

Love & War #6
Seeing God for Who He Is

Word

Scripture Reference

Habakkuk 3:1-15

Discussion Questions

1. Share a character of God that has been the most real to you recently.
2. After God answered Habakkuk's questions of why He seemingly allows sin to go unpunished and why He seemingly allows evil people to succeed, Habakkuk responded to God in a prayer of praise acknowledging that he had indeed received God's answers to his questions, and it had left him stunned and in awe as he realized God's sovereign power at work. He had a renewed fear—a healthy respect—for God.

Habakkuk's prayer reflects three realizations about who God is and how one should respond to Him. The first realization is this: Realizing God's sovereign power should cause people to fear Him (v. 1-2). In view of God's sovereign power with a response of fear, Habakkuk asked God to do three things:

- a. To bring revival during the time God would discipline Judah using the Babylonians. What is a revival? What did Habakkuk ask God to do in verse 2? Share an experience when you felt, through the Word of God (i.e. sermon or reading of His Word), the all-powerful God at work in you, and you took Him seriously. What was the result?
- b. To provide understanding for the people. It is often easy to misunderstand God and the reason He is rightfully angry. Habakkuk wanted people to understand that God's anger is within reason, and therefore God should be feared and respected. Why is it important to understand that discipline is necessary for an erring person, even among kids at home? Why does fear of someone without reason lead to bitterness? On the other hand, how does having a valid reason for anger and discipline cause one to respect the person doing the discipling?
- c. To show mercy in the midst of His rightful wrath. Habakkuk knew that the people deserved the discipline they receive. He knew, too, that God loved them in spite of His rightful wrath, but He asked God to show mercy. Discuss the difference between love and mercy. How could you discipline someone who is under your authority through the lenses of love so that you could be

merciful at the same time?

3. The second realization Habakkuk's prayer gives us is this: Recognizing God's awesomeness should cause people to respect Him (v. 3-7). These verses remind us that God is in control and will keep His promises to His people. The word "awesome" means awe-inspiring, breathtaking and overwhelming. It is a sad thing that a lot of people use this word carelessly. In many ways, only God is befitting of this description. How did Habakkuk describe God's awesomeness in this passage? When do you see and feel God's glory in His creations? How do you respond to God's awesome presence in your life in spite of your circumstances?
4. The third realization Habakkuk's prayer gives us is that seeing God's powerful works should cause people to be at peace (v. 8-15). These verses describe God's powerful acts in the world. In Habakkuk's question to God, he was affirming that God's demonstration of power in parting the Red Sea and the Jordan River (and other supernatural acts) was done to save His people, and not out of anger (v. 13). God sent an Anointed One, a deliverer that could refer to (a) Moses who delivered Israel out of bondage, (b) Cyrus who allowed the people of Israel to return from exile, or (c) the Messiah who would save all mankind from their sin. God's powerful acts are for our benefit, and so His powerful works should cause people to be at peace. Share how, as a Christian, you have peace in your heart in spite of problems or issues that you go through in life. Why is such peace even possible?

Walk

Realizing God's sovereign power should cause people to fear Him. Recognizing His awesomeness should cause people to respect Him. Seeing His powerful works should cause people to be at peace. In your Christian life, do you see God for who He really is? If not, ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to recognize God for who He is.

Worship & Prayer

Heavenly Father, I am overwhelmed of who You are! You are an awesome God who deserves my reverent fear. Thank you that when I recognize your powerful work, I do not need to be scared, and that when I have an intimate walk with you, I can be in so much peace because You whom I respect and fear is fighting on my behalf. Help me Lord to humbly submit to you because You are who You are, the only real and living God! In Jesus' Name. Amen.