

Nuggets in Habakkuk Part 3 - The Earth Full of the Knowledge of God

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[0 : 00] Well, we begin our worship by singing to God's praise. We're going to sing in Psalm 139a. It's page 180 of the psalm book, Psalm 139a. We're going to sing from verse 1 to verse 10.

O Lord, you have examined me. You know me through and through, my sitting, rising. All my thoughts afar are known to you. We'll sing from verse 1 to 10 to God's praise.

O Lord, you have examined me. You know me through and through, my sitting, rising.

All my thoughts afar are known to you.

My going out and lying down are plain before your youth.

[1 : 21] Before I speak a word, O Lord, it is well known to you.

You have me in the highly fold. You lay on me in your hand.

Such knowledge is too wonderful, too high, too understand.

Where can I from your safety? If I should be free, or from your presence go?

If to the heavens you are there, or in the depths below, If I should take the wings of dawn, and fell beyond the sea, Then also you would be my guide, Your right and holding me.

[3 : 17] Let's bow our heads together in a word of prayer. Let us pray. Our Father in heaven, as we come to worship you today, we thank you to be able to lift up our voices in singing to you and giving praise to you.

We are reminded of your goodness to us in these words that we have sung, that you know us in every way, you know our every need, that you are there for us, Lord, no matter where we go in this world, that we have the promise of your presence.

And we thank you that there's so much comfort in that, and that we would know, Lord, that whether we are here worshipping, whether we are in our homes, in schools or workplaces, wherever we go through the week, even when we travel to different places, that you have promised, Lord, that you will be there for us, that your right hand will hold us.

And we do thank you, Lord, for every way that you bless us day by day. We thank you for all the things that we enjoy in life, the friendships we have, the families, our Sunday school and creche, and tweenies and explorers and toddler groups and all of these things that are there for our young people and the YF and the youth club that starts this week again.

Lord, we pray for all our young people involved in these things, that there will be a sense of togetherness in it, sharing with one another, and above all knowing your goodness to us in it as well.

[4 : 57] And we thank you, Lord, that your word speaks to us in all of these things. And remind us of Jesus today, remind us of how much we need him and how much we are to love him, for he has loved us.

And may your word be blessed to us in all that we do. So we ask it all with forgiveness of sin in Jesus' name. Amen. Now, before the young ones go out, I just want to say a wee word to you today.

I'm sure many of you already know where I live. I stay up in Plasterfield, and it's a lovely part of the town to stay in. And we've got lovely neighbours up there.

And very often we engage with our neighbours. Sometimes over the wall we'll speak to our neighbours, just say something to them in the passing. And on the whole, things are good.

But the last couple of weeks our neighbours have, I don't know if it's the weather, or there's a hot sun or what it is, but they've been going a little bit crazy. They've been jumping our wall.

[6 : 01] And there's one little one, short legs. He's getting a little bit tubby as he gets a wee bit older, and he got stuck in the fence this week. And we had to go and help him.

Now, I think you're thinking I'm talking about somebody. It's not. It's something. It's an animal. It's the lambs and the sheep next door that I'm talking about. Don't be mistaken that it's somebody else.

But these neighbours, we enjoy seeing them out the back window and over the wall. But it's just they've been so lively the last wee while. And they've been coming into our, jumping our wall.

It's amazing to think they're just little lambs, and yet they're jumping the wall and coming into our garden. Our sheepdog is hopeless. He just looks at them as if what we're supposed to do. But then we have to go and catch them and put them back over the fence, so they go back to their mothers.

But they've also got a good shepherd who comes and checks on them as well. And it's a full-time job because the older they get, the more lively they get, and they get more adventurous.

[7 : 06] And I'm sure many of you had this experience in the last few weeks with lambing and keeping looking after lambs. You find lambs just going to strange places.

They'll go and try and get into any situation. They'll go and try and climb through anything and find their way always into trouble so often. And they have to be helped back.

