

## The Position of Strength

### Part II

#### Habakkuk 3

It was a rather diverse but eclectic gathering of genuine yet opinionated businessmen whose discussion took a distinct turn to harsh reality. We had been discussing what it meant to have an unconditional faith in God and His provision when it happened. One of the men who had been quietly listening, politely interrupted with, “Gentlemen, I hear what we’re saying, but I need to share something that is deeply troubling me. Because of the present economy, I’ve just had to lay off 18 people from my organization, and frankly I do not see things getting any better. As a matter of fact, I can only see it getting much worse.” He went on to say what no one really wanted to hear. He related the same sentiments of a number of business leaders who were facing the same harsh reality. His next statement demanded a complete turn in the discussion that forced us to deal with the reality of what we *say* we know to be true about God, His care for us, and how we experience an authentic faith in our daily walk. He said, “I need help in learning how to apply what we’re saying to where I am right now.”

That statement opened a rich, deep, and yet difficult discussion that challenged each of us to think about God’s provision from a whole new perspective. After a few minutes of considering a number of passages in anticipation of finding the answer for our friend, it soon became evident that each of us had the same question and challenges. All pretense of denying the harsh reality was removed.

Then another member of the group (who had recently experienced a devastating loss) took us to the core of the issue when he gently but with conviction said, “If we would be honest, every one of us would have to confess that our faith in God is quite conditional. We come with our expectations, conditions, and even demands, and if God doesn’t *answer our prayer*, meet our need as we think it should be met; or if our world begins to fall apart, we begin to question and wonder; and our confidence in God is shaken whether we admit it or not.”

The discussion became even more consuming and took us well past the time to end.

What if the job market never changed? What if, . . . after prayer and fasting, our loved one still died? What if the dream house *God provided* was taken in foreclosure . . . or burned? What if our mate chose to leave saying, “God has something better for me”? What if we took early retirement to volunteer in serving the Lord and our retirement fund was embezzled? What if you were stricken with a stroke, incapacitated for the rest of your life? How would it affect your faith? Could you, would you “exult,” . . . “rejoice” in the Lord . . . because God is your strength? Sobering thought, isn’t it?

#### **Life Response**

1. This week MEMORIZE and MEDITATE on Habakkuk 3:18-19, “*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.*”
  - (a) What are the “yets” in your life that serve as a diversion and quench your ability to “exult” and “rejoice” in “the God of my salvation”?
  - (b) Is it wrong to “exult” and rejoice” even when you don’t feel it’s honest or when you don’t understand the circumstances? See Rom. 10:8-11; Eph. 5:18-20; Rom. 14:22-23.

2. Begin a list of reasons (based upon Scripture) that would enable you to grow in your confidence to say “the Lord God is my strength.”

Ex: Hab. 3:3-7 - God’s faithfulness in the past and promise for the future.

Hab. 2:4	1 Cor. 1:4-9	Rom. 8:31-39	Jer. 17:5-10
Jer. 29:11-13	Eph. 1:3-6; 3:14-21	Rom. 12:1-2	Ps. 16
1Thess. 5:24	Phil. 4:11-13; 19	Ps. 23	Isa. 55:6-13
2 Tim. 2:10-13	Luke 6:20-26	Ps. 73	2Tim 1:7; 12-14

3. In Habakkuk 3:15 Habakkuk said, “I must wait quietly for the day of distress, . . .” What is the significance of the word “wait”? For how long? What enables one to wait? Think about what we can miss when we choose not to wait and rely upon the “God of my strength.” See Hab. 3:19b.
4. What is the most important thing you can do when you see a member of the “family” overwhelmed in the midst of trials, testing, temptation, and tribulation? See Heb. 12:12-13; 1 Thess. 5:11-13.

*... for we cannot from the heart seek pardon, unless we first be made humble. When a sinner is not displeased with himself, and confesses not his guilt, he is not deserving of mercy.”* - John Calvin

### **What Happens When Our World Begins to Fall Apart?**

#### **The Character of a Position of Strength**

Vitally connected to God and those entrusted to him.

#### **The Cause of the Problem**

At the core is sin.

“The righteous shall live by faith”

“That which is not of faith is sin”

#### **The Course of God’s Provision of Strength**

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

vs. 5 Not only does He know and care, but “look out”! “I am doing something in your days you would not believe if you were told.”

- Eph. 3:14-21

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

vs. 2/4 God’s Word / My personal faith

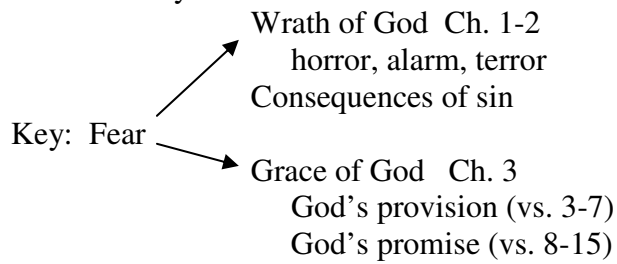
Chapter 3 How do I position myself to rejoice or exult in the midst of my conflicted world?

#### **The Position of Strength**

Personal Conviction:

A continual attitude/position of prayer . . . worship . . . connectedness

Personal humility:



Personal Responsibility:

Premeditated

vs. 17 The harsh reality.

It's going to get worse before it gets better. Matt 24:4-14

The most pivotal time of our life.

vs. 18 The choice

“I will”

“Exult in the Lord”

“Rejoice in the God of my salvation”

Rom. 10:8-10

vs. 19 The confidence

“The Lord my God is my strength” Ps. 18; 16; 73 Jer. 17-5-9

\* “like hinds’ feet”

\* “walk on MY high places”