



Holy Trinity
Combe Down



St Andrew's
Community Church

Homegroup Material Sunday 15th October, Habakkuk 1:1–17

(In the sermon Tim addressed the ongoing and distressing conflict in Israel and Gaza. This seemed right on that occasion, but it is unlikely to be a fruitful exercise with your small group to exchange views on this complex situation. You might like to focus on Habakkuk and more direct application to your own lives.)

Habakkuk is probably writing around 605–608BC. King Jehoiakim (son of the godly King Josiah, who re-discovered the Book of the Law) is on the throne. Unfortunately, he did not follow in his father's footsteps regarding the law and upholding righteousness in Israel.

Pray

1. If you feel able to, share a time (whether in the past or current) when you have felt as though God doesn't care or is inactive. How did you deal with that feeling? What helped/what was a hindrance?

Read the passage.

2. How many complaints does Habakkuk have in verses 2–4? [the precise number will vary according to how you count them!]. How would you summarise his complaint to God in these opening verses?
3. The complaint largely falls into two parts: the situation in Israel and God's inaction/silence. Consider any similarities (and differences) between Habakkuk's situation and the ones you shared earlier.
4. God's response (vv.5–11) certainly shocked Habakkuk (cf. v.12–17) and may shock us. How does 'raising up the Babylonians, that ruthless and impetuous people' answer Habakkuk's complaint?
5. V.12a is angry and sarcastic from Habakkuk. How does his response encourage you?
6. Tim Keller (former pastor/author in NYC) describes Habakkuk's response here as 'unconditionally faithful wrestling' (he brings questions, confusion and anger to God, but he will not walk away from faith in God). Explore together what that might look

like in your own lives (perhaps with reference to the situations shared at the beginning). How does the gracious character of God free us to be honest with Him?

7. Tim suggested Habakkuk was learning at least 3 lessons from God here:
 - i. God's time frame is not the same as ours
 - ii. God's way of salvation is not one we'd invent
 - iii. We don't always know what God is doing

Why are these important lessons for our own maturity?

8. In *Acts 13:41* the apostle Paul applies *Hab.1:5* to the death of Jesus. Through the violent and unjust death of Jesus, dealt out by Roman soldiers, salvation finally came to Israel and the world. How does Jesus' death 'solve' Habakkuk's complaints and ours?

Prayer:

It will be important to allow time to share and pray further, perhaps particularly about some of those unresolved 'complaints' or difficult unanswered prayers which were shared earlier. Wrestle with God together in prayer.

Tim Lewis