TOPIC: THE LORD IS IN HIS HOLY TEMPLE

We must stand in awe, submission and silence before the holy God who inhabits this Sanctuary.

KEY POINTS

- The book of Habakkuk was written by a lesser-known prophet who lived at the same time as Jeremiah.
- His prophecy really consisted of a vision and a prayer – a private conversation between himself and God. He did not receive a series of messages to the nation as did Jeremiah, who prophesied publicly for 40 years.
- Habakkuk's vision covered issues we deal with every day in the 21st century.
- In the first chapter of Habakkuk, the prophet wonders why God allows His people to live ungodly lives, seemingly without judgment or sanction.
- God responds by telling him that judgment is on its way, and the Babylonians will be His agents.
- Habakkuk then jumps to Israel's defense, asking how God could use such wicked, ungodly people to judge Israel, who, even in their sin, were more righteous than the Babylonians.
- In chapter 2, God responds further:
  -It is not right for a person to be proud in spirit…
  …but, "THE RIGHTEOUS WILL LIVE BY HIS FAITH" (v 4).
  -Those who make money through evil means bring disaster upon themselves;
  -Those who are violent, warlike destroyers bring disaster upon themselves…
  …but, "THE EARTH WILL BE FILLED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE GLORY OF THE LORD" (v 14).
  -Disgrace will come upon those who cause others to sin;
  -Idolatry brings dire consequences…
  …but, "THE LORD IS IN HIS HOLY TEMPLE. LET ALL THE EARTH BE SILENT BEFORE HIM" (v 20).
- Silence speaks of reverence and submission. We must develop the habit of listening to God.
- We must not talk back to God like spoiled children.
- We must be silent in our spirit as well as in body. (It is possible to be silent on the outside while screaming "NO" on the inside!)
- Here are some positive statements of things we must know, understand and do if we're going to be pleasing in God's eyes:
  -God is holy.
  -His way is best for us.
  -We must read His Word.
  -We must learn His ways.
  -We must settle it in our hearts that if He shows us His way, we will receive it and follow Him – with joy.
  -We must submit to God, not to the world.
  -We must submit to God, not to the flesh.
  -We must submit to God, not to the devil.
  -We must worship God, who alone is holy.
  -We must bow before God, who alone lives.
  -We must obey God, who alone blesses obedience.
  -We must lay aside the ways of the world, the glorification of the flesh and human pride.
- In chapter 3, Habakkuk responds to God with this prayer: "O Lord, whose ways are everlasting, **send us a revival**."
- That is still our prayer today.

KEY SCRIPTURES

Habakkuk 2:18-20; 3:1-6

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. Thinking back, what have you been taught about the practice of silence during prayer?
2. From your own experience, what examples can you share about the practice of silence in public worship? Why do you think this is/isn't a difficult concept to practice?
3. How important are times of silence to you in your times of private prayer? Why is this so?
4. Is silence the same as submission? How, or how not?
5. Why do you think it was important to God that "all the earth be silent before Him"?
6. Is it possible for "the earth" to be "filled with the knowledge of the Lord" without the practice of silence and/or submission?
7. How can we incorporate productive silence into our times of private/public worship?
8. Take a few minutes to sit silently before the Lord. In the silence, begin to yield your will to the Lord; ask Him to give you understanding of Himself and of His glory.

Prayer Time

(Silent prayer and meditation)

In Jesus' name. amen.

L.G. ice-Breaker: Describe how you react to extended times in noise-filled environments. Do you thrive, or seek a solitude break?

WEEK OF SUNDAY, JULY 16, 2017

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

(Reminds me/Confirms) (New idea) (Think about)

(Do this) (Speaks to my heart) (Must share)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS