

## **Kings and Prophets 16-01-21**

This is Thursday, the 21st of January, 2016. We are endeavoring to move forward in our study of kings and prophets. We are in the final half century, the final 50 years or so, of the southern kingdom of Judah.

We are anticipating the soon appearance of good king Josiah and the ministry of Jeremiah. We will see Zephaniah and Nahum coming on the scene. At the moment we are looking at and finishing up our study of the prophet Habakkuk.

Do you remember what Habakkuk's name means? A hug, to embrace. This is God's comfort. We have studied chapter 1, we have studied chapter 2, and tonight we are going to take a look at the ultimate and final chapter, chapter 3. Let's take a moment as we prepare for this time of fellowship and enjoyment of the fruitful, spiritual banquet that is set before us in this portion of God's Word.

Let's go to the Lord in prayer. Father, we are grateful, as always, for the many ways that you take care of us, watch over us, sustain us, and bless us. We thank you for the time we have tonight to lay aside the onrush of circumstance and challenges and tasks and responsibilities to refresh ourselves at the oasis of your Word.

We thank you for this book and for the truth that is contained in it and preserved for us across the years and the centuries. We pray that your Holy Spirit will minister it to each heart in a way that is meaningful and helpful and memorable as we look forward to the soon return of the Lord Jesus. We pray it in Jesus' name.

Amen. I don't think I need at this point to review much of what we have seen in Habakkuk. It should be reasonably fresh in our minds.

He had a big question. His society in the Southern Kingdom, the culture, the spiritual values were all in a radical state of deterioration, downgrade, downward spiral, disintegration, and this results in discouragement. It's discouraging to look and see injustice, to see the loss of the foundational values that actually define your culture and define your country.

We experience that today. Those of us that have any sense at all of what's going on are somewhat in a state of mourning, and my solution to that is just disinvest. I'm having to actually encourage myself to care at all what happens in the government or in legislation or in the election or anything else because I've mentally, this is sad to say, but I've pretty much mentally just written it off.

My citizenship is in heaven. That is a great place to be a citizen. It is a wonderful heritage.

It is a fantastic bequest from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. He has naturalized us as citizens of that eternal kingdom that belongs to His Father, and we will see the threshold step of that

kingdom for 1,000 years in the kingdom of the Son, and we will settle into our positions of service and of opportunity and of challenge and of great fruitful effort. In that first 1,000 years, it will go by as a day, and after that first day, after induction day, then we'll move into the kingdom of the Father.

And it's just so exciting to think about that it makes worrying about this life and this particular, and I haven't totally lost my patriotism, but I'm much more patriotic for the nation that I grew up in and that I served in the military than I am the one that's claiming the name now. At any rate, Habakkuk is in that situation, and you can only imagine how much more grievous and how much more painful it was for him because our American nation has always had its flaws and its sort of shaky underpinnings. We've never been exactly what was in our old history books of flawless founders, and there's always been kind of a story that people didn't really want to tell about greed and murder and driving people out and one thing and another.

But we look to the best in our history and use it for inspiration and for definition and for encouragement. But imagine if you were a citizen of the southern kingdom of Judah with the heritage of the Davidic line for your rulers and the representation of God on earth on the mountain where your capital city is built and to have the promises and the presence of God as your national heritage. That's something special, and to see that slip through the fingers and be lost and be unappreciated and disrespected and disregarded would be doubly tragic.

So I think we can at least empathize with Habakkuk. We have a sense of what he must have felt, he and the other faithful believers in Judah, as they looked at this rank evil that had begun to dominate and even define their nation. And he knows that God is in his heaven and that God is displeased, and so he cries out to God in chapter 1 and says, Lord, I've prayed about this and I don't see an answer forthcoming.

It looks more and more bleak. And then we saw God's answer, and then in chapter 2 Habakkuk says, Well, he so quickly grasps the elements of God's answer. And he sees this key element.

And I know that everybody says, and it's true, no argument, that Habakkuk 2.4 is the theme verse, definitional verse, quoted three times in the New Testament, the just shall live by emunah, by faithfulness. I take nothing away from that. But if I were going to pick a first runner up for the definitional verse for the book of Habakkuk, it would be chapter 1, verse 12.

This is Habakkuk's response. When God speaks, Habakkuk absolutely hears. Remember the condemnation that God gives to his people when he says, seeing they see and do not perceive, hearing they hear but they don't understand.

