

# The Perplexity the Righteous Often Have

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[ 0 : 00 ] And so we're now going to turn to our Bible reading. And Phil Copeland is beginning a series this evening in the book of Habakkuk.

So do grab a Bible. If you don't have one, we do have visitors' Bibles. They're positioned around the auditorium. And if you're not sure how to get one, if you wave your hand, I'm sure someone on the welcome team would love to grab one for you, bring it to you.

But do have a Bible open in front of you and follow along as we read from Habakkuk chapter 1. If you are using a church visitor's Bible, it's on page 785.

So Habakkuk chapter 1, beginning at verse 1. The oracle that Habakkuk the prophet saw.

Oh Lord, how long shall I cry for help and you will not hear? Or cry to you violence and you will not save?

[ 1 : 09 ] Why do you make me see iniquity? And why do you idly look at wrong? Destruction and violence are before me. Strife and contention arise.

And so the law is paralyzed. And justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous. And so justice goes forth perverted.

Look among the nations and see, wonder and be astounded. For I am doing a work in your days. That you would not believe if told. For behold, I am raising up the Chaldeans.

That bitter and hasty nation who march through the breadth of the earth to seize dwellings, not their own. They are dreaded and fearsome. Their justice and dignity go forth from themselves.

Their horses are swifter than leopards. More fierce than the evening wolves. Their horsemen press proudly on. Their horsemen come from afar. They fly like an eagle swift to devour.

[ 2 : 15 ] They all come for violence. All their faces forward. They gather captives like sand. At kings they scoff. And at rulers they laugh. They laugh at every fortress.

For they pile up earth and take it. Then they sweep by like the wind and go on. Guilty men whose own might is their God. Are you not from everlasting, O Lord my God, my Holy One?

We shall not die. O Lord, you have ordained them as a judgment. And you, O Rock, have established them for reproof.

You who are of purer eyes than to see evil and cannot look at wrong. Why do you idly look at traitors and remain silent when the wicked swallows up the man more righteous than he?

You make mankind like the fish of the sea. Like crawling things that have no ruler. He brings all of them up with a hook. He drags them out with his net.

[ 3 : 22 ] He gathers them in his dragnet. So he rejoices and is glad. Therefore he sacrifices to his net. Makes offerings to his dragnet. For by them he lives in luxury.

And his food is rich. Is he then to keep on emptying this net? And mercilessly killing nations forever? I will take my stand at my watch post.

And station myself on the tower. And look out to see what he will say to me. And what I will answer concerning my complaint. Amen.

This is God's word. And we'll return to it shortly. Well good evening everyone.

It's a pleasure to be here. And please do pick up your Bibles and turn to Habakkuk chapter 1. If you'd have that open that would be really helpful. Well I wonder if you've ever witnessed a seriously intense dialogue.

[ 4 : 35 ] Between two people or maybe two different parties. I was once sitting in a Glasgow coffee shop. And out of the window were two of the most enormous people I've ever seen in my life.

Two men in their 50s. And they were having a massive screaming match at each other. Over a parking space. I tell you it was an intense dialogue that was embarrassing to witness.

In the end I believe if my memory serves me right. They started wrestling on the pavement. Taps off in the middle of the road. Nobody looked good. Well as we read Habakkuk.

What we're witnessing here friends. Is a really intense dialogue. Between the Lord and the prophet Habakkuk. But unlike the Glaswegian drivers. This intense dialogue is so good for us to witness.

It is so good for us to witness. It's as you'd expect with any part of God's word. This book is full of precious lessons about the Lord our God. Precious lessons about what true faith looks like.

[ 5 : 37 ] But also what should we expect from this broken and unjust world that we live in. And also lessons about the hope that we have. If we trust the Lord.

Well this evening I hope to do this. I hope we will run through the text. So we feel the dialogue. And so that we're clear on what's being said.

And then after that having done that. We will think about three important implications. For our lives today as God's people. So then the book begins. With the prophet Habakkuk's perplexed concern.

Please look at verse 2. Habakkuk cries. Oh Lord how long shall I cry for help? And you will not hear. Here's a man with a deep burden.

Crying out in frustration and pain and lament. Because the Lord has apparently refused to answer his prayer. He's been desperately praying over and over again and again.

[ 6 : 38 ] For the Lord to take action and to deal with evil. But just notice please. This is not evil out there in the world. This is evil within Judah. Within God's covenant people.

