

Rejoice in the Lord even in 2020

(Habakkuk 3:16-19)



1

Year 2020 so far,

- Covid-19 pandemic
- More than 200,000 people died from Covid-19.
- Millions have been infected.
- Depression & other emotional illnesses
- Suicide rate are up 30%.
- People with other illnesses are not treated.
- National shutdown: businesses, schools, social gatherings, ...
- Many small businesses closed.
- People lost their jobs and family income.
- Social unrest for months: violence, looting, killing, destructions of private & public properties, ...
- Presidential election chaos
- A divided government plus many political issues
- The good – two potential vaccines & very low interest rate

2

Like most people, we can't do much (if anything) to change these situations. Then, ...

How can we still be joyful & thankful in the midst of adversities?

3

1. How? When we decide to trust God (Hab 2:4)

- a. Habakkuk was deeply troubled by what he saw in his country. Habakkuk was a prophet to the Southern Kingdom (Judah) during the reign of King Jehoakim, 609-598 B.C. (Hab 1:1-4)
- b. He prayed & asked God about why didn't He do anything.
- c. Surprise! Things were going to get worse. (Hab 1:5. God's answer) The Babylonians would come to destroy Jerusalem and the Southern Kingdom. The people will be taken captive to Babylon. The Kingdom was destroyed in 586 B.C.

4

Habakkuk 1:1-6

¹ The pronouncement that the prophet Habakkuk saw.

² How long, LORD, must I call for help and you do not listen or cry out to you about violence and you do not save?

³ Why do you force me to look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrong doing? Oppression and violence are right in front of me. Strife is ongoing, and conflict escalates.

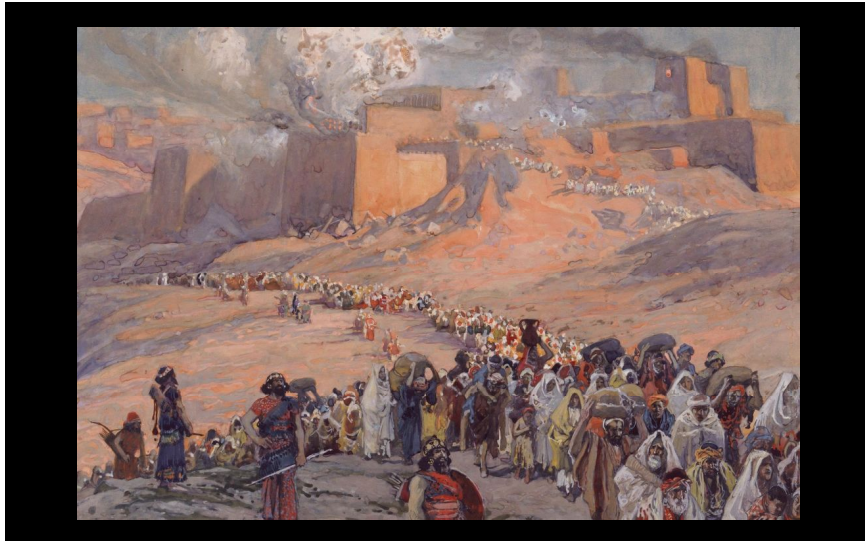
⁴ This is why the law is ineffective and justice never emerges. For the wicked restrict the righteous; therefore, justice comes out perverted.

⁵ Look at the nations and observe — be utterly astounded! For I am doing something in your days that you will not believe when you hear about it.

⁶ Look! I am raising up the Chaldeans,

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Habakkuk 2:1-4

¹ I will stand at my guard post and station myself on the lookout tower. I will watch to see what he will say to me and what I should reply about my complaint.

² The LORD answered me: Write down this vision; clearly inscribe it on tablets so one may easily read it.

³ For the vision is yet for the appointed time; it testifies about the end and will not lie. Though it delays, wait for it, since it will certainly come and not be late.

⁴ Look, his ego is inflated; he is without integrity. But the righteous one will live by his faith.

1. How? When we decide to trust God (Hab 2:4)

- a. Habakkuk was deeply troubled by what he saw in his country. Habakkuk was a prophet to the Southern Kingdom (Judah) during the reign of King Jehoakim, 609-598BC. (Hab 1:1-4)
- b. He prayed & asked God.
- c. Surprise! Things were going to get worse. (Hab 1:5. God's answer)
- d. "The righteous one will live by his faith." (Hab 2:4) Specific to this prophecy, the faithful believers of the LORD would be saved physically because of their trust in Him. Habakkuk decided to trust God. God is in control – His plan will be done. Though this judgment must take place, God's people was still in His care.

Habakkuk 2:18-20

¹⁸ What use is a carved idol after its craftsman carves it? It is only a cast image, a teacher of lies. For the one who crafts its shape trusts in it and makes worthless idols that cannot speak.

¹⁹ Woe to him who says to wood: Wake up! or to mute stone: Come alive! Can it teach? Look! It may be plated with gold and silver, yet there is no breath in it at all.