They have to be rescued. And there's a lovely verse in Scripture that speaks about this. Last week we thought of how the good shepherd looks after his sheep.

And even if there's one missing, he goes to find them. But here's another verse that reminds us of the care that the shepherd has, especially for his lambs.

It says in Isaiah 40, verse 11, a chapter that speaks about God's comfort, God's goodness to his people. And he says this, He tends his flock like a shepherd.

[8 : 02] He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart. He gently leads those that have young. It's a beautiful verse that reminds us of the care that God gives to his people.

We are like sheep. We're like lambs. We're always doing the wrong thing, going into the wrong places, and even getting stuck in stupid places. But we thank God that we have a shepherd, one who looks after us, who holds us in his arms, who carries us closely.

And it's a wonderful thing to see a shepherd doing that for his lambs, picking them up, gathering them, helping them, taking them back to safety. And that's what we have in Jesus.

One who looks after us all, and who cares for us in that wonderful way, and who loves us in such a wonderful way. So may we all know that tender care of the Lord as our shepherd.

And we're going to say the Lord's Prayer together now. Amen. Our Father, which art in heaven. Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come.

[9 : 15] 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. We'll again sing now to God's praise.

We're going to sing in Psalm 115, in the Sing Psalms version, page 152. Psalm 115, we'll sing from verse 1 to verse 9.

Lord, not to us, O not to us, to your name be the praise, because your love and faithfulness endure, O Lord, always. We'll sing from verse 1 to verse 9 to God's praise.

For not to us, O not to us, to your name be the praise, because your love and faithfulness endure, O Lord.

[10 : 48] Why do the nations question us?

Where is their God they say? Her God, O Lord, always. Our God, O Lord, always. Their God, O Lord, always.

Their God in heaven high, and over all, O sweet.

Their gold and silver images are crafted carefully, but they have hearts which shall not speak, And God's which shall not see.

Their noses have no sense of smell, Their ears can hear no sound.

[12 : 17] They have no feeling in their hands, Nor can they hope around.

Although these idols do have throats, No word can they proclaim.

Their big curse, their worshipers will all become like them.

O house of Israel, place your trust, Upon the Lord alone.

He is the mighty help and shield of all who are his own.

[13 : 41] Their jest small access, nai gives you the melody is of the world. It's if God is with angels. Well, these two are the things that time they pray about. We will see you in a while. We will think that from this episode of the Old book for all.

chapter 2, taking up our reading at verse 6. Habakkuk chapter 2, and reading from verse 6.

We're following on from where we finished off last week, where we were thinking of the righteous shall live by his faith, as we have in verse 4. Now we read on into verse 6.

Shall not all these take up their taunt against him with scoffing and riddles for him, and say, Woe to him who heaps up what is not his own, for how long, and loads himself with pledges?

Will not your debtors suddenly arise, and those awake who will make you tremble? Then you will be spoil for them, because you have plundered many nations. All the remnant of the peoples shall plunder you, for the blood of man and violence to the earth, to cities, and all who dwell in them.

[14 : 58] Woe to him who gets evil gain for his house, to set his nest on high, to be safe from the reach of harm. You have devised shame for your house by cutting off many peoples. You have forfeited your life, for the stone will cry out from the wall, and the beam from the woodwork respond.

Woe to him who builds a town with blood, and founds a city on iniquity. Behold, it is not from the Lord of hosts, that people labor merely for fire, and nations weary themselves for nothing. For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

Woe to him who makes his neighbors drink. You pour out your wrath, and make them drunk in order to gaze at their nakedness. You will have your fill of shame instead of glory. Drink yourself, and show your uncircumcision. The cup in the Lord's right hand will come round to you, and utter shame will come upon your glory. The violence done to Lebanon will overwhelm you, as will the destruction of the beasts that terrify them. For the blood of man and violence to the earth, to cities, and to all who dwell in them. What prophet is an idol, when its maker has shaped it a metal image, a teacher of lies?

