Dazed, Confused, Yet Faithful!
The Book of Habakkuk
Message Series begins June 25

It has been said that the Old Testament book of Habakkuk (no pronunciation penalty points) begins with a question mark and ends with an exclamation point! This Bible book shows us how to walk faithfully in a chaotic world.

Let me give you a brief overview of this powerful, three-chapter, 56 verse book that serves as the basis for this message series called "*Dazed, Confused, Yet Faithful*." I will first give you some facts and then give you the overall message of the book of Habakkuk which I pronounce as follows: Ha (as in "ha-ha"), bakk (as in "I hurt my back"), and uk (rhymes with "buck"). Ha-back-uck, with an emphasis on the second syllable.

THE FACTS OF HABAKKUK:
We know very little of the prophet Habakkuk apart from this book. He is a most unusual prophet in that he does not speak to people from God but rather speaks to God from the people. Habakkuk was a contemporary of Ezekiel and Jeremiah and would have been 10-15 years older than Daniel. He is writing before God's people, Judah, were taken into Babylonian captivity.

Habakkuk is one of the minor prophets of the Old Testament. There are 17 prophetical OT books, 5 are called "major prophets" and 12 are called "minor prophets." They are differentiated only because of the size of their writings, not the importance of their writings. In some Bibles, the five major prophets take up 191 pages while the twelve minor prophets take up only 61 pages.

Habakkuk is a short book with a formidable and contemporary message. He is asking, "God, where are you, what are you thinking, are you paying attention, and will you do anything about this chaos?"

THE MESSAGE OF HABAKKUK

Viewed from a satellite, planet earth looks calm, orderly and beautiful. Up close and in person, we can all tell a different story of various episodes of chaos, violence, hatred, injustice and disorder.

Why doesn't God do something about this nonsense and do something now? How long will God turn a seemingly blind eye to obvious points that cry out for divine attention? Why do the wicked prosper and many righteous suffer? Even among the people of God, we see behaviors that warrant our pleas for God's correction.

We are not the first to raise the questions of "why" and "how long." This is the cry of Habakkuk.

Habakkuk Chapter One: Complaining

In chapter one, Habakkuk offers two complaints. First, God's own people, Judah (think church), are behaving with incorrigible wrongdoing and wickedness. Habakkuk longs for God to protect the righteous and punish the wicked for their terrible crimes. God tells him that He will indeed discipline His own people through the Babylonians, which leads to complaint number two.

"God, how can you discipline your own people, sinful as they are, through the Babylonians who are far worse?" Habakkuk couldn't understand how God could punish ***one*** nation of wicked people by using ***another*** nation of even ***more*** wicked people. It just didn't seem right. It didn't make any sense.

Habakkuk Chapter Two: Waiting

God tells Habakkuk that He is indeed paying attention and for Habakkuk to wait patiently and see what He brings about in due time. Warren Wiersbe said: "The ability to calm your soul and wait before God is one of the most difficult things in a Christian's life. Our old nature is restless. The world around us is frantically in a hurry but a restless heart usually leads to a reckless life."

There are two well-recognized Bible verses in the second chapter of Habakkuk. Verse 4 is quoted three times in the New Testament: "the righteous person will live by faith" – faithfulness. There is another well-known Scripture in 2:20 - *The LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him.*

Habakkuk Chapter Three: Praising

Habakkuk sees no immediate change in circumstances, but he does receive God's promises of attention and faithfulness. He did not receive detailed explanations, but he did receive reminders of God's presence and wisdom. These reminders from the Lord gave him a renewed determination to be faithful.

In chapter 1, Habakkuk is saying, "God, I don't understand." In chapter 2, God said, "Be patient and wait." In chapter 3, Habakkuk is at peace.

The beginning of this book is filled with mystery ("God, I don't understand"), the end is filled with certainty. The beginning is filled with questions, the end with confident affirmation.

One of the most beautiful descriptions of faithfulness is recorded in 3:17-19

17 Though the fig tree does not bud
and there are no grapes on the vines,
though the olive crop fails
and the fields produce no food,
though there are no sheep in the pen
and no cattle in the stalls,
18 yet I will rejoice in the LORD,
I will be joyful in God my Savior.
19 The Sovereign LORD is my strength;
he makes my feet like the feet of a deer,
he enables me to tread on the heights.

Song: This is My Father's World

This is my Father's world:
Oh, let me ne'er forget
That though the wrong seems oft so strong,
God is the ruler yet.
This is my Father's world,

The battle is not done:
Jesus who died shall be satisfied,
And earth and Heav’n be one.