His Old Testament church. That's what Habakkuk's been seeing day after day. And he stockpiles up all of the horrors. That he's witnessed with his eyes.

Being carried out amongst God's people. In verses 2 to 4. Just run your eyes over that. Violence. Iniquity. Wrong. Destruction. Violence again. Strife. Contention.

Injustice. Persecution of the righteous. And yet more injustice. And as a result of all these things that are happening in God's people. In verse 4 he says that God's law has been nullified.

Paralysed. Remember these were the people God chose to be his special people. By grace. A kingdom of priests. Holy for him.

[ 7 : 35 ] God rescued them out of Egypt by grace and mercy. To be his inheritance. His son. And God planted them in the promised land. To obey his good law.

Out of love for him. And as they did that. They would love one another. This was to be a nation of brotherly love. And as they did that. Walking by the obedience of faith.

They would show off God's beauty. To the world. To be a light to the Gentiles. Imagine you are all Judah for a second. And I'm a Philistine. And I'm looking at you as you walk obediently to the Lord who saved you.

I'm supposed to look at you and go wow. Look how good the Lord God is. But by Habakkuk's time Judah was dominated by unbelief and disobedience.

They spurned God's grace. Time and again. The people of light have become the people of darkness. So much so that they were indistinguishable from the unbelieving pagan nations that surrounded them.

[ 8 : 38 ] And God's name. His glorious name was being dragged through the mud. Blasphemed by Judah. Because of what they were doing. But having said that folks.

In Judah. Within the people. There was a remnant. Those who are the true people of faith. Verse 4. They're called the righteous. Now that does not mean that they were sinless.

But it means that they were righteous in the sense that they believed God's promises. They looked to his grace for forgiveness. And they kept covenant with him. The trouble is they're obeying the Lord.

But it's not doing them any good. Because they are suffering for it. They are being abused by those within Judah who were wicked. That is who show themselves to be unbelievers. And it's tragically so often the same case today.

Is it not? In the church. Especially in the West. Unbelieving synods. Perverted presbyteries. Liberal church members seem to be doing everything that they can.

[ 9 : 38 ] To paralyze God's moral law. Those who love Christ. And seek to obey his teaching. Often find themselves surrounded. Blasted and belittled.

And bullied. Within the church. And church authorities don't bat an eyelid. Instead of exercising discipline against sin. They idly turn a blind eye.

And even in some cases. They take behavior that the Bible says is sinful. And now declare it to be godly. That's what was going on in Habakkuk's day. And he's seen it day after day.

After day after day. And it is breaking his heart. And what makes him so utterly perplexed. In all of this. Is the fact that what he knows to be true about God. Has rammed against his experience of God.

Habakkuk knows how God's covenant with his people worked. The Lord had clearly said to his people. If you love me. Walk by faith. Obey me. You'll be blessed.

[ 10 : 38 ] But if you reject me. Walk in rebellion. Spurn me. And you will face curse. Habakkuk knows that that's what the Lord has promised. And so as he looks at all this evil that's been happening.

And the way that the Lord's name has been dragged through the mud. He is utterly perplexed. Because the Lord doesn't seem to be doing anything about it at all. And that's why he cries.

How long oh Lord. Why am I still looking at this evil? Don't you care? That your name has been smeared? Don't you care? Care that true believers.

Those who actually love you. Are suffering. Why are you not taking action against the wicked like you promised? Are you seeing this?

Are you idle? Answer me please. Well in verse 5 the Lord finally answers. And you can picture Habakkuk sitting there thinking.

[ 11 : 31 ] Yeah beauty. Here we go. The good news that I've been longing for. Swift salvation and judgment for the people of faith. Maybe the Lord's going to bring revival. Maybe he's going to raise up a prophet even better than me.

Well imagine the shock that must have smashed into his heart. As he heard verses 5 and 6. The Lord takes Habakkuk's eyes off of Judah. And lifts them up to the bigger picture of history.

And the nations. And he says Habakkuk I'm going to do something that you will not believe. Even if you were told. I am raising up. The Chaldeans.

The Babylonians. I'm not blind Habakkuk. In other words he says. I have seen everything that has been going on in my church. And I will not let evil go unpunished. I am raising up.

A war machine. An impetuous superpower. And it's coming straight for you. Babylon will sweep across the whole earth. Brutally invading and seizing countries.

