

Bible Study – Habakkuk

Chapter 3



Habakkuk's Prayer

Chapter 2 concludes with a vision detailing an appointed time outlining five distinct transgressions that lead to significant sorrow, distress, and trouble. The judgment resulting from it is inevitable. Troublesome news! Habakkuk's prayer introduces Chapter 3. After receiving the vision, it seems that his most fitting response was to pray, possibly on his knees, as suggested by some translations. According to some translations, this chapter is written in the format of a song or psalm. Most probably considering the context it was a song sung unto God recalling many of God's actions in the past

Habakkuk 3:1-2

¹A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, on Shigionoth. ²O LORD, I have heard Your speech *and* was afraid; O LORD, revive Your work in the midst of the years! In the midst of the years make *it* known; In wrath remember mercy. (NKJV)

¹⁻² A prayer of the prophet Habakkuk, with orchestra: GOD, I've heard what our ancestors say about you, and I'm stopped in my tracks, down on my knees. Do among us what you did among them. Work among us as you worked among them. And as you bring judgment, as you surely must, remember mercy. (The Message)

Shigionoth is a Hebrew term that appears in the Bible in Habakkuk 3:1 and Psalm 7 and is, therefore, not well known to us. According to scholars, it refers to a style of music or poetic expression performed with strong emotion and a sense of triumph, emphasising this aspect of worship that transcends situational influences. The term conveys the idea of worship that is not dependent on our circumstances. Habakkuk recalls God's wondrous acts in Israel's past. He was very familiar with the history and also how Israel most probably versed it in the forms of prayers, songs, and poems as we see in the coming verses.

Questions for Reflection

In your opinion what did Habakkuk mean by asking God to revive His work?

If you apply that to your lifetime what would it mean?



Habakkuk 3: 3-8

He Reflects on God's Ancient Ways

³ God came from Teman, The Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah His glory covered the heavens, And the earth was full of His praise. ⁴ His brightness was like the light; He had rays flashing from His hand, And there His power was hidden. ⁵ Before Him went pestilence, And fever followed at His feet. ⁶ He stood and measured the earth; He looked and startled the nations. And the everlasting mountains were scattered, The perpetual hills bowed. His ways are everlasting. ⁷ I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction; The curtains of the land of Midian trembled. ⁸ O Lord, were You displeased with the rivers, Was Your anger against the rivers, Was Your wrath against the sea, That You rode on Your horses, Your chariots of salvation? (NKJV)

The song describes God coming from Teman and Mount Paran. Teman is a geographical location that generally signifies "south." It was considered the principal city of Edom and is located in a mountainous region to the south of Sinai in Egypt, which is likely Mount Sinai. Mount Paran is situated in Jordan, east of the town of Paran, just across the border from Israel. This area is also very mountainous. According to Numbers 10:11-13, it was the first site where the Israelites encamped after leaving Mount Sinai.

Both Teman and Paran were stopovers. It was at these locations that God made His presence known to Israel. According to scholars, the name for God used in this context is not "Elohim," but "ĕlôah," a relatively rare term that emphasizes God as the Creator of the universe. The names of God and their usage in Scripture merit further study, but for our purposes, there is a strong connection between God as the Creator, and how this song portrays His attributes.

Word Search

Below is a word search puzzle using words from verses 3 to 6 from the NKJV translation. Read through the verses again slowly and see if you can find the collection of those 22 words in the puzzle:

bowed; brightness; earth; earth; feet; fever; flashing; glory; hand; heavens; hills; light; looked; measured; mountains; nations; pestilence; praise; rays; scattered; startled; ways.

T	K	F	H	N	Z	R	Z	Q	J	B	G	O	B	L
H	P	N	T	S	I	J	Q	P	V	M	S	O	V	T
G	D	A	R	M	L	D	D	H	J	Y	W	K	G	H
I	U	T	A	W	O	L	A	S	N	E	V	A	E	H
L	M	I	E	D	M	N	I	O	D	W	L	U	O	V
S	W	O	F	H	D	P	E	H	F	E	V	E	R	D
Y	A	N	U	L	T	S	N	S	J	I	G	A	E	B
A	Y	S	B	N	A	R	T	O	I	A	O	K	X	C
R	S	U	F	L	T	S	A	A	O	A	O	R	R	D
H	Q	X	W	A	F	A	H	E	R	O	R	F	Y	S
M	Z	Q	A	T	F	K	I	I	L	T	I	P	Q	G
M	E	A	S	U	R	E	D	N	N	M	L	G	T	L
S	C	A	T	T	E	R	E	D	S	G	K	E	Z	O
E	C	N	E	L	I	T	S	E	P	S	E	W	D	R
S	S	E	N	T	H	G	I	R	B	F	T	Z	A	Y

Could you find those 22 words? This is a fun way to discover the attributes of God's glory as described by the Prophet. Scholars refer to this as a theophany—a visual display that expresses the presence and character of God. You can find the answer on the back page. As a result, Habakkuk observed the tents of Cushan and the curtains of Midian in distress. Both Cushan and Midian refer to geographical regions to the south of Jerusalem, which were well-known to Habakkuk and the people of Israel. God will likely appear from this direction on the Day of His Judgment.



Habakkuk 3: 9-12

The next section of Habakkuk's prayer of awe is a rendition of a coming battle that will see nations crushed, using the picture of a warrior.

