

Nuggets in Habakkuk Part 5 - Yet I Will Rejoice...

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 06 October 2024

[0 : 00] Well, we begin our worship this morning by singing to God's praise in Psalm 32, the Scottish Psalter version, Psalm 32. We're going to sing from verse 7 to 11.

It's page 244. Thou art my hiding place, thou shalt from trouble keep me free. Thou with songs of deliverance about shalt compass me.

I will instruct thee and they teach the way that thou shalt go. And with my eye upon thee set, I will direction show. We'll sing from verse 7 to 11 to God's praise.

The song of deliverance about shalt compass me.

I will instruct thee and lead thee, the way that thou shalt go.

[1 : 27] And with my eye upon thee set, I will direction show.

Then be not like the horse or mule, which you not understand.

I will instruct thee, the way that thou shalt go.

Unto the love that we hid his sorrow shall burn.

At him that trusteth in the Lord mercy shall compass Christ.

[2 : 55] Yea, righteous him the Lord be glad, in him to hear thee joys.

O he that upright tar in heart, for joy lift a pure voice.

Bow our heads in a short word of prayer. Let us pray. Amen.

As we gather here in the church and as the young ones soon go out to the Sunday school and the tweenies and the Bible class. We do pray your blessing on each one. Thankful for the teachers, the children and for your promise to meet with us.

For your promise to speak to us through your word. And may we all have that longing, that hunger to hear what you have to say to us. We thank you for your word, the Bible that we have before us.

[4 : 36] For it is your truth. And help us to lean upon it and rely on it. For all that it tells us. For all that it warns us of. And all the blessings that it tells us that are ours in Christ Jesus.

So hear our prayers. Continue with us. Go before us in all of this day. And we ask it all over the forgiveness of our sins. In Jesus' name. Amen. Well before the young ones go out.

Just want to say a few words to you. One of the questions that we are often asked. Maybe even as you were coming into the church this morning. Somebody asked you this question. Maybe when you got up in the morning.

Somebody asked you this question. It's the question. How are you? Remember when Mordor Campbell was preaching here at the Communion. That was one of the questions he was asking us as a congregation.

How are you? It's a very personal question. And it's a question we're going to be thinking about this morning in our service. As we look at a man called Habakkuk. We've been looking at the book of Habakkuk.

[5 : 36] And seeing how God was speaking to him. And reminding him. And teaching him of all the things that God was going to do. And one of the questions I would love to ask of Habakkuk is.

How are you? And I think today we're going to be seeing that really at the end of the book of Habakkuk. We get an answer to that question of how are you Habakkuk. But how would you answer that question?

How are you? And what about when we think of God and what he's saying to us. When we think of his Bible. And how he speaks to us through it. And he's really asking us all today.

How are you? How are you when you come to my word? How are you in life? How are you getting on? What are you trusting in? What are you believing in? I want to just tell you a wee story about a little girl called Mary Jones.

And she lived in Wales over 200 years ago. And when she was the age of nine. She used to love going to church. And she used to love hearing the minister speaking from the Bible.

[6 : 38] And she was so aware that God was speaking to her through it. And at that age she thought to herself. I would love a Bible for myself.

Now we've probably all got Bibles in our homes. I'm sure many have got Bibles in front of you today. Or maybe on your phone or something like that. Bibles are so easy to get. But when Mary Jones was living in Wales in that time.

The late 1700s. The Bibles weren't as common as they are today. And her parents didn't have much money. And Bibles were expensive to buy. And she told her mum that she really wanted a Bible.

And she knew how difficult it was. So she said to her mother. I'm going to save up to buy a Bible. I'm going to work. To work for different people. And get paid little bits of work.

And I'm going to save up to buy a Bible. And it took her six years. Till she was the age of 15. She didn't give up. She kept saving all her money that she was earning.

[7 : 37] All so she could go and buy a Bible. And when she had enough money. She had to go a long way to get the Bible. It wasn't a case of jumping in the car. Or jumping on a bus.

She had to go and walk to a village. To buy a Bible. A village that was 25 miles away. But even that didn't put her off. So she set out one day.

Took her money. And she walked all that way. It was just rough paths and over hills. It was hard going. But she was so determined. She wanted a Bible.

