

Habakkuk's Song (2)

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[0 : 00] The following sermon is made available by Lakeside Bible Church in Cornelius, North Carolina.

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Well, today we'll talk about how Habakkuk rehearsed the mighty acts of God. We'll see that he recognized the reality of his circumstance, and then finally he resolved to rejoice in the Lord.

Let's look at that second point. Habakkuk rehearsed the mighty acts of God. He rehearsed the mighty acts of God, and we see that in verses 3 through 15.

[1 : 05] Consistently throughout the scriptures is the intentional rehearsing of God's actions through history. Over and over, God's people are called to remember the mighty acts of God.

Think about how this is exemplified throughout the scriptures. Remember Moses, he dedicated a huge portion of the book of Deuteronomy to rehearsing for the nation of Israel everything that God had done.

We often remember Joshua's famous statement that he made to the nation. And maybe some of you have this displayed somewhere in your house or maybe outside in your yard. The statement, as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

We've heard that. We understand. We always remember Joshua for that statement, right? He says, choose you this day whom you will serve, whether it be the God of heaven, Yahweh, or whether it will be the gods that you carried over from Egypt.

But for me and my family, we're going to serve the Lord God. Well, that's coming at the tail end of this long message that Joshua had delivered to the nation, where he did exactly what Moses did.

[2 : 05] He said, remember the mighty works of God. Remember how he brought you out of Egypt. Remember how he sustained you in the wilderness. Remember how he gave us this land. Remember how he sustained us in this land.

Even in the midst of judgment, like in places like Jericho, he still provided mercy and grace to his people. And he says, now choose who you're going to serve. But for me, I'm going to choose to serve the God who has proven himself time and time again in his power.

When you come to the Psalms and the prophets, it's the same thing. Many of the Psalms and prophets use a rehearsing of God's mighty acts as a precursor to worship.

They rehearse the mighty acts of God in order to draw our attention to the mighty acts that are coming from God, which is Habakkuk's intention. And it's not just an Old Testament practice.

It's a New Testament practice. If you study the sermons in the book of Acts and all throughout the New Testament, you'll see over and over the apostles use this same method. They would use the rehearsing of God's mighty acts in history as a precursor to their preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

[3 : 13] This is consistent throughout Scripture. And it ought to be a consistent part of your life and your worship as well. There ought not be many times through your life where there's a drought of remembrance of what God has done.

Not only what God has done through his word as you reflect on the Scriptures, but what God has done in your life. In his moments of provision for you. In his moments of chastening you even.

Remembering who God is and who we are in light of that is instrumental to walking with God in a helpful way. Tremendous peace can be brought to our perplexities when we stop to rehearse the acts of God through history.

And energy can be brought to our waning passions of heart when we take time to recall the character of God as it's revealed to us in the Bible.

Nothing can set our hearts right like remembering the holy judgment of God. And nothing can provide rest to our souls like rehearsing God's steadfast love for his people.

[4 : 20] And here again, we see the importance of the Bible to our daily lives. We come to it allowing the revelation of God to overwhelm our thoughts and behavior.

That's really its intention. James Boyce said this, And with that we remember the simple answer to the question, what is the Bible?

It is the revelation of God. That's what it is. It contains many great ideas. But if we're coming to the scriptures on a daily basis or on a weekly basis, Sunday by Sunday, if we're coming to the scripture and what we're looking for essentially is ideas.

Ideas on how that we can be a better spouse or how we can be a better human being or how we can be more successful in our lives or how we can make friends and influence people.

If we're coming to the scripture for that sole purpose, we're going to get some ideas, but we're going to fall far short of what God's intention is in the Bible. The Bible is primarily a revelation of God.

[5 : 43] It is there to show us who God is, who we are in light of who God is. And then as we acknowledge Him, all of the secondary benefits of the Bible start to fall into place.

And we start to follow in success. We start to follow in obedience, not because we've come to the scripture for ideas, but because we've seen who God is.