For its maker trusts in his own creation, when he makes speechless idols. Woe to him who says to a wooden thing, awake, to a silent stone, arise. Can this teach? Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in it. But the Lord is in his holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before him. Amen. And may God bless that reading from his word. And again, unite your hearts in a word of prayer. Let us pray. Lord, our gracious God, as we continue in our worship at this time, we thank you for your word. And even in the challenges of reading it and trying to understand what you are saying to us, we recognize our need of the help of your spirit to be with us.

As we open up your word, Lord, that you will give us understanding of how it applies to our own lives today. When we read of these many woes in this passage, we see so many things that are, we think maybe just for Habakkuk's day, but help us to see that your word is applicable today as it ever was. And we pray, Lord, that you will come in your power, that you will come in your glory, that your glory will fill the whole of this earth, that the world will be covered with the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea. And we thank you that your word goes out with power. We thank you for every way that you are reminding us again and again how your word is active and powerful to save. In the midst of all the chaos of our world, we thank you that as your word is preached, it is powerful. It is able to convict and to convert, as the psalmist says.

[18 : 32] And we pray, Lord, for your power of your spirit and your word to bring life, bring life to people and nations and this world as a whole, that we would see your restoring power, that we would see your power in bringing peace where there is war and peace where there is tragedy, peace into the hearts of this world and in the large-scale things. But also, Lord, when we think of our individual lives and our individual circumstances, that you are able to bring peace to us. The psalm that we sang in, Psalm 139 reminded us of that knowledge of us. It is so intimate and personal that we cannot sit or rise without your knowledge of us. And may we take comfort in that, even as we pray for others, that you are able to be with them where they are, that you are able to meet their needs more than we can, and that you are able to provide the grace that is always sufficient. And we do pray,

Lord, in this day for those particularly who mourn and grieve at this time in our own congregation, Lord, in our own community. And far and wide, Lord, we pray for the comfort of your spirit to be with us.

You are the great comforter who comes alongside. And Lord, we remember that in the midst of the world in which we live, that there are always these trials that will come our way. That there are always these days when we can, like Habakkuk, ask, how long, O Lord? But yet, O Lord, help us to live by faith.

Help us to trust in you. Help us to lean upon you for all understanding and wisdom, for we do not have it of ourselves. And help us to be, O Lord, a people who pray your will be done, even when your will is hard and difficult for us to go through or to understand. We thank you, Lord, that in all things that you have a plan and a purpose. So, Lord, help us this day to commit ourselves into your care and into your keeping, and help us as we commit others to your care and keeping as well, that they would know your nearness. We think of servants of the church who have been called home even in this past week, and the families who mourn their passing. We remember the ministry of Neil Shaw, the various congregations he was ministered of, and so many sermons he preached. So many times we even hear his voice presenting the Psalms and marvel at the beauty of it. And we thank you, Lord, for your help, and strength to him over the years. And we thank you, Lord, for the great comfort and assurance that he has now come to rest in the Lord. We pray your blessing on his family at this time, that you will comfort and uphold and strengthen them. We remember, too, O Lord, the family of Reverend

Ian Morrison. It seems just such a short time he was in ministry, and sometimes it is hard to understand these things. And yet, O Lord, we thank you for his love of Christ and his love of people.

[21 : 54] And we pray that even in his short ministry that there will still be a blessing from it, that people who heard and knew him, Lord, would be blessed by his ministry and continue to be blessed going on. We pray for the congregation there in Oban in their loss and that sense of dismay maybe at this time. We pray, Lord, that you will surround them and uphold them and be with them, journey with them through these days, Lord, and remind them that you are the Lord who is shepherd to his people.

