

Use Week of:

Unit 15 • Session 4 Habakkuk the Prophet

BIBLE PASSAGE:

Habakkuk

STORY POINT:

Habakkuk learned to have faith
and trust in God.

KEY PASSAGE:

2 Chronicles 7:14

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

How did God plan to fix what sin broke?
Before He created the world, God planned
to send the Messiah to save sinners.

INTRODUCE THE STORY
(10–15 MINUTES)
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TEACH THE STORY
(25–30 MINUTES)
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APPLY THE STORY
(25–30 MINUTES)
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Additional resources are available at gospelproject.com. For free training and session-by-session help, visit MinistryGrid.com/gospelproject.

LEADER Bible Study

How much time do you spend waiting? Think about it. Waiting for a traffic light to turn green, waiting at the doctor's office, waiting at the drive-thru, waiting for a phone call, waiting for a birthday, waiting on someone else.

The fact is, we spend a lot of our time waiting. Why do we wait? We know something is coming. A major factor in waiting is faith—"the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen" (Heb. 11:1). This is precisely what the prophet Habakkuk addressed. Habakkuk was a contemporary of the prophet Jeremiah, living in Judah shortly before it was taken into captivity. He found himself in a period of waiting, first for judgment and then for revival.

All around him, people were oppressed and violence escalated. The Book of Habakkuk records the prophet's dialogue with the Lord. "How long, Lord, must I call for help?" Habakkuk asked. "Why do You tolerate wrongdoing?"

God answered. He was going to raise up the Babylonians, and they would hold captive the people of Judah.

Habakkuk prayed again. Judah deserved to be punished, but the Babylonians were even more wicked than Judah; how could God, in essence, bless them?

God answered. The Babylonian captivity would not last forever. After some time, God was going to rescue His people and punish the Babylonians.

God's people waited to be delivered from captivity, and those who are in Christ are waiting for the fulfillment of Christ's return. Until then, we live by faith. (See Heb. 10:35-38.) We can trust that God is sovereign over the future, so "though the fig tree does not bud and there is no fruit on the vines ... yet I will celebrate in the LORD; I will rejoice in the God of my salvation!" (Hab. 3:17-18).

The BIBLE Story

Habakkuk the Prophet

Habakkuk

Habakkuk (huh BAK kuk) **the prophet prayed to God.** “How long, O Lord?” he prayed. “How long will I cry to You for help and You do not hear me?” Habakkuk had told God about all the violence that was happening in Judah, but nothing seemed to change.

“Why do You let bad things happen?”

People are fighting and stealing. The bad guys always win,” **Habakkuk said.**

God was listening. He knew what was happening. **God answered, “Watch! I am doing something amazing, something you wouldn’t believe if I told you.”**

Then God told **Habakkuk what was going to happen. God was raising up enemies—the mighty Babylonians.** No one could stand in their way. Their army would be strong and fast, like hungry eagles that swoop from the sky to catch little mice in a field. **The Babylonians were going to come and make God’s people prisoners!**

Would this really happen? Habakkuk wanted the evil in Judah to stop, but the people of Babylon were evil too.

“Why do it this way, Lord?” Habakkuk asked.

God answered, “I’m going to show you what will happen. Be

patient and wait for it. If you are righteous, you will live by faith. It may seem like evil people are winning now, but they won’t win in the end.”

God knows how to deal with evil people like the Babylonians. He promised Habakkuk that the people’s captivity in Babylon wouldn’t last forever. God was going to bring His people back to their land.

Habakkuk prayed. People had forgotten about God. They didn’t care about sin. They didn’t pray. Habakkuk wanted that to change! He wanted people to wake up—to love God and hate sin.

“You have done so many amazing, powerful things. Please do it again so everyone will know You. Be merciful to us,” Habakkuk said.