And as we see who God is and we submit to Him, we follow in obedience, which results in blessing. And it results in encouragement. Habakkuk here in chapter 3 uniquely employs metaphoric language, poetic expressions to rehearse God's acts.

And like I said, the connections would have been easier, more easily made in ancient times, especially with Eastern people groups. But Habakkuk's poem refers to God delivering His people in a few different ways.

As you read through it, you'll see connections to the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt. You'll see connections to God's using them in the conquest of Canaan.

[6 : 50] You'll see evidence and connections of God parting the Red Sea and later the Jordan River in order to accommodate His people. You'll see connections to God's provision as they wandered aimlessly, it seemed like, in the years of being in the wilderness.

But Habakkuk's approach, it's meant to draw our attention to the awesome power and glory of God. In order that, people would view the coming invasion, at least in his context, the coming Chaldean invasion, in light of God's power and His judgment and His salvation.

I think a helpful way to look at these few verses, these poetic verses, is to look at them through the lens of the three Selahs that are mentioned.

Did you notice those? There's three times in this song that Habakkuk uses the word Selah. Now, Selah is not a word to be interpreted. It's a musical or liturgical notation.

As you see it in the scriptures, it was always in relation to a song, and it was always meant in the framework of worship, and it was meant to bring a complete stop to the song. So as Habakkuk says, Selah, he says, take a moment, stop the music, and take a moment for reflection on what you've just sang or what you've just read or what you've just come to understand.

[8 : 15] Three different times in this song, Habakkuk uses this liturgical notation, which means that we're to stop and not so much consider the act as it is the purpose of the acts that he's just described.

So let's look at those three Selahs just quickly before we move on. The first one's found in verse number three. Look at it with me. He says, God came from Teman and the Holy One from Mount Paran, Selah.

Now, that's not a lot to reflect on there, right? This one is in relation to God's covenant. Teman and Paran are boundaries of the theater of geography in which God delivered his covenant to the people where he allowed them to wander in this wilderness.

What Habakkuk's doing here is he's drawing right at the very beginning, he's drawing the people's attention to the covenant of God. Indicative in this verse, and I believe emphasized in this verse, is the area of Sinai, which is where Israel camped out before the mountain, and Moses went up to the mountain, and he received the Ten Commandments, and he received the law of God.

Even before going up into the mountain, God spoke to the nation. You remember they trembled at his voice, and they said, we don't want to experience that anymore. Moses, you go talk to God and just tell us what he says.

[9 : 31] They were so fearful in that moment. He's drawing their attention back to that. And what's the purpose in drawing their attention of reflection? It's on God's covenant. Well, what was God's covenant?

God's covenant was, I am a holy God, and you are sinful people. And because of that sinfulness, you will face my judgment.

Unless you follow me in faith, and as you place your faith in me, and follow me in obedience, you will receive mercy and salvation.

He's drawing their attention to justice and mercy. Once again, that's to start out, drawing their attention to the covenant. The second one is in verse number 9. Look at it with me there.

Verse 9. He says, thy bow was made quite naked. It just means that he unsheathed his bow, and he came forth to provide judgment. The oaths of the tribes even thy word.

[10 : 27] Selah. And the theme here, and the specific intention of Habakkuk, is to emphasize God's justice. The statements leading up to this verse, up to verse 9, emphasize God's power.

He's drawing their attention to God's power, and then he's connecting that power to the severity of God's judgment, that everything that they rehearse in history, they see the judgment of God being poured out on the wickedness of men.

And so he first draws their attention to the covenant, and then he draws their attention to justice.

But he finishes on the most blessed of the three, and that is in verse 13.

He says, you went forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed. You wounded the head of the house of the wicked by discovering the foundation unto the neck.

And then he says, think about that. The verses leading up to this one refer to the conquest of Canaan. And he makes a reference in verse 11 to Joshua and a specific act of God's power in Joshua in the act of saving his people.