So, Lord, we commit families and friends of these men to you. And we pray, Lord, for your comfort over us as a people in these days ahead as well, Lord, to know your goodness to us. As we even think of the General Assembly starting tomorrow, we pray for the week ahead for all your people who gather there for the meetings in these coming days, Lord, we pray that it will be for your glory and your good, that we will not get distracted by different things, but that we will keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, that we will look to him who is the author, the perfecter of faith. We pray for Bob Ackroyd as he comes to conclude his time as moderator and Reverend Carl McLeod as he takes up that role. We pray for them and pray your blessing on them and your strength towards them. And we thank you in all things that we have you as our Lord and as our God, the one to call upon, the one who is near to help, the one who is able to bless. And we just commit ourselves into your hands now, O Lord, that you will draw near to us as we seek to draw near to you, as we ask all things confessing our sins anew. May you pardon us, Lord, for all our iniquities and cleanse us as we ask it in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Saviour, and for his glory. Amen.

We'll again sing to God's praise, this time in Psalm 135 in the Scottish Psalter. Page 425. We'll sing from verse 1 to verse 6.

Psalm 135, page 425 at verse 1. Praise ye the Lord, the Lord's name praise his servants. Praise ye God, who stand in God's house and still Lord's name praise his servants.

In the courts of our God, make abode. We'll sing from verse 1 to 6 to God's praise. Praise ye the Lord, the Lord's name praise his servants. Praise ye God, who stand in God's house, in the courts of our God, make abode. Praise ye the Lord, for he is good, and to him praise his servants sing.

[25 : 18] Sing praises to his King, because it is a pleasant thing.

For Jacob to himself the Lord, give choose of his good pleasure, and he hath chosen Israel for his peculiar pleasure.

Because I know as you in thee, the Lord is very great, and that our Lord above all gods in glory hath his seat.

What thing so ever pleased the Lord, but in the heaven did he, and in the earth, the seas and all the places he had been.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Well, we can turn back to our reading in Habakkuk chapter 2, and we're going to look at this section from verse 6 down to verse 20.

[27 : 17] We come to our third part of our study in this book of Habakkuk, where we've been looking at different verses that we find throughout it that we can really call the nuggets of gold that you find in the midst of a challenging day for Habakkuk, and even in the midst of our own day, we see the relevance of these nuggets today as well.

And so far, we've looked at two different verses as we found them. First of all, in chapter 1, we were looking at how, excuse me, we see God has a plan, even as Habakkuk was crying out, how long, O Lord, will you not hear me?

Yet we see in verse 5 where he says, for I am doing a work in your days that you would not believe if told. We saw how there was this mysterious way that God was working, ways that we could not understand, even if he was to tell us.

And Habakkuk was seeing this in his own day. He was going to see how God was going to work in a way that would seem to go completely against the way Habakkuk would want it to work, or the way the people would want it to work.

And yet God is saying, I have a work. And this work was to bring a nation upon them, a nation of wicked people, the Chaldeans, or the Babylonians, as they're also known, a nation that was against God and against God's people, and who would bring much devastation.

[28 : 50] And yet how God was bringing them upon them with a purpose to judge and to restore. So then last week we were looking at, well, how are the people to live in those days and at that time when things were so difficult?

Well, in the midst of the attack they were going to come under, they were to be a people who were to live by faith, as we saw in verse 4 of chapter 2.

But the righteous shall live by his faith. Live by faith, waiting and watching for God in the midst of everything that was happening, and with a warning of a choice of how to live, either like the puffed up, as it says in verse 4, with no thought of God, or to live by faith.

Well, today we come into another section here as Habakkuk and God are interacting with one another. And it's this section where you see this passage full of woes.

And what makes a difference in our lives when we are to live by faith? When we think of the mysterious providence of God in different ways of life, what gives us hope in the midst of it all?

[30 : 14] Well, we come to this nugget that we're going to look at today, which is verse 14 of chapter 2. For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

This is the nugget that we're looking at today. This is the hope that we can have in the midst of all the chaos that's around us. It wasn't just a hope for Habakkuk and his day.