Habakkuk is just the opposite of that. When God speaks, he sees the point right away. When God speaks, he hears what God is saying right away, and he immediately plugs it into everything else that he knows.

And in verse 12 he says, Are you not from everlasting? And that olam idea there is the key, in

my opinion. It is the key to the book of Habakkuk. God is playing the long game.

It's strategy, not just tactics. It's a war, not just a battle. It is a pattern of things, not just one sample, one element, one circumstance.

This isn't one nation at one time, at one point in its history. Habakkuk, from God's answer, immediately is lifted up to his viewpoint in the tower. He's on a higher plane.

I was discussing with someone just yesterday the difference between PLAIN and PLANE, and they thought that the Higher Ground song was a higher plane, PLAIN, and I was explaining that no, it's PLANE, it's a higher plane. The great planes, there's more than one plane, that's why it's plural. They don't say the great plane, it's the great planes.

There's several of them, right? It's a collection of planes. Well, one might be slightly higher than the other, but that's not what we're talking about. It's a higher plane.

It's a whole different plane, P-L-A-N-E, of existence. A higher plane than I have found. I'm on higher ground.

And what's the advantage of the High Ground? You can see what's going on spread out before you. You get the God view. You get the divine viewpoint from up there.

And you can see further. You can see what's behind, and you can see what's in front. This I would submit.

This I would suggest. This I would encourage you to consider. When Habakkuk says, Are you not from everlasting? Oh, Lord, my God, my Holy One.

I am not from everlasting, but my God, my Holy One, is. And because I can put that possessive pronoun on him, I have access. I have privileges because of my relationship with him.

Habakkuk just distills this thought into this beautiful phrase. Are you not from everlasting? Oh, Lord, my God, my Holy One. And this is really the classic rhetorical question.

He's not asking, Are you? Are you sure? I'm kind of wondering. He's really sort of asking himself, Shouldn't I have remembered that God is from everlasting and that I have a relationship with him? I claim him as my God. He's not Molech.

He's not Ashtar. He's not Baal. He's not one of these flimsy, flea-bitten Canaanite gods that they displaced when they came into the land.

He is the Creator God, the everlasting, above-and-beyond-time God. The reason that's important is, moving on now to chapter 3, remember I said that this great central chapter 2 sits on these two bedrock pillars, the question and answer in chapter 1, and then there is a two-part psalm of praise in chapter 3. He asks the question and gets the answer. He reflects on it and interprets his time in chapter 2. That's the application, that's the bedrock on which he will now

build the tower that he's going to climb up and sit in to watch his present time.

Chapter 3 is his psalm of appreciation and thanksgiving for everything that happened in chapter 1 and chapter 2. And it is just explosive to me. When you look at it, I was looking at it in Hebrew, and that's why I brought my Hebrew-English Tanakh. Sadly, the Hebrew and English together is microscopically small, so to read this, I have to have these Angel Moroni golden glasses to be able to see it.

But it's just so great to see it right side by side here. I like it better than the computer. It's just an amazing thing.

So I have it marked here in Habakkuk chapter 3 because I just want to point out some of the words. And look, you don't have to be a Hebrew scholar, I'm not going to parse, and I'm not going to go to a lot of concordance in word studies. I just want to point out some of the words.

These are words you will recognize. You know these words. But it really makes a point.

We'll start out by reading this in English. Follow along in your New King James and notice the beauty of the Jewish Publication Society translation as it amplifies and illuminates what you have in the New King James. I really like the way this came out.

I don't often prefer the JPS, but I do here because this is poetry. This is lyrical, majestic, lofty, inspired appreciation. And they've really kind of captured that in this.

So follow along in your English as I read the JPS here. Chapter 3 of Habakkuk. A prayer of the prophet Habakkuk in the mode of shigionoth.

Shigionoth. Now this, they don't know exactly what this is. Is it a musical instrument? Is it a musical chord? Is it a sort of like silah? Is it an instruction? What we do know is that it's a feminine plural.

The oath tells you that, shigionoth. And shigion may have been a stringed instrument. What it tells us for sure is this is in a musical setting.

It's a psalm, which is a song, and this is music. You could imagine that they might have put this, you know, they put poetic words. That's where you get your hymnal.

Most of the lyrics of your hymns started out as poems and someone set them to tunes, and they married up. That's why the old hymnals would put the actual meter. They would say 6-5-5-6 or 6-4-4-3, 6-4-4-3, giving you the metrical length of the lines.

