

Why is God Not Helping Us

by Anton Bosch

This sermon delves into the book of Habakkuk, emphasizing the relevance of the minor prophets to the church today. It explores the themes of questioning God's justice, the rise of the Chaldeans as a judgment, and the importance of living by faith amidst challenging times. The message highlights the need for believers to trust in God's sovereignty and promises, even when faced with adversity and uncertainty.

Scripture: Habakkuk 1:1, Habakkuk 1:5, Habakkuk 2:2, Habakkuk 2:4, Hebrews 10:37, Hebrews 10:38

Topics: "Faith in Adversity", "Trusting God's Sovereignty"

Description

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Transcript

I'm going to move the studies on Hebrews to Sunday mornings. So, Sunday morning I'll continue in Hebrews and I have Omaha to speak maybe on some of these minor prophets because they are absolutely critical for the time in which we're living. Habakkuk is easy to find, it's the fifth last book in the Old Testament.

So, if you find Matthew and then back from that Malachi and then the fifth last book in the Old Testament. These books are difficult to read. I freely admit I'm not that familiar with them.

I have read them several times. I've never taught on them except for Joel and Daniel and Malachi, I think. But I believe they have a message to the church.

Now, remember that they either written to Israel or to Judah at the time, but today they apply to the church. And this is the amazing thing about these minor prophets is the fact that they speak so much to the time in which we're living. And I believe that that is a sign of true prophecy, that it may be true at that time, but it is true at other times as well.

And so, as you read through these minor prophets, it's almost as though God is speaking to the church today. Now, remember, we do not believe that the church replaces Israel. God's covenants and promises to Israel stand and God will return to those.

But at the same time, from a spiritual point of view, the church is Israel in the sense that we are God's people and God speaks to his people. So, God spoke to his people in the case of Habakkuk to Judah, and he is speaking to us. And we'll find that there's similarities in these passages.

I'm going to be probably in Habakkuk two or three weeks. We'll see how it goes. Unfortunately, the problem with some of these books is that they have long sections that are really very hard to read and understand, and not particularly edifying.

But we'll do our best to move through as quickly as possible, but you get the message. The other problem we have is that, particularly the book of Habakkuk, most of these minor prophets has to be understood as a whole. And so, I can't deal with it in one session.

I just can't cover all of that in one session. And so, we have to break it up, but in breaking it up, we lose the tension and we lose the flow of the argument. And Habakkuk is three chapters, and it has good news in the end, bad news in the beginning.

So, unfortunately, we have to deal with the bad news first to get to the good news. But please try and keep your head around this. Please try to spend some time studying, reading the book.

As I say, it's just three chapters. It shouldn't take you more than 10 minutes, I would imagine, to read it and try and get your head around it. But let's read together the Habakkuk chapter 1, and we'll read through chapter 2 verse 4. So, a long reading, but again, it's important for us to get it all in perspective.

So, Habakkuk chapter 1 verse 1. The burden which the prophet Habakkuk saw. O Lord, how long shall I cry and you will not hear? Even cry out to you violence and you will not save. Why do you show me iniquity and cause me to see trouble? For plundering and violence are before me.

There is strife and contention arises. Therefore, the law is powerless and justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous.

Therefore, perverse judgment proceeds. Look among the nations and watch. Be utterly astounded, for I will work a work in your days which you will not believe, though it were told you.

For indeed, I am raising up the Shaldeans, a bitter and hasty nation, which marches through the breadth of the earth to possess dwelling places that are not theirs. They are terrible and dreadful. Their judgment and their dignity proceed from themselves.

Their horses also are swifter than leopards and more fierce than evening wolves. Their charges charge ahead. Their cavalry comes from afar.

They fly as the eagle that hastens to eat. They all come for violence. Their faces are set like the east wind and they gather captives like sand.

They scoff at kings and princes are scorned by them. They deride every stronghold, for they heap up earthen mounds and seize it. Then his mind changes and he transgresses.