It's a hope for ourselves today as well. That the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

But in order to see the wonder of this hope, we need to see it in the midst of the darkness of the day. And what we see is Habakkuk here telling us of these woes.

Woe to him, it says throughout this section. And there's five of these woes. Imagine reading your own obituary.

[31 : 24] You say to yourself, that's not possible. In order to have an obituary, the person must have passed away. So how is it possible to read your own?

Well, in 1867, it's said that the Swedish chemist, Alfred Noble, he awoke one morning, and as he opened up the newspaper, there he saw his own obituary.

It's obviously shocked to see it. And as he read it, it just shook him. It said, Alfred Noble, the inventor of dynamite, who died yesterday, devised a way for more people to be killed in a war than ever before.

And he died a rich man. There's different versions of maybe what was said. But it shook him. And what had happened was the newspaper reporter had made a mistake.

It was Alfred's older brother who had passed away. But the reporter had heard it was Alfred, and he knew about Alfred. He was famous for the invention of dynamite.

[32 : 32] He'd obviously made a lot of money out of it. And this was the obituary that was written for him. And it got Alfred to think, is this the way that he would want to be remembered?

Alfred, as developing a means of killing people and making a lot of money out of it. And so he sought to do good in the world.

And he set up what is known as the Nobel Peace Prize, which gave a prize to people who were able to come up with ways of helping people instead of causing chaos and destruction.

Well, what does an obituary have to do with what we're looking at today? Well, what you see as you go through this section, verse 6 down to verse 20, is this word, woe.

And these five woes that are spoken of here, the word woe can also be translated alas. And what the word is used for so often is speaking of someone who is dead.

[33 : 43] For example, in 1 Kings chapter 13 and verse 30, there there is an account of a man of God who died.

And a friend came to bury him. And it says in verse 30, he laid the body in his own grave. And they mourned over him saying, alas, my brother.

So that is the same word as we have here. Alas and woe are the same word. And the same word that we have here. Alas, my brother, his brother who had died. And so woe would normally be used in that sense of someone who had died.

But the prophets like Habakkuk and others, they used these words, woe or alas, speaking to people who were alive.

But because of their sin, because of the way that they were living their lives, as one writer says, they are already as good as dead because God has given his verdict against them.

[34 : 49] And so as we read these woes in this passage, yes, it is speaking to people who are alive, but it's almost like an obituary.

Woe to you in the midst of all that you have done. You have died in your sin. And it reminds us of the way Paul writes to the church at Ephesus in Ephesians chapter 2.

Look at the way he speaks to the people there. It's like an obituary. You were dead in the trespasses and sins. You are dead in your trespasses and sins.

You are dead without Christ. And so there is an obituary for us. But as Paul goes on to say, but God, being rich and mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ.

By grace you have been saved. And so in this passage, what we're going to see is these woes, the woes of condemnation.

[36 : 03] But in the midst of that, we're going to see a confirmation. Confirmation that God is one who still gives hope. And then thirdly, and just very briefly at the end, we'll see the comfort that that gives.

And so the first thing we want to see is, as we think of the wonder of that verse 14, the earth being filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters covers the sea, we think first of the condemnation and these woes.

Because in order to see the beauty of the gospel, we have to see the darkness of sin. And as we've noted already in Habakkuk's day, it was a dark time.

That is where Habakkuk's cry came from in verse two. O Lord, how long shall I cry for help and you will not hear? Or cry to you violence and you will not save?

There was devastation around him. Devastation nationally and internationally as we've seen. That is where the cry for help came from.

[37 : 14] And what makes ourselves feel a sense of injustice today? What makes you feel a sense of anger and long for God to change things?

What makes you come to God with that cry of Habakkuk? How long will I cry for help? And you will not hear. It's likely that the things that make us angry and feel a sense of injustice are the very things that Habakkuk is telling us of here in these five woes.