²⁰ But the LORD is in his holy temple; let the whole earth be silent in his presence.

Habakkuk 3:1-2, 13

¹ A prayer of the prophet Habakkuk. . . .

² LORD, I have heard the report about you; LORD, I stand in awe of your deeds. Revive your work in these years; make it known in these years. In your wrath remember mercy!

.....

¹³ You come out to save your people, to save your anointed. You crush the leader of the house of the wicked and strip him from foot to neck.

1. How? When we decide to trust God (Hab 2:4)

- a. Habakkuk was deeply troubled by what he saw in his country. Habakkuk was a prophet to the Southern Kingdom (Judah) during the reign of King Jehoakim, 609-598BC. (Hab 1:1-4)
- b. He prayed & asked God.
- c. Surprise! Things were going to get worse. (Hab 1:5. God's answer)
- d. "The righteous one will live by his faith." Habakkuk decided to trust God.
- e. We can be joyful & thankful when we decide to trust God to be in control of all things.
 - We "decide" with our mind and will regardless of our feelings.
 - When you trust God to be in control, then don't worry about what you cannot control (leave it to God, e.g. the overall pandemic situation); but only take care of what you can control (with God's help, e.g. wearing mask & social distancing, ...).

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1. How? When we decide to trust God (Hab 2:4)

2. Then, we can rejoice in God (Hab 3:18)

- a. Habakkuk rejoiced in God, not in his situation or the condition of his country. In fact, he trembled at the thought of the upcoming destruction of Jerusalem and the kingdom (Hab 3:16-17). Yet, he could rejoice (celebrated) in the LORD (3:18).

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Habakkuk 3:16-19

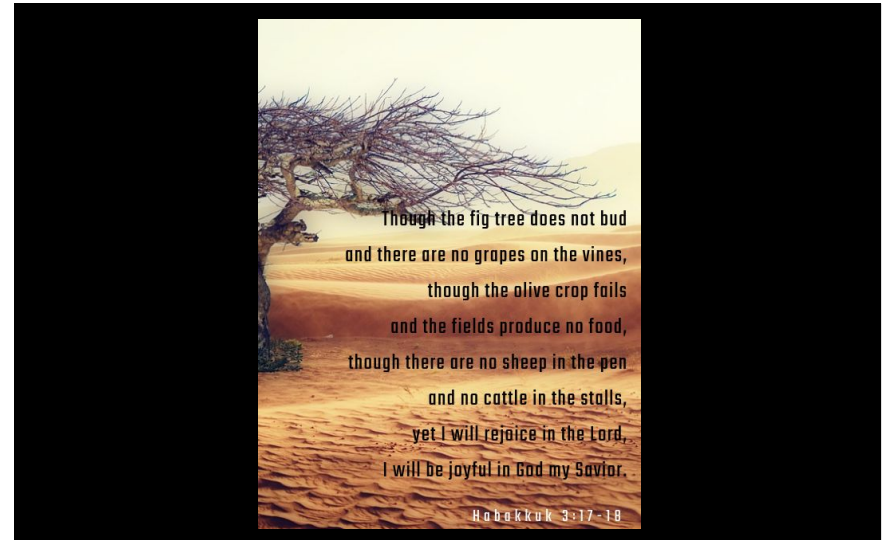
¹⁶ I heard, and I trembled within;
my lips quivered at the sound.
Rottenness entered my bones;
I trembled where I stood.
Now I must quietly wait for the day of
distress
to come against the people invading us.

¹⁷ Though the fig tree does not bud
and there is no fruit on the vines,
though the olive crop fails
and the fields produce no food,
though the flocks disappear from the pen
and there are no herds in the stalls,

¹⁸ yet I will celebrate in the LORD;
I will rejoice in the God of my salvation!

¹⁹ The LORD my Lord is my strength;
he makes my feet like those of a deer
and enables me to walk on mountain
heights!

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1. How? When we decide to trust God (Hab 2:4)

2. Then, we can rejoice in God (Hab 3:18)

- a. Habakkuk rejoiced in God, not in his situation or the condition of his country.
- b. Rejoice in God, not necessarily our situation or our life condition.
- c. "Rejoice in God" = God is the reason for our joy
 - e.g. His character of righteousness & justice, His love for us, His sovereign control over all things, His salvation for us, ... etc.See what Jesus Christ said in John 14:1-3.

17

John 14:1. Live by faith in Jesus Christ

¹ "Don't let your heart be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ² In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? ³ If I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to myself, so that where I am you may be also. ⁴ You know the way to where I am going."

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To be joyful & thankful even in the midst of adversities does not begin with how you feel, but how you trust God.

We trust God, therefore we rejoice in God!

Let us trust the LORD our God with all our heart and mind, so that we will rejoice in Him!

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Sharing & Praying Together

We love to hear your thanksgiving thoughts, feelings, experiences, prayers, ...

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