



habakkuk

GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

week 1

Overview of Habakkuk

Habakkuk is short, but it's packed with emotion, questions, and rich dialogue. It starts with Habakkuk crying out to God, and it seems like it's not his first time doing that. He says, "How long, Lord, must I call for help, but you do not listen?" (Habakkuk 1: 1–2 NIV). He's tired of all the injustice, violence, and destructive behavior of his own people, who are also God's people! While the late King Josiah brought revival, the people returned to their old ways right after he died. Habakkuk was over it.

The beautiful thing about this is that God responds to him! He doesn't tell Habakkuk to stop asking questions. He doesn't invalidate his feelings and frustrations. Instead, God tells him that He's going to use the Babylonians to bring justice to Judah. Habakkuk then questions why God would use even more wicked people to bring punishment. His questions are rooted in God's character, because He knows God's everlasting and holy. Then, Habakkuk waits. We don't know for how long, but we know he stands at the lookout tower awaiting God's reply.

When God answers, He first tells Habakkuk to write down the vision so one can run with it. His answer will be a pillar of hope and assurance, but it's also a vision. "For . . . an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay" (Habakkuk 2:3 NIV). He continues to list off five warnings to wicked people because God doesn't let them go unpunished. Habakkuk must wait and trust that God will be faithful because that's who He is. After encountering God's power and majesty, Habakkuk responds with a prayer that reflects on God's glory and strength.

Habakkuk's opening statement of this final prayer has been a pillar for the vision at Calvary: "Lord, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, Lord. Repeat them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy" (Habakkuk 3:2 NIV). The heart of Habakkuk's prayer is that we'd behold God, in all His glory, because that will strengthen our faith to continue praying bold prayers and living in bold obedience—and that's the heart of our prayer to make disciples and witness God's faithfulness from one generation to the next.

supporting scripture

Read this week's Scripture in addition to these supporting Scriptures:

Haggai 2:7; Lamentations 3:25–26; Job 13:15;
Romans 8:28–39; 2 Corinthians 4:16–18

application challenge

Habakkuk isn't afraid to take his questions, frustrations, and emotions to God. He draws near because he knows God's character, and because he draws near, he leaves knowing God even more intimately. This week, aim to spend 10–60 minutes in honest prayer with God. Whether you speak out loud on a walk, in the car, or write it down in a journal, come to Him with everything and ask Him for fresh vision to be revealed in your life.

group discussion guide

Pick your favorites to discuss with your group, family, or friends.

1. Habakkuk begins by asking, “How long, Lord?” What situations in our world, community, or personal lives make us ask similar questions today, and what can we learn from the way Habakkuk brings those concerns to God?
2. God’s answer to Habakkuk was not what he expected. Have you ever experienced a time when God seemed to be working in a way you didn’t understand? How did that affect your trust in Him?
3. Habakkuk’s questions are rooted in what he knows about God’s character. Why is it important to anchor our doubts and frustrations in who God is rather than in what we see around us?
4. One of the major themes of the book is waiting on God’s timing. What makes waiting difficult, and what practical habits can help us remain faithful while we wait for God to act?
5. By chapter 3, Habakkuk moves from questioning God to worshiping Him. What do you think caused that shift, and what does it teach you about the relationship between knowing God and trusting God?
6. Habakkuk prays, “In wrath remember mercy” (3:2) and asks God to make His deeds known again. If God answered that prayer in our church, city, or generation, what might that look like, and how could He use us to be part of it?



week 2

Habakkuk 1-2:1

At some point, we've all gone through a "why" phase. Maybe we've seen it in a child who asks endless questions, or we remember it from our own angsty teenage phase. We've all probably heard this answer at some point, too, "Because I said so." Perhaps, we've even used it to answer a curious child ourselves! We naturally want to understand what's happening around us. We want explanations. We want to know why things are the way they are.

