Habakkuk

Read Habakkuk 1

1. What do you know about who Habakkuk was (Hab 1:1)?

2. What was Habakkuk's burden (Hab 1:2-4)? What might we say is the equivalent today? (See also 1 Pet 4:15-18)

3. Why doesn't God intervene and do something (Hab 1: 2)? Why does God take so long to judge the unrighteous? (2 Pet 3:9)

4. The Lord does respond (Hab 1:6; Heb 12:6, 11). What is surprising in his means of judgement? (Hab 1:5-11)

5. What is Habakkuk's complaint about God's response? Try reading Hab 1:12 emphasising 'them' with disdain and sarcasm. You'll get a better sense of the original Hebrew language account of Habakkuk's incredulity at God's answer.

6. What can we learn from Habakkuk on what to do first when we see failures around us especially those in God's people (Hab 2:1; Heb 4:16)?

7. What can we learn about God's ways in our own lives? (See also Isaiah 55: 8-9)

8. *When the train goes through a tunnel and it gets dark, you don't throw away the ticket and jump off. You sit still and trust the engineer.* (Corrie Ten Boom)
   Why can we trust God in our lives? (See also 2 Cor 4:16-18; Phil 1:6; 1 Thess 5:23-4)

Pray Together

Pray for each other and St Johns. Are there any failures you should bring to God in repentance, confident in his forgiveness? Are there any matters you want to bring to God asking 'how long'?

Habakkuk

1. Have your ever found yourself asking God, 'What are you doing'?

Read Habakkuk 2

Faith that questions

2. In the first chapter Habakkuk questions God, bringing his complaint to God. He didn't understand what God was doing. What does Hab 2:1 imply about his faith?

3. What kind of faith does God want of us? (John 4:23; Heb 10:19-23)

Faith that trusts God's promises

4. What assurance does God give Habakkuk as he waits? (Hab 2:2-3)

5. God speaks firstly of the Babylonian empire (Hab 2:5). What are the five wrongs and pronouncements against them (Hab 2:6-19)? What do you know of the outcome of the Babylonian empire?

6. God also speaks beyond the endless cycle of empires that come and go. What promise does he offer us? (Hab 2:14, 20; Mt 25: 31-33)

Faith that perseveres in hope

7. How does God contrast the righteous with the enemy? (Hab 2:4 – 5)

8. The Hebrew expression in Hab 2: can be translated as 'faith' or 'faithfulness – a steadfast trust in God'. How does the New Testament use this verse? (Rom 3:21-23; Gal 2:20; Eph 2: 4-10; Heb 11:6)

9. What does it mean for us today to live by faith when life is difficult, when prayers seem unanswered, when there is injustice, when world conflict and disasters seem never-ending, when we don't understand what God is doing? (Rom 5:1-5)

Pray Together

Pray for each other as you persevere in your walk of faith.

May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance. (2 Thess 3:5)

Habakkuk

1. How do you know God loves you even through the most challenging of circumstances?

Read Habakkuk 3: 1-2

2. Compare your prayers with this prayer of Habakkuk. How would your priorities change if you prayed like Habakkuk?

3. Why do we find it hard to accept that both God's wrath and mercy reflect his character? How does Christ's death on the cross help us understand God's character? (See also Rom 11:22; 1 John 1: 8, 9)

Read Habakkuk 3: 3-15

4. Habakkuk looks back as he anticipates the future (Hab 3: 3-5). How does the anticipation of Christ's return impact your life? (See also Heb 10: 35-27 that quotes Habakkuk)

5. What aspect of God's character is depicted in Hab 3: 6,7? (See also 2 Pet 3: 10,12)

6. What is the purpose of God's intervention in Habakkuk's day and in Christ's death on the cross? (Hab 3:13; Col 2:15; 1 John 3:8)

Read Habakkuk 3: 16-19

7. How can we ensure a right sense of awe and godly fear in our lives and in our worship in a culture that emphasises informality and intimacy?

8. What do we usually consider as 'blessings' in our lives? When these are stripped away what do we have left to be joyful about? (Hab 3:17-18, 19; 2 Cor 12: 9)

9. What is the key take-away, the key verse for you from Habakkuk 3?

Pray Together

Throughout his dialogue with God Habakkuk moved from asking 'why' to worship. Pray for each other that you might know the joy and strength of the Lord and be moved to worship in the midst of your difficulties.