And when she got to the town. The village. She bought a Bible. And then she made the journey back home. 25 miles back. And she had her own Bible.

And this was the most precious thing to her. Because she knew now she could read of God. Asking her. How are you? Every day. Whenever she wanted to. She could learn more of God.

[8 : 31] And it's so important for us today. To see how precious God's Word is. And to have that same longing. That same desire. As Mary Jones. To have the Bible for ourselves.

And I'm sure we don't have to save up six years. We can go home today. And we've got the Bible in front of us. And start looking at it. Reading it. And seeing for yourself. The wonder of how God speaks.

And how precious He is. So may God bless these thoughts to us all. We'll say the Lord's Prayer together now. Amen. Our Father which art in heaven.

Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen. Amen. I will again sing to God's praise.

[9 : 37] Now we're going to sing in Psalm 40. In the Scottish. In the Sing Psalms version. Psalm 40. On page 59 of the Psalm books.

Sorry, it's not page 59. It's page 50. Page 50 of the Psalm books.

Psalm 40. We'll sing from verse 1 to verse 5. I waited long upon the Lord. He heard my cry and turned to me. He raised me from the slimy pit and from the mire.

He pulled me free. We'll sing Psalm 40 verse 1 to 5 to God's praise. I waited long upon the Lord. He heard my cry and turned to me.

[10 : 42] He raised me from the slimy pit and from the mire.

He pulled me free. He said my feet on solid rock.

A place to stand both firm and strong. He heard my cry and forth.

He heard my cry and turned to me. He heard my cry and turned to me. A joyful hymn of praise to God.

Then he will live with godly cheer, and on the Lord alone rely.

[11 : 58] Blessed are they who trust the Lord, who shan the pride and cross the night.

The wonders you have done, O Lord, how many and how great they are.

Your plans for us are far beyond, our power to number or defame.

We're going to turn to read now in the book of Habakkuk in the Old Testament. You'll find this around page 950 of the Bibles. Habakkuk, we're going to read chapter 3.

We have Habakkuk's prayer, as we've looked at previously. And then this morning we're going to be looking at the last part, verse 7 to 19. But we'll read the whole of this chapter.

[13 : 28] A prayer of Habakkuk, the prophet, according to Shaganoth. O Lord, I have heard the report of you, and your work, O Lord, do I fear. In the midst of the years, revive it.

In the midst of the years, make it known. In wrath, remember mercy. God came from Taman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. His splendor covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise.

His brightness was like the light. Rays flashed from his hand, and there he veiled his power. Before him went pestilence and plague followed at his heels.

He stood and measured the earth. He looked and shook the nations. Then the eternal mountains were scattered. The everlasting hills sank low. Whose were the everlasting ways?

I saw the tents of cushion in affliction. The curtains of the land of Midian did tremble. Was your wrath against the rivers, O Lord? Was your anger against the rivers?

[14 : 32] Or your indignation against the sea? When you rode on your horses, on your chariot of salvation. You stripped the sheath from your bow, calling for many arrows.

You split the earth with rivers. The mountains saw you and writhed. The raging waters swept on. The deep gave forth its voice. It lifted its hands on high.

The sun and moon stood still in their place. At the light of your arrows as they sped. At the flash of your glittering spear. You marched through the earth in fury.

You threshed the nations in anger. You went out for the salvation of your people. For the salvation of your anointed. You crushed the head of the house of the wicked.

Laying him bare from thigh to neck. You pierced with his own arrows the heads of his warriors. Who came like a whirlwind to scatter me. Rejoicing as if to devour the poor in secret.

[15 : 33] You trampled the sea with your horses. The surging of mighty waters. I hear and my body trembles. My lips quiver at the sound.

Rottenness enters into my bones. My legs tremble beneath me. Yet I will quietly wait for the day of trouble to come upon people who invade us.

Though the fig tree should not blossom. Nor fruit beyond the vines. The produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food. The flock be cut off from the fold.

And there be no herd in the stalls. Yet I will rejoice in the Lord. I will take joy in the God of my salvation. God the Lord is my strength.

He makes my feet like the deer. He makes me tread on my high places. To the choirmaster with stringed instruments.

[16 : 31] May God bless that reading from his word. And again just bow our heads in a word of prayer. Let us pray. Lord our gracious God as we continue in our worship of you.