He commits offense, ascribing this power to his God. 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. 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? Why do you make men like fish of the sea, like creeping things that have no ruler over them? They take up all of them with a hook and catch them in their net, gather them in their dragnet.

Therefore they rejoice and are glad. Therefore they sacrifice to their net and burn incense to their dragnet. Because of them, their share is sumptuous and their food plentiful.

Shall they therefore empty their net and continue to slay nations without pity? I will stand my watch and set myself on the rampart and watch to see what he will say to me. And what will I answer when I am corrected? Then the Lord answered me and said, Write the vision and make it plain on tablets that he may run who reads it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but the end of it will speak and will not lie.

Though it tarries, wait for it, because it will surely come. It will not tarry. Behold the proud, his soul is not upright in him, but the just shall live by his faith.

So one of the problems we have is understanding what's going on, and it's helpful if you have a translation that has headings, because to some degree the headings help to pass out when Habakkuk is speaking and when God is speaking. So this is a conversation between Habakkuk and God. Habakkuk is questioning God's justice.

Why do the heathens rage and the people imagine a vain thing is what the psalmist said, and there are many parallels between Habakkuk and the Psalms. There are huge parallels between Habakkuk and Job, and the parallels really are questioning God. Why do bad things happen, and why do bad things happen to good people? That really is the question.

And so the first question is found in verses 1 through 4. Now verse 1 begins, The burden which the prophet Habakkuk saw. The burden which the prophet Habakkuk saw. Now you remember many of these minor prophets speak about the burden of the Lord.

More modern translations will speak about the oracles of God, or speak about the oracle which the prophet saw, or the prophecy which he saw. But the word burden is significant because it speaks about a burden, about a weight, and the prophets would feel a burden in terms of what it is that God is saying, or in terms of the need of the time. And it's good that we feel that kind of burden for the church, for the lost, for our families, that we are weighed down not in a negative sense, but that we feel the responsibility to carry a load.

We want to be as light and as easy as possible, and not carry any kind of responsibility. But men of God carry a burden, and they carry the burden of the people, and of the Lord's Word. And so the burden which the prophet Habakkuk saw.

And now here's his first question, verses 2 through 4. Oh Lord, how long and you will not hear, even cry out to you, violence and you will not save. So he is questioning God. Now we must say that it is not wrong for us to question God.

I think it's important that we question God, that we understand his ways, that we understand what it is that he is doing. We can't just go along and say, well, you know, everything is fine, and oh yeah, I've got faith, everything's going to work out. Everything wasn't working out for Judah.

Judah was, and so Habakkuk is speaking to Judah. Israel had already, the northern tribes, had already been carried into captivity by Assyria. Assyria was the world power at that time.

But Assyria was on the wane. Assyria had lost its influence in the world, and a new power called Babylon was busy rising at this time. So that's what's happening on the political scene.

Judah is still in the land. Israel is in captivity. Josiah was a good king, and Habakkuk saw the end of Josiah's reign.

Josiah tried to bring about reforms, but he was unsuccessful because of the hardness of people's hearts. So he was not able to bring about the reforms that he wanted, and so Habakkuk observed that. And Habakkuk is burdened by the fact that this good king had now died without fulfilling his dream and his vision of restoring the nation in their relationship with God.

Zephaniah, one of the other minor prophets, and we may look at him, had prophesied before him, 20 years before Habakkuk. Between Zephaniah's prophecy and Habakkuk's prophecy, there was 20 years of silence. So not only was Josiah, the good king, dead, but God had not spoken through a prophet for 20 years.

So we have, remember, the 400 years that God doesn't speak between Malachi and the New Testament. But here we have a period of 20 years, during Habakkuk's time, that God is not speaking. Added to that, Jehoiakim has now become the king, and Jehoiakim was one of the worst kings that Judah ever had.

Just corrupted justice and righteousness, and so the nation is in trouble. Now, I said earlier, we must read this, and I'm going to emphasize this, we must read this concerning, obviously, Judah originally, but concerning the church. The popular thing today is to read this concerning America.