And what we are reading here is these woes, this word of condemnation, that we are dead in our sin, but that God is going to deal with these sins and the sinners behind them.

The five ways, the five ways of condemnation that will come. It's about seeing the judgment of God on those who feel confident in their ways, confident in their sin, like the Babylonians would be, like other nations in the Old Testament who you read of, the Assyrians who came and tried to destroy God's people.

But God is saying, I am at work, as we have seen earlier in chapter one, in ways that you would not believe if I was to tell you that God is still at work.

[38 : 48] And the condemnations that we see here are just like the ones that we can think of today in our own world. We think of the things that make us angry, the sin that we see around us, and we just want God to take action while he is saying, I will.

Unless these people change their ways, then they are dead in their trespasses and sins. And what do you see? We see these five woes, and I just want to touch on them just briefly so we see what they are.

In Habakkuk 2, verse 6 to 8, Woe to him who heaps up what is not his own. There's this woe against aggression.

Habakkuk saw it in his day with all these nations invading and taking what was not their own. And they did it in a devastating way.

And we think of the world in which we live today. And you think of the way people live their lives with no thought of God and who just take what is not their own and by any means.

[40 : 02] You see it in so many different ways, whether it's through times of war and invasion, or see it in just corporate greed. You see it in people, what we call modern-day slavery.

We think slavery is something in the past. It's not. It is still there today. People who are modern-day slaves, they've paid pennies or nothing at all, led captive, away from families, away from friends, and put to use.

Why? Because of people's way of aggression. People who want to heap up what is not their own. But God is saying, Woe to them.

I will deal with them. Then in verse 9 to verse 11, Woe to him who gets evil gain for his house to set his nest on high.

There is this woe against covetousness. People who just want to get richer. And again, just forget about anybody else. Just look after number one.

[41 : 10] No care or concern for others. It's just, How much can I amass in this world? Whether it's houses or cars or money, whatever it is.

Well, God is saying, Woe. Woe to him who gets evil gain for his house to set his nest on high. Again, there's no thought for God.

Verse 12 to verse 14. Woe to him who builds a town with blood and founds a city on iniquity.

Again, you see here just this wicked way, this way of violence, this way of bloodshed, this way of gain by this acts of war and terror.

The things that Habakkuk saw on his day that we see in our own day as well. And we can cry like Habakkuk, How long, O Lord? How long are you going to allow this to go on?

[42 : 13] But again, it's by living by faith in the God who works in mysterious ways that we see they will be judged. Woe to him who builds a town with blood.

The wickedness of man's heart will be judged. They are as good as dead unless they repent and turn. And you see in verse 15 to verse 17, Woe to him who makes his neighbors drink.

You pour out your wrath and make them drunk in order to gaze at their nakedness. Again, there's woe against humanity. The way people deal with other people.

It's prevalent in Habakkuk's day and you think of it in our own day as well. You think of human trafficking. You think of people being put into lives of prostitution.

You think of all these wicked things in our world where life is not precious. Where people are just a commodity to be used.

[43 : 22] But God is saying, Woe. Woe to them. I will not allow this to go undealt with. The Lord will deal with it.

And then the fifth one. And you see in verse 19, Woe to him who says to a wooden thing, Awake! To a silent stone, Arise!

Woe to idolatry! Woe to those who worship anything apart from God! Now you think of the first four and you say, Well, I don't fall into that category.

That's not something that my heart is inclined to. But you can almost guarantee that we all fall into the trap of idolatry in different ways.

Idols were common in Habakkuk's day. Every nation had their gods made of silver and gold and wood and stone and all sorts.

[44 : 25] And they were worshipped in the place of God. You think of when Moses was receiving the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai.

And the people were saying, Where is Moses? He's left us. He's gone. Let us make an idol to worship. And they made a golden calf. How quickly they changed.

And how easy it is for us to put something in the place of God. Idolatry is worshipping or being more devoted to anything other than God, as someone put it.

