

Something Has Changed Within Me

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[0:00] Josh and Kylie, thank you for serving us this morning and tag teaming this longer text. We're going to look at chapter 3. We're going to go from 1 down through verse number 15. So a little bit of a longer text today. So they're going to tag team reading this text. And they are also going to read to us this morning from the New International Version. That is what will be on the screen if I pulled all the levers and did all the things. So hopefully that's what's on the screen. So your Bible may read just a little bit different than what they're reading, but that will be just fine. A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet on Shagaiath.

Lord, I have heard your fame. I stand in awe of your deeds, Lord. Repeat them in our faith. In our time, make them known. In wrath, remember mercy. God came from Taman, the Holy One from Mount Aaron.

His glory covers the heavens and his praise fills the earth. His splendor was like the sunrise where he splashed from his hand where his power was hidden. Plague went before him. Essestance followed in his steps.

[1:09] He stood and shook the earth. He looked and made the nations tremble. The ancient mountains crumbled and the age-old hills collapsed. But he marches on forever.

I saw the tents of Cushion in distress, the dwelling of Midian in anguish. Were you angry with the rivers, Lord? Was there wrath against the streams? Did you rage against the sea when you rode your horses and your chariots to victory?

You uncovered your bow. You called for many arrows. You split the earth with rivers. The mountains saw you and writhed. Torrents of water swept by. The deep roared and lifted its waves on high.

Sun and moon stood still in the heavens at the glint of your flying arrows, at the lightning of your flashing spear. In wrath you strode through the earth, and in anger you threshed the nations.

You came out to deliver your people to save your anointed one. You crushed the leader of the land of wickedness. You stripped him from head to foot. With his own spear you pierced his head when his warriors stormed out the scatterest, gloating as though about to devour the wretched who were in hiding.

[2:16] You trampled the sea with your horses, churning the great waters. Thank you. Let's pray. Good Father, we come before you, and we want to hear what you have to say to us through your word, by the power of your Holy Spirit.

So would you please come, as we have sang, and illumine our minds, help us to understand. Would you awaken fresh faith?

Would you stir our hope and our confidence in you? Please show us our Savior, Jesus Christ, even in this text that could seem a bit obscure to us, and poetry on top of that.

Would you please help us, as we take this time, to continue in worship by sitting under the preaching of your word. Please speak to us from your word.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Most change in our lives happens slowly.

[3 : 27] You don't pay attention that your fingernails are growing, and yet you regularly need to cut them.

You may not notice your perspective shifting until you're asked to share your opinion.

Change usually happens slowly. But, sometimes, something shifts all at once.

And the shift is not in what you see, not in what you hear, not in what you feel. The shift is inside of us. Suddenly, your mind is clear, and you know what needs to be done.

Your heart feels the urgency of the moment, and even your body relaxes, releasing some tension that it's been carrying for a while.

[4 : 36] Your job hasn't improved, but your outlook shifts. The diagnosis is still all too real, but your mindset is different.

Your prayer remains unanswered, but your heart posture is now humble.

As chapter 3 begins, Habakkuk's circumstances haven't changed, but he has.

Habakkuk's circumstances have you experienced this kind of change. What if God doesn't change your circumstances, but instead changes you?

Habakkuk 3 shows us what happens when a person stops demanding answers, explanations, control, and starts resting in who God is.

[5 : 53] Chapter 3, verse number 1. A prayer of Habakkuk, the prophet, according to the Shigianoth.

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 Timon, and the Holy One from Mount Paran.

Selah. The change inside of Habakkuk is already clear from the very first words.

He is no longer questioning God. He is praying. This is a good place to be. This is a prayer, according to the Shigianoth.

[6 : 59] We don't know exactly what this word means. In fact, it's only mentioned in one other spot, Psalm 7. It's likely some sort of musical instruction.

What is clearer is the word Selah. Do you see that there in your Bible? It might be offset, off to the right. It might be in italics.

The font itself might be a little different. Selah is a musical pause. This is a moment to stop, to reflect, to let the truth sink in.

This pause is especially fitting here because of how chapter 2 ends. Look in your Bible, and let me remind you, the Lord is in His holy temple.

Let all the earth keep silence before Him. Yes. Yes. Selah. Stop.

[8 : 06] Reflect. Let that truth sink in. Habakkuk has been quieted, not dismissed, not rebuked, but brought to silence before God.

