



Living By Faith
Habakkuk

MEMORY VERSE

HABAKKUK 2:4

“Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith.”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

A blindfold for every two children.

A Bible, a marker and index cards.

ATTENTION GETTER!

Twenty Questions

Habakkuk had some questions for God in our lesson today. Just for a fun introduction play a game of 20 questions. Before class come up with five words or phrases from your lesson that could be used in other areas. Words like faith, prophet, God, Babylon, etc. are good. Allow the children to ask 20 questions. You can give a hint such as “I am a person” or “I am a place” or “I am a thing.” Make it easier for the younger children. If it is difficult you can give more hints. When done introduce the lesson by saying that Habakkuk had two questions for God.

LESSON TIME!

We do not know a lot of things about the prophet Habakkuk. We do know that he was trained for ministry and his office of prophet. He was a very strong and faithful prophet, but he is mainly known for his two questions for God. We will be studying those questions today and see what we can learn from them. **When in doubt, walk by faith!**

Habakkuk wrote his prophecy about the same time that Judah (the southern kingdom of Israel) was about to be invaded by the Babylonians. Nineveh and Egypt had already been overthrown by

Babylon and it was now about to take Jerusalem. Habakkuk probably ministered about the same time as Jeremiah.

HABAKKUK 1:1-4

The burden which the prophet Habakkuk saw.

O LORD, how long shall I cry, And You will not hear?
Even cry out to You, "Violence!" And You will not save.

Why do You show me iniquity, And cause me to see trouble?
For plundering and violence are before me; There is strife, and contention arises.

Therefore the law is powerless, And justice never goes forth.
For the wicked surround the righteous; Therefore perverse judgment proceeds.

This is the first question that Habakkuk had for God. Have you ever had a question for God? God does not get angry with Habakkuk for having questions and He will not be upset when we have questions. Sometimes we will have questions for God, we need to be happy with whatever the answer to that question is, or be patient and wait for the Lord to answer some of our questions. We need to remember that God will always do what is best for us.

Habakkuk trusted in God, even though he did not understand God. Basically his first question is, "Why do You allow Your people to live wickedly without punishment; do You not care?" Habakkuk lived during a time in Israel's history when they had turned away from God. They served idols and lived very sinful lives. There was also an evil king reigning at this time. Habakkuk must have looked around at all of the wickedness in his nation and cried out to God to ask Him, "How long will You put up with all of this?"

Sometimes we can look around at bad things that happen around us and wonder, "How long will God allow this to happen?" We do not always know, but we do know that God is merciful and patient. We wonder when the Lord will come back to usher in His kingdom because we look around at all of the evil. Even though we may not know when, we do know that God will return and judge this world according to His holiness. **When in doubt, walk by faith!**

HABAKKUK 1:5-11

"Look among the nations and watch; Be utterly astounded! For I will work a work in your days Which you would not believe, though it were told you.

For indeed I am raising up the Chaldeans, A bitter and hasty nation Which marches through the breadth of the earth, To possess dwelling places that are not theirs.

They are terrible and dreadful; Their judgment and their dignity proceed from themselves.

Their horses also are swifter than leopards, And more fierce than evening wolves. Their chargers charge ahead; Their cavalry comes from afar; They fly as the eagle that hastens to eat.

"They all come for violence; Their faces are set like the east wind. They gather captives like sand.

They scoff at kings, And princes are scorned by them. They deride every stronghold, For they heap up earthen mounds and seize it.

Then his mind changes, and he transgresses; He commits offense, Ascribing this power to his god."

This is God's answer to Habakkuk. He says that Israel's sin has not gone unnoticed. They will be judged and even at this very time He said that He was raising up the Babylonians to bring judgment upon His people. Even though Habakkuk could not see what was happening, God knew and was doing what He knew was the best thing. Habakkuk just needed to trust in God and not worry about the future.

Sometimes when we have questions we do not even realize that God is already working something out on our behalf. He may not share everything with us until He is ready, but we can confidently trust in Him to do what is right. We should take our questions to Him, but then rest in His answers and His timing for what He has for our lives. **When in doubt, walk by faith!**

HABAKKUK 1:12-17

Are You not from everlasting, O LORD my God, my Holy One? We shall not die. O LORD, You have appointed them for judgment; O Rock, You have marked them for correction.

You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours A person more righteous than he?

Why do You make men like fish of the sea, Like creeping things that have no ruler over them?

They take up all of them with a hook, They catch them in their net, And gather them in their dragnet. Therefore they rejoice and are glad.

Therefore they sacrifice to their net, And burn incense to their dragnet; Because by them their share is sumptuous And their food plentiful.

Shall they therefore empty their net, And continue to slay nations without pity?

God's answer to Habakkuk's first question brings another question from him. Habakkuk does not understand why God would use a wicked nation to bring judgment on His people so he asks God about it. He knew that the nation of Babylon was a very wicked nation who served false gods and had no regard for the true and the living God. So he could not understand why God would let them be the ones to carry out judgment on Israel.