We thank you again for your word. For your truth. A truth that we would seek to hold precious. A truth that we would seek to honour with our lives and with all that we are.

A truth that we would follow. For in following your commandments our blessing. And in turning away we see your blessings so often taken away. And we pray Lord that you would heal our land.

That you would heal our land from the turning away from your word. From the rejection of it. Even the forbidding of it in so many ways and places.

It's turning more violent in so many ways. And we just see an anger that comes about as we turn away from you. As we look to our own ways and our own paths.

[17 : 32] As we lean on our own understanding and wisdom. We recognise the foolishness of it as we see your word. And yet so often we get caught up in it. And so we pray Lord that you will teach us.

That you will humble us. That we would not come to see days like Habakkuk. When there was so much destruction and devastation. When there was so much violence and wickedness. Although we see it in part around us Lord.

We know that days could so easily become worse. But we pray Lord that we would see. That in wrath you would remember mercy. That you as Lord and God of all would have mercy upon us.

That you would revive your work in our midst. That you would revive your work in our day. That we would see your blessing poured out upon us. And we know that comes through obedience to you.

And so humble us before you today. Teach us through your truth. Bring us into that relationship where we would say. Even as Habakkuk. Yet I will rejoice in the Lord.

[18 : 34] For God the Lord is my strength. And may we come in our own hearts and in our lives. For that to be our confession. And we do pray for your church oh Lord.

As we are part of it here. And as we see it around us. As people near and far. We pray for you to build up your church. We pray for your blessing. Of your spirit upon us.

Leading us. Guiding us. And helping us. In all of our ways. We pray to know. What it is to live. By faith. Even as we have seen in Habakkuk. The righteous shall live by faith.

We pray for that faith in our own hearts. And in our lives. And in our congregations. And in our church far and wide. That we would be a people who live in dependence upon you.

Trusting that you are able to provide. And so we lean upon you for all of these things. So remember as Lord we pray. As we thank you for all in our congregation.

[19 : 34] We thank you again for all our young people. And as the schools go on holiday this week. We pray for them. For the teaching staff. And all the staff in our schools. We pray for a time of rest and refreshment for them all.

A time of encouragement. And a time when they will be able to step back. From the busyness of life in that way. But just to enjoy a time of refreshment.

In either staying at home or going away. Or whatever it might be. That your blessing would be upon all. We pray too Lord for the work of our congregation. We thank you for all going on in our church. Not just on the Lord's days. We thank you for our services. Both here and in the Gaelic. For the youth fellowship. For the Sunday school. And all the young ones. We thank you for all of these things.

And we pray that you would bless it. That you would bless abundantly the word. That is proclaimed in these ways. We pray that through the week as well. That as the monthly meeting is taking place tomorrow evening.

[20 : 34] God willing. As there are meetings throughout the week. We think of the vacancy committee. As it meets on Tuesday. Pray for wisdom and guidance. For all on the committee. And for the discussions that take place.

That your spirit would lead and guide in all of these things. Pray for the prayer meetings. That we would see that as such a wonderful privilege. And a place where we should be if we are able. That we would gather to unite our hearts.

And praise and worship and prayer to you. That we would see your blessing on the 55+. Thankful for all involved in running that. And attending it. Pray for the blessing of your spirit upon them.

This week as well. And we do thank you for all of these things. And many more Lord. As we think of all the activities going on. And we just ask for your blessing in it all.

We thank you for the work of the congregations around us as well. We pray that together we would see the blessing of God upon us. We think of the communion seasons just now.

[21 : 33] As they soon draw to a close. We thank you for all the preachers who have come from near and far. To proclaim the wonders of the gospel. And we remember them in Bach and in North Harris today.

As they are gathered for that purpose. For remembering the Lord's death until he comes. In that significant way. We pray for your encouragement to the congregations there.

For your blessing upon them. And for all the services that have taken place. And will take place next weekend as well. We do pray for your blessing in all of these things.

We thank you Lord that you are a God who is not sleeping. That you are working. That you are active. That your word is powerful. And we pray that together we would know the wonder of your salvation.

The wonder of the one who is your son Christ Jesus. Who came into the world to save sinners. That is a great gospel message. And we pray that we will come to know the wonder of a personal relationship with him.

