

Why?

Habakkuk

What is it about astronauts that would cause them to condition themselves to take the risk of strapping themselves to 1,585,379 pounds of explosives so they can spend 6 months in cold space in a confined piece of metal with a person who speaks another language?

Could it be possible that they see planet earth from a totally different perspective than in their previous 30-40 years as residents?

Sometime the closer we come “down to earth,” the more overwhelming it becomes to live on this dusty, grim sphere occupied with humanity. As one theologian wrote, the “increased turmoil, rising terrorism, mounting tragedies, unprecedented trauma, increasing pollution, deepening trials, and unparalleled tensions cast dark shadows over earthlings. The world looks more and more like some ominous black sphere with a very short fuse, a time bomb sizzling to explode.” And when you think about it, he has just described what is descript not just of our planet but of the individual lives that inhabit it. The astronauts perspective of our world is totally different. Perhaps he has answered for himself the question asked by Southwest Airlines, “Ya’ Wanna’ get away?”...a question most, if not all, of us have considered or are presently considering.

Life is seldom as it appears or as we had hoped. It is when we get close to life itself that we begin to see things, experience and feel things that are missed from a distance. It’s then that we begin to ask questions about “what went wrong.” Why did God allow this to happen? Why is my loved one suffering or dying? Why did I lose my job? Why did I marry you? Why didn’t God stop my mate’s unfaithfulness? Why did my parents get divorced? Why don’t people care about me? We each could add a hundred more “whys” to a never-ending list, couldn’t we.

None of these questions are new. And there will always be those who will choose to escape *to a world* of their own to avoid the why’s in life. But long before any of us existed, there was a prophet who very candidly asked God those same questions as he looked at the world up close and wondered if He was simply uninterested or had no control over it.

The answers God gave are recorded by that same prophet named Habakkuk. There is perhaps no other writer who was more outspoken and upfront with God regarding those mysterious and personal questions than was Habakkuk. The answers God gave him are penetrating and life changing as we will learn from this prophet with a different name but a distinct message.

Life Response

1. This week MEMORIZE and MEDITATE on Habakkuk 2:4 “*Behold, as for the proud one, his soul is not right within him; but the righteous will live by his faith*”
 - (a) Summarize this verse as it relates to your own life and how you face adversity.
 - (b) Paraphrase this verse in such a way that a young child could understand.
2. What reference point do you have to trust God based upon what you know to be true of His character and what you have seen Him do in the past? (If you don’t have a good reference point, say so and let us help.) See Hab. 3:1-2.
3. How would you describe your confidence to stand firmly in your faith and not back down in your circumstances? (Hab. 1:12; Luke 9:62; Heb. 10:35-39)

4. What role does God's revelation—Scripture—have in enabling you to stand firm in the midst of what God is doing through your circumstances?
5. How do you relate your present life to Hab. 1:5? (See Eph. 3:14-21)
6. Make Hab. 3:17-19 your prayer this week.

"The ever-present 'Why?' is best answered by the everlasting 'Who!' Though the outlook may elicit terror, the uplook elicits trust." - Dr. J. Ronald Blue

What happens when our world begins to fall apart?

BACKGROUND

Habakkuk - "to embrace"

- contemporary of Jeremiah

Prophets normally speak to God's people on behalf of God.

Habakkuk speaks with God on behalf of his people.

It's OK to ask "Why?"

But we must trust God for answers we may not understand.

3 Chapters answers 3 Questions

Ch. 1 Does God know or even care about what is going on in my conflicted world?

Ch. 2 What is my basis for confidence/security/ stability as I face my conflicted world?

Ch. 3 How do I position myself to rejoice or exult in the midst of my conflicted world?

Progression from the pits to praise
 Why? to Who!
 Present to Eternal

Chapter 1 Does God know or even care about what is going on in my conflicted world?

1:1-4 Strife's reality

1:5-11 Sovereign rule

1:12-17 Steadfast reference

Habakkuk 3:17-19

Through the fig tree should not blossom, and there be no fruit on the vines, though the yield of the olive should fail, and the fields produce no food, though the flock should be cut off from the fold, and there be no cattle in the stalls,

Yet I will exult in the Lord,
 I will rejoice in the God of my salvation.

The Lord God is my strength, and He has made my feet like hinds' feet, and makes me walk on my high places.