[11 : 37] It's a reminder that God will stop at nothing to not only utilize his power for judgment, but his power for mercy and salvation.

He'll even go so far as to give his only son to lay down his perfectly sinless life for the sins of mankind.

Out of his love, he shows mercy and grace. And when we consider the covenant, we see our destiny of judgment, but we also see God's provision of mercy for all that will follow him.

And that's exactly Habakkuk's intention in writing this poem, especially this section. Remember the works of God so that you can see who God is and be reminded of judgment and mercy.

When Habakkuk wrote this song, he didn't intend for it to be a reminder of the nation's storied past in order that the people could take pride in their history.

[12 : 42] That wasn't his purpose. We could maybe assume that there was a part of that that Israel might've enjoyed. Now that they've been carried out of their nation, they're slaves in Babylon and they sing this song and they remember what once was, but that wasn't Habakkuk's intention.

He intended for the nation's history to be relevant only as it rehearsed the covenant, justice and salvation of God. When the people sang this song in captivity, he wanted them to remember God, not their forefathers.

And we use this quote by Martin Lloyd-Jones in one of our earlier studies of Habakkuk and it's helpful again here. Lloyd-Jones in 1953 said, the key to the history of the world is the kingdom of God.

The story of other nations mentioned in the Old Testament is relevant only as it bears upon the destiny of Israel. And ultimately history today is relevant only as it bears upon the history of the Christian church.

What really matters in the world is God's kingdom and that's Habakkuk's intention, not to look back on what used to be a wonderfully successful and wealthy nation, but to look back and see the mighty acts of God in order that they may remember who they are in light of God and cry out to him for mercy.

[14 : 02] So we see Habakkuk rehearses the mighty acts of God. Thirdly in verse 16, we see Habakkuk recognized the reality of his circumstance.

He recognized the reality of his circumstance. Look with me at verse 16. He has ended his poetry, sort of, and now he's addressing again what he's heard from God.

And he says, when I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice, rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself that I might rest in the day of trouble.

When he comes, that is the Chaldeans at the hand of God, when he comes unto the people, he will invade them with his troops. As Habakkuk enters into this conclusion, he first pulls back the curtain just a bit and shows us the reality of his own struggle with fear.

And I think this is so important. Did you see the ways that he expressed this fear in verse 16? My belly trembled. This was a physical fear.

[15:15] Have you ever been in a situation like that? Joey's here, I mentioned a while ago, we all know him as the pilot, right? And then we've got people like Amy who are scared to death to get on a plane, right? Amy knows what this is like.

You get on a plane, your belly trembles because I'm so scared, right? We know that fear. Like you've ever been in a moment of tragedy or in a moment of intense fear, and you felt that fear, you felt that expression in a physical way.

That's where Habakkuk's at right now. His belly trembled. His lip quivered. We're seeing one of your kids, when they get in trouble or when they're about to get hurt and they start to fall apart emotionally, what's the first thing sometimes that starts?

Is the lip starts to quiver. That's where Habakkuk is at this moment. And he emphasizes again the physical nature of his fear in this moment. He was afraid, not only because he has seen the reality of God's holiness and his own sinfulness, but now he's looking ahead at what God has promised is coming in this Chaldean invasion.

And he looks at it and he says, this is frightening. I'm scared to death about what is coming and what not only me and my family, but my nation is about to experience.

[16:29] And I think it's so important to point this out. It's not an embellishment on the part of Habakkuk. It's the honest recognition of hardship and a hardship that he knew was coming.

There's a juxtaposition exemplified here that seems to be ignored, sometimes even condemned by Christians.

Some believe that to ignore the true reality of difficulty is what faith is. They'll be going through a difficult time or they'll face a difficult diagnosis or they'll be going into a season of life where there's great tragedy or there's great trial, there's great burden in their life.

And instead of really trusting God, they just kind of ignore the reality of the circumstance around them. And then they call that faith. That's not faith at all. It's not that they're trusting God.