[22 : 36] So hear our prayers. Remember us in our homes and our families. In our communities at this time. In all our different needs. In our sorrow and sadness of loss and grief.

In the uncertainties of ill health. Or awaiting results. Or awaiting procedures. Whether we are confined to our homes. Or whether we are anxious about family.

Work situations. Whatever it may be. We pray that in all our troubles. Yet we might rejoice in the Lord. So hear our prayers. Continue with us and pardon us in all our sins.

We ask it all. In Jesus name. And for his sake. Amen. Amen. Before we turn back to Habakkuk. We are going to sing again in Psalm 4.

In the Sing Psalm. Psalm 4. It is on page 4 of the Psalm books. We will sing from verse 3 down to the end of the Psalm.

[23 : 37] Know that the Lord has set apart the godly as his own. The Lord will hear me when I call and my request make known. We will sing from verse 3 down to the end of the Psalm.

To God's praise. The Lord will hear me when I call and my request make known.

In the Anger do not wake us fall. In the Anger do not wake us fall.

Consider and be still. We send a righteous sacrifice.

And wait upon his well. And wait upon his well. Oh, who can show us any good.

[25 : 13] I hear so many say. Oh, Lord, shine on us with your eyes.

Show us your face. Show us your face. The Lord will hear me when I call and my heart. The Lord will hear me when I call and my heart. I will hear me when I call and my heart. You filled my heart with greater joy that others may have found, as they rejoiced at harvest time when faith and wine the blend.

I will lie down and sleep in peace, my heart will rest with you.

For you alone, O gracious Lord, will keep me safe and sure.

We're going to turn back then to a reading in Habakkuk in chapter 3. And the end of this chapter, we're in verse 17 to 19. As we were saying to the young ones, one of the most common questions we'd often asked is, how are you?

[27 : 12] And we have a variety of answers to that question so often from the standard answer, I'm fine. And we move on or to the more in-depth and more honest answers, where we feel more able to pour out our hearts to the person who's asked the question.

We hear the question often, but I wonder how many other people you would want to ask that question of. Not just people you know around us, but maybe perhaps people in different situations, maybe past or present.

Think of perhaps world leaders today and the strains that they have in trying to lead different nations. Maybe Keir Starmer or Joe Biden or someone like that.

Would you want to come alongside them and ask the question, you know, how are you in the midst of everything that's going on? Maybe it's a famous figure from history. You would want to be with them in a certain situation and ask, how are you?

I think of John Newton, the author of Amazing Grace and other hymns, and his conversion that happened while he was in a storm at sea.

[28 : 22] Because of my own background, I often think of that situation. I would love to have been there with him in some ways and seen him at his low point there, when he's seeing just the frailty of life, his life and all that it's entailed, how wrong it was, and yet he came to see the wonder of the amazing grace of God and to ask him, how are you in the midst of all of that?

And maybe there's characters in Scripture you would want to come alongside them and ask them that question, you know, how are you? Think of people like Job in the Old Testament. And very often when you think of that question of how are they in the midst of situations, you find in Scripture an answer given.

Job, as you maybe know, in his life experience, he lost so much in his life. There was so much devastation that came his way. In chapter 1 of the book, you read of how everything just was taken from him, almost in the blink of an eye.

He lost his livestock. He lost his children. There just seemed to be tragedy after tragedy coming upon him. And you come alongside, how are you, Job, in the midst of all of this?

Well, in chapter 1, verse 21 to 22, he says this, Job himself says this, Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I shall return.

[29 : 40] The Lord gave. The Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. You see their confidence. You see their faith.

It says in the next verse after that, In all this, Job did not sin or charge God with any wrong. There was a faith in the midst of everything that was going on.

Think of Paul as he wrote the letter to the Philippians, a letter of rejoicing. But in the midst of what was happening in his experience, you come alongside and ask, Paul, how are you in prison?

How are you in the midst of everything that you're seeing happening around you? Well, we see in chapter 4 of Philippians, verse 11, how thankful he is that the people there have remembered him.

They've sent him a gift. But he says in verse 13, Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned, in whatever situation I am to be content, I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound.

[30 : 41] In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret to facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through Christ, or through him, it says, who strengthens me.

There is confidence in the midst of trials. And so here in Habakkuk, as we've been going through this book of Habakkuk, we've been seeing the kind of challenges that Habakkuk and the people have been facing up to.

