

Habakkuk: From Protest to Praise – Trembling, Yet Rejoicing Habakkuk 3:16-19

INTRODUCTION

Please turn in your Bible to **Habakkuk 3:16-19**. Today marks the end of our journey...from Protest to Praise. Throughout our study we have been tracing **Habakkuk's** own personal journey from a place of questioning, doubt and confusion at the beginning of the book to a place of faith, hope and confidence by the end of the book. As we said before, **Habakkuk** “*begins with a question mark and closes with an exclamation point.*” (J. Vernon McGee) And as we close out our study, I think you will agree that that is a very apt description for the book of **Habakkuk**.

When we come to **Habakkuk 3**, we turn a corner in our study. The whole tone of the book changes. **We move from confusion to clarity and from fear to faith.** Here is the key **observation: *Nothing has changed on the outside. Habakkuk has changed on the inside.***

The people are still mocking God, violence still fills the streets, and the Babylonians are still coming to Jerusalem. Outwardly everything is just as messed up as it was in the beginning. Yet **Habakkuk** the man has changed on the inside. How did that happen? This chapter gives us the answer.

The outline is very simple. **Habakkuk 3** consists of...

- A _____ – 3:1-2
- A _____ – 3:3-15
- A _____ – 3:16-19

Last time, we looked at the **prayer** and the **vision**. In this closing passage **Habakkuk** makes one of the strongest statements of faith you will find in all of Scripture. This statement makes a fitting climax to the whole book, and in many ways, we have saved the best for last with these verses.

Let's look at these closing verses together and see what we can learn for the strengthening of our own faith.

**I. Trembling yet trusting: _____
_____ for God even when you are
afraid (3:16)**

God had told **Habakkuk** about the coming invasion by the Babylonians. God had described the arrogance, violence, and cruelty of these invaders in chilling detail. God also told **Habakkuk** about the judgments He would bring upon Babylon and indeed upon all the nations of the earth that refuse to submit to God. **Habakkuk** may even have seen all this in a vision. And **Habakkuk** is terrified at what will soon take place. He is afraid. His heart pounds in his chest, his lips quiver, he feels physically weak and hardly able to stand.

Habakkuk wasn't just dealing with the possibility of attack on his country but with the certainty of attack. He was deathly afraid, and his fear affected him on a deep and even physical level.

How do you deal with extreme fear? What do you do when the fear grips you in such a way that your heart is pounding, and your legs give way? Do you try positive thinking? Deep breathing? Just try and push it out of your mind? How do you exercise faith in God during the worst of times?

Habakkuk says to wait patiently for God even when you are afraid. How do you exercise faith during the worst of times? Wait patiently for the Lord even when you are afraid. Rest yourself in God.

Next, please note...

II. Trembling yet joyful: _____ to rejoice in God even when everything in life goes wrong (3:17-18)

These verses represent one of the strongest expressions of faith you will find in the whole Bible as **Habakkuk** determines to rejoice in God even when everything else in life goes wrong.

Habakkuk paints three scenarios here. Each scenario contains a matching couplet of images.

A. The first scenario: *“Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines.”* The blossoms on the fig tree and the grapes forming on the vine refer to those things you are trusting for the future.

They are a symbol of _____ to come.

B. The second scenario: *“Though produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no fruit.”* The olive crop and the fields refer to those things you are trusting in the present.

They are a symbol of your _____ means.

C. The third scenario: *“though the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herds in the stall.”* The sheep and cattle refer to those things you are trusting from the past.

They are a symbol of your _____.

Lastly, please note...

III. Trembling yet strong: finding _____ in God to rise above my doubts (3:19)

Habakkuk had learned to find his strength in God, not in his own resources or ability. **Habakkuk** was about to go through some rough times. The thought of it scared him so much that his heart pounded, and his legs trembled beneath him. Yet as he rejoiced in God in the midst of difficult circumstances, he found new strength from God to deal with the trial ahead.

How do you exercise faith during the worst of times? Wait patiently for the Lord even when you are afraid. Choose to rejoice in God even when everything in life goes wrong. Find strength in God and in God alone.

CONCLUSION/INVITATION

And so, we have reached the end of our journey together through the book of **Habakkuk**. **Habakkuk**’s journey mirrors our own journey through life. We saw that **Habakkuk** began his journey with a lot of questions. *“Does God care? Is God fair? Is God there?”* But instead of running away from God with his questions, **Habakkuk** kept bringing his questions to God, and finding the answers that he needed. **Habakkuk** began his journey in the valley of doubt and fear, and ended his journey scaling the heights with God with feet like a deer.

It is a beautiful journey, and one that is open to all who will come honestly to God with their questions, and seek Him earnestly. **And so, wherever you may be in your own personal journey from doubt to faith, let me encourage you, keep seeking God.** Keep coming to Him with your doubts and with your questions. And I pray that God will also lead you to a place where you will learn to trust Him no matter what.