Habakkuk is a fascinating book of the Bible because the whole book is a conversation between the prophet and God. Habakkuk sees his community surrounded by defeat and pain. As he cries out to God, "Why?! Why does it seem like evil is winning? Why does it seem like no right is being done in the world? Why is there no justice? Why does it seem like you're absent, God?" God responds by telling Habakkuk that the pain he sees hasn't taken Him by surprise. In fact, God has been and continues to be faithful in the midst of it.

Perhaps Habakkuk's tone towards God has caught you off guard. Who would dare approach the God of the universe so brash and bold? Jerome (347–420 AD) thought the same thing: "For no one has dared with so bold a voice to challenge God to debate about justice."¹ There certainly is a degree of boldness in which Habakkuk approaches God, but that's the beauty of this book. Throughout the Scriptures, one of the most consistent things we see is people who wrestle with God in prayer, and God responds.

What kind of king would welcome a lowly subject into his courts only to have that subject question him or express their grief about the evil he or she has experienced? Yet if you read the psalms, this is

exactly what God says is proper prayer and worship. We serve a King who rules with kindness and grace. Our King is a loving Father.

When we go before the Lord with all of life's worries and pains, we're welcomed with kindness and made aware of a certain truth: God's sovereignly active in every square inch of the world, including every square inch of our lives. That means we can look around in our situation and believe with hope that God will do something we wouldn't believe even if we were told (Habakkuk 1:5).

¹St. Jerome, *Commentaries on the Twelve Prophets*

supporting scripture

Read this week's Scripture in addition to these supporting Scriptures:

Isaiah 43:18–19; Ephesians 3:20–21; 1 Corinthians 2:9

application challenge

Habakkuk goes to God with a vision of how the world ought to be. What's wrong with the world as you see it? Have you taken those concerns and fears to God? Make a list of the things you hope God would make new around you, and take time this week to pray through that list.

group discussion guide

Pick your favorites to discuss with your group, family, or friends.

1. Where in your life are you currently asking God, “Why?” What does Habakkuk’s honesty teach us about bringing that question to God instead of hiding it?
2. Habakkuk looks at the world and feels like evil is winning. Where do you feel that tension most right now—personally, culturally, or spiritually?
3. Why do you think God allows Habakkuk to speak so boldly to him? What does that reveal about the kind of King and Father God is?
4. What’s the difference between complaining about God and lamenting to God? How can lament actually become an act of faith?
5. Habakkuk 1:5 says God’s doing something that Habakkuk wouldn’t believe even if he were told. Why is it hard to trust God’s work when we can’t yet understand His methods?
6. Habakkuk 2:1 (NIV) says, “I will stand at my watch.” What would it look like for you to wait on God faithfully instead of anxiously? What practices help you remain watchful, hopeful, and honest before Him?

week 3

Habakkuk 2:2-20

Are you the type of person who needs to write a to-do list? Whether it's on a notepad, a sticky note, or the phone, writing things down helps us keep the main thing, the main thing. When God answers Habakkuk a second time, he tells him to write down the vision so one can read it and run! This word is also used in Proverbs 18:10 to describe how the righteous "run" to the Lord, our fortified tower, and are safe. Those who run with this message will find security and comfort.

What makes this vision so encouraging? First, the vision "speaks of the end." The word "speaks" in Hebrew implies breath. God's actively breathing His plan into action, and it involves both divine judgment and deliverance. Although it may take time, God urges Habakkuk to wait, for God's righteous justice will come on those who are dishonest, violent, deceivers, murderers, idolaters, and evil. At the same time, God promises that "the righteous person will live by his faithfulness" (Habakkuk 2:4 NIV). After the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, this verse still applies, only now our faith is rooted in the fulfilled promise that "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21 NIV).

In Habakkuk 2:14, God declares that His divine justice serves a greater purpose as well! It's so the entire earth will be filled with the knowledge of His glory. This is the same word used to describe God filling the temple or tabernacle. God desires to dwell with His people, and the ultimate fulfillment of this will come at the end, when God's dwelling place is finally among the people in a new heaven and new earth (Revelation 21)!

