

## Habakkuk – Notes 3

### [1] A SCRIPTURE USED IN TEMPLE WORSHIP

**Another unique feature of the book** – 3 elements: **(i) ‘on shigionoth’** (v 1) - transliteration of Hebrew word. Uncertain meaning, ‘probably a literary or musical term.’ Only other occurrence of word - Ps 7 title ‘*shiggaion* of David...’ - a particular type of psalm. **(ii) Closing words of the chapter:** ‘For the director of music. On my stringed instruments.’ Only two Hebrew words. **First** word appears in 55 headings of Psalms, also 2 Chron 34:13. **Second** word mostly refers to musical accompaniment to praise in the temple (7x in Psalm titles). **(iii) Threefold use of ‘Selah’** (vv 3, 9, 13), only ever otherwise in Psalms (71x). Habakkuk 3 sung in temple worship – not just the Book of Psalms.

### [2] PRAYER FOR THE RENEWAL/ REVIVAL OF GOD’S CAUSE (v 2)

To date: 1:2-4 - Habakkuk engaged in ‘robust prayer’; again, 1:12-17, robust prayer.

#### (i) He Recalls the Mighty Work(s) of God

Common OT feature. **Psalm 77:1-9** - distressing circumstances; v 10 - turning point: ‘I will remember the deeds of the Lord’, especially redemption/ the Exodus (see vv 15, 20). **Psalm 44.** V 1 ‘our fathers have told us what you did in their days’: conquest of Canaan (v 3). Vv 9-22 different now. Vv 23-6: ‘Awake, O Lord! Rouse! Rise up! Redeem us!’

#### (ii) He Prays for a Renewal/ Revival of these mighty works of God

- No call for revival because of Hebrew verb used? But, **1 Chron 11:8**, ‘Joab restored = ‘revived’ the rest of the city’; and **Neh 4:2**: ‘Can they bring the stones back to life.’
- **Let’s remember:** Ninian, Patrick, Columba; Reformation; great spiritual revivals
- **Barvas (Lewis)** - many revivals 1820-1950. 1949-50 - 51 new members in 2+ years. Oldest member - 4 different revivals c1908; early 1920s; 1939; 1949-50.

#### (iii) The Basis of His Prayer - He Pleads the Mercy/ Compassion of God

- **‘Wrath’** – ‘tumultuous shaking’? (See ‘anguish’ [v 7], ‘quivering’, ‘trembling’ [v 16])
- **Mercy/ compassion** - characteristic of God that strays into the realm of the undeserved/ unmerited

- Related to Hebrew word for '**womb**'. Mercy/ compassion - tender care/ warm affection/ concern a mother has for her vulnerable children
- '**remember**' applied to God = going into action on behalf of. Act consistently with your character: 'merciful and gracious, etc [Ex 34:6; Neh 9:17; Ps 86:15; etc]

### [3] THEOPHANY (vv 3-15)

- Similar to other theophanies: **Deut 33:2** - Glory of God like rising sun. **Judges 5:4f**: Glory ... like earthquake and monsoon rains. **Ps 68:7ff**.
- **Is Habakkuk using a standard way of recalling the Exodus?**
- But, the **way God is**; the way in which he normally reveals himself – in HIS time (2:3): his splendour is visible; his enemies tremble (v 6), experience his wrath (v 12) and their leader is crushed and symbolically disrobed (v 13); while God's people experience salvation (v 13).
- And **so it will be at last too!** Matt 24:27; Rev 1:7; 1 Thess 4:16; etc
- Habakkuk **trembles (v 16)** in awe and **commits himself to await the fulfilment** of this vision, meanwhile **(2:4) living by his faith** in this mighty God of Sinai.

### [4] HABAKKUK'S PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION

- **Compare and contrast** beginning and ending of a book. See movement, e.g, Judges.
- **Habakkuk** begins and ends in prayer. But, content of prayer and heart-attitude of prophet change immensely, while his circumstances worsen. Yet, at peace with God; at peace in himself; rejoicing in the Lord, even in tribulation!!
- **committing himself to continue in that same mood and mode** for the future (v 17)
- i.e., even though **no visible signs of the covenant blessings** of the Lord; and even **though life may be very difficult** without these, yet joy in God his Saviour (v 18).
- **How can he do it?** Dependent on Lord's strength (v 19). Isaiah 40:31. Here, 'deer'.
- Habakkuk's **eyes** are on the '**One of Sinai**' and **how things** will be '**in the end**' (2:3)
- **not going to live his life depressed**, in the shadowlands. **Instead**, strengthened and enabled by the Lord – like the mountain goats or deer – he is not going to be a stranger to the '**heights**', to experiences of the mountain top as well as the valley!
- **can be your future too** – and mine, for (2:4) 'the righteous shall **LIVE** by his faith