When Habakkuk prays in verse 2, I have heard the report of you. What is this report that he's talking about?

Most likely, it is the five woes that we looked at last week in chapter 2. Most likely, this report is God's announcement of judgment against Babylon.

Habakkuk now knows God is working. The plan is written in stone.

He will discipline His people, and God will judge Babylon. This awareness of God's larger purposes changes Habakkuk.

[9 :19] In chapter 1, he demands justice. He's almost accusing God of being indifferent. Why don't you listen? Why don't you do something?

Why do you tolerate this wickedness? But now, he stands in awe of what God is doing, of God's involvement in history.

Do you see it there in verse 2? Your work, O Lord, do I fear. this is a decisive shift.

God's first answer back in chapter 1 began with, I am working a work, and Habakkuk objected to that. Well, I want you to do something, but I don't want you to do that.

But now, having heard God, Habakkuk doesn't ask him to adjust the plan. He asked him to continue it.

[10 :20] His three questions have become three requests. Look in your Bible. Revive your work. Verse 2, revive your work.

Make it known. In wrath, remember mercy. His fear has not disappeared, but it has found its place.

Habakkuk isn't arguing anymore. He is seeing. Maybe you remember an early scene from C.S. Lewis's *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*.

Edmund, Lucy, Eustace is there. They are looking at this painting on the wall, and then suddenly they are pulled into the scene.

Something like that happens here. As Habakkuk reflects on God's character, he is drawn into this vision of God, this theophany.

[11 :28] He is no longer studying a painting, no longer just remembering God's works in the past. It's as if he is walking right with God through what comes next.

Some translations read the verbs in this portion as past tense because Habakkuk is remembering what God has done.

And other translations change them into the present because it's as if this vision is unfolding right in front of him. Both are good. Both are helpful.

Habakkuk remembers God's work and that becomes his present sight. It's as if he is seeing it for himself, drawn right up into the picture.

Even the geography that we read at the end of that first reading carries meaning here. Taman and Mount Paran, these are not random places. Beginning of verse 3, Taman is often associated with God's judgment against those who mistreat his people.

[12 :44] Mount Paran is only elsewhere mentioned in Deuteronomy chapter 33 when Moses reminds God's people of God's covenant love for them.

Keep that in mind as Habakkuk sees God on the move. This is faith learning who it bows to.

Verse 3, 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.

[13 :49] His 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 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. Selah. God comes.

The Holy One arrives. He intervenes in human history because his mission has not changed since the beginning, since the creation.

We read about it in 2.14. The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God. God's mission has not changed.

[14 : 59] He shines with the light he created. He carries fistfuls of lightning. Power radiates from his presence. Back in chapter 1, Habakkuk cries, justice never goes forth.

But now, judgment marches in God's procession. Pestilence goes before him, and plague follows behind him.

He surveys the earth. He stands in judgment. Nations tremble. Mountains shatter. Powers that seemed permanent, immovable, suddenly look just fragile.

Babylon may boast like a fisherman who thinks he owns the sea as we saw in chapter 1.

But God mounts his chariot and rides on those waters. He draws his bow.

[16 : 06] He sends his arrows. They go exactly where he commands. God comes. He defeats wickedness.

He delivers his people. Selah. What happens inside of you when you see God like this?

Habakkuk has more to see. At the end of verse 9, 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.

[17 : 06] 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.

Selah. The Lord splits the earth. Rivers burst forth.

Mountains see him and quiver. Flood waters sweep past. The deep cries out, lifting its waves as if in submission, in surrender to God.

Sun and moon, they stand at attention. God's arrows flash. His glittering spear streaks across the sky.

[18 : 13] He marches through the earth in fury. He tramples the nations in anger. He crushes the head, the leader of the house of wickedness, strips him bare, lays him open.

But don't miss why. God goes forth for the salvation of his people, for the salvation of his anointed.

Chaotic wickedness does not have the final word. God does. Selah. Verse 14.

You pierced with his own arrows the head of his warriors who came like a whirlwind to scatter me, rejoicing as if to devour the poor in secret.

it. You trampled the sea with your horses, the surging of the mighty waters, the agents of evil, the warriors of wickedness.

[19 : 32] They storm in like a whirlwind against God's people. They gloat about their violence. They devour the weak. They think no one sees them.

no one knows. But God turns their weapons against them. He pierces their heads with their own arrows.

Back in chapter 1, Habakkuk cried in anguish, will Babylon keep emptying his net and then refilling it forever? God's answer?

