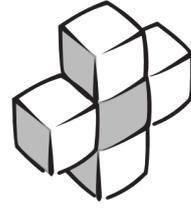




SMACC

Making Disciples of Jesus Christ



Bible Study Series:

Habakkuk



Our Mission:

To glorify God together in response to his grace

by making disciples of Jesus Christ

About These Studies

These studies were written by various SMACC leaders for use among university students. You are most welcome to use and adapt these studies for your own context. Where you do so please provide the following acknowledgment.

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Study 1: “The Problem of Evil” (Habakkuk 1:1-2:4)

Getting Started

1. Your friend asks you, “If there is a God, why doesn’t he do something about all the evil and suffering in the world?” How would you answer?

Digging In

Read Habakkuk 1:1-2:4

2. Identify the main sections and give them a short title d

Verses	Title

Read Habakkuk 1:2-4

3. What complaint does Habakkuk bring to God? Why?

4. What does Habakkuk expect God to do? Why?

Read Habakkuk 1:5-11

5. “The Chaldeans” refers to the people of Babylon.
 - a. How are the Chaldeans described? (cf. Gen 11:4)

 - b. How is this a surprising and unexpected response to Habakkuk’s complaint?

Read Habakkuk 1:12-2:1

6. What is Habakkuk's second complaint? How is it related to God's response in 1:5-11?

7. Despite his astonishment at how God works, what is Habakkuk's attitude to God? (cf. 2:1)

Read Habakkuk 2:2-4

8. When will Habakkuk's question be finally dealt with? What must he do in the meantime?

9. What does God promise to those who wait for him in faith?

Thinking it through

10. Does the existence of evil deny the existence of a sovereign and good God? Why or why not?

(For further discussion if you have time)

- Is God sovereign over evil? Why? Why not?

 - If God allows evil, does that mean that he is evil?
11. Read Acts 2:22-24 and Acts 4:27-28. Was God sovereign over the evil act that happened at the cross? Was God doing evil or something else? (cf. Gen. 50:20)

12. How do the following New Testament passages help us understand the relationship between “faith” and “righteousness”?

- a. Romans 1:16-17
- b. Galatians 3:10-14
- c. Hebrews 10:36-38

13. When will God ultimately deal with all evil? (Rev. 20:11-15)

Application

14. Do you find it hard to trust that God is sovereign and good when you experience suffering and injustice in life? Why? Why not? (cf. Rom 8:28)

15. What do you do when you have difficult questions about your faith? Do you bring them to God or run from God?

16. How does it encourage you to know that there are answers for these difficult questions, even if they are not initially as we expect?

17. How does it comfort you to know that God will deal with the problem of evil in his time? How does that help you to trust him now?

Prayer:

Thank God that he is sovereign, even when we experience evil and suffering. Pray that he would help us to trust in him, and wait for his perfect just in his timing. Thank God that we can be declared righteous even though we are evil.

Study 2: “The Downfall of Babylon” (Habakkuk 2:1-20)

Getting Started

1. Have you ever longed for God to come in judgment of the world?

Context

2. What were Habakkuk’s two complaints in chapter 1? How has God answered them so far?

Digging In

Read Habakkuk 2:1-20

3. Identify the main sections and give them a short title. (hint: note the repeated word ‘woe to him’)

Verses	Title

4. What is the sin of Babylon? (4-5)

5. Complete the table below:

	What is going to happen to Babylon?	Why?
6-8		
9-11		
12-14		
15-17		

6. How has Babylon shamed others for her own glory? Who will be shamed and glorified in the end?

7. In what ways, is God's judgement simply inflicting on Babylon what they have done for others? (Cf. Gen 9:6).

8. Why is it foolish to worship an idol? (cf. Dt. 27:15) How does God compare?

Thinking it through

9. In the end, the whole earth is silenced before God. How does Habakkuk 2 provide the answer to Habakkuk's second complaint?

