

Habakkuk 1:5-11 – The Lord's reply

Objective: Know that God is sovereign

v. 5

The second part of this conversation in chapter 1 begins with God's reply to Habakkuk's complaint. The response the Lord gives is an amazing one as He doesn't dispute what Habakkuk was saying. In fact He is sympathetic towards Habakkuk instead of striking Him dead for questioning the situation. God knows the situation arising in Judah and has a plan that has been set into motion long before Habakkuk was around. As the Lord gave Habakkuk an answer after 12 long years you can imagine the amazement that he felt. Finally! An answer, hardly. More like oh my God, oh sorry, I mean gosh God are you actually giving me an answer? Have you ever been praying for something so long and so hard that when you got the answer you couldn't believe it? God's answer was not what Habakkuk was expecting either, but it does show that God knows the problem so much more deeply than this prophet's minute perception.

He reply's with look and be amazed – which means

utterly amazed: *tamahh* (taw-mah'); a sudden alarming amazement, to be astonished, to marvel.

It's the kind that knocks you back making you say are you serious? Kind of like when you have chocolate chip cookie dough peanut butter cheesecake from cheesecake factory. Or when you get that A on your organics test and the whole class is ready to kill you for messing up the curve or when you look up and stop in time before slamming into the car in front of you or when that person you've been praying for calls and says I'm done with chemo and the cancer is gone or when you look up at the sky and say thank you God for that amazing picture of color or when you read that verse and you feel His loving arms wrap around you and say "your ok, I've got you, everything will be just fine, your mine and I love you my child."

Have you ever had that moment? That moment when you knew God was there, when you knew God had you in His arms. When you could not believe what was going on and you were utterly amazed and astonished.

v. 6

The Babylonians were a nation northwest of the Persian Gulf, currently Iraq. They rose to power between 612 and 605 bc. They conquered the Assyrian and the Egyptian empires during their ruthless reign. They were merciless to the point where in 597 bc they conquered Jerusalem and destroyed the temple and took God's people into captivity.

He is going to use a wicked people to discipline His people – the nation of Israel. But, then he judges them because of what they had done to His people. You hurt my people and I'm gonna judge you for it. And later on the king of Persia wipes them out.

Doesn't that make you go what? That doesn't make sense.

Deut 28:49-50

The LORD will bring a nation against you from far away, from the ends of the earth, like an eagle swooping down, a nation whose language you will not understand,⁵⁰ a fierce-looking nation without respect for the old or pity for the young.

Here God is telling the nation of Israel what will happen when this disobey. God always warns us when we disobey...sometimes we just ignore the warning because we are happy where we are, in the sin we are living in. it's fun, makes me feel good, I'll deal with consequences later. I don't care. He also used the prophet Jeremiah and Isaiah to warn them repeatedly. But they still didn't listen.

The problem of evil is not a problem for God.

The existence of evil is part of the greater plan for God show the fullness of His divine attributes and for Him to receive the greatest amount of glory. God does all things for the ultimate purpose of His glory.

Romans 8:28 - And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Contrast this with Jesus. Perhaps the most unjust act in human history where the one being oppressed, the one being beaten and mocked and judged is perfect and innocent, God in the flesh. God takes those who are against Jesus and uses them to beat him, to mock him to nail him on a Roman cross and stabbed in the side by a spear and kill him. Then God holds them accountable for what they have done. Jesus Christ comes down from his throne at the right hand of God and takes on the likeness of man, letting go of equality with God to come in this world. And the trees he created were cut down and fashioned to a cross, the iron that was driven through his wrists and through his feet were hidden in a mountain that he made and harvested by His people who He created. A crown of thorns was made out of a bush that he created for His glory that was driven into his skull. Through this great act of injustice and horror, God's mercy is seen through and through. God takes his enemies to kill his own son whom he loves that he sent to die for us. Satan says I win ha! Take that. But through this horrible act of hate and injustice ends up being the greatest story of God's mercy and love and God is glorified because grace is poured out by Christ's blood.

The problem of evil is this – God does everything for His own glory. In creating this world, God is so wise that in order for Him to demonstrate his attributes and glorify Himself, evil was a necessity. You see it is not comforting to tell someone who has just lost a friend or a child that God could have done something but instead he turned his back and looked the other way so that he wouldn't infringe upon your free will. Do you think that is comforting? You mean God could've done something but He chose not to?

What about for that person to hear and understand that God is a sovereign God who is in control of ALL things, He is exhaustively sovereign. It is more comforting for me to hear that every atom ever particle of dust is moving and created in accordance to what His will is, to what brings Him glory. When pain and bitterness is given to me to drink I know my God whom I love has given it to me for His own glory. **That is my comfort and that is all Habakkuk has to hold on in this letter for his comfort.**