

SUBJECT: LOOKING THROUGH THE STORM

SCRIPTURE: HABAKKUK 1:1-4

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Introduction

1. No one is immune from the storms of life.
 - a. Our world is filled with violence, suffering, disease, hunger and lawlessness. Our natural inclination is to cry out, "Where is God? Why does not God do something?"
 - b. As the prophet Habakkuk looked around his world he saw this same condition. He penetrates the gates of heaven with a cry of confusion, vs. 2 "O Lord, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear." Man has a tendency to blame God for all of the evil in the world. In reality this is what Habakkuk was doing, just as we do today.
2. Understand, God did not create evil and suffering.
 - a. These must be laid at the feet of Lucifer, the arch angel that God gave charge over all the angelic host of heaven's throne.
3. Why does not God not intervene?
 - a. He has! He has given His only Son to die for evil humanity! The answer to our storms is Jesus Christ, who can see us through our storms. We were never promised freedom from the storms of life.

There are five ways for us to look through our storms of life.

1. Have a proper perspective of the storm. (v. 1)
2. Have a proper patience during the storm. (v.2-3)
3. Hold to the promise of God in the storm. (v.3)
4. Have faith in participation with the storm. (v.4)
5. Receive perception in the storm. (v.20)

I. A PROPER PERSPECTIVE OF THE STORM (V.1)

1. Purpose of Habakkuk going to the watch tower.
 - a. From these watch towers one could see the entire layout of the land, easily spotting the approach of the enemy. A valuable lesson. From this watch tower Habakkuk is represented as looking down upon things from God's perspective rather than his own.
2. God had a reason for Habakkuk's watchtower visit.

- a. There is a reason for everything that happens in our life.
- b. Ephesians 1:11 explains, "God worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."

- Illustrate: Joseph certainly found this out. He was sold by his brothers to Ishmaelites because of their hate and envy toward him.

He was taken down to Egypt where he was thrown into prison because he was falsely accused of something he did not do. Thirteen years later he had become the Prime Minister of Egypt, which later enabled him to protect his family during the famine. (Gen. 45:5; 50:20; Rom. 8:28)

II. HAVE PATIENCE IN THE STORM. (V. 2-3)

1. Patience is most vital in our storms of life.

- Illustrate: Job is a prime example of patience. He lost his family, his wealth, and his health, all because Satan challenged God to remove the protective covering He had around Job and he could get him to denounce even knowing God. Job lost everything but his faith. Even then he did not know what God was doing, but he was patient with God as He worked in his life. His friends accused him of sin, his wife suggested that he kill himself. (Job 1:21; 42:12)

III. HOLD TO THE PROMISE OF GOD. (v. 3)

1. What God promises He will perform. (Joshua 6:2-5)
2. Christians live by promises not explanations.

IV. BE ENCOURAGED THROUGH PARTICIPATION (V.4)

1. Participation with Christ's faithfulness.

- a. Those first century Christians faced their torturous deaths with victory when they were commanded to say that Caesar was Lord and they would not. They declared that Christ Jesus was Lord.

- Illustrate: Martin Luther's transformed life ushered in the Protestant Reformation. As a Catholic monk he was crawling up the stairs of Saint Peter's Cathedral in Rome in a futile attempt to be righteous through works. God spoke to him, "The just shall live by their faithfulness." He began his participation of faithfulness with Christ and continued the rest of his earthly life,

2. Participation with Christ brings future perfection.

- a. One day, when God calls us home there will be no more storms, only a life of perfection with Jesus. Stop looking at the storm in your life and look through the storm.

V. HAVE THE PROPER PERCEPTION. (v. 20)

1. God is on the throne!
 - a. In the midst of your storm, God is in control. Evil may seem to have its way for a time, but remember, God still reigns!
2. God allows your storm for His own purpose.
 - a. The enemy could do nothing unless God permitted it. And if God allowed it, there must be a purpose.

Conclusion

Storms of life are inevitable. You may be experiencing a storm in you life as I speak. Go to the watchtower (altar) and look at things from God's perspective rater than from your own! He will see you through.