

HABAKKUK: A THEODICY
IV: Habakkuk's Example Of Living By Faith
(Habakkuk 3:1-19)

I. Introduction

- A. Habakkuk trusted in the Lord, but he struggled to understand how God Who was good and all-powerful would function at times seemingly indifferent to the existence of great evil in the world.
- B. The book of Habakkuk is thus a theodicy, a “defense of God’s goodness and power in view of the existence of evil,” Ryrie Study Bib., KJV, 1978, p. 1296, “Introduction to the Book of Habakkuk: Habakkuk’s Questions.”
- C. After God explained His justice in punishing Israel by a Babylonian invasion only later to punish Babylon by its being invaded, but that the just would survive the invasion by faith, God’s prophet in Habakkuk 3:1-19 applied this message, exemplifying how the godly are to live by faith. We view this passage for our application:

II. Habakkuk's Example Of Living By Faith, Habakkuk 3:1-19.

- A. Habakkuk responded to God’s news that He would use Babylon to punish Judah and then punish Babylon as the just survived by faith, and he did so by a prayer of submission and a request for mercy, Habakkuk 3:1-2:
 - 1. First, Habakkuk submitted to the Lord’s plan to punish Judah and then to punish Babylon, acknowledging that he was satisfied with God’s ways of dealing with them, Habakkuk 3:1-2a,b; Ibid., fn. to Hab. 3:2.
 - 2. However, Habakkuk also asked that God in His wrath in judgment might remember mercy, that God might cause Judah to survive Babylon’s invasion for God to fulfill His Abrahamic Covenant (Hab. 1:12) and for the godly remnant, to which Habakkuk belonged, to survive the invasion by faith (Hab. 2:4b), Hab. 3:2c.
- B. The prophet Habakkuk then witnessed a vision from the Lord about His great majesty and power that had been shown in Israel’s past and would also be applied in God’s future deliverance of the nation, Habakkuk 3:3-15:
 - 1. When God had arrived at Mount Sinai, “Moses had said the Lord’s appearance was like a light shining ‘from Seir . . . and from Mount Paran’ (Deut. 33:2).” (Bible Know. Com. O. T., p. 1518) Habakkuk thus wrote of this earlier divine visitation at Mount Sinai in Habakkuk 3:3a.
 - 2. God’s glory then covered the heavens and His praise filled the earth, Habakkuk 3:3b-4.
 - 3. The Lord’s judgments were then recalled in Israel’s history, Hab. 3:5-11 (Ibid., Ryrie, fn. to Hab. 3:5-11):
 - a. The judgment of pestilence on Egypt in Exodus 7-12 is recalled in Habakkuk 3:5.
 - b. God’s judgment on the rivers in Exodus 7:20-25 and the sea with Exodus 14:13-31 is noted in Hab. 3:8.
 - c. The Lord caused the sun and moon to stand still in Joshua 10:12-13, what is recalled in Habakkuk 3:11.
 - 4. Accordingly, these past judgments in this vision that Habakkuk saw were the precedents for God’s future judgments on His enemies (Habakkuk 3:12) and His deliverance of Israel (Habakkuk 3:13). (Ibid.)
 - 5. God’s final judgment on Israel’s foes is mentioned in Habakkuk 3:14, and it is based on God’s deliverance of Israel from the Egypt at the Red Sea, Habakkuk 3:15; Ibid., Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1521.
- C. This vision about God’s great power and majesty left Habakkuk trembling in his body, quivering in his lips at the sound, weakened in his bones, and shaking in his legs, Habakkuk 3:16a.
- D. However, moved to trust the Lord by this vision’s demonstration of God’s vast power and majesty to preserve His people even in their imminent judgment, Habakkuk resolved quietly to wait for the time of trouble, Habakkuk 3:16b. God’s prophet then described his life of faith in that trouble in Habakkuk 3:17-19:
 - 1. Though the fig tree not blossom and the vineyards bear no fruit, though the produce of the olive tree fail and the fields yield no food, though the flock be cut off and there be no herd in the stalls due to the looting of the invaders, Habakkuk would still rejoice in the Lord, the God of His salvation, Habakkuk 3:17-18.
 - 2. Habakkuk explained that the Lord God was his Strength, that He made his feet like the nimble feet of the deer, causing him to tread on his high places, figurative expressions of buoyant joy as he fellowshiped with God, surviving the Babylonian invasion and awaiting Judah’s final deliverance, Habakkuk 3:19; Ibid.

Lesson: *When Habakkuk submitted to God’s plan to use Babylon to punish Judah before He punished Babylon and to call the just remnant to survive the Babylonian invasion by faith, the Lord revealed His great majesty and power of His past deliverances of Israel as evidence of His motivation and ability to deliver Judah in her future. Armed with this moving revelation, Habakkuk chose to live by faith regardless what he faced in the invasion.*

Application: *The life of faith in God involves (1) submitting to His plan for us (2) followed by deciding to heed His call to live by faith, (3) to which God will respond to encourage that decision by demonstrating His great power, majesty and motivation to help us that we might fellowship with Him regardless what trials we face.*