God certainly did allow Babylon, an evil world empire, to bring His people into captivity. It seems that He allowed that to show them the terrible fruit of sin and the terrible price of bondage that has to be paid. Israel turned from God. As a result, they would have to serve very cruel masters. They loved their sin more than God, so they would end up having to be a slave to the things they gave themselves to.

Habakkuk may not have understood all of God's ways or purposes, but we do not always need to understand. We just need to be obedient and He will make everything clear in His way and in His timing. **When in doubt, walk by faith!**

Walk by Faith

Have the children do this fun activity to learn how to trust God and "live by faith." You will need a blindfold for every two children. Have the children partner up in twos. Have one volunteer to be "faith." The other will be the "guide." Have your aide (or designated adult or helper) take the "faith" students outside of the classroom door. Explain to them that they will have a blindfold

and have to rely on their “guide” to help them through an obstacle course. Next blindfold the “faith” students.

Meanwhile, explain to the “guide” students who have remained in the classroom that they will be the “guides” for the “faith” students. Their job will be to help their partner through the obstacle course. Explain that the “guide” may hold the arm of “faith” and lead them through the course. The guide may ONLY tell them to move left or right, forward or backward. Leave enough space between pairs to allow for slow movement and possible confusion.

Next set up a simple obstacle course in your room using chairs, tables or other items that the “guide” students and “faith” students will have to go over or around. When your classroom is ready signal to your helper to bring the “faith” students in. Have the children line up and take turns as pairs going through the obstacle course, again only using the directions from the “guide” as listed above.

When completed have all of the “faith” students remove their blindfolds and then ask all of the children to set the classroom back in order and return to their seats. Ask the faith students what was it like to not know where they were going? Did you have to rely on your guide? What would happen if you did not have a guide? Explain that this is like living by faith. We have to trust in Jesus to guide us through this life. We have to put our faith and trust in Him to get us where He wants us to be.

HABAKKUK 2:1-4

I will stand my watch And set myself on the rampart,
And watch to see what He will say to me, And what I
will answer when I am corrected.

Then the LORD answered me and said: "Write the vision And make it plain on tablets, That he may run who reads it.

For the vision is yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; Because it will surely come, It will not tarry.

"Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith.

God responds to Habakkuk again and tells him basically that it is not important what method or tool that He uses to accomplish His purpose or plan, but what is important is that every person turn to Him in faith. He reassures Habakkuk that His plan will come about, but the most important thing for every person was to live a life of faith and to have a relationship with God through faith (or belief) in Him.

Just because someone was from Israel did not mean they were automatically right before God. Those who were right before God were those who experienced a relationship with Him based on faith. Habakkuk had to walk by faith in order to walk in a right relationship with God. God would take care of all of the other details concerning nations and everything else.

Today, we are saved by placing our trust or faith in Jesus Christ. Do you have a relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ? There is nothing more important for you to do. There are no questions more important than that question in your life. We all need to come to God by faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. **When in doubt, walk by faith!**

HABAKKUK 3:17-19

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;

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

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.

Habakkuk closes with a beautiful prayer of thanksgiving and faith. Habakkuk simply rests in the Lord to answer all of his questions. Even though things happen that may seem troubling or not right, he was still going to trust in the Lord. Even though there are no blossoms on the fig tree, fruit on the vines, no oil from the olives, food from the crops, no more flocks of sheep or herds of cattle he says, "Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

Habakkuk is saying here that even though I have questions or I look around and things may not make sense, it does not matter because I know the One who is in control. We so often want answers from God, but all He wants from us is to just put our trust in Him.

Do you have things happening in your life that you do not understand? Maybe questions that you do not know the answer to? God never told Habakkuk that he should not bring those questions to Him. God gives Habakkuk the answers that he needs. God encourages Habakkuk to trust in Him and to walk in faith. When we place our faith in God and He becomes our strength, we have peace that passes all understanding. He will give us joy and bless

us in all we do. Let us always walk by faith and not by sight! **When in doubt, walk by faith!**

Spell the Prophet Game

As a review of the 12 Minor Prophets studied so far play this fun game of “Spell the Prophet.” You will need Bibles, a marker and index cards. Before class print the alphabet on index cards, one letter on each card. Make two sets of letter cards. Add five blank cards to each set (for names that have more than one of the same letter in it).

Divide the class into two teams. Give each team a set of cards to be divided as evenly as possible among team members. Call out one of the minor prophet’s names. The students on each team holding the letters should work together to arrange the letters to correctly spell the word. When the team members think they are in the correct order, they should call out, “done!” and everyone immediately freezes. Verify if the spelling is correct, but do not say how it is spelled in case it is wrong and the other team can have a chance. If it is incorrect the other team can unfreeze and try to spell it correctly. The team who spells it correctly gets one point. Keep track of the points on the board. Then the game continues on with another name. When time is called, the team with the most points wins.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to always trust in God no matter what, to walk by faith and trust Him for everything. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.