These prophecies do not relate to America, or to England, or Australia, or to any other country. They relate to Israel, or Judah originally, and to the church today. And so, there's a cry going out from many hearts, saying, and I've spoken about the great falling away, that we're seeing this falling away happening all the time.

Churches, good churches, are closing down. Good pastors are giving up and leaving the ministry. The church is in a terrible, terrible state, just like Judah was at the time.

And his question is, Lord, aren't you listening? I'm the same way as we sometimes hear about people who are being raped, or stabbed in the city, and they cry out for help, and nobody listens. Everybody just walks past. Nobody cares.

And he is saying, Lord, we're in trouble here, and Lord, we're being violated. We'll see in which ways. And he says, where are you? Why aren't you listening? And of course, we need to get to the end of the book to get the answer.

So, how long will I keep falling, and you will not hear? Why do you show me iniquity, and cause me to see trouble? Now, he's, in a sense, blaming God, and he's saying, well, you know, all this trouble I'm seeing, and all the trouble that we're seeing in the church, Lord, why are you showing us these things? Well, it's not God who's showing us. I think, in a sense, he does show, because he's highlighting the need for a prophet. He's highlighting a need for a church, and for people who will stand for truth and righteousness.

And so, why are you showing me all these things, and you cause me to see trouble? For plundering and violence are before me. There is strife, and contention arises. Now, he's talking about the state of Judah.

There is violence, there is plundering, people are stealing from one another, there is strife, and there is contention. Again, a picture of what's going on in the church today. Many denominations are splitting right now.

Many individual churches have been splitting over these last, since the beginning of COVID, which is, it's not COVID, but everything that came with COVID resulted in tempers flaring, in people becoming more and more intolerant, people becoming more and more isolationist, and all sorts of things have come as a result. And he's saying, Lord, don't you understand what's going on? Can't you see what's going on? There's all this stuff. Verse 4, therefore the law is powerless, and justice never goes forth.

Now, again, we can apply this nationally, but I don't believe that's what he's talking about. But he's saying, there is no justice. There seems to be no justice in the church.

The cheats, and the charlatans, and the false prophets, and the false apostles, they're flourishing, and they're doing well, and the good people are struggling. Lord, where's the justice in all of this? The wicked surround the righteous. Now, we can apply this to the false church, but also the false church is in cahoots with the world, and the world is turning against the church like never before.

And so, we are surrounded by the wicked, and I trust that we are the righteous. Notice again, it's not England that is the righteous. We can never speak of England, or America, or any country as being the righteous.

Only the saved, only the church, can be called the righteous. We are made righteous by the blood of Jesus. It's the only basis on which we become righteous.

He's not talking here, I don't believe, in speaking to us. He's speaking about being righteous in the sense of passing just decisions, or being righteous in our actions. He's talking about a righteousness that comes as a result of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so, the wicked surround the righteous. Therefore, perverse judgment proceeds. And I think you can read that as perverse doctrine.

It's just proliferating all over the world. Just go to YouTube, go to Facebook, and it's just one false prophet after the other, and it just goes on and on and on and on. Lord, what's going on? Don't you listen? Now, the Lord answers in verse five, and his answer is rather shocking.

He says, look among the nations and watch. Be utterly astounded. Now, let me sum up this next section, going all the way down to verse 11.

Habakkuk is saying, Lord, we're dying here. We're in trouble. Why aren't you listening? And God says, you ain't seen nothing yet.

You think this is tough. He says, it's going to get worse. And of course, that blows his mind, because then we get the second question in verse 12.

So, look at the Lord's answer. Look among the nations and watch. Be utterly astounded.

For I will work a work in your days, in Habakkuk's days, which you will not believe, though it were told you. Now, when you read that in isolation, you say, oh, this is great. God's going to do a miracle.

This is the message the false prophets are bringing all the time. God's doing a miracle. He's going to do great things.

The church is on the march. Things are wonderful. That's not what God is saying.

