

## THE MINOR PROPHETS – THIS IS OUR GOD

### God is Enough!

Habakkuk.

Ian has entitled today's talk 'God is Enough' but how do we know that our God is enough?

How do we measure what is enough in life, when we live in a world that encourages us to want more and more and to consume more of the world's limited resources?

Is it enough to be content with a new day, our health and knowing God loves us, cares for us, that we are his children, part of God's family and the Holy Spirit lives in our hearts through all its ups and downs?

The Apostle Paul wrote in Philippians 4

For I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. <sup>12</sup> I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. <sup>13</sup> I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

How does God give us strength? Through the Holy Spirit, making scripture come alive, providing inner peace, joy and the assurance that we are loved by God.

You might say what has the Holy Spirit got to do with Habakkuk?

Prophets in the Old Testament were anointed by God's Spirit to be Prophets.

You could not be a prophet without the Holy Spirit, we can't fulfil God's potential in our lives without the Holy Spirit leading and guiding us each day.

In Numbers 11 v 26 it says.

However, two men, whose names were Eldad and Medad, had remained in the camp. They were listed among the elders, but did not go out to the tent. Yet the Spirit also rested on them, and they prophesied in the camp. <sup>27</sup> A young man ran and told Moses, "Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp."

<sup>28</sup> Joshua, son of Nun, who had been Moses' aide since youth, spoke up and said, "Moses, my lord, stop them!"

<sup>29</sup> But Moses replied, "Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the LORD's people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!" <sup>30</sup> Then Moses and the elders of Israel returned to the camp.

Number 12 v 6

he said, "Listen to my words:

"When there is a prophet among you,  
I, the LORD, reveal myself to them in visions,  
I speak to them in dreams.

However, prophets were not just an old testament phenomenon.

Jesus replied, "I will ask you one question. Answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. <sup>30</sup> John's baptism—was it from heaven, or of human origin? Tell me!"

<sup>31</sup> They discussed it among themselves and said, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will ask, 'Then why didn't you believe him?' <sup>32</sup> But if we say, 'Of human origin' ..." (They feared the people, for everyone held that John really was a prophet.)

John the Baptist was full of the Holy Spirit from birth.

Mathew 11v11

"Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is the least in the kingdom of Heaven is greater than he.

As Christians, as Gods children we are in the kingdom of heaven here and now.

Therefore, we have the same Holy Spirit living in us.

I Corinthians 3 v 16

Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

But what difference should it make? I am not sure it's for each of us to work that out with God, all I know is Jesus died so that we would receive the Holy Spirit as a counsellor and friend. So, it must be important.

Ephesians 1:3

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

1 Corinthians 14v5

I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified.

14 v 31 For you can all prophesy in turn so that everyone may be instructed and encouraged.

14 v39 Therefore, my brothers and sisters, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. <sup>40</sup> But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.

But if we have not love we are a resounding gong. I would suggest if we grow in love we will grow in Gods spiritual gifts.

I wonder though, do we want enough of God Spirit to bless us, but not so much it challenges us?

If someone was listening to what Ian was saying at a church meeting and felt God was speaking to them, I would suggest, by the Holy Spirit it has the potential to change their lives by following Gods calling in their lives.

It can feel strange and uncomfortable to experience supernatural events and witness miracles if we are not secure in God's love.

These prophets were totally dependent on the Holy Spirit, they had to deliver unpopular and often very challenging messages to the nations around them and to Gods people.

I am not sure I would have liked to deliver the messages they delivered challenging society, putting their lives on the line, to deliver a message the people did not want to hear.

I wonder today, do we share nice news rather than sharing good news, nice news which upsets and offends no one? Neither of these bring people into Gods Kingdom.

People still find the Christian message; Gods truth, offensive. How can Jesus be the Son of God, how can accepting Jesus be the only way to inherit eternal life?

Even to say that Jesus is the Son of God, that he died and rose again, is a stumbling block and offence to some. But life to us who believe.

The Christian message will always challenge people, because people don't like the truth.

You are more likely to lose your job over sending an offensive tweet than you would be for stealing or bullying someone at work.

Jesus shook the very foundations of his society and the way they understood God. From a set of rules set by a distant God, to a relationship built on love with a loving heavenly father.

The point of the Minor Prophets was to challenge and change society with Gods truth, under the power and anointing of the Holy Spirit.

Mav pointed out that the 12 minor prophets should be read in one go; as Habakkuk is basically a complaint to God and how God answers is a bit like Job, which needs to be held in the context of the other letters.

Habakkuk lived in Judah around 612 BC no one really knows much about him, he is a bit like the Apostle Mathias who gets appointed as an apostle but we hear very little from him after that.

We have covered in the other prophets, who lived in a godless society full of injustice and a lack of respect for God and his ways, does this sound familiar?

So, Habakkuk complains to God – Just as an aside, if you complain about things maybe you could be called a prophet?

How long, LORD, must I call for help,  
but you do not listen?

Or cry out to you, "Violence!"  
but you do not save?