And we can have to guard our hearts against this. John Calvin once said, The human heart is a perpetual idol factory.

We are making idols all the time. Things that we put in the place of God and worship more than God. But the Lord says, Woe.

[45 : 26] Now, Habakkuk, in his day, as the people were hearing this, they should have stopped in their tracks and started to think, What does this mean for me?

And the same is true for ourselves as well. It should make us stop in our tracks and look at the world in which we live, but also look in our own hearts and ask, Are we part of the problem here?

Is my heart away from God? Am I not trusting in God? As we saw the last time in chapter 2 there when we were thinking of the righteous shall live by faith.

The other way was to go away from God and just to live puffed up in self. Is that the way that we are living? We have to guard ourselves because there is condemnation.

There is death if we continue in sin. But what of hope then? Where does hope come in the midst of these woes?

[46 : 37] Well, that's the nugget that we see in verse 14. And that's the wonder of God to us, as his people. For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

In all that is wrong in the world, we are reminded here that God's great purpose is to make his glory known throughout the whole of creation.

And we have to see this verse not just as one stand-alone verse here, but a confirmation of God's redemptive work throughout the Scriptures.

because it's not the only place we read these words or words very similar to it. Numbers 14, verse 21.

But truly, as I live, and as all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord. God speaking there to his people.

[47 : 40] Again, there's the people in Moses' day who were in the wilderness and they were grumbling against God. They were moaning at him for taking them out of Egypt and into this wilderness where they saw it in their own eyes as suffering, almost like Habakkuk's cry, How long are we going to be here, Lord?

But God is reminding them, I've got a purpose. I am taking you to a better place. I am leading you along the way. And he gives them this assurance as the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.

And then later on in Isaiah, Isaiah 11, verse 1 and 2, there it says, There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from whose root shall bear fruit, and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding.

And then later in verse 9, it says, They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

So again, Isaiah is speaking there of the wonder of this, the wonder of God and his glory. And who is Isaiah speaking about there in verse 1 and 2?

[48 : 53] There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse. He is speaking about the Messiah, the Lord Jesus, who is coming into this world. The only way our condemnation could be dealt with was for him to take it for us.

As the hymn writer says, In man of sorrows, bearing shame and scoffing rude, in my place condemned, he stood, sealed my pardon with his blood.

Hallelujah! What a Savior! So there is woe, there is death, there is condemnation, but then the glory of the Lord that will fill the earth is Christ himself.

in my place condemned, he stood. And the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord.

Isn't it a marvelous thought that when you think of just what that means for us, Psalm 19 says, The heavens declare the glory of God. But there is so much more.

[50 : 01] The glory of God is so linked with the presence of God. And God's sending his word out across the lands, across the world, that it might bring healing to nations.

And the wonder of how God did it. As Jesus himself came into this world in John 1, 14, what does it say there?

The word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory. Glory as the only son from the Father, full of grace and truth. We have seen his glory.

The glory of God filling the world with the knowledge of God. And Habakkuk was given a message for his people in those days, and it's the same in our ministry today as well, to make the glory of God known to the people around us.

To know it ourselves first and foremost. And his word gives us this confirmation. That the glory of the Lord will fill this world as the waters cover the sea.

[51 : 16] There's a depth and a breadth to it. The knowledge of the glory of the Lord. We don't know but just a taste of it just now.

but God is filling the world with more and more of it. It's amazing when you think of this image of just the whole world being filled with the glory of God.

I was over on the west side on Thursday evening and as I was going over the mirror you could see that there was a thick mist, a thick fog on the west side.

You could see it and then all of a sudden you're coming into it. And I was over there for a time outside and there was no getting away from it. It just surrounds you. It's all around you.

And you can almost see it just rising on the ground and off the lochs. And you think just of that image in a sense of the whole world being filled with the glory, the knowledge of the glory of God.

