

## Trusting God in Troubled Times

Read: Habakkuk 1:1-17

### Introduction:

As we begin this new series on Habakkuk, we delve into a short but eminently relevant study for our time. Habakkuk was a prophet to the Southern Kingdom in a very unstable and difficult time. Led by bad kings, Israel was in a state of decline and instability, marked by rampant injustice and violence. Moreover, it faced the constant threat of invasion by the powerful and ruthless Babylonians. In that bleak historic moment Habakkuk turned to God for perspective and help. And the prophet's dialogue with God teaches us important lessons on what to do in deeply troubled times.

### Discussion:

1. As God's people in very different time periods, what are some similarities and differences between what we face now and what Habakkuk faced then?

The Christian faith is not indicated by the absence of doubt or struggle.

**When troubled, it's okay to bring complaints and raise questions to God!**

2. If you get riled up by the contentious social issues of our days (COVID, politics, racial injustice, etc.), to whom do you go to talk about those strong thoughts and feelings?
3. The sermon encourages us to approach God in those moments - with the boldness and emotional honesty seen in Habakkuk. How does the thought of engaging God that way make you feel? (Excited? Intimidated?)

**God's response may not be what we want to hear.** God's response to Habakkuk was not what he expected or wanted. The prophet was shocked and dismayed that God planned to raise up the violent and evil Babylonians to address the violence and evil in Israel.

4. Have you ever been dismayed by God's response? Are you willing to revisit that experience in light of Pastor Paul's suggestion, that it might be an indication you are actually dealing with the real God of the Bible?

5. Even though God's perspective can be difficult to grasp at the time, eventually it will prove benevolent and redemptive (Isaiah 55:8 and Romans 11:33.) Pastor Paul illustrates this point by tracing the far-reaching repercussions of the Babylonian conquest, which led to many unexpectedly positive historical developments.

In light of this important truth, what attitude and expectation should we adopt when God's response to our plea for help "doesn't make sense?"

**God's response tells us something more...** His inscrutable response to Habakkuk found its ultimate fulfillment in the Cross. Through the violence done to Christ, God "*put an end to evil and violence with evil and violence; brought salvation through judgment, justice through injustice, and peace through an act of violence.*"

6. Romans 8:32 says, "He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?" What other scriptural passages come to mind that can help us trust God more even when His response may appear baffling?

### Apply:

Let us lean into God now, as we face our own troubled times. May we approach Him in boldness and honesty, knowing that He welcomes our questions and can handle our doubts and struggles.