We've seen in chapter 1 how God was going to do a work, a work that they could hardly understand or comprehend. Even as he told them, God working in mysterious ways, that he was going to bring the Babylonians upon them.

It didn't seem to make sense. And yet we have seen how Habakkuk has been with the people, trying to encourage them, trying to strengthen them. And we've seen encouragements like the righteous shall live by faith.

We've seen too how he had hope. In chapter 2, verse 14, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. There is that hope that things are going to be better.

[31 : 55] Chapter 3, as we've read in verse 2 there, we see his prayer, a prayer that in the midst of it says, in the midst of the years, revived in the midst of the years, make it known in wrath, remember mercy.

So Habakkuk has been living in a day when things are difficult, things are challenging. In the darkness of the day, he didn't see God and think, well, God just cannot change this situation. God cannot make a difference in this situation. Yes, he had his questions, as you see in verse 3 of chapter 1. Why do you make me see iniquity?

Why do you idly look at wrong as if God has no concern? But yet, as you come alongside Habakkuk and ask him the question today, how are you?

How are you in the midst of all of this? Well, today we come to our final nugget of gold. That's why we've been looking at Habakkuk, how in the midst of all the challenges, you find these nuggets of gold, precious verses that speak of the wonder of God.

[33 : 05] And today we're going to look at the last one here in verse 17 to 19. And really it's one long nugget of gold. It's Habakkuk's answer to the question, how are you?

And that's the way we're going to look at it this morning. Under that question, Habakkuk, how are you? And we see that in each verse, he gives us an answer. And he gives us an answer that ultimately shows that he is rejoicing.

And he's rejoicing, not oblivious to the situation. He sees the reality of all that's going on around him, but he sees that he can rejoice in the Lord because God is his strength.

And so that's the three things. You really got the first word of each verse are going to be your three points. You have though in verse 17. You have yet in verse 18.

And you have God in verse 19. So we're going to go through these three things. Habakkuk, how are you? Well, in verse 17, we have though.

[34 : 13] And here is Habakkuk seeing the reality of the situation. He's not oblivious to all that's going on around him.

There's a lot of trouble around him. Serious trouble. Grave trouble. Trouble that has its consequences from turning away from God.

As we've gone through this book of Habakkuk, we've seen the backdrop to it all is this abandonment of God. Turning away from God. And judgment is coming upon them.

An unbelievable hardship is coming upon them. We read of it there in chapter 3. You see the wrath. You see the anger. You see the devastation that's going on even in chapter 3.

And there are all these things going on. And God has sent this judgment upon them through the Babylonians, this wicked enemy.

[35 : 13] And in chapter 1, verse 5, he was saying, I am doing a work you would not believe. It's almost through the strangest of providences, through the strangest of works, God is working.

God is still at work. And that's a nugget in itself. Although it's hard for us to understand, as we saw looking at that part of Habakkuk, there are things that we see around us that we cannot understand that leave us with the same kind of questions as Habakkuk had in chapter 1.

Almost thinking, Lord, why have you left us? And yet what it is, is God saying, I am doing a work, even in the strangest of providences, I am doing a work in your midst.

And so Habakkuk has this reality. He sees what's going on around him. And that's the background of the thought of verse 17.

There's nothing positive in verse 17. You see there, though, the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit beyond the vines, the produce of the olive fail, and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls.

[36 : 35] There's nothing positive here. Though, and all of these things are going on. What are they saying to us?

What's verse 17? What's Habakkuk saying to us in terms of, how are you, Habakkuk? Well, this is what is happening. This is what is going on, not just in my experience, he's saying, but in our experience as a people, he is saying, the fig trees not blossoming, the fruit is not on the vine, the produce of the olive has failed, the fields have no food, the flock is cut off from the fold, there is no herd in the stalls, there is devastation all around.

And they are speaking of two things. One is the destruction of the Babylonians, the devastation that has come upon an invasion from the Babylonians.

Things have been destroyed by them. Everything that was important to them as a people has been almost destroyed. But it's not just about an invading army.

More importantly and more seriously, it's about the withdrawal of God's blessing and God's favor upon them. When you look through that list in verse 17, the those, the fig trees and the vines were so important for the economy because great produce meant it was so financially important.

