

Something Beautiful from a Tangled Mess

A Study of Habakkuk

Session #1 The Complaining Prophet

Habakkuk Chapter 1 Verses 1-12

Sladebrook Evangelical Church

www.sladebrook.org.uk

Series on Habakkuk #1: The Complaining Prophet

Why do bad things happen to good people? Why do bad people seem to prosper for stepping on the good? Why does God not step in and prevent suffering? Is it possible for a good God to use evil in his own purposes?

These are all questions raised by the Prophet Habakkuk.

Habakkuk was very much a man that we can relate to. Unlike many Bible characters, he wasn't a king or the kind of prophet that took messages from God to kings. The book of Habakkuk doesn't even begin in the normal way with, "The word of the Lord which came to..." Instead, Habakkuk talks to God first, and God answers him. Wonderfully, here we have an open conversation between God and Habakkuk. This short book contains God's promise of world changing events. However, more than anything else, the book is about God working in the heart of Habakkuk himself.

Habakkuk lived through a very dark time in the history of God's people. Their leaders oppressed the people and worshipped idols. 2 Kings describes them as even worse than the people who lived in the Promised Land before they arrived. Habakkuk sees the state his country lies in and complains to God, begging Him to clean up the mess. Habakkuk would find many surprises in store for him.

Questions for personal reflection / Bible study

Read Habakkuk 1:1-4

- *What was it like to be Habakkuk? What can we tell from this first section?*
- *In what ways can we relate: globally, nationally or personally?*
- *What is striking about Habakkuk's prayer? Do you ever pray like this? Why/why not?*

Read Habakkuk 1:5-11

- *How do you think Habakkuk felt hearing God's reply? Why?*
- *Have you ever had surprising answers to prayer?*

Read Habakkuk 1:12

- *What is the very first truth Habakkuk holds on to after God speaks?*
- *How might that have comforted him?*
- *Habakkuk then says 'we will not die' (some translations differ). How can he be sure that God won't completely eradicate His people? (see verse 9 and Genesis 22:17, for example)*
- *What applications are there here for our own prayer lives?*