Until then, remember the last thing God says in this chapter: "The Lord is in his holy temple" (Habakkuk 2:20 NIV). Think about it: When a king sits on a throne, he holds absolute power and authority. If he's a good king, his people will rest in his security, even when chaos surrounds them. Our King is even more worthy of our trust because He's God—the creator and sustainer of the universe—the King who already secured our redemption, and the King who will return one day in victory!

supporting scripture

Read this week's Scripture in addition to these supporting Scriptures:

Romans 1:16-17, Galatians 3:11, Hebrews 10:36-39, Revelation 21:1-8

application challenge

This week, intentionally encourage one person who's walking through a difficult season. Reach out to them with a call, text, handwritten note, or conversation, reminding them how God's faithful even when His timing is unclear. Pray that your words would help them trust God more deeply and see His goodness in the midst of their circumstances.

group discussion guide

Pick your favorites to discuss with your group, family, or friends.

1. In Habakkuk 2:2–3, God tells Habakkuk to write down the vision and wait for its appointed time. Why do you think God wanted the vision recorded, and what does this teach you about remembering God’s promises when you’re waiting?
2. Habakkuk 2:4 (NIV) says, “The righteous will live by faith.” How do Romans 1:16–17, Galatians 3:11, and Hebrews 10:36–39 expand your understanding of what it means to live by faith today?
3. The five woes in Habakkuk 2 reveal God’s opposition to pride, greed, violence, injustice, and idolatry. Which of these warnings feels most relevant in our culture, and why?
4. Habakkuk 2:14 (NIV) promises that “the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord.” How does this promise shape the way we view the brokenness and injustice we see around us today?
5. The chapter ends with, “The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him” (Habakkuk 2:20 NIV). What does it practically look like to trust God’s authority and rest in His rule when life feels chaotic or uncertain?
6. Where have you seen God meet you in a season of confusion, and what helped you move from questioning to trusting Him?



week 4

Habakkuk 3:1–15

Have you noticed that the older we get, the harder it is to remember? It's becoming more frequent that I'll walk into my kitchen for a glass of water, and as soon as I approach my fridge, I completely forget why I was there in the first place. In the Old Testament, one of the most consistent themes we see is that God's people are a forgetful people. But it's not calendar appointments or work meetings they're forgetting—they're forgetting God. They forget all God has done throughout the generations, all the ways He's demonstrated His providential care and faithfulness. And what's the result of their forgetfulness? Generations who forget the Lord and His Word.

Habakkuk 3:1–15 (NIV) reminds us that there's power in remembering. Habakkuk says, "I've heard of your fame, I stand in awe of your deeds." Well, what deeds? He then goes on to recount the ways God demonstrated His faithfulness and power by marching downward to Egypt to deliver His people, the story as seen in the earlier Old Testament books of Exodus through Joshua. "God would rise from the east (Teman) and head westward (Paran) to deliver his people. . . . Yahweh 'rises' like the sun in Teman and marches his way toward Egypt. His march is accompanied by praise and majesty in earth and sky."¹

And by recounting this story, Habakkuk's reminded that the God who provided and delivered back then, can do it again. The same God who overthrew evil and corrupted leaders could do the same again. There's real power in our memory of God's works. These memories stir our faith and give us hope! It's these memories that enable Habakkuk to pray and praise.

When we take time to remember God's work in our own lives, we're reminded that we live every day in the palm of His hand. The same God that worked back then can do it again—and He can work in our time and in our day!