He's saying, what I'm going to do is going to blow your mind. It is so bad. I mean, just think about that.

This prophet is looking for consolation. He's looking for help. And God is saying, there's no consolation.

It's going to get worse. And I'm going to bring it about. Verse 6, for indeed, I am raising up the Chaldeans.

That's Babylon. And now he's going to describe the Chaldeans. Now, I said to you that Assyria was on the decline.

Babylon at this point was just beginning to flex its wings. You remember that the book of Daniel is written. Judah is then carried to Babylon in captivity.

And Babylon at that point is a world empire. And remember that image of the head of gold and the shoulders of silver and going down to the feet of brass and clay. The greatest of those kingdoms was the Babylonian kingdom, Babylonian empire.

So it was the greatest world empire in the old times. And he says, now he says, I am raising up. Notice that.

I am raising up the Chaldeans. But they bad guys. But God says, I'm raising them up.

You see, and let's go on and you'll see his answer. You'll see the Prophet's answer. I'm raising up the Chaldeans.

And now he explains who they are, a bitter and a hasty nation, which marches through the breadth of the earth. So they were busy going out and conquering to possess dwelling places that are not theirs. They are terrible and dreadful.

Their judgment and their dignity proceeds from themselves. The Chaldeans or the Babylonians were the first to to practice what we today in warfare called the scorched-earth policy. The scorched-earth policy is a dreadful thing.

The English used it against the Boers in South Africa. America used it to some extent with Agent Orange in Vietnam. And the idea is just to obliterate everything.

Russia is doing that in Ukraine right now. Why are they bombing the cities? Because they want to destroy everything. Which is contrary to traditional warfare where you want to preserve the cities, because why do you want the other country? Because you want the wealth that can come from there.

But if you destroy the whole thing, you have nothing. But these people are not, they don't think straight. And so they were the first to practice this scorched-earth policy, where everybody and everything gets killed, everything gets torched, everything gets decimated, everything gets destroyed.

And so their horses are swifter than leopards and more fierce than evening wolves. Their chargers, that's their horses, charge ahead. Their cavalry, that's the horse regiments, come from afar.

They fly as the eagle that hastens to eat. So they are very swift in getting from one place to the other and conquering new territory. They all come for violence.

Their faces are set like the east wind. They gather captives like sand. They scoff at kings.

They don't respect kings, and princes are scorned by them. They deride every stronghold, for they heap up earthen mounds and seize them. In other words, it doesn't matter how strong your city is, they will build a ramp up against the city, and they will take the city.

Verse 11, then his mind changes and he transgresses. He commits offense, ascribing this power to his God. And you remember this is exactly what Nebuchadnezzar did.

He worshipped his gods, and he said these gods have given him the victory over Judah and over the world. So the Prophet obviously has a second question. And the question really is, I don't understand this.

God, this doesn't make sense at all. We're in enough trouble as it is. And so verse 12.

Sorry, I haven't been moving the clicker around. I need to stay in my Bible because I need to keep the whole thing in perspective. So verse 12, Are you not from everlasting, O Lord my God, my Holy One? We shall not die.

He's whistling in the dark. You understand that saying, when you're scared, you whistle. And so he said, we won't die.

We're okay. But he knows they're not okay. But he says, are you not the eternal Holy One? In other words, and then he says, we shall not die.

In other words, aren't you the God of grace and of mercy? Aren't you the eternal God? Are you not the God who has a covenant with us, your people? Surely we're not going to die. O Lord, you have appointed them for judgment. O rock, you have marked them for correction.

So he calls God his rock, his place of refuge, but also the unchanging one. The rock speaks about that which is unchanging and that which is the refuge. I will hide in that rock, David says, that is higher than I. So he says, God says, I'm raising up the Chaldeans against you.

And he says, that can't be. Have you not appointed them for judgment? And have you not marked them for correction? You are of purer eyes to behold evil. He says, God, you can't even look at evil.

