

Major Lessons From Minor Prophets: Lesson 8

Trusting God's Goodness (Habakkuk)

The Terminal Man. That was what he was called, or at least that's what Mehran Karimi Nasseri named his autobiography after having lived in the departure lounge of Terminal 1 in the Charles de Gaulle Airport in Paris, France.

Nasseri was expelled from his own country due to protests against then King of Iran, Mohammad Reza Shah, but was eventually awarded refugee status in Belgium by the United Nations High Commission. This meant he could take up residency in any European country. His choice was England. During a stopover in Paris, the briefcase he used to carry all his papers in was stolen. In spite of this he boarded his flight to Britain but was quickly returned to France when he wasn't able to produce a passport. He was initially arrested by the French, but then released for the reasons that his entry to the airport was legal, and that he had no country of origin to be returned to. Thus began his residency in Terminal 1.

Several attempts were made over the years to find a way to get Nasseri to England, but they all failed. So, from August 26, 1988 to July 2006, the better part of seventeen years, Mehran Nasseri waited. There is an uncanny similarity between this story and the theme of the book of Habakkuk - waiting patiently for God's salvation.

In Short: Although repeatedly called to repentance, Judah stubbornly refuses to respond therefore bringing intolerable conditions to the country. Habakkuk is concerned about the state of his country so asks God how long the judgments will last. God responds which leads Habakkuk to acknowledging that he should trust God's wisdom even though he doesn't fully understand His ways, and to wait patiently on Him.

Memory Text: Habakkuk 2:14 - "For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."

Perplexed Prophet

(Habakkuk 1:1-11)

Habakkuk 1:2-4: "O LORD, how long shall I cry, and You will not hear? Even cry out to You, "Violence!" and You will not save. ³Why do You show me iniquity, and cause *me* to see trouble? For plundering and violence *are* before me; there is strife, and contention arises. ⁴Therefore the law is powerless, and justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous; therefore perverse judgment proceeds."

Psalms 94:3: "LORD, how long will the wicked, how long will the wicked triumph?"

Daniel 8:13: "Then I heard a holy one speaking; and *another* holy one said to that certain *one* who was speaking, "How long *will* the vision *be*, *concerning* the daily *sacrifices* and the transgression of desolation, the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot?"

Revelation 6:10: "And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"

Jeremiah 12:1-4: "Righteous *are* You, O LORD, when I plead with You; yet let me talk with You about *Your* judgments. Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why are those happy who deal so treacherously? ²You have planted them, yes, they have taken root; they grow, yes, they bear fruit. You *are* near in their mouth but far from their mind. ³But You, O LORD, know me; you have seen me, and You have tested my heart toward You. Pull them out like sheep for the slaughter, and prepare them for the day of slaughter. ⁴How long will the land mourn, and the herbs of every field wither? The beasts and birds are consumed, for the wickedness of those who dwell there, because they said, 'He will not see our final end.'"

2 Chronicles 36:15-20: "And the LORD God of their fathers sent *warnings* to them by His messengers, rising up early and sending *them*, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place. ¹⁶But they mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, till *there was* no remedy. ¹⁷Therefore He brought against them the king of the Chaldeans, who killed their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or virgin, on the aged or the weak; He gave *them* all into his hand. ¹⁸And all the articles from the house of God, great and small, the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king and of his leaders, all *these* he took to Babylon. ¹⁹Then they burned the house of God, broke down the wall of Jerusalem, burned all its palaces with fire, and destroyed all its precious possessions. ²⁰And those who escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon, where they became servants to him and his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia..."

Living By Faith

(Habakkuk 1:12-2:4)

Habakkuk 1:12, 13: "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. ¹³*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?"

Habakkuk 2:2-4: "Then the LORD answered me and said: "Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it. ³ 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. ⁴ "Behold the proud, his soul is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith."

Romans 1:17: "For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

Hebrews 10:35-39: "Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. ³⁶ For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: ³⁷ "For yet a little while, *and* He who is coming will come and will not tarry. ³⁸ Now the just shall live by faith; but if *anyone* draws back, my soul has no pleasure in him." ³⁹ But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul."

Galatians 3:11: "But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "the just shall live by faith."

See Prophets & Kings, p. 387

For The Earth Shall Be Filled

(Habakkuk 2:5-20)

Habakkuk 2:14 - "For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."

Psalms 72:19: "And blessed *be* His glorious name forever! And let the whole earth be filled *with* His glory. Amen and Amen."

Isaiah 60:1-3: "Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you. ² For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but the LORD will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you. ³ The Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising."

2 Corinthians 4:6: "For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

Revelation 18:1: "After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory."

See My Life Today, p. 63

Remembering God's Name

(Habakkuk 3:1-16)

Ephesians 5:19, 20: "Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, ²⁰ giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

James 5:13: "Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms."

Acts 16:25: "But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them."

1 Corinthians 14:26: "How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification."

Matthew 26:30: "And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives."

Colossians 3:16: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

¹⁷ And whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him."

God Is Our Strength

(Habakkuk 3:17-19)

Habakkuk 3:19: "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.

Psalms 61:2: "From the end of the earth will I cry to You, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the Rock that is higher than I."

Isaiah 33:16: "He will dwell on high; his place of defense *will be* the fortress of rocks; bread will be given him, his water *will be* sure."

Isaiah 40:31: "But those who wait on the LORD shall renew *their* strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."

Summary: The book of Habakkuk begins with questions and concerns, but closes with an affirmation of confidence in the promises and purposes of God. Habakkuk clings to God's promises, and embraces who He is.