

11-14-2022

Gratitude that Strengthens Faith

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Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation. (Habakkuk 3:17–18)

When life seems to be falling apart, gratitude can strengthen our faith. It is not always easy to be grateful. Sometimes it can be one of the most challenging things to do, even for Christians, especially when things are going wrong and we do not understand why they are happening. However, could it be that is precisely when gratitude is so important? When our faith is being tested, thanksgiving to God can be the lifeline we need to help us to persevere. Life is tough enough without adding extra stressors, but sometimes it feels like everything is going wrong at once. In these moments, we may feel abandoned by our friends and even by God. It would be easy to give up, and it's possible that the thought of being abandoned by God may have crossed Habakkuk's mind.

In the verses above, the prophet painfully shares six different things that are going wrong, and they are happening all at once. Everything that could go wrong is going wrong. What do you do when the enemy attacks you all at once? What do you do when it is not only your finances that are being impacted but also your family and your friends? What do you do when it feels like all of your hopes and dreams are being dashed?

The prophet's response is one of the most powerful statements of faith in the Bible. In the midst of all his troubles, he says, "Yet, I will rejoice in the Lord." He reminds us that, even amid difficulty, we can choose to rejoice in God. This does not mean that we rejoice *for* the difficulty, but we can choose to rejoice in God despite the devastation around us. Such a declaration is not easy, but Habakkuk recognizes that he has a choice to make, he can either focus on his circumstances and what is going wrong, or he can look to God - his Salvation.

So what is the basis of Habakkuk's faith? The basis of his faith is in God Himself, as revealed in His covenantal promises. It is through the covenant that God not only predicted the invasion and devastation of Jerusalem, but the covenant also gives assurance of God's people being restored; the covenant reminds Habakkuk of the faithfulness of God. Habakkuk trusted that God was good, even when everything else was falling apart.

Although the Babylonians would take God's people captive, He did not abandon his people. Jerusalem would ultimately be restored as a sign that God keeps His promises. This promise was fulfilled when the Medes and the Persians conquered Babylon and the new rulers allowed the Israelites to return to their home and rebuild the temple.

Despite life's difficulties, God does not abandon his people. Even in the darkest of moments, God is there, providing strength and hope. When everything seems to be going wrong, we can trust that God is still in control. He has a plan for us, and he will never abandon us; He remains faithful to His covenant. Today, we can choose to take joy in the God of our salvation!

Reflect

- What is your first reaction to a difficult situation?

- How is it possible to "rejoice in the God of our Salvation" through troubling times?
- In what ways has God shown you He is trustworthy through the hardships you've experienced?

Prayer and Resources

- Follow **@ministryandmissions** on Instagram for updates on events and programs as well as encouraging messages and [check out our website](#) for many new resources.
- **Talk** with Chaplain [Anna Bennett](#) or [Joseph Khabbaz](#) if you need someone to pray with or have a desire to grow spiritually.