Well, God does look on evil. He sees it all the time and cannot look on wickedness. Why do you look on those who deal treacherously? Now he's basically saying, God, why are you on their side? Are we not your people? And I think that if you understand what's going on in the churches today, this resonates certainly with me.

And I say, God, how come the wicked are doing so well? How come the false churches are growing? How come the good churches are dying? How come the enemy seems to be taking over? How come the unsaved in America are dictating to the church today? What's going on? Why do you look on those who deal treacherously and hold your tongue when the wicked devours a person more righteous than he?

Now, remember, he's talking about Babylon and Judah. Judah is more righteous than Babylon. But Judah is not where they ought to be.

That's the problem. So while Judah says, you know, he says, we're better than the Babylonians. And the church today can say, well, we're better than the liberals.

We're better than those people. We're better than those people. But that's not the point.

The point is, is the church where it ought to be? And that was the problem. So God was going to use the Babylonians to get Israel's attention, or Judah's attention. And this would come to pass, and he would carry them into into captivity.

And I remember the Scorched Earth policy thing. Remember what happened when Babylon came against Judah, and wiped out the whole, the city was razed to the ground. The walls were totally destroyed.

Remember that later on, Nehemiah and Zerubbabel and Ezra, these guys come, and they rebuild. After 70 years of captivity, they come to rebuild. When they come to rebuild, it is, the whole city is in ruin.

Everything has been destroyed. The temple is destroyed. The golden vessels have been taken away.

And the houses have been destroyed. The walls have been destroyed. The jackals had made it their nesting place, the scripture says.

And so, he says, he says, God, you are silent, you hold your tongue, when the wicked devours a person more righteous than he. Now, you see, that's the human perspective. Lord, you know, why? We're better than them.

No, that's not the question. The question is not whether we're better than them. The question is whether we are where we ought to be.

Whether the church, whether our church, is where it ought to be. It's not whether we're better than the church down the road. It's not whether you're better than the next person in the pew.

It's whether we are where God wants us to be. And the answer for Judah was, they were not where they ought to be. And so, God was going to allow this to happen, to get their attention.

Verse 14, why do you make men like fish of the sea, like creeping things that have no ruler over them? He's, again, when he speaks about men here, he's talking about us, talking about Judah. And he's saying, why do you make us like defenseless? What defenses do fish have against the net? They have no defense whatsoever. And creeping things that have no ruler over them.

In other words, we're at the mercy of the enemy. They take up all of them with a hook. In other words, fish get caught, and they catch them in their net, and gather them in their dragnet.

Therefore, they rejoice and are glad. And so he's saying, we are like the fish, and these guys are coming, and they're going to just catch us away, and we have no defense. And they are happy, and we are sad.

Verse 16, therefore, they sacrifice to their net, so their net becomes their God. The army becomes the God of the Babylonians, and burn incense to their dragnet, because by them they share is sumptuous, and their food plentiful. What got the Babylonians where they wanted to be? The army, their military might.

And so, the military becomes their God. And there are nations in the world today that do exactly the same, because they have great armies, and they're able to invade other nations. The army becomes the thing that they that they worship.

So they therefore empty their net, and continue to slay nations without pity. I think it speaks for itself. Verse 18, sorry, chapter 2 now.

I will stand my watch, and set myself on the rampart. So now it changes. The rampart is the part of the wall where the watchman would watch.

And the prophet is saying, I'm going to stand on the wall of Jerusalem, on the corners where the watchman watch, and I'm going to see. So I will stand my watch, and set myself on the rampart, and watch to see what he will say to me. And what will I answer when I'm corrected? I think there's a few things going on here.

The first is that he's saying, God, I don't accept your answer. I'm going to stand here until you give me the right answer, because what you just told me is not the right answer. Obviously, the answer that he wanted is, I'm on your side, the enemies won't attack you, you'll be fine, you'll be okay.

God says, no, that's not the message. And so, I'm not sure that we can say that he's sulking, and he's saying, well, God, I'm just going to sit here. You remember someone else did that? Remember Jonah? He goes and sits outside the city, and he says, now I'm going to see.