And then people would remember tunes that had that length of lines so that they could, and people would sing all different words to all different tunes. And so shigionoth may even have been something of a metrical hint on what tunes would be suitable to put this to. But what it does tell you is one of the most permanent ways to remember a thing is to have it set to music.

I, like you, can probably quote more popular and rock song lyrics than I can verses of Scripture. And I'm ashamed of that fact, but it's true. And the reason it's true is those words are set to music.

I probably know the words to 25 or 30 Eagle songs, 25 or 30 Beatles songs. I mean all the verses, all the choruses, the whole thing. Probably 30, 40, 50 Paul Simon songs.

And when you think about it, why do those stick in our mind? They are accompanied with music. So this, by being on shigionoth, here's the point. Remember it.

This is to be memorized, to be remembered. So this is a prayer of the prophet Habakkuk. That's the second thing we learn is it is addressed to God.

We don't pray to trees. We don't pray to each other. We pray to God.

So this is a prayer of Habakkuk. This is something that was composed, dedicated to and addressed to God and something to be remembered, something that the people of God should enter into and share with Habakkuk. So here we go.

O Lord, I have learned of your renown. I am awed, O Lord, by your deeds. Renew them in these years.

O make them known in these years. Though angry, may you remember compassion. God is coming from Taman, the Holy One coming from Mount Paran, Sila.

Taman, by the way, that's Sinai. That Taman, Paran, that's harking back to Sinai. His majesty covers the skies.

His splendor fills the earth. It is a brilliant light which gives off rays on every side and therein His glory is enveloped. Pestilence marches before Him and plague comes forth at His heels or fever.

If you see the burning idea there. When He stands, He makes the earth shake. When He glances, He makes nations tremble.

The age-old mountains are shattered. The primeval hills sink low. His are the ancient routes, the ancient ways, the ancient roads.

His are the ancient routes. As a scene of havoc, I behold the tents of Kushan. Shaken are the pavilions of the land of Midian.

Well, that's enough to get started. That's the first seven verses. Gracious sakes, that's small.

So, what's going on here? Pop quiz. What do I think, in my humble opinion, is the key verse in Habakkuk? 112, which says what? 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. Now, appointed and marked means it hasn't happened yet, right? So, in this verse, hear me now. This is the key that unlocks the door to a room full of treasure.

Look at verse 12. Are you not from everlasting? Past, present, or future? Past. From everlasting.

You were here, that's the alpha. That's eternity past, right? O Lord, my God, my Holy One. Past, present, or future? Present.

We shall not die. You've appointed them for judgment and marked them for correction, but not us. Past, present, or future? Future.

So, what do you get in verse 12? The past, alpha. The present. My God, my Holy One.

The future. I will live. They are appointed for judgment.

It's the sweep of history. It's the long view. It's Habakkuk in his tower, right? So, now, when you go to chapter 3, what do you see? I'm going to switch over to my New King James here.

Prayer of Habakkuk, the prophet, on Shegionoth. Remember this. Think about it.

O Lord, obviously it's a prayer. Good way to start. I have heard Your speech.

It's not speech. Well, it is, but it isn't. I have heard what has been spoken of You.

I have heard the record. I have been taught. How did teaching happen back then? They didn't carry around Bibles.

They didn't have computers. They didn't have phones. How did they get the Word of God? It was rehearsed.

It was spoken. He's saying, Shegionoth. Remember this, because people who remembered it before have communicated it to me.

I am communicating to you. Things old and new. A teacher in Israel, a good one, will bring out of his storehouse things old and new.

Habakkuk is taking what he already knows, mixing it with what God has revealed to him, and he's passing it on, speaking the truth in love to his fellow faithful, emunah, southern kingdom citizens. He says, O Lord, I have heard of Your mighty deeds in the past. That's what this speech is.

I'm thinking about that. I'm in the moment. I'm in the present.

We've got this catastrophic situation going on. We've got evil and rot within, and now You tell me there's judgment coming from without, everything looks bleak and dark. However, verse 12, I'm going to live.

I am not one of those that has been marked for judgment. Remember the marking angel that we studied? If you're going to get marked, get marked right. Get marked for preservation.

Those who sigh and cry, as Habakkuk does over Jerusalem and over the southern kingdom, they're the ones who are marked. Same thing here. O Lord, I have heard Your speech and was afraid.