[ 12 : 29 ] Capturing and destroying people. They are rightly feared and dreaded. They have no morality. There's no Geneva Convention with them. They do not know me or my law.

And so they do not know love or mercy. In fact they are a law unto themselves. And the end of verse 6 is very familiar to Habakkuk.

Because it's language lifted from Deuteronomy. To describe the way that the promised land was taken away from the Canaanites. Well now it's being applied to Judah. As though the Lord is saying Judah has become just like the Canaanites.

They stooped so low. And just as the land was seized from the Canaanites in the past. Now it is with Judah. It's its turn. To have the land seized from it by these Chaldean killers.

And from verse 8 to 11. The Lord describes his war machine in terrifying detail. It's ferocious. Fast. And fatal. The ultimate predator.

[ 13 : 35 ] Swifter than a leopard. Fiercer than a pack of wolves. More power than a herd of horses. They will swoop down upon Judah. In the same ferocity and speed.

As an eagle swoops down upon its prey. My family. In the summer we were at an animal park. We saw a bird of prey show. And I was astounded. When they brought out this hawk.

It wasn't even an eagle. But it was a hawk. And the little trainer brought out this little bit of meat. And this hawk was miles above. Up in the air. And he just went. With a wee whistle.

And this thing came out of the sky like a bullet. Bang. And away it was with the prey. Devouring it. Ripping it to shreds. That's what's coming. Says the Lord.

That's what's coming. No king or man made defense can possibly withstand. Anything in Babylon's path. Will be swept away like sand. In a hurricane.

[ 14 : 33 ] Friends. God's people filled the land with violence. And now they're going to get even more. Because verse 9. The Babylon's are bent on violence. They love it. They live for it.

Notice their own strength is their idol. Their own strength is their God. And they love nothing more than seeing their God in action. And that can only mean torturous pain for anyone who gets in the way.

And friend. If you're sitting there thinking. This is horrific. You're right. It's horrific. Is it not? And yet the shocking truth is that the Chaldeans are the way that they are.

Because the Lord has raised them up to be this way. The Lord says to Habakkuk. Their destructive success and carnage is my will. It's my doing.

My plan. I am raising them up. I am setting them upon my church. Both the wicked of Judah. And by the way.

[ 15 : 33 ] The righteous of Judah too. Will also be swept up in this. Well how does Habakkuk respond to this news? What is he going to say? Well first notice.

He responds. With faith and submission. Please look at verse 12. He says. Are you not from everlasting? Oh Lord my God. My Holy One.

We shall not die. Oh Lord. You have ordained them as a judgment. And you. Oh Rock. Have established them. For a reproof. So Habakkuk will bring a new perplexed concern to the Lord.

In just a moment. But before he voices protest. He voices praise. He reinstates what he knows to be true about God. Back to God. He says.

You are the eternal God. You are my God. You are the personal God of all those who trust you. You are the Lord. Yahweh. The covenant God of Israel. Totally faithful.

[ 16 : 28 ] To the covenant promises that you made to Abraham. That through his descendants. You would bless the world. And that's hence why the reason Habakkuk can say. We shall not die.

In verse 12. He is saying to the Lord. Lord you will not destroy your people completely. I know that's true. Because we still trust in you. The remnant. The righteous. Whatever lies ahead for us.

Is ultimately discipline. Not divorce. My Lord. I accept this hard word from you. I accept that you are going to use the Babylonians. As an instrument of judgment. They will chastise us.

As you have ordained. But Lord. I just don't get it. And that's what he moves on to. From praise. To protest. He brings a new perplexed concern.

He's just absolutely baffled by this. Again. He's struggling to reconcile. What he knows to be true about God. With his current experience of God. That it log our heads together.

[ 17 : 26 ] Please look at verse 13. It says. You who are of purer eyes. Than to see evil. And cannot look at wrong. Why do you idly look at traitors?

Traitors being Babylon. Do you hear the conflict going on within him? He knows that God is holy. Set apart from all evil. God can't even look upon evil. So why is the Lord tolerating.

And using the wicked Babylonians. As his instrument of judgment. It seems to have taken a sledgehammer. To Habakkuk's heart. And he carries on in verse 13.

Why are you silent? While the wicked. Swallows up the man. More righteous than he. Habakkuk knows that the Lord is totally just. So why on earth is he using.

Extremely wicked people. The Babylonians. To punish those. Who are less wicked. Now friends. Please human me for a second. Put up your hand please.

