our eyes on the Lord and we acknowledge Him either for who He is or, what He has done or is doing or will yet do. Worship always puts us down. We might bow our head or bend our knees. Worship acknowledges how little I am and how big God is.

We have very few worship hymns but one outstanding hymn of worship is, "How Great Thou Art." You can't sing that song and jump and clap. It makes us small because it makes Him so big. And here is my conclusion: We very seldom worship God. And when we do, we run out of what to worship Him with in 2 minutes. If you question that, do this some time. Kneel down to worship God and express to Him how great He is or how true He is or list any attributes and worship Him in describing to Him what you think of Him. List His great actions, past, present or future and acknowledge what an incredible God He is. And then see how long it took until you ran out.

And here is the conclusion I came to: One cannot worship God any further than one knows Him or can talk to Him about who He is. Well, I conclude that rejoicing in the Lord is like that as well. To rejoice in Him one has to know Him. And one has to be able to be able to think about these things either in one's mind or verbally say them. The more one knows the Lord, the more one can rejoice in Him at any time or any place one might be.

Note that Habakkuk pointed out one particular thing about God that caused him to rejoice. You will notice first that the word LORD is all in capitals. What does that mean? He is talking about Jehovah God. He is talking about the One and only true God. There is only one God who is God by nature. You see, you and I are human beings by nature. You can carve a human being, or make one out of cement, or set one up as a manikin but they are not a human being by nature, only by resemblance.

You can make gods of all kinds. Scripture says there are gods many and lords many. But there is only one God who is God by nature. This God, this Jehovah is the LORD, and He is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is Jehovah God. Habakkuk now has his eyes off of his troubles and on the one true God.

I propose that getting our eyes off of the troubled world and onto the Lord again and again is key to Christian victory when one recognizes the sad shape of our world. I find knowing prophecy one of the most comforting things in the midst of life's trials. I feel for those who sit in churches and prophecy is not taught. Habakkuk had learned what God would do and then he determined that no matter what was coming, no matter how dark it got, he would rejoice in the Lord.

But notice the one thing in particular about this LORD that he points out. He is the God of his salvation. This God is the God of his personal salvation. He was assured of his own personal salvation. He has given a very famous verse in this book. It is this: The just shall live by faith. Oh how key that is. In the midst of all the bad news and all the bad things that happen, in the midst of others dying one needs to learn to glory in one's salvation.

Let me ask you, how would you like to face what is happening in the world today and believe that man

evolved? Would you not be afraid? Would one not be like Peter who looked at the waves of the sea?

When we get our eyes off of life's circumstances and start to ponder this LORD, one's troubles, like the Apostle Peters can soon look a lot different. But much of our problem is that we cannot rejoice in the Lord much because we do not have much in our minds about Him. It is because we do not know Him well enough.

So I want to make some suggestions. One, before you catch up with the news, do your Bible reading. I know many of you do that already. So here is my next suggestion. In your Bible reading, when you note outstanding things God has done, or is doing or will yet do, make a note of that on paper. Sometimes one thing stands out as one reads and another time something else stands out. Jot those down. Then, when you have time to ponder things, ponder any of these you remember.

One day a lawyer came to Jesus to test Him with a question. Matthew 22:36 says:

36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?"

Verses 37-38 then say:

37 Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'

38 "This is the first and great commandment.

Now note in verse 37 that Jesus said we should love God with all our heart and all our mind. I have told you that the heart is the mind. Does anyone remember the word translated "mind" here? It would be a miracle if you did. It is not actually the mind. The original word is "dianoia". The *noia* part comes from one part of the mind which is the storage part called the *nous*.

The *dia* in front of it is a preposition which here means "through". I believe it means with all your thinking things through. When our mind is not otherwise occupied, it is busy thinking things through. Loving God with when we meditate on Him is the exact opposite of trying to empty one's mind as in transcendental meditation.

And the command here is to love God in such times when we have time to think on things. It takes great discipline to not let our dianoia lead us where it wants to go, and to take the reins and guide our thoughts where they should go. And it takes great discipline to lead them onto the path of rejoicing in the Lord. And one of the ways to do that is to worship God and another is to rejoice in the Lord. This requires discipline.

So when you read the Bible, jot down any name or attribute or action of God that stands out to you. For example, the very first chapter in the Bible has a lot of things about God one can ponder. Turn to Genesis 1. Before you get there, somebody tell me what the first four words are. Think of this, "In the beginning God..." What is God? Where was that beginning? Ponder that. It will tire you out but it will give you something very valuable to chew on.

Look at the next word, "created." God created. What does that mean? Well, when you study it, it means He brought things into existence that did not exist in any way before. If you ponder that and believe it, immediately you will learn that a God who can do this can easily do many other things.

There is so much to think about when you spend time pondering such a chapter. For example, look at verse 3. God said, "Let there be light. And there was light." There is an understood subject for the command

to let there be light. And who was that subject? Well, if you study it, it is the Lord Jesus Christ.

So look at verses 14-19. Here is what He did on the fourth day:

14 Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years;

15 "and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so.

16 Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also.

17 God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth,

18 and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good.

19 So the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

Now look at the last part of verse 16. It says, "He made the stars also." God made the planets and He made the stars also. Well, the planets are a very small thing compared to the stars. But from man's perspective the planets are the big thing.

Now when you study God, you could get a list of God's attributes and start to learn those. For example, we say He is omnipotent. That means He is all powerful. So think of this. He created the heavens and the earth. Think of this, on day four of creation it says, "And he made the stars also." That is indescribably phenomenal! The internet says the star VY Canis

Majoris is 2,000 times wider than our sun. So how big is it? Well, they say you could fit 9.3 million suns into this star. Well, they also say that the sun could hold about one million earths! The number of the stars cannot be counted, and on one of the days of creation it says, "God created the stars also."

And let me tell you this, if a person can believe in evolution, believing these numbers is not such a big thing. When you consider God, the world's problems seem to shrink. You know God knows what He is doing. So Habakkuk said, "Though everything that could go wrong goes wrong, I will rejoice in the LORD!"

You see, Habakkuk said:

17 Though the fig tree may not blossom, Nor fruit be on the vines; Though the labor of the olive may fail, And the fields yield no food; Though the flock may be cut off from the fold, And there be no herd in the stalls-

18 Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

CONCL: Yes, we live in a troubled world. We might live in personal problems and concerns and worries. These can lead to frustration, anxiety, and depression. But the Christian can learn to rejoice in the Lord. The Christian can learn to take his or her thoughts in control, take his eyes off of a troubled world, place them on an omniscient, eternal, all powerful God and rejoice in Him!

You can go on the internet and find hundreds of names for God, or Jesus, or the Holy Spirit. If one dwells on those as much as one might pay attention to what is happening around us, it could change our outlook on life in dark times.

Or one can check for a list of God's attributes. One could take one per day or week, and ponder that when one has free thinking time. And now, our dianoia, our thinking through things is being led by us and it is not leading us hither and yon. Oh, there are

times when it is nice to just let our minds rest. But there are many times when we need to take control.

17 Though the fig tree may not blossom, Nor fruit be on the vines; Though the labor of the olive may fail, And the fields yield no food; Though the flock may be cut off from the fold, And there be no herd in the stalls—

18 Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

Without disciplining ourselves to know God, we will always be limited as to how much we can rejoice in Him.