[52 : 19] The Spirit of God moving throughout this world. The Spirit of God bringing life to people who are dead in a way that we're surrounded by this glory.

There's no getting away from this glory. Romans, as Paul writes and he speaks of being left without excuse because the glory of God is seen all around us.

No hiding place. It's awesome to behold that. That God is speaking to us.

As we are dead in our trespasses and sins that we might be alive. How blessed Habakkuk was to have these nuggets of gold in the midst of everything going on.

And how blessed we are that there is God's mysterious ways that we are to live by faith and that there is hope that the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord.

[53 : 26] Again, Paul writing to the Corinthians says this, For God who said, Let light shine out of darkness has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

He has made his glory known to us in the face of Jesus Christ. What a precious Savior we have.

John Newton in his old age he loved his Savior and he loved to preach about his Savior. And he was old and frail and going blind but he still loved to preach.

But he had an assistant who would come up with him to support him and to help him. And as he was preaching one Lord's Day he said to the congregation Jesus Christ is precious.

And then he repeated it again Jesus Christ is precious. And the man who was with him supporting him he said you've already said that thinking he was just losing his way.

[54 : 38] And he said yes I've said it twice and I'm going to say it again and he lifted up his voice and bellowed out as loud as he could Jesus Christ is precious.

That is the knowledge of the glory of God that Jesus Christ is precious. And is he precious to you?

You when you realize that your obituary is here before you. You when you think you are dead in your trespasses and sins but by the grace of God you can be made alive.

And isn't there comfort in that? When we think of the confirmation that Habakkuk has in the midst of all of the woes that there is this confirmation that the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God.

Habakkuk writes with challenges to the people but these nuggets they give comfort. When you think of sorrow and sadness when you think of these woes what better blessing than to know the great comfort and comforter that is God and his word.

[56 : 02] and when we think of what his word says when we think of the condemnation that we are under ourselves because of sin what does the glory of God mean for us?

I want to finish with these words of Romans 8. What does it say in verse 1? There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

There is no condemnation when you are in Christ Jesus. The woe has been dealt with because in my place condemned he stood.

And what does Romans 8 go on to conclude with? From verse 35 it says who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

Shall tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? All of these things that we see in the woes of this passage as it is written for your sake we are being killed all the day long.

[57 : 20] We are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered. No in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life nor angels nor rulers nor things present nor things to come nor powers nor height nor depth nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Nothing can separate us when we know that there is no condemnation when we are in Christ Jesus. Christ Jesus is a fulfillment of this verse.

The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters covered the sea. The glory that has been made known in the face of Jesus Christ.

We have these woes these words of death really to make us see the wonder and the beauty of the gospel to see the darkness of sin and to see the only way out is to know the glory of the Lord and the glory that is Jesus Christ a precious Savior.

Do you know this comfort? Well come and put your trust in him. Be in Christ Jesus because then there is no condemnation.

[59 : 01] Let us pray. Our Father in heaven we do praise you for your wonders of your grace and the wonder of your word and your glory that goes throughout the world and we pray Lord to know more of it that we will see your glory and know the wonder of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ and faith in him.

We ask it Lord confessing our sins before you that we might not be condemned but know the wonder of no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus as we ask it in his name.

Amen. We'll conclude by singing to God's praise in Psalm 57 Psalm 57 from verse 9 down to the end.

Among the nations Lord to you I will give praise among the peoples of the earth my songs of you I'll raise great is your steadfast love which reaches to the sky your constant faith on S.O.

Lord extends to heaven high above the highest heaven so God exalted be and over all the earth below display your majesty. We'll sing these three stanzas to God's praise.

[60 : 35] Among the nations Lord to you I will give praise among the peoples of the earth my songs of you I raise great is your steadfast love which reaches to the sky your constant love and faithfulness and faithfulness O Lord extends to heaven high above the highest hands

O God exalted thee and over the earth may know display your majesty 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 amen