[38 : 08] The economy suffered without it. The fields producing no flock, the food and the flocks being taken, this meant hardship for the people. The people were suffering.

And this was the work of the enemy, but God was behind it as well. And we see that as you look back in the scriptures.

Obedience meant blessing, but disobedience had consequences. You just have to go back to Leviticus, chapter 26, where God outlines the importance of obedience and what disobedience leads to.

And so much of it is to do with the flocks, the herds and the harvest. Because a rich harvest was always seen as the blessing of God.

And he says in Leviticus 26, verse 3, If you walk in my statutes and observe my commandments and do them, then I will give you your rains and their season, and the land shall yield its increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.

[39 : 15] Your threshing shall last to the time of the grape harvest, and the grape harvest shall last to the time for sowing, and you shall eat your bread and be full and dwell in your land securely.

There was blessing from obedience. But disobedience, turning from God, had consequences. In that same chapter, Leviticus 26, verse 20, it says when you turn away from God, your strength shall be spent in vain, your land shall not yield its increase, the trees of the land shall not yield their fruit. There is consequences to disobedience. And Habakkuk's day was one that saw the reality of the devastation of rejecting God.

The those that you have here are the woes that came upon the people. And when we look at this verse for ourselves, how are you?

Though, it says, well, what are our those today? We will all have our those. We will all have the things that we see going on around us or even within us that leave us feeling like Habakkuk here.

[40 : 32] You see the world. And like Babylonia, a cruel nation inflicting pain. You look at the world today and you see so many parts of the world where there's pain inflicted through wickedness and evil.

People are suffering. We look at our leaders. We look at our economy. And what do we see? We see greed. And we see a people going without, a people suffering in that way as well.

We look around ourselves as an island here. And you think of even just these last few days and what's been in the news about Tesco seeking to open on a Sunday. And you see all that going on and you see how it goes against our culture, as so many people say, but more importantly, against our faith, against what the Word of God says.

You look at the church today and we see a lack of interest in so many ways in the church. We see a turning away from the church.

We see so little encouragement at times in the church. We look at our own lives, our individual lives, and the difficulties we may have, the challenges that we're going through.

[41 : 45] We all have our those. And we could list them off, just like Habakkuk does here. Though the fig tree should not blossom, we have things that we could say for ourselves.

Though we're seeing hardship, though we're seeing suffering, though we're seeing attacks on our faith, though we're seeing difficulties in our lives, we all have our those. Some may be seen as inflicted by others, but some as a result of turning against God.

So what can we do? Well, Habakkuk has his those. How are you? Well, there's all these challenges. But the second thing we see is in verse 18.

How are you, Habakkuk? Well, he says, Yet I will rejoice in the Lord. I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

In the midst of all of those, the things that are difficult and trying, he says, Yet I will rejoice in the Lord. We saw before how the realization and understanding of the situation of Habakkuk's day led to a boldness and an urgency in Habakkuk coming and pleading with God.

[43 : 04] In the midst of the years, revive it, he's crying out. In wrath, remember, mercy. And we see it also here in the realities of the those. We ask Habakkuk, How are you?

And he says, I am rejoicing in the Lord, the God of my salvation. And if you ask yourself today, How are you in the midst of your those?

Of the things that you're seeing going on around you or in your own circumstances? How are you? Are you able to say, Yet I will rejoice in the Lord. I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

Is that what you have? In the midst of everything going on, do you have that rejoicing? The rejoicing that Paul had in that letter to the Philippines where he says, Rejoice in the Lord always.

Again, I will say, Rejoice. In the midst of his own hardship, he's able to rejoice. Do we have that rejoicing in the Lord?

[44 : 09] And why could Habakkuk say it? Why can we rejoice in the Lord today? Well, you see, there's in the midst of all the trouble around him, there's other nuggets that come to mind as well.

In verse 13 of this chapter, in the midst of all that's going on, it says, You went out for the salvation of your people, for the salvation of your anointed.

God was not idle. God has gone out for the salvation of his people. It would be true for Habakkuk's day. It would be true in the New Testament days.

It's true in our day that God has gone out for the salvation of his people, through his anointed. For us, we can say it's through the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

God has gone out to save his people. So you can say, almost like Habakkuk's prayer is answered, in the midst of wrath, remember mercy, he was pleading, and God has shown mercy.

