Habakkuk — Watchtower

In an era of consumerism and instant gratification, our understanding of time and patience may not be complete. Do we assume that God should work within these same cultural laws we've constructed? Efficiency and speed? Quick fixes instead of true healing? If we believe in a God as creator, as the author and inventor of our faith, how can we limit Him to our own interpretations of what should be?

I see Habakkuk crying out to God in His heartbreak and anger and confusion, asking Him to do something. Yet, God doesn't act—at least not in Habakkuk's preferred timeline.

"Babylon is evil! Do you not see what they have done, God! How long must we wait for you to act! How could you even let this happen?"

How long must we wait for you to act!

"Yes, my child, Babylon is terrible," God replies. *"And my heart broke over such evil long before this empire rose,"* forcing Habakkuk to think about His words.

It's like one of those epic stories where the hero we've been rooting for learns that they are not innocent like we, or they, had thought, but they, or those who came before him, have had a hand in the chaos their current world is in.

This must be a different, more profound kind of heartbreak for someone like Habakkuk. For those who want nothing but to see God act in the midst of such cruelty and unrighteousness to be shown that their people have been part of the problem all along.

I'm reminded of the tamarisk trees of the desert when I read the words of Habakkuk. Those trees that are planted and then take upwards of eighty years to grow into the coveted shade that keeps people alive in the desert. What was the lesson buried in the tamarisk? You don't plant them for yourself. (See Episode 28 for a refresher of this favorite desert image.)

Why does injustice reign? Perhaps because we let it.

There was no clear way to look back and trust the Story for Habakkuk's people any longer. No tamarisk trees planted to model what faith and freedom in their God truly looked like. Thus the understanding of what should and could be were directed by the empires of their world, with power grabs and prowess, with idolatry and injustice.

Why does injustice reign? Perhaps because we let it. Perhaps because we didn't do the long, hard work of planting the seeds for the future generations to follow and flourish.

Let us cry to God like Habakkuk from our watchtowers. Asking why, sharing our tears and our fears and our faults, but not shying away when God calls us to trust His time and understanding. Because Israel would return home, and Habakkuk was faced with how to show what this looked like—to plant some tamarisk seeds and trust in the promised redemption he may not live to see himself.

With just a glimpse of God's perspective, Habakkuk accepted that he may not understand God's timing and yet praised Him—even though the pain lingered. Even though the ache was still raw.

When the pantries are bare, the gas tanks are empty, families are separated, bombs are dropped, or cancer strikes again, can we be like Habakkuk? Can we rejoice in God's good future that we cannot see? When God looks to us after we cry out and says, "*Yes, my child, this is terrible.*" What will we do to help God heal it?

What will we do to help God heal it?

I do not understand God's timing, but I trust that He is good.

I do not understand the silence, but I trust that He is near.

I do not understand the whole story, but I'm going to do my part to better it.

PRAYER

We are not innocent
But we are tired.
Our hands are unclean
But we long for justice.

When the world around us crumbles
When we tremble and cry in fear
When everything falls apart
We will worship You.

We believe what You do is good.
We know what You do is just.
We trust what You are doing restores.

So we worship You from our watchtowers,
calling on You to be our strength.
As we wait, we rejoice, for You will not let evil prevail.

Amen

EPISODE 58 (SESSION 2)

THE FOUR PILLARS



BEMA Discipleship is built on four pillars; a **Four-Pillared Perspective** to help us remember **to elevate the words of God** (not ours) and help us identify the principles that we see recurring in the story of God's people.

Here are some applications for this episode echoing the ideas of the four pillars:

I

TEXT

What stands out from the Text that you want to carry with you as you read the prophets? Try meditating over and memorizing Habakkuk 3. How does it feel to sit in this?

II

COMMUNITY

How does your community rejoice and trust in God's goodness in hard times? What difference does it make to do this together? How can you be part of the solution to injustice?

III

DISCIPLESHIP

Who walks alongside you and who do you look to with the heart of Habakkuk? How can you model this to young adults around you even when they are struggling?

IV

WRESTLING

What are your thoughts on God's answer to Habakkuk? How do you wrestle with God not stopping injustice in "better timing"? How can you partner with God in this?

Spotify

Are you a music listener?

Listen along to our BEMA Music Playlists on Spotify.

Song suggestions? Send them to bemabesorah@gmail.com.

BEMA SESSION 2

MEDITATION & PRAYER

REFLECTION, APPLICATION & IMPACT

There are three emphases that we are always thinking about in terms of application at BEMA. These may be stated explicitly at times, but often we will want you to do the work of finding ways to connect the dots to the things we are learning. Much of this is what makes the work of BEMA distinct as a ministry of Impact Campus Ministries.

CREATING A SPACE
SPIRITUAL FORMATION

True success is developing intimacy with God. In Session 1, we encountered the idea of "Creating Space for God" in our lives. We believe that ***if we do our part of creating that space, God will fill it*** *as He desires. You're already doing this as you dive into the Text and jump into a place to discuss. God will meet you in these places! Look for places the Holy Spirit can do work in and through you as you go about your everyday life.*

CONSIDERING CAMPUS
YOUNG PEOPLE FOCUS

We believe that young adults are shaping the future of this world. *Jesus modeled a ministry of discipling young adults, and that approach has and will work. If you are a college student who is listening, we want this material to be directly helpful to your pursuits. If you are not a college student, we want to challenge you to come alongside one and work together.*

SACRED STATION
THEOLOGY OF WORK

This isn't only for church or Bible study; this is about what we do every day. How we do our job and how it may take advantage of or bring life to others is something God says is central to our presence in the world. Justice is very much something God cares about. Does our physical work (our 9–5 job) bring shalom or chaos? Does it exploit creation? The way we manage our employees, interact with customers or coworkers, care for our children, or create products can provide relief to others. ***The work we do every day is sacred and matters!***

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