<sup>3</sup>Why do you make me look at injustice?  
Why do you tolerate wrongdoing?

Destruction and violence are before me;  
there is strife, and conflict abounds.

<sup>4</sup>Therefore the law is paralyzed,  
and justice never prevails.

The wicked hem in the righteous,  
so that justice is perverted.

How many of us have felt like Habakkuk? Have we complained to God; why have you let this happen to me if you are a good God? If you are supposed to be looking out for me why has this happened?

When it says in God's word, all things work for the good of those who love him, how an earth can this be true.

I am in a difficult situation at work, and I am asking the question; how is this going to end. But in it I am realising God is with me, God spirit lives within me whatever the outcome.

And God answers

Look at the nations and watch and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe even if you were told. I am raising up the Babylonians, that ruthless and impetuous people who will sweep across the whole Earth.

When was the last time we were utterly amazed by God?

Habakkuk the complains again

LORD, are you not from everlasting?

My God, my Holy One, you will never die.

You, LORD, have appointed them to execute judgment;

you, my Rock, have ordained them to punish.

<sup>13</sup>Your eyes are too pure to look on evil;

you cannot tolerate wrongdoing.

Why then do you tolerate the treacherous?

Why are you silent while the wicked

swallow up those more righteous than themselves?

<sup>14</sup>You have made people like the fish in the sea,

like the sea creatures that have no ruler.

<sup>15</sup>The wicked foe pulls all of them up with hooks,

he catches them in his net,

he gathers them up in his dragnet;  
and so he rejoices and is glad.

<sup>16</sup> Therefore he sacrifices to his net  
and burns incense to his dragnet,  
for by his net he lives in luxury  
and enjoys the choicest food.

<sup>17</sup> Is he to keep on emptying his net,  
destroying nations without mercy?

God Answers

Then the LORD replied:

“Write down the revelation  
and make it plain on tablets  
so that a herald may run with it.

<sup>3</sup> For the revelation awaits an appointed time;  
it speaks of the end  
and will not prove false.

Though it lingers, wait for it;  
it will certainly come  
and will not delay.

Babylon would one day lose all its power, they put their trust in themselves and their possessions, but ultimately God prevails. But we have to wait and be content with what God provides and know that God is enough.

Chapter 2 V 20

But the Lord is in his Holy temple, let all the earth be silent.

V 14 for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord

And ultimately, we are still living in the waiting times until Jesus' return. How good are you in the waiting times?

And our response should be the same as Habakkuk. pray in the Spirit, worship, trusting in God and all he has promised, and that God is enough even when we don't understand.

A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet. On *shigionoth*.

<sup>2</sup> LORD, I have heard of your fame;  
I stand in awe of your deeds, LORD.

Repeat them in our day,  
in our time make them known;  
in wrath remember mercy.

<sup>3</sup> God came from Teman,  
the Holy One from Mount Paran.

His glory covered the heavens  
and his praise filled the earth.

<sup>4</sup> His splendour was like the sunrise;  
rays flashed from his hand,  
where his power was hidden.

<sup>5</sup> Plague went before him;  
pestilence followed his steps.

<sup>6</sup> He stood, and shook the earth;  
he looked, and made the nations tremble.

The ancient mountains crumbled  
and the age-old hills collapsed—  
but he marches on forever.

<sup>7</sup> I saw the tents of Cushan in distress,  
the dwellings of Midian in anguish.

<sup>8</sup> Were you angry with the rivers, LORD?  
Was your wrath against the streams?

Did you rage against the sea  
when you rode your horses  
and your chariots to victory?

<sup>9</sup> You uncovered your bow,  
you called for many arrows.

You split the earth with rivers;

<sup>10</sup> the mountains saw you and writhed.

Torrents of water swept by;  
the deep roared  
and lifted its waves on high.

<sup>11</sup> Sun and moon stood still in the heavens  
at the glint of your flying arrows,  
at the lightning of your flashing spear.

<sup>12</sup> In wrath you strode through the earth  
and in anger you threshed the nations.

<sup>13</sup> You came out to deliver your people,

to save your anointed one.  
You crushed the leader of the land of wickedness,  
you stripped him from head to foot.  
<sup>14</sup> With his own spear you pierced his head  
when his warriors stormed out to scatter us,  
gloating as though about to devour  
the wretched who were in hiding.  
<sup>15</sup> You trampled the sea with your horses,  
churning the great waters.  
<sup>16</sup> I heard and my heart pounded,  
my lips quivered at the sound;  
decay crept into my bones,  
and my legs trembled.  
Yet I will wait patiently for the day of calamity  
to come on the nation invading us.  
<sup>17</sup> 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,  
<sup>18</sup> yet I will rejoice in the LORD,  
I will be joyful in God my Saviour.  
<sup>19</sup> The Sovereign LORD is my strength;  
he makes my feet like the feet of a deer,  
he enables me to tread on the heights.  
For the director of music. On my stringed instruments.

Yet I will rejoice in the Lord for he is enough.

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