

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, October 3, 2004

Passage: Habakkuk 1:12-17

Verses to Memorize: Psalm 62:6

Day 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

1. Read Habakkuk 1. What change occurs beginning in verse 12; who is speaking in verses 12-17?
2. What is Habakkuk responding to? What had God revealed in verses 5-11?
3. How does that information make Habakkuk feel? Is he pleased with God's plan? Why or why not?
4. Put yourself in Habakkuk's shoes. Do you ever find yourself questioning the wisdom and plan of God? Recall a time when you could not make sense of what God was doing in your life. How did you respond to God in the midst of those circumstances?
5. When we approach God to question Him, what must we be prepared for (consider Job 38-39; 40:6-9)? Taking our cues from Job, how might we respond to God's answers to our questioning (consider Job 40:3-5; 42:1-6)?

Day 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

1. Focus on Habakkuk 1:12a. What attributes of God does Habakkuk appeal to in this verse? What does it mean that God is "from everlasting?"
2. Theologians refer to this as the *eternality* of God. Take some time to investigate what some of the biblical writers have to say about this characteristic of God (consider Psalm 90:1, 2; 93:2). Is this characteristic unique to God, or can man possess it as well (consider 1 Timothy 6:15, 16)?
3. Why does Habakkuk find it necessary to remind himself of God's eternality? What does this attribute imply about God's wisdom and His ability to care for His people? Do you think that Habakkuk might possibly have begun to question such things in light of what God had revealed to him in verses 5-11? Explain.
4. Habakkuk also refers to God by His covenant name, Yahweh (LORD). Why does Habakkuk need to remind himself of God's covenant with His people? What had God promised His people through Moses (consider Deuteronomy 31:6; Joshua 1:5)?
5. What can we learn from Habakkuk's example in times of turmoil? Why is it helpful to reflect on the character of God when our circumstances seem to make no sense? Make it your aim to study God's attributes so that you might be able to recall them in time of need.

Day 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

1. Meditate on Habakkuk 1:12b, 13. What does Habakkuk come to realize about God's plan to use the Chaldeans to judge Israel? Was God being just or unjust (compare with 1:4)?
2. Although he seems to recognize God's justice in this plan, why was this plan still so perplexing to Habakkuk? What attribute of God seemed to Habakkuk to run counter to this plan? Explain.
3. Was there something about God's plan that seemed sinful to Habakkuk? If so, what was it? Why didn't this seem to fit consistently with Habakkuk's view of God?
4. Was Habakkuk right in his estimation of God's character? Is God really holy, so much so that "[His] eyes are to pure to approve evil?" If Habakkuk was right about God's character, why was there still a disconnect with his understanding of God's plan?

5. Have you ever experienced a time when God's plan seemed to you to be unfair or even unrighteous? Explain. How are we to respond to such experiences?

Day 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

1. Meditate on Habakkuk 1:14-16. To what does Habakkuk compare the Chaldeans and the people they conquer? Some of the other prophets paint a similar picture regarding God's judgment of Israel and Egypt (see Amos 4:2 and Ezekiel 32:3).
2. What are these pictures of hooks and nets symbolic of? Who, in Habakkuk's imagery, are the 'fish' being hooked and gathered into a net?
3. What does Habakkuk reveal to us about the character of these conquering Chaldeans? Were they a righteous people? Why or why not? Who, or what, did they worship? Where did they place their hope?
4. Why does all of this seem backwards to Habakkuk? Do you find Habakkuk to be justified in his assessment of the situation – does this whole scene strike you as unfair? Why or why not?
5. How can you reconcile the holiness of God and His plan to use an unholy people to chasten His chosen ones?

DAY 5– ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

1. Meditate on Habakkuk 1:17. After considering God's holiness over against the idolatry and wickedness of the Chaldeans, what question does Habakkuk pose to God?
2. Why did he ask this question? Does it sound like a question you might ask in similar circumstances?
3. Habakkuk now seems less concerned with the wickedness he saw in Judah and more concerned with how long God was going to allow the wickedness of the Chaldeans to go unpunished. Had Habakkuk lost his perspective?
4. How had Peter similarly lost his perspective when Jesus prophesied about Peter's martyrdom (consider John 21:18-22)? How did Jesus remind Peter of what he ought to be focusing on?
5. What can Habakkuk 1:12-17 teach us about the danger of focusing on our circumstances to the neglect of focusing on what the Lord wants to accomplish in our life through our circumstances? Ask the Lord to help you maintain perspective in the midst of difficult and what seem to be unfair trials in your life.

Sunday, October 3, 2004

SERMON NOTES

Text: Habakkuk 1:12-17