God says, God told me he's going to destroy these people. Now he's going to save them. Now let me see what's going to happen.

And maybe there's a bit of that going on. I don't know, I don't think that we can take from this what many times is preached from this, and that is that we are watchmen, and we must be watching for the church, because that's not what he's doing. He's not watching for Israel.

He's not a watchman in the sense of standing guard over Israel. He's watching to see what will God now do, because he can't believe. Remember, God said, when I tell you what I'm going to do, you'll be astounded.

And he is astounded. He said, now let me see what's going to happen. And let me watch and see what he will say to me, and what I will answer when I'm corrected.

Then the Lord answered me. So here's the Lord's second answer. Write the vision, and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it.

So he says, I'm going to stand on the rampart and watch. And God says, no, get down from there and write the vision. And that's what we're reading tonight, what he wrote down.

If he hadn't written it, we would not have this message today. I think that it is a message to us today, to the church, because there are too many who are watching. They're reading every newspaper.

They're watching every news channel. They're reading every blog about what's going on in the church, what's wrong with the church. And God is saying, I don't need you to be watching.

I need you to be preaching, to write the vision. And that's what we don't have today. We don't have men and women who are writing the vision.

And I'm not emphasizing, the emphasis here for me is not on writing the vision, but declaring the vision. Declaring the vision. And of course, what is the vision? The vision is that we're in trouble, and that God is not on our side, unless we repent.

And I believe that God would have, you remember Jonah, and he goes against Nineveh, and Nineveh is a wicked city, the Assyrians. And yet, God changes his mind when he sees true repentance. I believe that God could have spared, would have spared Judah, the 70 years of captivity, the destruction of the of the temple, and the destruction of Jerusalem, and of the city, and effectively the destruction of the nation.

God would have spared them if they'd only repented. And so God needed prophets. They were not listening.

And so Habakkuk, God says to him, go and write the vision, publish the message, and make it plain on tablets. And that's our responsibility. That's the responsibility of every preacher, and every Christian, is to make the message plain, as I'm trying to do for you in this book this evening.

To make it plain, so that we can run with it. So that it's not something that we can't handle, that we can't deal with, but it becomes something that empowers us to be able to run the race. And so the Lord says, write the vision.

And I believe that that is the message to this church as well, that we need to write the vision. We need to publish the message, that people may understand, and that they may run, who read the message, who hear and receive the message. Two more verses, verse 3. For the vision is yet for an appointed time.

Now stay with me, I know we're tired, but we're nearly through. The vision is yet for an appointed time. It's in the future.

But at the end, it will speak. The vision will speak, and will not lie. In other words, what I've said is going to come to pass.

All right? But it's in the future. Though it tarries, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry. In other words, what I've said will be fulfilled.

Now, notice he's saying, it's in the future. I didn't work out how far in the future it was, but it wasn't, it was, it was just after Habakkuk's lifetime, so maybe 30, 40 years, and Babylon would carry Israel, Judah into captivity. So he says, it's the future.

But this is now, this is important. Notice it says, though it tarries, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry. So he's saying, the prophecy is sure, but he's saying something else.

And we only know that because if you keep your finger in Habakkuk and go to Hebrews chapter 10, where we've recently been. Hebrews chapter 10 and verse 37. For yet a little while, and he who is coming will come and will not tarry.

Can you see it's the same words, but there's a big change. In Habakkuk he says, it, though it tarries, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry. But Hebrews applies that to Jesus.

So what he is saying, for those of us who have the benefit of hindsight, is that there are two fulfillments of this prophecy. There is the prophecy that relates to that time, and there's a prophecy that deals with the future when Jesus comes. And in fact, not in Jesus' first coming, but in his second coming.

That's important when we get to chapter 3. So just file that away, and we'll come back to that. Now, if you're still in Hebrews chapter 10, you'll see that verse 38 then says, now the just shall live by faith. But if anyone draws back, my soul has no pleasure in him.