The JPS put it, O Lord, I have learned of Your renown, and that's a beautiful interpretive translation of this. I have heard of Your renown. I know Your name, the history of Your deeds.

Looking at the past. O Lord, revive Your work in the midst of the years, or as it says here, I am awed, O Lord, by Your deeds. Renew them in these years.

Make them known in these years. I know what You have done in the past. I know who You are, and I know You can and do and will accomplish those same acts of oversight, of power, of preservation and judgment in the present.

What I have heard of Your deeds in the past, I observe, interpret and apply in my present day. Is Habakkuk not an incredible example of a mature believer? What I have heard, what I know from the past, O Lord, I am watching for You to do that in the present day. I am going to interpret what I see in that light.

That's what he's saying here. So then he goes on and he says, in wrath, remember mercy. Though angry, may you remember compassion.

And the word here for compassion or mercy is descriptive of those who own the Lord God as their Savior and Lord, those who claim Him as my God, my Holy One. In wrath, those marked for judgment, remember, and it's not like he has to remind the Lord of his own mercy, but this is what you pray, you pray what you know. And he is praying and he says, O Lord, I understand the principle that even as you judge and even as you move forward with the resolution of evil, you have compassion, you are merciful.

He will never suffer the righteous to be moved. In wrath, may you remember compassion. God is coming from Taman, the Holy One from Mount Paran.

What's He doing here? He's invoking, He's remembering this renown in the past, one of the mightiest, most profound and memorable demonstrations of the presence and power of God in history, in the history of Israel was His descent on Mount Sinai in cloud and smoke and thunder and lightning, earthquake. People ran away from the mountain, they were so afraid. Remember that? He is practicing what He preaches here.

When He says, remember what God has done in the past, remember His renown, He says, I remember, I know what I have been told about the day when you were at Sinai, when you were at Mount Paran and Taman. These are poetic references to that. And why would it be poetic? Is it just for varieties, is it just for style points? Why would He do it in a poetic fashion? This is, it's

not exactly, you know what onomatopoeic is, right? Onomatopoeia, where a word sounds like, when you say hiss, it sounds like what a hiss sounds like.

The word sounds like the thing it describes. Well, if you are going to talk in grand terms about the spiritual effect of physical things, that's poetry. You don't use mundane, common expression.

You use elevated expression, you use artistic, the highest elevated language you can think of, because you're talking about high and elevated truths that go beyond the material. And so even in its form, the poetry here is designed to allude to and to reinforce the notion that there's more going on here than a physical earthquake in the region of Mount Sinai. Reporters on the scene, Bob, you can see behind me, as Bob turns the camera on Mount Sinai, you can see rocks rolling down and notice the cloud and the... No, it's more than a physical manifestation.

It's the presence of the Almighty God who is from everlasting. So that's what's going on here. That's why He says Taman and Mount Paran, instead of just saying, well, you know, back there at Sinai, elevated.

He's lifting us up into His tower to look at the broad sweep. God came from Taman, the Holy One from Mount Paran. Verse 12, chapter 1, My Holy One.

The same One that I can claim as my God is the One that descended with all of those physical manifestations and terrifying grandeur at Sinai. He's the same God. We sometimes forget that when we say our Father and we pray, Father in Heaven, we thank you, we are talking to the God that created the world.

We're talking to the God that destroyed civilization with the flood. We're talking to the God that parted the Red Sea and took the top off Mount Carmel. It ought to be something of a daunting and awe-inspiring experience to boldly go before the throne of grace to find help in time of need, as we're encouraged to do, because we have been adopted by this God.

It's just the most profound thing. But when He says the Holy One came from Mount Paran, you can't help but think back to verse 12. He's the Holy One, but He's my Holy One.

His glory covered the heavens and the earth was full of His praise. The JPS says His majesty covers the skies, His splendor fills the earth. It is a brilliant light which gives off rays on every side.

Now, we're going further back. God is from everlasting. And when you start talking about the earth and the heavens, He says, In the beginning, God created that sky.

In the beginning, He created that earth. And what's the very first command He issued? Let there be light. In this vantage point from this strong tower of faith and faithfulness, Habakkuk sees to and through Mount Sinai, all the way back to Genesis chapter 1. And he says, He is the God of the heavens.

He is the God that sat in the Isaiah 14, Ezekiel 28 heavens, surrounded by the seraphim and the burning ones, with Lucifer walking in the midst of the coals of fire. O shining one, son of darkness. Remember that? He's looking all the way back.

