

▶ Introduction

Two Sundays ago, we saw the childlike faith that cries to God.

Last Sunday, we saw the faith that grows, trusting in God alone.

This Sunday, we will see **the faith that matures**, proclaiming God amidst trials and tribulations.

We will see this from our passage today with the following outline:

- 3:17 The song that the world sings
- 3:18 The song that we sing
- 3:19 The reason why we sing

▶ The Song That the World Sings (verse 17)

The world is a messed-up place. Natural disasters: tsunami, earthquake, hurricane, drought, fire.

We are messed-up people. Birth defects, bad genetics, hereditary illnesses, etc.

Even worse, **our heart** is messed up. It is desperately sick, wicked. **We love sin.**

We don't want to forgive; we love unhealthy lifestyles, and we don't like discipline.

We realize all these aren't ideal, and we want to get out from this "fallen-from-ideal" situation.

Even worse, this fallen situation permeates every aspect of life.

Every conversation, every thought, every desire of every single human being.

But the world does not know what the cause of the problem is, nor do they know the solution.

The world is stuck in this situation. This is the only situation the world knows.

This is the song that the world sings: the fallenness, despair, and hope for something better without knowing what or how to get there.

Every Christian, including Habakkuk, lives in the fallen world.

Every one of us experiences the sinfulness of the heart and the longing for a better place.

We see Habakkuk talks about this in **Habakkuk 3:17**:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <i>The fig tree may not blossom,
Nor fruit be on the vines;
The labor of the olive may fail,</i> | } | First triad: choicest produce of the land. |
| <i>And the fields yield no food;
The flock may be cut off from the fold,
And there be no herd in the stalls—</i> | } | Second triad: bread, milk, meat, grains. |

As promised in the covenant curses, God is paralyzing the food chain in Judah.

This is really bad: no food, no drink, no wool on top of the Babylonian's siege.

Misery is the theme everyone in Judah talks about. This is the song that they sing.

Habakkuk chapter 3 is a song of praise. His song includes the misery part too.

But his song does not end there. **In fact, verse 17 says, "THOUGH all these happen,"**

Hab. 3:18 *Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.*

► [The Song That We—Christians—Sing \(verse 18\)](#)

Habakkuk uses the misery/judgment that is coming as a springboard to proclaim his God.

Habakkuk does not only **cry to God** because he belongs to God through Jesus Christ,
He does not **only trust God** in spite of the situation and the judgment that is coming,
He **sings for God, proclaiming God's name** and his work of salvation.

A mature faith is not just growing inward but also outward.

This is not just simply “positive thinking!”

Positive thinking is relying on yourself rather than on God.

Positive thinking does not change the situation, nor does it change your wicked heart.

“Behaviour change” programs, self-help books might tame, but only as temporary patches.

Furthermore, **when the day of judgment comes, there is nothing to be positive about.**

The judgment of Judah was scary, but the final day of judgment will be even more terrible.

No one can stand the wrath of God, because we are all sinners. There is no escaping.

Hebrews 10:31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

But there is one and only hope for living: Jesus Christ who saves.

The book of Habakkuk is famous especially for Hab. 2:4 “The just shall live by his faith.”

Habakkuk can move on from verse 17 to verse 18 only because **God is his salvation.**

Jesus Christ is the God of our salvation!

New Testament writers explain that the just shall live by faith in Jesus Christ:

Romans 1:16-17 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, *'The just shall live by faith.'*

Galatians 2:16 knowing that a man is *not justified by the works of the law* but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; *for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.*

Who is this Christ? What is the Gospel?

This is a story of God, coming to save his people by becoming man to fulfill all the requirements every human must do and take the punishment we all incurred on himself. His name is Jesus

Though he came to die, throughout his earthly ministry he preached **peace** and **rest**.

He **cried** to his Father on the cross.

He **trusted** in his Father to his dying breath.

He **waited** patiently for his God.

If the story ends here, I say: he was a good example. Learn from him, try harder. End of sermon.

But he didn't stay dead! He rose again, proclaiming the victory over sin and death!

