

INTRO

- If you could ask God any question, what would it be?
- What do you most complain about?

Habakkuk is highly relevant today as we join him on his journey and struggle with God that leads him out of disillusionment and despair at the way things are, towards genuine trust and hope in God.

READ

Habakkuk 1:1-4

REFLECT

Habakkuk complains to God about his situation: Judah is morally and spiritually corrupt with violence, destruction, strife, and injustice all around.

At least 3 things we can learn from Habakkuk's complaint.

1. EMBRACE THE BURDEN

Habakkuk is deeply burdened by what he sees and feels. As we look at our world today, God wants us to see → feel → act. To see means we live with our eyes open to the struggles internally and externally. We aren't ignorant of our reality. To *feel* means we practice emotional honesty, making our feelings the allies of our faith. To *act* means we respond as God leads us.

Qu: what burdens you right now whether personally or societally? What action can you take?

2. ASK HARD QUESTIONS

Habakkuk isn't afraid to ask hard questions of God and neither should we (see also Ps13:1-2, Ps22:1)

Qu: what questions does he ask of God (see v2-3)? Have you ever asked these questions of God? Discuss.

Lament is a passionate expression to God ranging from complaint and frustration, to despair. The question of evil and suffering is weighty because it is so very personal to most of us.

Qu: how would you answer someone who struggles with evil and suffering in the world?

Qu: Although we may never fully have the answer as to why God allows suffering, how does the crucifixion of Jesus emphatically tell us what the answer is not?

The answer cannot be because God doesn't care or is indifferent to our struggles. Jesus suffered personal injustice & violence, and for a temporary moment we witnessed the triumph of evil in the crucifixion of Christ. It would seem God takes the problem of evil and suffering so seriously that he was willing to take it on himself.

3. GO TO GOD

Habakkuk is pouring out his heart before God. It's so easy for us to first turn everywhere but God to pour out our hearts. Think about your social media feed.

Qu: how does lamenting before God in prayer help us and strengthen us?

The intent to embrace the burden and ask hard questions is to **provoke us Godward** in what our minds think and what our hearts feel in all circumstances of life.

RESPOND & PRAY

- What was most encouraging and most challenging in today's discussion?
- Ask God to help see → feel → act in the ways He would if in your shoes.