

Yet!

(Trumpets Tears And Ashes, Message 5)
(Lent, 2018)
Habakkuk 3:1-19

PRAYER

- A. When an Israelite gave his testimony, they recalled the mighty deeds of God
1. When the people talked about God, they'd talk about God's deliverance
 2. When the people talked about God, they'd talk about his righteous judgment
 3. Habakkuk reminds Judah God still does mighty deeds and he's praying God will do them again for Israel
- B. In 3:3-7, Habakkuk recalls God's activities surrounding Mount Sinai (3:3-7)
1. He begins by recalling God's glory and power at Sinai (Exodus 19:16-19)
 2. Cushan and Midian (3:7) are "witnesses" to God's deliverance of Israel
- C. In 3:8-16, Habakkuk approaches God celebrating Israel's Exodus
1. Habakkuk looks back to offer hope as Israel look ahead
 2. Habakkuk confesses his fear of the future and his confidence in God

PERSISTENCE

- A. So now this entire book has come down to these final words...
1. Habakkuk suggests we learn to trust God now (in good times) so when the devastation comes (and it always does) we can find strength in God
 2. Habakkuk says as long as we know our God is on the throne, we have hope
- B. 3:18 - "*Even if I starve to death, I will rejoice in the Lord.*"
1. This is a haunting worldview
 - a. "*Without a good reason*" Habakkuk rejoices in God (cf. 3:19)
 - b. Only when Habakkuk has been stripped of every competing comfort does he fully embrace the joy of the Lord
- "Rejoice in the Lord always..."* (Philippians 4:4)
2. We can't really understand Hab. 2:4 until we understand Hab. 3:17-18
 - a. Faithfulness means doing the right thing no matter what happens
 - b. Faithfulness means doing the right thing eagerly and joyfully
 - c. Faithfulness means just knowing God is sufficient reason to rejoice
 3. We're challenged to embrace God so deeply and thoroughly that nothing can ever happen to decrease our joy of knowing him

"I am for going on whether I have comfort here or not. If God doesn't intervene, I'll leap - even blindfolded - into eternity, sink or swim, into heaven or hell. If you would catch me, Lord Jesus, do; if not, I will still love you." (John Bunyan)

4. Faithfulness means doing what is right even if there is no personal reward

C. Faithfulness brings confidence that we can trust God

1. The phrase, "*more than conquerors*" from Paul in Romans 8 can mean "*conquerors and even more*" or "*not conquerors, but something better*"

"We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our bodies" (2 Cor. 4:8-10)
2. This is not to overlook that the Bible often promises physical deliverance
3. It is only those who trust God can physically deliver that lament that he hasn't

POSTLUDE

- A. The Cross demonstrates God's promise to be with us hasn't been abandoned
- "When through the deep waters I call you to go; the rivers of sorrow shall not overflow; for I will be with you, in trouble to bless; and sanctify to you your deepest distress."*
(How Firm a Foundation)
- "I have good news of great joy that will be for all people..."* (Luke 2:10)
1. The Gospel promises we can experience that joy now
 2. Christ remained faithful - under the worst of circumstances - "*who for the joy set before him and endured the cross, scorning its shame.*" (Hebrews 12:2)
 3. People are "*more than conquerors*" and "*Yet rejoice*" in the midst of suffering
- B. The Old Testament introduces vicarious suffering; Jesus provides it
1. In Isaiah 53, the *suffering servant* suffers because he is righteous and he takes the suffering of others - who deserve it - upon himself
 2. We think of Christ suffering *for* the guilty; we should also remember Christ suffers *with* the innocent
- C. We cannot explain why we must all endure suffering...
1. We do not suffer alone; God comes, and, because of the cross, makes us more than conquerors
 2. So we can YET rejoice in God and dance and dance and dance!