He looks through the smoke of Mount Sinai to the chaos of Genesis 1-2, back to the heavens before the earth was even founded. That's what poetic language will do for you. And He says, And what's the bottom line here? What is the application? What is He doing? He is setting His current today experience in the context of God's plan, in the context of God's history.

Why should I worry? Why should I fret? My Holy One from everlasting, from Genesis 1, from Exodus 18 and 19 and 20, Mount Sinai, the Ten Commandments, the God who put David on His throne, the God who made all of those promises for salvation, My Holy One is consistent. He is always holy. He is always dominant.

He is always in control. And so He reflects that here. His glory covered the heavens, the earth full of His praise, brightness like the light rays flashing from His hand, and there His power was hidden.

We have this in a hymn lyric. "'Tis only the splendor of light hideth Thee." God, the light is so blinding, no man has seen God at any time. Our capacities are too limited.

Before Him went pestilence, and fever followed at His feet. In front of Him there is destruction, and behind Him is destruction. Now, that seems odd in this context, doesn't it? We're talking about the creative God and the all-powerful God, and the God of Sinai, and the God of deliverance.

Then He says there's pestilence in front of Him and plague behind Him. Why that? Well, what is it that gets plagued? What is it that is the target of pestilence? Evil, unrighteousness, faithlessness, those who are marked out for judgment and designated, appointed for destruction. And when God moves, just the glory of His presence is going to wreak that havoc.

He stood and measured the earth, He looked and startled the nations, and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills were bowed. This is really fascinating in Hebrew, and I told you there's some words here you'll recognize. The word for everlasting and perpetual is exactly the same.

It's the same word in two successive lines. It's olam. It's olam, laolam.

Unto the ages, unto everlasting. It's the unto everlasting hills, it's the everlasting mountains, His ways are everlasting. It's olam, olam, olam.

It's three-dimensional infinitude, and nothing that is unholy, nothing that is unsanctified, nothing that is defiled is going to stand. That destruction is going to precede Him, and the wake of destruction is going to follow Him. And what does that mean? We talked about this, I can't remember now, several years ago, but it occurs to me that I've made this same point.

The prediction of what God is going to do, such as the great white throne judgment, the judgment seat of Christ, that's what goes before Him. When we look at God, He is everlasting and eternal. He's at the beginning, He's at the end, He's everywhere, He's outside of time.

But when we look at Him, in front of Him is pestilence, and behind Him, in our terms, from anthropopathic point of view, we see the record of God's judgment in the past. Where He has passed, we see the plague. And we know that in front of Him, where He goes, when you get to those future judgments, there's going to be the same kind of episode that you have in the past.

Consistency, predictability, it's not a surprise, there's not going to be people at the judgments going, well, Lord, I just totally didn't see that coming. He has established this as a pattern. You have no excuse for not knowing what's coming, because what's in front of Him is exactly what's behind Him when it comes to judgment.

If you want to know what's in front of Him, just look behind Him. If you want to know what's coming at the Great White Throne, look at the flood, look at Sodom and Gomorrah, look at the various judgments that are recorded in Scripture, before and behind. And things that people will appeal to for strength, for preservation, they think, well, you know, nothing can move a mountain.

Well, guess what? Faith will move a mountain, and God can move a mountain, and the everlasting hills shake and melt at God's approach. People can't think of anything more secure, more defensible, more permanent, more safe and secure than a mountain. What does Habakkuk say? Things are going to melt like water at the presence of the Lord.

Don't think that you can find a cleft of the rock and be delivered by rocks. Rocks melt in the presence of God. Anything human beings consider permanent, secure, safe, are as nothing when it comes to the presence of God.

The perpetual hills are laid low. People may say, well, that thing's been there forever. Well, it's not going to be there after God passes by.

Then he says, I saw the tents of Kushan in affliction. The curtains in the land of Midian trembled. The tents in Midian trembled.

Kush and Midian, what are these references to? Where did Moses come from? Where was the burning bush? Where is Mount Sinai? What land is Paran and Teman in? The land of Midian. This is another archetypal reference back to that. Habakkuk is sitting in the southern kingdom of Judah in circa 650 B.C. But what is the source of his security and his confidence and his perspective? He's looking back 800 years.