They're just refusing to acknowledge the true nature of their trial. The various forms of the prosperity gospel have robbed us of a biblical theology of suffering, which in turn has diminished our ability to effectively point people to Christ in tragedy.

[17:47] Think about how this affects our witness sometimes. When we go through difficulties and trials and we ignore the fact of the trial and we embellish the fruitfulness of life or the goodness of life.

And then we go and we try to share Christ with an unbelieving friend or family member who's going through the same kind of trial, the same kind of burden. And they just don't understand. They think that you're out of your mind because you just refuse to acknowledge that life is real and life is hard. And we really do go through difficult times and we try to mask that and we try to blame God for why we're masking it. But that's not faith at all. Faith is not ignoring the reality of the situation. Faith is trusting God in spite of the reality of the situation.

And Habakkuk is a great reminder of that. And we would do well to develop a strong theology of suffering because suffering is a reality of life.

Habakkuk's transparency here does the opposite of what we are tempted to do. And it shows the true strength of his faith and serves as a backdrop for his resolve to rejoice in verses 17 to 19.

[18:58] Let's talk about it just a little bit further. Habakkuk was clearly affected by fear in verse 16. But in verses 18 and 19, he proves that he was a man full of faith.

And this is the juxtaposition that seems to be ignored. We're often told that fear is the absence of faith, but Habakkuk's testimony actually tells a different story because existing in a matter of four verses is a fear that's causing him physical discomfort.

And yet there is a resolve to rejoice in the Lord in a way that none of us have probably experienced. How can that be so? I wanna suggest to you today that faith is not the absence of fear.

It's the absence of a certain kind of fear. If I were to be diagnosed today with terminal cancer and my life would be on the line, I can fear what's coming as far as the experience of pain and discomfort and grief and simultaneously trust completely in God's plan for my life and in eternity. Fear does not automatically equate to sin, but there is a kind of fear that certainly does. Let me explain. Jesus helps us to understand how this can be true.

[20 : 24] When he was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, you remember this, on the night of his arrest, he instructs his disciples to stay awake. It's the middle of the night. He instructs them to stay awake and pray.

And then he adds in Matthew 24 and I think Mark 13, he adds in this additional phrase. And he says, the spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak.

And it's so helpful here. Essentially, Jesus said there's two parts of a man. There's his spirit and there's his flesh. There's this weakness that we live in in this life.

Just because you're a believer doesn't mean that you now look at life with a superhuman perspective. Though our spirit is full of faith, we are still prone to weaknesses of the flesh.

And while Habakkuk trusted the Lord's plan, the thought of the coming invasion, the thought of the coming invasion left him physically exhausted and overwhelmed, all in one person.

[21 : 31] Why? Because there's two parts of a man. There's our spirit and there's our flesh. Do you think that Daniel faced any kind of fear when he was thrown into the den of lions?

Of course. Do you think that the three Hebrew men felt any kind of fear when Nebuchadnezzar goes to toss them into the fiery furnace?

Of course they did. What about Gideon when he went to fight against the armies of Midian with just 300 people? What about David when he ran for his life from Saul and then later on his own son, Absalom?

Or what about Stephen as he watched the Pharisees pick which stones they were going to hurl at him to kill him in the streets of Jerusalem just for preaching the gospel of Christ? Do you think they sensed fear?

Absolutely they sensed fear. The strength of these individuals was not in the absence of fear, but in the presence of faith in spite of their fear.

[22 : 34] And when we go through trials in life, we don't prove any faith by ignoring reality, but by trusting God through the painful acknowledgement of that reality.

And what a great witness of the glorious gospel that can be. Rather than ignore the fact that life is difficult, we praise the Lord in spite of the difficulty.

And we follow him faithfully no matter how hard it gets. But then inevitably, our question then becomes, what about 2 Timothy 1.7?