[45 : 17] And still today, in the midst of God's judgment, in the midst of God's anger, there is still mercy. For God has gone out for the salvation of his people.

And that is a reason to rejoice. I will take joy in the God of my salvation, Habakkuk says. Can we say that today?

Do we see how God has gone out for our salvation? And can we not rejoice in that? When you think of salvation, as you see it in the New Testament, when you see it in Matthew chapter 1, she will bear a son, and she shall call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.

God has sent his son. When you see it in the book of Acts chapter 4, when Peter is preaching at Pentecost, and he reminds the people, there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

It is the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. John, in his letters, in 1 John chapter 4, verse 14, says this, We have seen and testified that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.

[46 : 40] I will rejoice in the Lord. I will take joy in the God of my salvation, that God has sent salvation for his people.

Do you rejoice in that today? In the midst of your those, in the midst of the those that are so often woes, can you rejoice in the Lord?

That the Lord is not idle. That the Lord is working. That the Lord is able to save. That the Lord, in the midst of wrath, is able to remember mercy.

There is rejoicing in the God of salvation. In the midst of all are those. Think of Joni Erikson Tadda. Maybe you've heard of her writings. A Christian woman. She was a great swimmer, but in a diving accident at the age of 17, she was paralyzed. And she, for a time, struggled with her faith.

[47 : 46] But as she went on, her testimony became more and more powerful to the wonder of the salvation of God. That she could rejoice in that. And she said this, when we learn to lean back to

God's sovereignty, fixing and settling our thoughts on that unshakable, unmovable reality, we can experience great inner peace.

Our troubles may not change. Our pain may not diminish. Our loss may not be restored. Our problems may not fade with the new dawn. But the power of those things to harm us is broken. As we rest in the fact that God is in control. Yet, I will rejoice in the Lord. I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

In the midst of our own circumstances, the righteous shall live by faith. And what faith does for us is give us that rejoicing in the Lord.

Another one, John, this man called John of the Cross, I was reading a comment that he made. He said, And when you think of Habakkuk, how he thought God was forgetting him.

[49 : 21] And yet here we see his rejoicing in the Lord. Yet, I will rejoice in the Lord. I take joy in the God of my salvation.

Despite the those, he is still rejoicing. The final thing we take from this is the last verse there. God the Lord is my strength.

The source of this rejoicing is God the Lord. What a difference God makes in the lives of his people. What a difference God makes in the life of Habakkuk or Job or Paul or Joni, Erickson, Tadda or all of us as Christians.

What a difference having the Lord does for us in the midst of all our those. As we think of the question to Habakkuk, how are you? Well, he's saying, God the Lord is my strength.

A minister called George Campbell Morgan, he said this about looking at Habakkuk's life and circumstances. He says he was perplexed, as you see in Habakkuk 1, verse 3.

[50 : 35] But when he waited and listened to God, he sang one of the greatest praise songs in the Bible. And that's these verses here.

From perplexity to praise. And the praise that you see in verse 17 to 19 is just that. Though, though all of these things are going on, yet, I will rejoice in the Lord.

Lord in Habakkuk is used 10 times. God is used five times. It's a short book. And yet, God the Lord is to the fore all the time.

And as we conclude in this book, what we see is it closes with God the Lord. He is my strength. He makes my feet like the deer's. He makes me tread on my high places.

He lifts us up. There is hope. There is rejoicing in the Lord. Think of Isaiah, how he wrote to the people of God in their own devastation.

[51 : 41] He reminded them in Isaiah 40 as God was speaking words of comfort to them. He says later in that chapter, verse 28, the Lord is the everlasting God, the creator of the ends of the earth.

He does not faint or grow weary. His understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint and to him who has no might he increases strength.

Even youths shall faint and be weary and young men shall fall exhausted. But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like eagles.

They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint. So similar to Habakkuk here. He makes me tread on the high places.

He lifts his people up. God the Lord as our strength lifts us up. As you come into the New Testament, you see God the Lord in the person of Jesus Christ is still the source of strength for his people.

[52 : 46] And a hope that lifts us up. As he writes in John chapter 14 through to 17, you see there how he's speaking to the disciples about all that's to come.

