

HOW TO LIVE BY FAITH
HABAKKUK 2:1-4 / APRIL 22, 2020

INTRODUCTION

- A. Habakkuk was a prophet who had some tough questions for God.
1. His name means “**wrestler**”. He wrestled with God about some questions that bothered him. Have you ever done that? Like why did God allow the coronavirus to invade our world?
 2. His ministry was around 612 to 606 B.C.
 3. His contemporaries were Nahum, Zephaniah, and Jeremiah.

- B. In the second chapter of Habakkuk, the prophet asked God an age-old question—**“Why do the righteous suffer while the wicked prosper?”**—1:13.

Habakkuk 1:13

13 Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrongdoing. Why then do you tolerate the treacherous? Why are you silent while the wicked swallow up those more righteous than themselves?

- C. God’s answer is found in Hab. 2:2-4.

Habakkuk 2:2-4

2 Then the Lord replied: “Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald (whoever reads it) may run with it. 3 For the revelation awaits 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. 4 “See, the enemy is puffed up; his desires are not upright—but the righteous person will live by his faithfulness (faith).

- D. The Apostle Paul quoted Habakkuk 2:4 in Romans 1:17.

Romans 1:17

For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

1. This verse changed the life of a priest named Martin Luther (died in 1546) and set the stage for what would become “The Protestant Reformation,” which gave birth to Baptists and every other Protestant church.
2. Luther was not convinced works was the way to be made right with God.
3. When he discovered Romans 1:17 (a quote from Habakkuk 2:4) he realized that faith alone resulted in salvation.
4. Today let’s see from Habakkuk 2:1-4 what it means to “live” by faith.

I. FIRST, LIVING BY FAITH MEANS WAITING ON GOD.

- A. Habakkuk opens his book of protest by expressing the fact he has waited a long time to hear God answer his questions—1:1-2.

Habakkuk 1:1-2

1 The prophecy that Habakkuk the prophet received. 2 How long, Lord, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, “Violence!” but you do not save?

- B. In 2:1 we find Habakkuk still waiting for God to answer—2:1.

Habakkuk 2:1

I will stand at my watch and station myself on the ramparts; I will look to see what he will say to me, and what answer I am to give to this complaint.

1. Perhaps you too have asked God some important questions. Lately you may have wondered how long Covid-19 will last? Or will we lose our jobs? Or will the workplace in America open back up soon?
2. We must realize that God doesn’t always answer our questions either when we want Him too or how we want Him too.

3. This doesn't mean that He has no answer or that He won't answer.
4. God's timing is different than ours. Is this what God means in verse 3?

Habakkuk 2:3

For the revelation awaits 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.

5. We must remember that God has a reason for what He is doing or what He allows.
6. The lesson is that we need to learn to wait like Habakkuk did for God to answer our questions or prayers—Psalms 27:14.

Psalms 27:14

Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.

7. So living by faith begins with waiting for God to answer.

II. SECOND, LIVING BY FAITH MEANS OBEYING GOD.

- A. God's response involved an assignment for Habakkuk to "go public" with His answer—2:2.

Habakkuk 2:2

Then the Lord replied: "Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it.

- B. The lesson for this prophet and us, who are waiting on God to answer, is that God may be waiting on us to obey Him.
- C. I've heard it said by many that if anything good comes from the coronavirus it is that many people are turning back to God. Is it possible that one reason we are being ravaged by this pandemic is to give us an opportunity to realize how much we need God?
- D. Is it also possible that God is calling us back to a life of obedience to His "word" and "will" for our lives? Are we willing to answer God's call to obedience today?
- E. So living by faith not only means waiting on God, but also obeying God.

III. THIRD, LIVING BY FAITH MEANS TRUSTING GOD—2:4.

- A. Eventually, the Babylonians, who had been oppressing Israel, were punished for their wickedness, which was Habakkuk's original question for God. In 539 B.C. their empire fell. This was 70 years after Habakkuk's prophesy.
- B. What did Habakkuk do during this time? Well, he probably didn't live long enough to see the defeat of his enemies, but he continued to wait, obey and trust God, just like we should.
- C. This is what God means in verse four—2:4.

Habakkuk 2:4

but the righteous will live by his faith.

- 1. The word "live" means to continue to live.
- 2. The message for us is to continue to live by faith by waiting, obeying and trusting God.

CONCLUSION

- A. We're all waiting for this plague we find ourselves in to just be over.
- B. Remember that God's timing and purpose is different than ours.
- C. Until this virus ends, we must continue to live by faith. This is the only way to please God and demonstrate to an unbelieving world how a Christian faces hardship—Heb. 11:6.

Hebrews 11:6

And without faith it is impossible to please God...