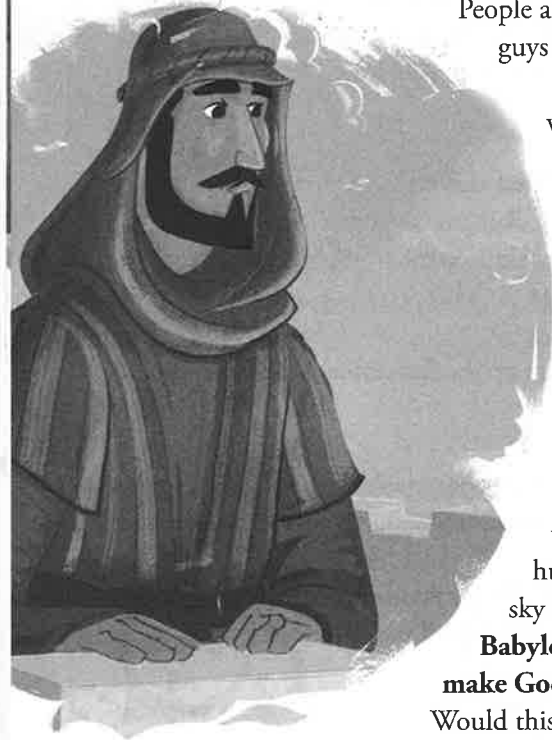
Habakkuk praised God for His power. The Babylonians were going to come, and life for the people in Judah would be very hard for a while. But Habakkuk had faith, and he would wait for the day when God would rescue His people from the Babylonians.

Finally Habakkuk said, **“Even if the trees and vines do not produce fruit, even if nothing grows in the fields, and even if there are no sheep in the pens and no cattle in the barns, I will be glad because of the Lord. I will rejoice in God who saves.”**

Christ Connection: Habakkuk lived at a time when evil seemed to be everywhere. By faith, he trusted God’s promise that God would deliver His people. Injustice, violence, and wickedness surround us today, but we can live by faith and trust that Jesus will return to make all things right.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Use dramatic dialogue:** Speak Habakkuk’s words as you look upward. Pause slightly between his dialogue and the rest of the narrative.
- **Display art:** Show the Bible story picture as you tell the Bible story.



Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. Whom did God plan to use to punish Judah? (*the Babylonians, Hab. 1:6*)
2. How will the righteous live? (*by faith, Hab. 2:4*)
3. Would Habakkuk stop praising God if things stayed hard? (*no, Hab. 3:17-18*)
4. Why do you think God punished His people's sin?
Guide kids to see that God's justice is a part of His love. He punishes sin to prevent sin from growing and destroying more lives. Help kids see that if God simply allowed sin to grow and thrive, He would be going against His very character as a loving and holy God.
5. When you think about God's plan to punish Jesus for our sin, how do you feel? *Guide kids to discuss their thoughts. Ask them questions about if they feel more grateful toward God, more shocked at His love, or more humbled by Jesus' sacrifice.*
6. How can we have faith even when the world seems scary or evil? *Guide kids to talk about our ultimate source of hope. Remind kids that we know Jesus will return and fix everything broken in the world. We know that evil will not win in the end. If we trust in Jesus, we will live in His perfect kingdom when He returns; if we reject Him, we will bear the punishment of our sin that we deserve.*

SAY • Habakkuk learned to have faith and trust in God.

Habakkuk did not fully understand God's plan to use an evil nation to punish His people, but he realized that God would not let Babylon go unpunished either. Our hope comes from knowing that Jesus will return and destroy evil forever.

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

like, "If things stay difficult, then I will trust God anyway." As he spoke with God, **Habakkuk learned to have faith and trust in God.** Even though things looked like they were only getting worse, God is in charge of all things. God can use even hard times to do amazingly good things.

Reflection and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper to each child. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or about the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Whom can I tell about this story?

Make sure to send the sheets home with kids alongside the activity page so that parents can see what their kids have been learning.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page provided with this session. Pray for your group.

- pencils and crayons
- paper
- Bible Story Coloring Page, 1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week's *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.