It says, God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. That's a popular verse right now. When all the coronavirus stuff first started happening, you really had kind of two divisions of people.

You probably got all kinds of divisions of people now, but you really had two in the very beginning. And there was the people that were really nervous about it and concerned. And then there were the people in the Christian realm, there were the people that were constantly throwing out this verse.

[23 : 32] God's not giving us a spirit of fear. God's not giving us a spirit of fear. And that's true. But what they were leaning into was not a helpful doctrine of suffering. They were ignoring the reality of a circumstance rather than give glory to God in the difficulty of the circumstance.

What does that verse mean? Paul's writing to Timothy at a time when the church was facing severe persecution. Severe. Paul's at the end of his life.

He's about to be beheaded for preaching the gospel. And there's a part in this book where he says that most people had forsaken him. People that at one time had served with him in the gospel, churches that had supported him in the gospel, had now forsaken him because of this persecution that was coming against them.

They had begun to deny the gospel. They had begun to be disobedient to God's commands on their life. And Paul writes to Timothy, his right-hand man, as he's passing the torch, so to speak, off to Timothy.

And he says, God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. The fact that Paul or Timothy or anyone else would have felt anxiety over the fact that the government could come into our worship service today and literally take our lives for worship, that's what they were facing.

[24 : 57] The fact that he wouldn't have any kind of anxiety about that is ludicrous. That's not what Paul's saying. He's not saying that you can't fear. There's a distinction between sensing fear in a troubling circumstance and allowing that fear to lead you to disbelief and disobedience.

It would have been sinful had Timothy looked at his anxiety and rejected the gospel and rejected his ministry in light of that fear.

That would have been sinful. But just sensing fear in and of itself, there's no sin in that. It means that he was... This verse doesn't mean that God is angered when we have anxiety.

It just means that he's displeased when the fear that's present keeps us from trusting him and obeying him. When Paul said that God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and love and of sound mind, he was emphasizing more of what God does provide than what he doesn't provide. He was calling Timothy to tap into the divine resources of God whenever the persecution came and it was inevitable that it was going to come. Those resources would provide Timothy with perseverance and anything that would pull him away from faith and obedience wouldn't be a spirit that was from God.

[26 : 23] That was the point of that passage. So existent in one believer can be a spirit that is full of faith, but also a flesh that is weak and fearful and anxious because life really is hard and we really do suffer.

And having a mindset that ignores that doesn't glorify the Lord. It's trusting God through that where the Lord is pleased and our life can be used.

Well, let's look at the final one and we'll be finished. Habakkuk resolved to rejoice in the Lord. We've seen his reaction to the word of God. We've seen that he rehearsed the mighty acts of God.

He recognized the reality of his circumstance. And finally, he resolves in his heart to rejoice in the Lord. My favorite preacher in the whole world is a man named Alistair Begg.

He said this a few weeks ago. I was listening to a sermon that he preached. He said, The key to a great sermon is a great beginning and a great ending and to keep the two of those things as close together as you possibly can.

[27 : 32] I don't know that I've accomplished that today, but we are at the end nonetheless. And not only are we at the end of the sermon for today, we're at the end of this book. And this is what makes this passage even much more significant to our understanding.

What does Habakkuk say? Look at verse 17. Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines. The labor of the olive shall fail, and the field shall yield no meat.

The flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls. Yet I will rejoice in the Lord. I will joy in the God of my salvation.

The Lord God is my strength. He will make my feet like deer's feet. He will make me to walk upon mine high places. He's going to be walking on the clouds, he says. Not because he's not facing difficulty, but because he's trusting the Lord in his difficulty.

The backdrop to Habakkuk's resolve to rejoice is the reality of his suffering. Have you ever been to a jewelry store and looking for maybe an engagement ring?

[28 : 42] I don't know. That might be the last time I was in a jewelry store. It was 12 years ago or so looking for an engagement ring. And what an intimidating process that is, right guys? That's terrible. I went to Jared in Raleigh.

