

"Armor For the Soul"

Habakkuk 3:17-19

Overview



We live in an angry age. On many days it does seem that the qualification for spearheading a social movement is to be outraged about something. Being angry gets you a hearing in the public square (and legitimacy on the public stage).

But anger has its limitations. It can motivate and empower for a time – but it also exacts a heavy price. Eventually the inner energy anger calls for simply ends up being exhausting and leading to emptiness.

The Christian faith does offer an alternative. While there is a place for anger at times, God's Word encourages another approach – one that inspires and infuses life – one that is characterized by gratitude and thankfulness.

Getting Started

Let Us Give Thanks!!



1. Name one thing you are especially thankful for today. Why is that particular thing significant to you at this moment in time?
 2. What do you wish people in general were more thankful for? What does our society need to stop taking for granted? Explain your answer.
 3. Does your family have any Thanksgiving holiday traditions? Share what they are (and how they got started (if you can remember)).
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The Text



¹⁷ Though the fig tree does not bud
and there are no grapes on the vines,
though the olive crop fails
and the fields produce no food,
though there are no sheep in the pen
and no cattle in the stalls,
¹⁸ yet I will rejoice in the LORD,
I will be joyful in God my Savior.
¹⁹ The Sovereign LORD is my strength;
he makes my feet like the feet of a deer,
he enables me to tread on the heights.

Habakkuk 3:17-19 (NIV)

The Video (optional) “Armor For the Soul” – Habakkuk 3:17-19 – by Dennis Bunio, Oct. 10/21
(view at www.immanuelonline.ca).



NOTES: _____

Understanding



1. What are Habakkuk’s reasons for writing (i.e. what are his complaints before God)? Check out 1:1-4 for one reason and then 1:5-13 for another.
2. What is God’s response to these complaints? Review 1:5-6, 2:4, and 2:6-8.
3. Habakkuk takes some time to remind himself of God’s might and power. Read 3:1-15. What evidence of God’s incomparable might does Habakkuk call to mind?
4. With divine judgement coming, what immediate response does Habakkuk have to the thought of God’s wrath arriving (3:16)? What future does Habakkuk envision for his people (see 3:17)?
5. Despite his fears, Habakkuk makes a choice to not respond simply in terror. How does Habakkuk’s response change (see 3:18)? What do you suppose prompts this new reaction (consider 3:2, 13)?
6. In the spirit of joy and thanksgiving, what other blessing does Habakkuk anticipate (3:19) (see also Psalm 18:33-34)? What relationship does thanksgiving have to this blessing?

Applying



1. Would you describe yourself as a “thankful” person? How did you develop that perspective? Who, if anyone, modeled a thankful spirit for you?
2. Habakkuk originally views with horror the thought that God would use an enemy nation as an instrument of God’s will. How do you reconcile a holy God utilizing an evil people to accomplish His design?
3. Have you ever looked out upon your life and seen only desolation? How did you deal with that? Where was God at that moment? How did you work your way through that (or how are you working your way through it now)?
4. What strategies or methods can be used to switch from the terror of the moment to thanksgiving (and joy and faith) in God’s salvation?
5. What role does thanksgiving play in our walk with God? How does gratitude help us live well for Christ? Consider Rom. 1:21; Col. 2:6-7, 4:2; Phil. 4:6-7; Eph. 5:4.
6. ““Nowhere in the Bible is gratitude connected explicitly with obedience as a motivation. We do not find the phrase ‘out of gratitude’ or ‘in gratitude’ for acts toward God.” What do we find instead? That when God wants to motivate us to obey him, he calls us to live by *faith*.” (Jon Bloom) Agree or disagree?
7. Can you think of any way in which a thankful spirit has energized you or given you the strength to persevere? Share that experience with your group.

Memory Verse(s)



¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray continually, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NIV)

Extra Resources



- ❖ “*Armor For the Soul*” – *Habakkuk 3:17-19* – by Dennis Bunio, Oct. 10/21 (sermon, view at www.immanuelonline.ca). Pastor Dennis describes the relationship between thanksgiving and a life lived for God’s glory.

- ❖ *“How Can We Give Thanks In All Circumstances?”* - by Jon Bloom (article at www.desiringgod.org, Nov. 13, 2013). Bloom provides an answer to a question we have likely all asked at one time or another.
- ❖ *“Giving Thanks is a Community Project”* – by Megan Hill (article at www.thegospelcoalition.org, Nov. 28, 2019). As the title suggests, this article encourages us to make thanksgiving a group enterprise.