[ 18 : 22 ] If you get milk delivered to your house. Does anyone get milk delivered to your house? Okay. I get milk delivered to our house. It's very very good. Anyway. Just imagine for a second.

You live on a street. Where you and your neighbours. Get your milk delivered. Okay. So we're all getting milk delivered. Then imagine you have a problem. You go out every morning. For a week. You go to get your lovely.

Delicious fresh milk bottles. But there's a problem. Some of them are missing. You have a milk thief on your street. What do you do?

Well imagine to solve your problem. You hire the most notorious bunch of thugs. The most notorious and violent street gang in the whole of Scotland. To come into your neighbourhood. And deal with your milk thief.

What will happen? Well they sought your milk thief out right away. The trouble is they end up killing almost half of your neighbours as well. You would never do that.

[ 19 : 20 ] You would just never do that. It sounds mad. And yet this is what Habakkuk thinks of the Lord's plan. He says, Lord, your cure seems worse than the disease. And from verse 14 to 16, Habakkuk uses a gripping metaphor to describe the Lord's plan.

He says, And in verse 17, I think Habakkuk actually comes to be reaching his boldest here.

He comes very close. Very close. Not quite, but very close. He says, To accusing God of being unjust. Verse 17, He says, Is this then Babylon to keep on emptying his net, Mercilessly killing nations forever?

He's saying, Lord, are you going to let them do this forever? And not hold them to account? Will you forever turn a blind eye to their atrocious war crimes? Their murder?

Their holocausts? And then Habakkuk ends his response to the Lord. In the same way that he began in 1 verse 12.

[ 20 : 58 ] By faith and submission. Please look at chapter 2 verse 1. He says, I will stand at my watch post and station myself on the tower and look to see what he will say to me.

What I will answer concerning my complaint. In other words, he is saying he will wait with great expectation and eagerness to hear from the Lord. Back in those days, the watch posts or the ramparts were the highest part of the city.

And soldiers and watchmen would be stationed there to diligently watch the horizon, looking out for coming messengers or troops coming from enemy forces. Well, Habakkuk is declaring that he's going to do just that.

Don't think he's going to literally stand up on the watchtower. But poetically, he's saying, I will diligently wait for the Lord to answer me, to answer my perplexed concern. And I think it's also a statement of praise because he's confessing that the answer he's looking for is only found in the Lord's knowledge and his rich wisdom and understanding, which is so far above him.

He can ascend to the highest heights of the city, but even then it's still not high enough. He must wait for the Lord to graciously condescend to him and speak to him the truth.

[ 22 : 15 ] By faith, he knows that that's his only hope, to settle his perplexed pain. And so he waits. And so must we, until we come back next Sunday, or next time I'm preaching, if I'm well enough, next Sunday, and we'll look, God willing, at chapter 2.

But with the remainder of our time this evening, let's ask, so what? So what, Phil? So what? What does this mean for our lives today as the Lord's people? Well, there are lots of things to learn from this intense dialogue, but I want us to briefly just focus on three things.

Okay, so here we go. If you've fallen asleep, wake up. Okay, give yourself a wish, you may. Firstly, here's the first point. Friends, do not be surprised if God's apparent inactivity perplexes you.

Do not be surprised if God's apparent inactivity perplexes you. Friends, as believers today, we need to know that it is not uncommon for God's people to often feel overcome with the same perplexed concern that Habakkuk has in chapter 1, verses 1 to 4.

Now, you could apply this principle broadly. Christians find themselves in all sorts of situations of darkness and pain and turmoil. Maybe sickness. times when you think, what is the Lord?

[ 23 : 36 ] What are you doing? What are you doing? Maybe it's a diagnosis. Maybe it's some sort of horrible thing that swept over your life. You pray and pray and you just think, what are you doing?

You seem so far away. You can apply this principle really broadly, but let's apply it the way Habakkuk was facing this situation. Because maybe you're here tonight and actually you're precisely feeling the same way that Habakkuk felt because you look at the state of the church today, especially in the West.

You see the relentless evil that's being committed by so many who bear the name of Jesus. You hear the things that pass for teaching and preaching in churches sometimes.

I sometimes look on Twitter and hear things that people put up and it breaks your heart because you think that is not what the Bible teaches. Or you see the way God's law is paralyzed by church leaders to suit their own sinful desires.

Or you see the way that real believers who know and love Jesus and His Word are being blasted, bullied and belittled by the same people who are in church but are merely paying Jesus lip service.