And I remember going into the store, and I knew that Julie liked Teardrop. Is that right? Teardrop diamond. And that's all I knew. And so I asked for the jeweler, if I can see what you have in this, and for \$300 or \$400 would be great.

And what does the jeweler do when you go and you ask to look at it? They carefully remove the jewel from the case, but before they set it out, what do they do? They lay down something on the glass.

It's usually black. Sometimes it's like a velvet board or something. Something that will protect it, but it serves as a backdrop for that diamond. So they got the bright lights above the counter that shine down on the jewel, and then they got this dark backdrop behind it that actually makes the jewel sparkle and shine brilliantly, right?

And they want to sell you this jewel. And so they lay it on this backdrop so that it will shine brilliantly. In Habakkuk's life, what makes his resolve to rejoice shine so brilliantly in this passage is the fact of verses 16 and 17.

[29 : 53] It's the reality of his suffering. It's his acknowledgement of the suffering that actually makes his statement of rejoicing so significant. It's one thing to say, I trust the Lord.

It's another thing to say that I trust the Lord in the midst of intense suffering and devastating seasons of life. And that's exactly what Habakkuk's doing. The scene described in verse 17 is absolutely devastating.

It's a complete deconstruction of society. And it's one that God had promised would happen to Israel in Deuteronomy chapter 28 if they would turn away from him and worship other gods.

What did Habakkuk say? Think about it. The fig tree shall not blossom. No fruit's gonna be available for us to eat. No fruit will be on the vine.

That means we're not gonna have wine to drink in their day. The labor of the olive is gonna fail. The field shall yield no meat. There's no grain. The flock will be cut off from the fold and there shall be no herd in the stalls.

[31 : 00] There's no protein. There's no meat to eat. This is the complete devastation of their society. All the basic necessities of life are gonna be stripped away. And he says, even though all of these necessities are stripped away, I will rejoice in the Lord.

The coming Chaldean army meant that it pictured for Habakkuk the burning of the city of Jerusalem, which included the temple, the place of worship.

The corpses of hundreds of thousands of people would be thrown about the nation. It meant the captivity of the remnant. It meant the desolation of the land of promise.

It meant the loss of all their wealth. And anyone that survived would now live as slaves in a foreign land. That's the reality of Habakkuk's circumstance. And set against that backdrop, Habakkuk's joy shines like a diamond, doesn't it?

Let's take verse 17 and just substitute the phrases to fit our culture a little bit. And we can't even do it justice based on what Habakkuk was facing, but we'll do our best. What if it read like this?

[32 : 09] Although the grocery store shelves be emptied of daily necessities, a worldwide pandemic take the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. Those sworn to protect us carelessly murder instead.

Though the looters steal all that I own, though major cities be burned in the night, wealth be threatened by a failing economy, and leaders politicize everything to the detriment of the nation. What if it read like that? How would you respond? Better, how have you responded? Most of us would find bitterness and despair to be the prevailing attitude of our heart.

But if our suffering is the backdrop that causes the glorious gospel of Christ to shine through us, shouldn't we instead be thankful and rejoice?

Now Habakkuk says, though everything is stripped away from me, I will rejoice in the Lord. Well, how is that possible? It is possible for him, and it's possible for you too.

[33 : 16] And it's possible in two ways according to verse 18 and 19. The first way is this. It's when we understand that joy is an act of the will.

Joy is an act of the will. Often we consider joy to be an emotional sensation, when in reality, it's a matter of resolve. Look at verse 18.

Twice he says, I will. Yet I will rejoice in the Lord. I will joy in the God of my salvation. Joy doesn't just happen.

Joy is chosen. And though God is sovereign in providing us with the capacity to experience joy, his divine work does not negate the responsibility of our will in actively choosing to rejoice.

We're to thank God for the freedom of joy, and then we are to pursue that joy with all of our hearts. Joy is an act of the will. Secondly, joy is related to its object.