No. No. Verse 13 is so vivid. Look at it again.

To save his people and his anointed, God crushes the leader of the house of wickedness.

[20 : 39] God takes sides. He is for his people and against those who hurt them.

He is for his people and against the sin that ruins them. And this raises a question.

If God crushes wickedness, then what about us? God because apart from Christ, we belong to this house, this house of wickedness.

But God sent forth his son and the word became flesh and dwelt among us. God made him who knew no sin to be sin for us so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

In wrath, as Habakkuk prayed, God remembered mercy. As promised in Genesis 3, on the cross, the leader of the house of wickedness bruised the heel of the promised one.

[22 : 07] But through his death, Jesus crushed the head of our adversary, the devil. Our God crushes evil to save his people.

And that means when he comes in judgment, he does not come to condemn you, child of God. He comes for you.

If this is who God is, then this is how faith responds. The first thing faith produces is not confidence.

It's not even first calm. The first thing that faith produces is some kernel of awe, some reverence for who God is, some acknowledgement of his beauty, his glory, his greatness, his goodness, properly oriented fear.

So train your faith for a follower of Jesus, anxiety is often not fear of the future.

[23 : 35] Anxiety is amnesia about the past. Forgetting is an enemy of faith. But faith grows.

Faith is trained when we rehearse what God has done. Memory teaches fear where to kneel. So remember, read the story of God, study his character, name the ways that he's been faithful to you, name them regularly.

Train your faith by remembering God's work. Because faith is fear that knows who it bows to.

Second, reorient your fear. Culturally, we prefer a caricature of God.

God. We emphasize the attributes that we like about him. Mostly, those are the attributes where he is gentle and patient and kind and loving, of course.

[25 : 01] And those are gloriously true of God. But Habakkuk pulls us into a much bigger, much clearer painting of who God is.

God's love is not separate from his holiness. God's patience is not separate from his wrath. His goodness is not separate from his power.

This is not a safe God. But he is a saving God. Some of us are waiting to trust God until we feel safe.

And some of us are stuck because we're demanding clarity and we are not getting explanations. What if you don't need answers to every question?

What if instead you need a bigger vision God? God? What if God gets bigger, then fear finds its place?

[26 : 22] It gets rightly oriented. Friend, what if God doesn't intend to change your situation, but to change you?

my brother, my sister, what if God doesn't intend to change your situation, but to change you? What if faith isn't getting better answers to our questions?

What if faith is learning better trust? Habakkuk 3 shows us what it looks like to stop demanding control and to start resting in who God is.

So, let God's greatness reorient your fear. Children, young people, what makes you feel scared?

Who do you want to be near when you are most afraid? Faith means remembering that God is with you.

[27 : 37] He is stronger than what scares you. And even the things that frighten you are afraid of him.

Habakkuk 1 is a debate, and I'm glad that we got to witness it. But Habakkuk 3 is a doxology.

Habakkuk does not understand everything, but he finally sees when his prayer ends, nothing around him has changed.

His circumstances have not improved, but he has changed. God changed him. Habakkuk's arms are no longer crossed, demanding answers and explanations.

This vision of God has reoriented his fear, settled his mind, steadied his heart, stirred his faith.

[28 : 47] Has something changed within you? faith is fear that knows who it bows to.

So let's bow before God, who is for us because of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Let's pray. Father, for your greatness, for your glory, for your goodness, for your grandeur, and for your grace, we give you thanks.

grace, when we feel lost and when we feel broken, when we find ourselves in the night of fear and doubt, would you please stir our faith so that we will still trust in you, good Father?

would you please stir our faith so that it is to one great king that we bow? Would you please anchor our hope in this truth that as Jesus rose, so we shall rise and we shall stand in ransomed glory around the throne and our hearts will be restored and everything that has been broken and ruined by sin will be made new.

We will be in your presence with all those who have gone before us and all those who will come after us and we will see the face of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ and you Father, Son, and Holy Spirit will be our God and we will be your people and you will dwell among us forever.

[31 : 10] We look forward to that day with eager anticipation and hope. until then, would you please help us to be people of faith, people with the right kind of fear, properly oriented before you because you are great and you are good and you have crushed the head of our adversary, the devil, and you have saved us because in your wrath you remembered mercy.

We give you thanks, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in Jesus' name, amen. Let's gather in the back and let's celebrate communion together.

celebrate together.