¹Heath Thomas, Habakkuk (*Two Horizons Old Testament Commentary*)

supporting scripture

Read this week's Scripture in addition to these supporting Scriptures:

Psalms 77:11–14, Deuteronomy 8:2–18, Joshua 4:20–24

application challenge

Remembering isn't passive. You must choose to remember and create rhythms of remembrance so you can make it a habit. This week, take time to write out your favorite memory of God's work in your life. Take it a step further by sharing that story with your family, neighbors, coworkers, or your small group.

group discussion guide

Pick your favorites to discuss with your group, family, or friends.

1. Why do you think we're so quick to remember our fears, failures, and disappointments, but so slow to remember God's faithfulness?
2. What story are you most tempted to live inside right now: "God has forgotten me," or "God has been faithful and will be faithful again"?
3. Where in your life do you need to say, "Lord, I have heard of your fame; renew your deeds in our day"?
4. What are some "stones of remembrance" in your life—moments, people, prayers, or seasons that remind you God has carried you before?
5. How does forgetfulness shape a person spiritually over time? What kind of person will you become if you stop remembering God?
6. Habakkuk doesn't remember God's works as nostalgia, but as fuel for faith. What would it look like this week to remember in a way that actually changes how you pray, wait, or obey?

week 5

Habakkuk 3:16–19

Habakkuk 3:16–19 is one of the most powerful endings in all of Scripture. Not because there was some massive, miraculous climax or because anyone was saved from a den of lions or from walls that came tumbling down. It's powerful and important for us even today because **nothing** about Habakkuk's circumstances had changed.

The violence hadn't disappeared, the injustice hadn't been cleaned up, and the people of Judah were still guilty. The just judgment was still very real, and it came like a freight train in the form of the Babylonians. The future of the people of Judah still looked terrifying. Habakkuk even said, "I heard and my heart pounded, my lips quivered at the sound; decay crept into my bones, and my legs trembled" (Habakkuk 3:16 NIV).

Do you feel that? Habakkuk was afraid, but his fear didn't consume him. And that's what makes this passage so important and timeless for the people of God throughout the ages. Because in spite of the fear, the dread, and the very real looming threat of God's wrath, Habakkuk said, "Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior" (Habakkuk 3:18 NIV).

You see, Habakkuk didn't rejoice because life was easy. He wasn't praising because the economy was strong, the pantry was full, the nation was stable, and the future was bright. In fact, he envisioned the worst-case scenario: no figs, no grapes, no olives, no crops, no sheep, no cattle. And **yet**, he still said, "I will rejoice in the Lord."

That little word "yet" seems so insignificant, but it carries so much power. It indicates a faith that's standing strong in the wreckage and refusing to let circumstances rule over it. It's trust that says, "Even if everything I can see falls apart, God's still my Savior, He's still on the throne, He's still my strength, and He's still enough."

Throughout this short book, Habakkuk has moved from questioning God to waiting on God to worshiping God. He still doesn't know every detail of what's coming, but he trusts in, hopes in, and rests in the One who does—and that changes everything!

supporting scripture

Read this week's Scripture in addition to these supporting Scriptures:

Psalms 46:1–3; Psalm 73:25–26; Isaiah 41:10; Romans 8:28–39; Philippians 4:10–13

application challenge

Habakkuk chose to rejoice before his circumstances improved. This week, choose one way to serve someone else before your own situation is resolved. Volunteer at church, help a neighbor, encourage a struggling friend, or meet a practical need. Let your service become an act of trust that says, "God's still good, and I can still be part of His work."

group discussion guide

Pick your favorites to discuss with your group, family, or friends.

1. Which part of Habakkuk 3:16–19 feels most honest or relatable to your current season?
2. Why do you think Scripture allows room for trembling, fear, and grief instead of pretending faithful people never struggle?
3. What are some “fig tree” or “field” areas in your life where you’re tempted to attach your joy to outcomes?
4. What’s the difference between rejoicing in the Lord and pretending everything is okay?
5. How does knowing God as your Savior and your strength change the way you face uncertainty?
6. What would it look like this week to say, “Yet I will rejoice,” in a real and practical way?