

# Questioning God

## Week 1: A Questionable Faith

Text: Habakkuk 1:1-4

### Habakkuk In Context:

By the time Habakkuk was written, God's people (the nation of Israel) had been on a downward spiral politically, because they had continuously disobeyed God's laws. First, they had internal issues, which left them divided into two kingdoms (the Northern and Southern Kingdoms), and then both kingdoms were eventually conquered and captured by other nations. There was a short time period when Judah (the Southern Kingdom) gained autonomous rule, but it was not long until they were taken under Egypt's rule. Naturally, under such dire circumstances, the people desperately wanted to hold onto God's promises, that as his people, they would be a blessed nation, with their own land, and a reigning king. But things did not appear hopeful, and it seemed to them, as though God had given up on their prayers altogether.

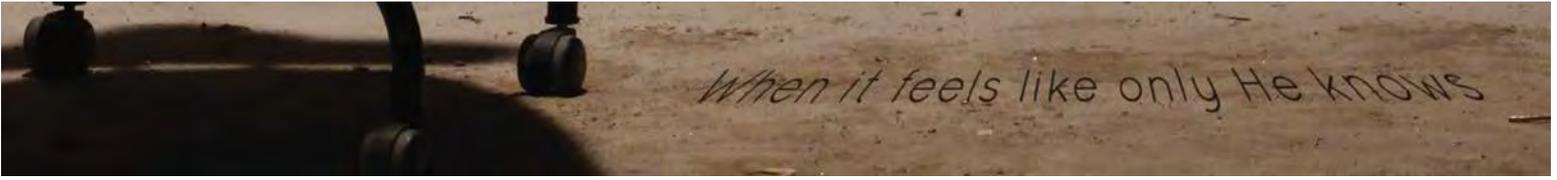
### 1. Questions For And About God Have Always Existed Amongst The People Of God

All the way through scripture we see passages where God's people deeply questioned what God was up to, and why he allowed their circumstances to be such a struggle. Questioning God is no new thing. The difference between them then and us now, is that we can see how the story of the promised kingdom developed and was fulfilled, through Jesus, the Messiah, who ushered in the Kingdom of God. As a result, we should be far more encouraged, because we can trace the faithfulness of God throughout scripture, and yet we still question God's intentions and timetable. It seems to be human nature to do so.

### 2. Questions For And About God Aren't The Opposite Of Faith In God

If we haven't already experienced it, chances are that life will still throw some unexplainably difficult circumstances at us, which will cause us to ask God some hard questions. Habakkuk was a prophet (a publically recognized spiritual role) and a man of great faith, and yet, because of the troubling circumstances facing Judah, and God's seeming lack of interest in solving the situation, he asked God some tough questions, hoping to get some sort of relief for his burdened soul.

- ❖ Q: Why do you think we question God when bad things happen?
- ❖ Q: Why is it encouraging knowing that the scripture is full of questions about God's intentions and timing?
- ❖ Q: What encouragement can we gain from knowing that Habakkuk, a prophet, wrestled with his faith, and in comprehending God's ways?
- ❖ Q: As we walk with people in trying circumstances, why do you think we should give them freedom to ask God the tough questions, like Habakkuk did?



*When it feels like only He knows*

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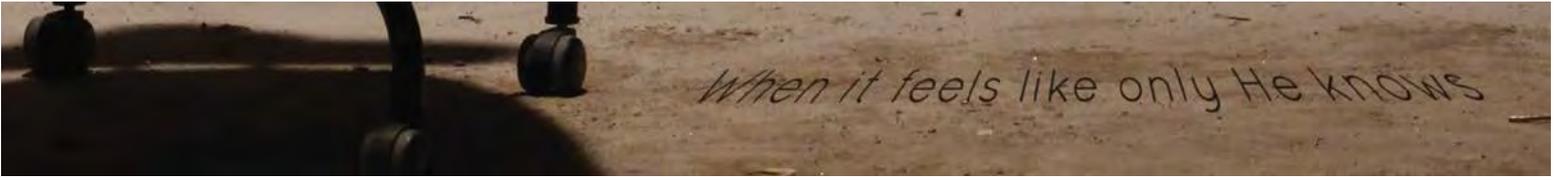
## 3. Questions For And About God Can Actually Grow Our Faith In God

- Read Romans 11:33-36

It's important to grasp from this story, that Habakkuk did not remain in a state of questioning, or become bitter or cynical towards God. His heart of faith deeply desired genuine answers, hoping that they would match up with God's well-known character. His questions were birthed out of faith, alongside his inability to align that faith with the trying circumstances around him. He wanted to understand God, but he genuinely couldn't. But by the end of the story, Habakkuk's questioning had turned into worship.

As we encounter traumas and difficulties in our lives, where we genuinely do not understand what God is doing or why, we are absolutely free to question him, but we can do that in ways that actually build, rather than destroy, our faith in God:

1. Go to God with our questions - instead of running away from God. We need to keep ourselves in the scriptures, in prayer and connected to our Christian community.
  2. Admit the limitations of our own understanding - See Isaiah 55:8-9. As created beings, we need to realize that we do not have the same insight and perspective that God has on our circumstances. We are not meant to. Surrendering that to God's care and trusting him to do what is best, even when it seems crazy to us, is a step of necessary faith for us.
  3. Anticipate Mystery - See Romans 11:33-36. We are not always going to get the neatly packaged answers we want from God, because his ways are beyond ours. He is, after all, God. His answers are often mysterious. We see this in the ending of the book of Habakkuk, as well as in the famous book of Job.
- ❖ Q: What is the difference in attitude between questioning God and blaming and judging God?
  - ❖ Q: Why is it important to go to God, and spend time with him, when we are struggling to understand his ways, and why is this usually such a challenge for us?
  - ❖ Q: How can we make sure that our times of questioning and wrestling in our faith does not end up breaking down our faith, or that of others?
  - ❖ Q: Have you ever been in a situation where you started out questioning God, but ended up worshipping him, like Habakkuk did? What was the turning point for you, and what has this done to your faith and testimony?



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