How he's showing them and how in chapter 17 he prays for them. But at the end of chapter 16 at verse 33 he says this, I have said these things to you that in me you may have peace.

In the world you will have tribulation but take heart I have overcome the world. There is strength for God's people in that.

You will have tribulation. You will have your those but yet you can rejoice in the Lord because God the Lord is my strength.

The one who has overcome the world. Do you have that source of strength on God the Lord in all of your those today?

[53 : 47] another man whose name was Horatio Spafford. He knew something of the difficulties and challenges of the those of life.

He was a successful attorney in America and a real estate investor. But in the Great Fire in Chicago in 1871 he lost almost everything.

At the same time his four year old son passed away. He was in the midst of this devastating time and he thought it would be good for the rest of his family, his wife and daughters to go to England for a holiday and that he would join them soon after.

And so he sent them over to England. They boarded a ship to make their way to England and the ship was involved in a collision at sea and sank.

200 people were drowned including his four daughters. His wife survived and she made it back, she made it to England and she sent a telegram and it said, saved alone, what shall I do?

[54 : 58] Horatio Spafford immediately set sail for England and the captain of the ship he was on knew what had happened and as they were making their way across the Atlantic he called Horatio up to the bridge one day and said this is the spot where the ship sank.

He wanted him to know that they were passing and it was at that time that words came to him, words that became a well-known hymn.

In the midst of all his those he'd lost his fortune, he'd lost his son, at four years old he'd lost his four daughters in a tragedy and yet he was able to say, when peace like a river attendeth my way, when sorrows like sea billows roll, whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to know, it is well, it is well with my soul.

It's hard sometimes to think how we can see good in the midst of all the those. It's difficult and we see that with Habakkuk, it sounds maybe so innocent, though the fig tree shall not blossom, nor fruit beyond the vines, the produce of the olive fail, and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls.

It sounds in some ways not that serious, yet it was utter devastation for the people. It was their lives and their suffering that we are seeing here.

[56 : 27] all this was happening. That was there, those we have ours. And yet Habakkuk could say, yet I will rejoice in the Lord.

I will take joy in the God of my salvation. He had hope because he could rejoice in the Lord who has sent out salvation for his people.

God, and in the midst of that he could say, God the Lord is my strength. Can you? Can you say these things today?

We all have our those, but in Christ we can come and rejoice in the Lord. I will take joy in the God of my salvation because God the Lord is my strength.

Habakkuk came from perplexity at the beginning of chapter 1. Why, Lord, where are you? He came from that to this great song, the song of praise.

[57 : 41] Though all these things are going on, yet I will rejoice because God the Lord is my strength. there is a nugget that concludes for us this study in Habakkuk where we see nuggets in the midst of so many challenges.

May we come to rejoice in the Lord and know God the Lord as our strength. Let us pray. Lord, our gracious God, we thank you for all the words of wisdom that you speak to us.

In the midst of the challenges to Habakkuk when he sees so much devastation around him, yet he was given so much insight into the glory of your name.

How you would remember mercy in the midst of wrath. How the righteous are to live by faith. How you are able to revive your work in the midst of the days.

And how yet in the midst of all our those, we can rejoice in the Lord, the God of our strength. And so help us, Lord, to take your word with us, to remember it, to apply it to ourselves on a daily basis.

[58 : 56] Help us to be prayerful, to be patient, and above all to praise your great and your glorious name as we ask it all with forgiveness of our sins. In Jesus' name, Amen.

We're going to conclude by singing to God's praise in Psalm 18. This is in the Sing Psalms version on page 21. We'll sing from verse 27 to verse 30.

You save the humble and the meek, but bring the proud down from their height. You, Lord, will keep my lamp aflame. God turns my darkness into light.

We'll sing from verse 27 to 30. These three stanzas to God's praise. to save the humble and the meek, that bring the pride and from their height.

Your heart will keep my lamp aflame. God turns my darkness into light.

[60 : 26] With help from God's love.

God is to you and write them on. And with the end my God will give.
I can lead over any wall. For perfect is the way of God, God.
No father is found within his world. To all who put their trust in him, a shield and refuge is the Lord.
After the benediction, I'll go to the main door. We'll close with the benediction. Now may grace,
mercy and peace from God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit rest upon and abide with you all now and
forevermore.
[61 : 58] Amen. Amen.