[ 24 : 48 ] And as you look upon all of that in a non-self-righteous way, it fills you with the same pain and anguish that Habakkuk has here. Holy zeal. Because ultimately, you're concerned for the Lord's glory.

But what has caused you even more pain and perplexity is by the fact that the Lord seems to be doing nothing about this at all. If that's how you're feeling tonight, friend, or if you ever feel this way in the future because you can, then let Habakkuk chapter 1 reassure your perplexed heart.

The Lord is not blind. The Lord is never inactive, ever. Even though He appears to be, He is never inactive. He knows perfectly what's going on.

He knows what is happening in His church. He sees those who are faithful and are suffering for His sake. He sees those who are also carrying out evil in His name. And He will deal with all these things in His own good, sovereign way in His timing.

We will think more about that as this book goes on, especially in chapter 2. And knowing that the Lord will deal with evil in His church, even when He seems to not be, that should comfort us greatly.

[ 26 : 08 ] But it should also challenge us, shouldn't it, and humble us. And that brings me to my second point this evening. Don't be surprised if the Lord uses our enemies to discipline us.

Don't be surprised. Friends, we have the same God as Habakkuk and He hasn't changed for He never changes. And if our God used His enemies to discipline His wayward people back then, then friends, He could very well do the same today in our time.

And you might be thinking, oh, come on, fit a wheel of this side of the cross of Christ. Well, what difference does that make to this? If God's people slip into complacency and deep unbelief, if they constantly spurn God's grace, spurn the blood of the Lord Jesus, as Judah did all those years before, do you really think He's going to sit back and turn a blind eye?

No, the New Testament tells us plainly the Lord loves His people so much that He will discipline us if we break covenant with Him. And the Lord may use the most surprising of instruments to carry out this work.

Listen to this from David Jackman. He says this, suppose for a moment we are part of a church that is under discipline because of its rebellion. Would it then be inconceivable that God would use the greatest enemies of the gospel, false religion, pagan immorality, powerful commercial or media forces to overrun His people in order to humble us, to bring us truly to our knees?

[ 27 : 42 ] Might it not be that the disappointments and the difficulties that we face, which we call our enemies, are in God's hands His agents to deepen and ultimately renew our faith, painful though it may seem at the present?

Could that be so? Is God's hand really in all these things all of the time? Even when things seem to be worse than better? Now, let's just be very careful.

Of course, we're not saying, I'm not saying, that it's the case that every time a church suffers or every time a Christian suffers is because they are under discipline or their suffering has come about as a direct result of sin.

No. Friends, the Bible gives loads of carefully nuanced reasons why a church suffers. But as we listen to the Lord's words to Habakkuk, we need to see that this is clearly one way that the Lord operates today.

My friend, this may have kicked up some major issues challenging you for what you know to be true about God and how He works. But friends, we need to take this seriously. And if the God that we believe in here does not match up with the God proclaimed in Habakkuk, then changes need to be made here, not here.

[ 29 : 02 ] Don't be surprised if the Lord uses our enemies to discipline us. Well, friends, here's our final point this evening, much more comforting to hear.

And it's this, don't be afraid to pour out our perplexed pain in prayer. Don't be afraid to pour out our perplexed pain in prayer.

If you were like me, then the first time you read through Habakkuk, which may have been this evening, you never know, but as you heard Josh reading this passage earlier, you may have been surprised, maybe even shocked with the way that he is so bold before the Lord.

You may be thinking, whoa, is Habakkuk right to be plain like this? Some commentators rip Habakkuk to shreds and give him a right good telling off.

Bad Habakkuk, naughty Habakkuk. He was far too forward in the way that he spoke to the Lord. I even came across one writer who said that Habakkuk was just like Stephen Fry, the devout atheist who has often appeared in the media to give off bitter rants about the God that he does not believe in.

[ 30 : 10 ] That's ridiculous. Habakkuk is no atheist. In fact, in this book, I want to say with confidence, Habakkuk has been lifted up as a model believer for us to learn from.

And I'm so thankful for the way he prays here. It is so refreshing. He pours out his perplexed pain that is motivated by holy zeal to the Lord, his God, whom he clearly trusts and loves.

Nowhere does Habakkuk get a telling off for what he says or how he says it. Nowhere does the Lord scold him for being perplexed and for not having all the answers. In fact, the opposite seems to be the case.