He's looking back to creation week in the days of God. And that's his confidence because he knows that what God has done in the past, both by way of preservation and salvation and by way of judgment, will hold in the present and will hold in the future. All of this, the big idea here, is the sweep, the long view.

We are so myopic. We get so caught up in the moment. What am I going to do? I've got a problem.

I can't see a solution. Bad things are going to happen to me tomorrow. We have a God who is a mighty fortress, a bulwark never failing.

By the way, you know what Martin Luther, who wrote the lyrics to that song in German, you know what his theme verse was? The bellwether of the Protestant Reformation. Martin Luther, you know what his theme verse was? Habakkuk 2.4 The just will live by his faithfulness. Paul quotes it twice at least.

So that's the idea here. When you're tempted to be shaken, when you're knocked off your pins, when you're thrown for a loop, when things look dismal and dark and hopeless, this is the tower to which we resort. And we get up and we stop and reflect on the eternity of God, the measured progress, the inevitable righteousness and justice that will set everything right in God's time.

God is patient. He takes the long view. He plays the long game.

And when we adjust to that, when we reconcile ourselves to that, when we enter into the security and the peacefulness of that view, current circumstances, dismal though they may be, don't shake us. We are not in the earthquake. We are not in the melting hills.

We're not relying on what human beings who have no relationship with God have to try to resort to. Oh Lord, were you displeased, verse eight, with the rivers? Was your anger against the rivers? Was your wrath against the sea that you rode on your horses, your chariots of salvation? And that's exactly the word there. You know, when it says chariots of salvation, these are chariots of Yeshua, Yeshua's chariot.

Your bow was made quite ready. The oaths were sworn over your arrows. This is so interesting.

I'm going to translate a little bit of this next time. But what you see in here is references forward now. Look down at verse 12.

You marched through the land in indignation. You trampled the nations in anger. You went forth for the Yeshua of your people, the Yahshua of your people.

This is the word group from which Jesus' name comes from. You went forth. Actually, this is so poetic, there's several different ways to translate it.

Let me read you the, and this is where we're going to close here, verses 12 and 13. Just a quick preview of coming attractions. Chapter three, verse 12.

Let me read you the JPS rendition of this. You tread the earth in rage. You trample nations in fury.

You have come forth to deliver your people, to deliver your anointed. And two times there, you have this Yeshua idea. And to deliver your, deliver can either mean to rescue and deliver, but it can also mean to, like the delivery man, like UPS or FedEx, to present, to bring forward, to bring out, to show forth.

You know, deliverance has the idea of bringing out of a bad situation. You're delivered out of bondage, delivered out of sin, delivered out of your bad circumstance. Well, you can deliver the deliverer.

You can deliver the Mashiach, the anointed there, that's the Messiah. And this is Habakkuk anticipating and looking forward. Regardless of how you take these words, he's looking forward.

They're not delivered. He's in the midst of a horrible situation. And he knows Judah is on a downward spiral and headed for judgment, the nation as a whole and the people in it.

But as he has looked to the one side, to the past, and seen everything that God has done, now he's turning and looking to the future. And he says, in the same way that God has always delivered his righteous ones, Noah in the ark, Joseph and his family, the Israelites out of Egypt, those that will trust him, those that are faithful and establish themselves on his word have always been delivered. So as he turns around and looks at his present and then looks to the future, he sees at a distance the Mashiach.

He sees at a distance the coming deliverer, the Yeshua that will Yeshua, the people. And it's the warp and the woof of the plan of God. This is where our strength and our comfort and our security and our peace comes from.

And Habakkuk is straining the limits of Hebrew in the same way that Paul will strain the limits of Greek to try to get across this fantastic truth to us. It's a terrific psalm. It comes in two parts and we've looked at most of the first part tonight.

We'll look at the rest of the first part and the second part of chapter 3 next time. Let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you that we, without any qualification of our own, by virtue of claiming you as our God and as our eternal Father, can have confidence and can have peace and stability recognizing that we are held in your hands and no one can pluck us out.

We have a bright future. We are not of those who fall back unto perdition but those who, by faith and patience, inherit the promises. Such wonderful promises you have given us through the Lord Jesus Christ.

We pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will make these things real in our souls. Enable us to see this wonderful viewpoint that is presented to us by the prophet Habakkuk so that we can shine as lights and call others to share in the view of your glory, the fulfillment of your plan and purpose ultimately expressed in the Lord Jesus himself. We pray it in Jesus' name.

Amen.