⁹ Your bow was made quite ready; Oaths were sworn over Your arrows. Selah You divided the earth with rivers. ¹⁰ The mountains saw You and trembled; The overflowing of the water passed by. The deep uttered its voice, And lifted its

hands on high. ¹¹ The sun and moon stood still in their habitation; At the light of Your arrows they went, At the shining of Your glittering spear. ¹² You marched through the land in indignation; You trampled the nations in anger."

Questions for Reflection

What does it mean when an oath is sworn over an arrow?

What are the elements of creation that succumb to God marching through the land?

Who are the nations that will be trampled? Does this include Israel?

Habakkuk 3:13-14

The Wicked will not Endure

"¹³ You went forth for the salvation of Your people, For salvation with Your Anointed. You struck the head from the house of the wicked, By laying bare from foundation to neck. Selah ¹⁴ You thrust through with his own arrows The head of his villages. They came out like a whirlwind to scatter me; Their rejoicing was like feasting on the poor in secret. ¹⁵ You walked through the sea with Your horses, Through the heap of great waters."

Questions for Reflection

What does the salvation of God's people in this context mean?

How did the wicked react to God's presence?

How did God respond to the wicked?

Taking everything in, the Prophet heard, he was about to cave in!

"¹⁶ When I heard, my body trembled; My lips quivered at the voice; Rottenness entered my bones; And I trembled in myself, That I might rest in the day of trouble. When he comes up to the people, He will invade them with his troops"

Questions for Reflection.

Describe the physical and emotional responses of Habakkuk to what he observed:

His Body _____

His Lips _____

His Bones _____

His Innerman _____

Does this sound in any way familiar? As with the Prophet, bad news affects our whole being!



Habakkuk 3:17 - A Hymn of Faith

The following verse has been immortalized in various gospel songs in multiple languages around the world. Habakkuk envisions the looming threat to the nations, including Israel, which will lead to a loss of all sources of livelihood. But instead, he rejoices!

"¹⁷ Though the fig tree may not blossom, Nor fruit be on the vines; Though the labor of the olive may fail, And the fields yield no food; Though the flock may be cut off from the fold, And there be no herd in the stalls"

Below is an easy word search puzzle highlighting those 6 sources of livelihood of an agrarian community typical to the time. See if you can find them. Words can go in direction and words can share letters as they cross over each other. Words are listed here in no particular order. The answer is on the back page.

P	X	L	O	V	K	T	O	N	F
R	E	Y	K	C	M	C	C	I	J
U	U	V	O	O	H	U	G	U	W
D	Y	L	I	D	W	T	Y	S	K
E	F	A	E	L	R	R	V	D	J
H	E	R	D	E	O	B	I	L	P
K	Q	L	E	G	T	X	C	E	M
S	E	N	I	V	W	S	K	I	L
N	Q	G	Z	H	T	V	U	F	J
P	A	Y	K	I	I	C	E	T	T

Words: fields;flock figtree;vines;olives;stalls

Despite the possible loss of all sources of income, the prophet chooses to rejoice in the Lord. This declaration has instilled hope in God within the minds of

millions of believers who seek to follow in the footsteps of Habakkuk. What a powerful declaration!

Habakkuk 3:18-19

In Spite of It All!

¹⁸ Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

¹⁹ The Lord God is my strength; He will make my feet like deer's feet, And He will make me walk on my high hills. To the Chief Musician. With my stringed instruments."

The words of the prophet come to an abrupt conclusion in these final verses. The book of Habakkuk transitions like a pendulum, moving from questioning God to listening to Him, and ultimately to praising Him. This shift served as a powerful statement of faith in Israel's history much later on.

Afterthoughts:

We conclude our study on Habakkuk with a few takeaways.

- **Questioning is acceptable.** Habakkuk had many questions for God, and he approached them with respect and justification.
- **God's timing is different from ours.** Habakkuk came to understand God's timeline for both the nation and its adversaries.
- **Evil ultimately faces judgment.** The wicked were due for judgment.
- **Faith sustains us.** Despite the prospect of difficult times, Habakkuk maintained his faith in God.
- **There is joy amidst chaos.** Habakkuk chose to praise God despite the challenges he faced.

Thank you for journeying with us through this book. We trust that it will strengthen you in your faith during difficult times!



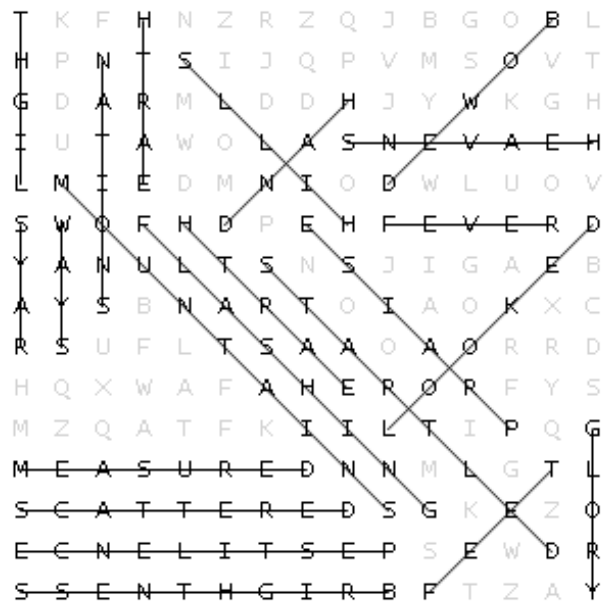
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Answers to word Search Puzzle

Habakkuk 3:3-6



Answers to word search puzzle

Habakkuk 3: 17