10. One day we will all stand before God's judgement throne:

- a. How will God judge the world? (Romans 2:6-11)

- b. Why will all people be silenced and held accountable before God? (Romans 3:10-12, 19-20)

- c. How will we be able to stand on that day (cf. Romans 3:21-26, Habakkuk 2:4)

In the bible, Babylon becomes a symbol for humanity in arrogant rebellion against God.

11. Read Revelation 17:1-6, 17:15-17, 18:1-3, 18:19-24

a. How is Babylon described?

b. What ultimately happens?

12. Read Revelation 6:9-11. The people ask "How long" until God's judgement falls? When will God finally come in judgement against all of arrogant sinful humanity?

Application

13. *"God knew that Babylon was filled with the proud, the greedy, the violent, the drunk, and the idolater - and the LORD knew how to deal with them all."*

How does it comfort you to know that there is a day of final judgement?

14. *There may be as much pride inside a beggar's rags as in a prince's robe; and a harlot may be as proud as a model of chastity. Pride is a strange creature; it never objects to its lodgings. It will live comfortably enough in a palace, and it will live equally at its ease in a hovel. Is there any man in whose heart pride does not lurk?" (Spurgeon)*

How do you see pride in your own life?

15. Read Colossians 3:5. Here 'What idols are you tempted to worship in your life?

Prayer:

Thank God that there is a final day of judgement when all will be set right. Thank God that we can be saved through faith in Jesus. Pray that he would enable us to turn away from all pride, greed and idolatry.

Study 3: “Yet I will rejoice” (Habakkuk 3)

Getting Started

1. How do you normally respond when bad things happen and you are not in control? Can you remember a time you continued to trust and rejoice in God, despite your circumstances?

Context

Over the past few weeks, we have explored big questions like how can a just God allow suffering? How can God use evil people to achieve his purposes? And how ought we to respond when we experience evil? We’ve seen the need to live by faith, trusting in God’s goodness, and that he will bring ultimate justice in his timing. In Habakkuk 3, we see Habakkuk’s final response to God and we will be challenged to trust God and rejoice in every situation, even when it is awful and we can’t understand it.

2. Summarise what has happened so far:

1:1-4	Habakkuk’s 1 st Complaint	
1:5-11	God’s Response	
1:12-2:1	Habakkuk’s 2 nd Complaint	
2:2-19	God’s Response	

Digging In

Read Habakkuk 3

3. Identify the main sections and give them a short title.

Verses	Title

4. What is Habakkuk's final response to the news that he will use Babylon to judge his people, and only later punish them too? (2)

5. How is God described in verse 2-15?

6. What are the events that Habakkuk is reflecting on?

Exodus 12:29-30

Exodus 19:16-19

Numbers 31:1-12

Deuteronomy 33:1-5, 15

Judges 3:8; 8:19-21

7. How would summarise what God did in the past for his enemies and his people? Why do you think Habakkuk is reminding God of these events in his prayer?

8. How does Habakkuk respond to the news that judgement is coming on his people? (16-19) What does this reflect of his relationship with God? (cf. 1:12; 2:1; 3:2)

Thinking it through

9. How does your life and attitude to God compare to Habakkuk's?

10. Read Hebrews 11:1-3; 13-16, 32-40.

- a. How do these verses help us to understand the nature of faith?

- b. How do these heroes of faith provide a model for us, when we are going through suffering?

11. Read Romans 4:18-25. Is it wise to trust God when the circumstances seem otherwise? What does God promise to those who will trust him?

12. Read Romans 5:1-11. Habakkuk resolved to be joyful and trust God even in the midst of the trials that were coming. How does looking to the cross give us the same joy and trust even in the midst of suffering?

Application

13. When suffering comes, is it your first instinct to turn to God in prayer when things are not going as you would like, or do you try to solve the problem first?

14. How does your relationship with God compare to Habakkuk's? How could you be learning to trust God and rejoice in God more in the midst of trials?

Reflection

15. Think back on the book of Habakkuk:

a. What have you learnt about God?

b. How have you been challenged/encouraged to trust him more?

Prayer:

Thank God that he has judged sin and saved us through the ultimate suffering of the cross. Pray that in the light of the cross that he would enable us to trust and rejoice in him, no matter what situation we are in.