The Lord graciously meets his servant in his perplexed pain and helps him. If that isn't enough to convince you, then remember, Habakkuk isn't the only one in the scriptures to lament like this and cry out, how long?

Think about Matthew chapter 17 who cried out, how long, twice, in bitter agony when faced with unbelief in the people of God? The Lord Jesus.

[ 31 : 16 ] And then in the scene depicted in Revelation chapter 6, we are told that even the saints who are departed and are now with the Lord in a state of glory in heaven, they look upon the scenes on earth and they too cry out, how long, O Lord?

As they long for righteous judgment to fall upon those who are persecuting the church. So friends, I think it's clear Habakkuk is not wrong at all for praying the way he does.

He's pouring out his pain. He's not lambasted by the Lord either for his perplexity. And sadly, that is the impression we can often give others or the impression that we can often get from others within the church is that in order to belong to God's people, you need to have all the answers.

There's no room to be perplexed in the Christian life. And I think that's a dangerous tendency sometimes for those of us who've had the privilege of being trained for ministry. The temptation can often be to give off the impression that there's no place for being perplexed and living with mystery in the Christian life.



We must be sure that when we try to help people and speak the truth to love in them, that we don't make them feel guilty for feeling perplexed, especially when they're going through the thick of it.

[ 32 : 34 ] In fact, friends, I can think of fewer things that are more annoying than a spiritual know-it-all who thrusts some pious soundbite of advice in your face when you're in pain.

I'm really thankful, brothers and sisters, that over this past year, none of you have done that to me. And I thank you for doing that for me and for my wife. But here's a bold believer who's been honest with God.

He doesn't have the answers. He's perplexed. And that's fine. And he does the right thing in turning to the Lord as God. And isn't that a great comfort to know that you and I can do the same?

Yes? Calvin says this about Habakkuk. Though Habakkuk freely pours forth his feelings, there was nothing wrong in this before God. At least nothing wrong was imputed to him.

For what reason do we pray but that each of us may unburden our cares, our griefs, and anxieties by pouring them into the bosom of God?

[ 33 : 36 ] Elsewhere, Calvin says, Since then, God allows us to deal so familiarly with him. Nothing wrong ought to be ascribed to our prayers when freely we pour out our feelings provided the bridle of faith keeps us always within due limits as was the case with Habakkuk.

And friends, there will be times in the Christian life when you will feel like you are in a slimy pit with no way out. Times when you are so perplexed because your current experience of God has smacked into your knowledge of God and what you know to be true of him.

In fact, at times when you are in such pain you think he's abandoned you. If that hasn't happened to you, get ready. You just never know.

And that is one of the reasons why God has given us the book of Habakkuk. Here is a model believer making a model prayer. Now when I was younger I was told to pray following a nice neat and tidy order, following acts.

Do you know this? Acts? John Taylor is nodding. John knows it. Adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication. That's the order you follow. But that is great. That is a great order to follow.

[ 34 : 51 ] Nothing wrong with that. But there are times in life where things aren't neat and tidy. Times in life when we find ourselves in pain and agony and the only thing we can do is cry out to the Lord our God.

And friends, we can do this because our God is big enough and gracious enough to take our pain. And having done that what will we do?

Having cried out to the Lord, well, like Habakkuk we are to humbly seek understanding from the Lord our God. Get up on the watchtower as it were in our hearts ready to listen.

And of course the equivalent for us today is not to expect direct words from the Lord but to diligently prayerfully listen to His word here. In many ways we have it so much better than Habakkuk, don't we?

As we have the complete and finished word of God right here. We don't need to sit around in silence desperately waiting. All the wisdom that we need from the Lord is here. So let's give our hearts to this book.

[ 35 : 53 ] Well, our time is gone. Let's pray that the Lord will help us to remember these lessons. Don't be surprised if the Lord's apparent inactivity perplexes you. Don't be surprised if the Lord uses our enemies to discipline us.

And don't be afraid to pour out your pain and perplexity in prayer. Amen. Let's pray.  
Gracious Heavenly Father, we praise and thank you that we can pour out our perplexed concerns before you, our Lord and our God.

we praise you for the gracious way that you've dealt with Habakkuk and for the gracious way that you continue to deal with us. Help us to learn from your prophet and help us to learn from Judah so that we will walk by the obedience of faith, by the power of your Spirit, for the glory of your name.

And we pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.