We dealt with that last week. Now, if you go back to Habakkuk, though it tarries, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry. Behold the proud, his soul is not upright in him, but the just shall live by his faith.

So you can see that he is connecting these two, Hebrews is connecting these two passages. This is important, because the statement I began with this evening, of saying this message of Habakkuk relates to the church. The book of Hebrews tells us that it relates to the church, because it is connecting the ministry of the Lord Jesus and justification by faith, which comes in the New Testament to the prophecy of Habakkuk.

Now, let's just go back to verse 3. So the vision is for now, but it's also in the future. Many of the prophecies, most of the prophecies in the Old Testament were that way. And I'm not going to give you examples, because we've out of time.

But he says it's going to happen. Now, verse 4, behold the proud. Who are the proud? Well, the Babylonians.

If you go back, verse 7 of chapter 1, they are terrible and dreadful. Their judgment and their dignity proceed from themselves. They are a proud people.

So behold the proud, his soul is not upright in him. Well, that speaks for itself. But there's that important word, the just shall live by his faith.

Now remember, when God says, I'm going to send the Babylonians, Habakkuk says, we won't die. And God says, watch me. But now he says, the just will live by faith.

This is an important verse that appears three times in the New Testament. I've forgotten the third one. The first one is in Romans, then in Hebrews.

This is the verse by which Martin Luther got saved. And I'm not condoning some of Martin Luther's teachings, but he certainly got saved as a result of this verse, that the just shall live by faith. How are we justified? By faith.

We are not justified by works. We are not justified because they are Judah. Or we are not justified because we are Christians.

We are justified by faith. And how do we live? We live by faith. We're saved by faith.

We are kept by faith. We live by faith. And so what he is saying to Habakkuk is, yes, all of this is going on.

Everything is against you guys. And it's going to get worse because I'm going to send Babylon to deal with you. Because you are not keeping my Sabbaths.

You're not keeping justice. You've corrupted the word of God. All of these things.

But the just shall live by faith. And folks, this is a very important message for the time. I'm going to close here, pick up on that again next week.

But this is an important message today. How will we survive in times that are becoming more and more evil, more and more wicked, when the church is failing? The just will live by faith. Not by faith in the church.

Not by faith Judah for them. Or by faith in the king. But faith in God.

That is what keeps us. And that is what will keep us. And that's part of the very important message that God is giving to Habakkuk.

And I believe that that is the message today. We don't draw back. And remember that the book of Hebrews connects that.

And he says the just will live by faith. But we are not those who draw back to perdition. Why? Because we live by faith.

When we do not live by faith, we are coward into fearing, to running away, into defecting all of the things that the people in the book of Hebrews were busy doing. Moving away from the truth. And the writer to the Hebrews is saying, no, you need to live by faith.

And today we find ourselves in the same place. Christians are giving up on church. Christians are giving up on Christianity.

Christians are beginning to doubt. No, we will survive. We will live if we live by faith.

Not by faith in the church. Not by faith in the preacher. But by faith in Jesus Christ.

That will see us through. And that will bring us to the day of victory on the other end. Father, we pray that you'd help us to understand.

Lord, these are hard things sometimes. But Lord, I pray that you would, by your spirit, open your word to us. Above all, Lord, that we may understand that this is a message for us today.

That you're speaking to this church. That you're speaking to all true churches and all true Christians through these prophets. Lord, forgive us for putting these men aside and these books aside because they seem to be inaccessible and too hard to understand.

Help us, Lord, to read them and to understand that they are not just for then. They are for now. The same way as the prophecy that is fulfilled in the Lord Jesus.

That he will not tarry, but that he will come. Lord, that these things have past fulfillments, but they have messages to us today too. So help us understand.

But above all, Lord, help us to be those who do not draw back to perdition. But that we may be those who live by faith. We ask this in Jesus' name.

Go with us, Lord. We pray that you'd protect us, bring us together again safely on Sunday. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/s5NNPUtXYSY.mp4>
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