[34 : 21] It's related to its object. What is he rejoicing in? Nothing about his circumstance. There was nothing there to rejoice in. He says, I will rejoice in the Lord.

I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God, he says, is my strength. This is not the power of positive thinking.

It's not like he was sitting there. He was thinking, this is not that bad. This is not that bad. I will rejoice. I will rejoice. I will rejoice. I will rejoice. No, there was nothing about his circumstance that made that possible. It's our joy is directly related to its object.

And our object as a believer is Jesus Christ. Everything in life has the potential for loss except for Christ.

And had Habakkuk's focus been on the pleasures of this life, then he would have been utterly devastated. But because his primary concern was the glory and purposes of God, he could rejoice no matter what.

[35 : 26] Remember what he said at the beginning of this prayer? Revive thy work, Lord, in the midst of the years. Lord, if this is what you've got to do to accomplish your work, do it. And because that was the nature of his heart, when he came to the end and he recognized exactly what God's work was, he could legitimately say, I will rejoice in the Lord.

If your life is wrapped up in the successes of your business, that business can be quickly taken away in a matter of a moment. And all of your joy dissipate.

If it's wrapped up in a person, that person can be taken away in a moment. That marriage can fall apart. Death and tragedy can come into play for your family and for your friendships.

And then all of that joy dissipates. Unless your joy is rooted in the gospel of Jesus Christ, you will be utterly devastated at suffering.

But Jesus never fails. He's the same yesterday, today, and forever. He's the everlasting God. He's immutable. He never changes. When you place your faith in him, when you follow him in obedience, when you love him, he never changes.

[36 : 39] All of our circumstances will change, but Christ will never change. And his love and his mercy and his grace will remain. That's why Habakkuk could say, I'll rejoice in the Lord.

Because I know what he's doing is for the good of his people. And I know it's for my good. The coronavirus can take your life, but it can't take your soul.

The riots can destroy your business, but they can't separate you from God. Politicians can hinder your freedoms, but they'll never be able to stop you from worshipping.

The economy can take your wealth, but it can't steal the treasure that you have in Christ. Paul said in Romans 8, I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor death, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Habakkuk wasn't callous or unaffected. He suffered greatly. It's likely he died in this invasion. But he was able to suffer joyfully because his faith and focus was on the Lord.

[37 : 56] And we too can suffer joyfully so long as our faith and focus is on Christ Jesus. And that's the answer. Jesus is the answer. In what's known as the Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24 and Mark 13, the disciples asked Jesus what would be the signs of his coming when he would establish his kingdom on earth.

And he reveals to them really a devastating scene. Wars and rumors of wars, famines, pestilence, disease, natural disasters, corrupt, demonic politicians and government leaders, world leaders really.

And in the midst of this description, Jesus tells his disciples, when all of this is happening, do not be troubled. But how is that possible? As C.S. Lewis said, in those moments, you cannot be indifferent to the person of Jesus Christ.

When you see a moment like that in the scriptures, you cannot say that Jesus is just a good man or that he was a good prophet or that he was a moral teacher. Any of those, he cannot be that.

There cannot be indifference towards him. In a moment like that, he's either a lunatic, a liar, or he's the Lord, the Lord of all.

[39 : 16] How can he say, do not be troubled? Because he is the answer. James Boyce again said, then came the answer, Jesus Christ is God.

Jesus Christ is the Lord of history. Jesus Christ is the God of detailed circumstance. Nothing has ever happened that did not flow in the channel God dug for it.

No event has ever flamed up in spite of God or left him astonished, bewildered, or confused. He is our God. The sin of man has reduced the world to an arena of passion and fury.

Like wild beasts, men tear at each other's throats, yet in the midst of the history of which Jesus Christ is Lord, each individual who has believed in him as the Savior and as the Lord of life will know the power of his resurrection and will learn that events, however terrible, cannot separate us from the love of God.