He did not only give us example how we must have faith solely in God,

He also gives the faith so that you and I may be saved!

► [The Reason Why We Sing \(verses 18-19\)](#)

This is the reason why **Habakkuk can rejoice** amidst tribulations!

Because Yahweh is his God, because Jesus is his God of salvation (verse 18)!

Because God is his strength, who makes him stand firm, immovable!

Habakkuk 3:19 *The LORD God is my strength; he will make my feet like deer's feet, and he will make me walk on my high hills.*

Romans 5:1-5 tells us that those who are **justified by faith** have peace with **God** through **Jesus**. We **rejoice** in hope of the glory of God and in tribulations.

Why? Because the **love of God** has been poured out into our hearts by the **Holy Spirit**.

Only the Triune God, Yahweh, can accomplish such a great work of salvation.

God can restore us so that we do not be slaves of sin anymore.

He also gives us **peace** and **hope**, which causes us to **rejoice** even in the most difficult situation.

Our rejoicing is not because of circumstances, but because of God alone.

The verb “to rejoice” in Greek also means: **to glory, to boast**.

We can glory in God, boast about him, even in suffering!

Habakkuk's story is described in David's psalm! **Psalm 40:**

- 1 *I waited patiently for the Lord; He inclined to me and heard my cry.*
- 2 *He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, And set my feet upon a rock, and established my steps.*
- 3 *He has put a **new song** in my mouth— Praise to our God; Many will see it and fear, and will trust in the Lord.*
- 4 *Blessed is that man who makes the Lord his trust, And does not respect the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies."*

The story of faith that: Cries to God, Trusts in God, Waits for God, Sings for God.

God put in Habakkuk's and in every Christian's mouth a new song to sing, a new story to tell.

We don't have to be stuck with the story of misery because we have this story of salvation!

**This is the faith in Jesus Christ
which grows and matures,
inwardly renewing our identity, strengthening our trust in God,
and outwardly proclaiming Jesus and his victory.**

Is this your faith?

Do not be deceived, this faith is the gift of God through Jesus Christ.

It is not of your own.

If you don't have relationship with him,
come to Jesus today.

Jesus calls you to come, have faith in him, and he will save you.

► **Conclusion**

The world is a messed-up place. People are messed up. Wicked. Evil.

Day after day, we pray, "Come soon, Lord Jesus, make all things new!"

Sunday after Sunday, we are reminded, "God is faithful, and he will surely come!"

And yet here we are, another year, another decade.

The world doesn't seem to be better. In fact, it seems worse.

Sin is celebrated. People don't even know male/female, right/wrong, love/hatred.

But we will continue to rejoice!

We will continue to pray and preach the gospel!

Because our hope is strong and secure in Jesus Christ.

We will continue to proclaim the story of this coming King and his coming kingdom.

Not Judah where Habakkuk lived, not Israel that we know today, but the **Kingdom of Christ.**

Join us in singing this song! For Jesus will sing with us when he comes again:

Zephaniah 3:17

The Lord your God in your midst, the Mighty One, will save;

He will rejoice over you with gladness,

He will quiet you with His love,

He will rejoice over you with singing."

Applications:

1. Engage with people: talk about the pain, the misery, the struggle in this fallen world.
It shows the world that we have common grounds. But don't just stop there!
Talk about your hope in Jesus!
2. **Share your struggles**, confess, pray for each other that we may be healed (James 5).
3. **Share your victory** in Jesus! A healthy faith sees the grace of God amidst our struggles.
It is also unhealthy for the listeners if you only share struggles all the time.
4. Don't only share, but also **listen!**

Finally, don't forget the last bit of our passage today:

Habakkuk 3:19 ... To the Chief Musician. With my stringed instruments.

Each of us is the **chief musician** of our heart, our family, our church, our school, workplace, etc.
You set the tune and the tone for your heart and also for everyone around you.

What song do you sing?

Are you stuck with the misery of the world?

Or do you sing about your Saviour?

Everything in your life is the **instrument** God gives to proclaim his name.

May we sing the new song of salvation all throughout the new year!