

Introduction

- *Recap:*
 - **Q:** why is wickedness unpunished? (and aren't you being hypocritical God, saying you are holy and just, but not acting?)
 - **A:** it will be...
 - **Q:** but isn't the punishment unjust...?
 - **A:** having waited, God does answer - and his answer is that the evil of the Babylonians will itself be judged, and God will vindicate the loyalty of the faithful...
- Inviting the two-fold response of:
 - engagement, conversation, grappling with God...
 - and recognition of his divinity, his right to order his world his way, even when we don't fully "get" it...
- So what does Habakkuk 3 add to the picture?

Recognition of his greatness (v.1-4)

- What are the deeds of which Habakkuk has heard?
 - revealing himself, picking out a people, rescuing that people - Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses & Exodus, commandments, plagues, crossing sea, desert journey, entry into promised land, victories over enemies, good kings...
 - acts of revelation, acts of mercy, acts of justice and judgement, acts of rescue
- This is who God was - and (2b) still is
 - renew them in our day...
- What would God's greatness revealed today look like?
 - prayer room things of headlines turned round...
 - people recognising their Saviour
 - revival...
 - individual lives changed...
 - Power, glory, worship, universality...
- *He's not a tame lion...!*

Recognition of his judgement (v.5-16a)

- One particular thread of God's greatness explored in greater detail is his judgement:
 - been a theme through the first couple of chapters, the judgement brought in the form of the Babylonians...
 - amplification of the consequences of God's hatred of evil...
 - the victory that he wins over those who reject him, rescuing those who trust him
 - judgement comes, God visits on us the consequence of our choices - rejecting him, embracing evil, will bring judgement
 - the language is of the destruction of war, the shaming of the vanquished by the conqueror (eg v.13b), the worst Habakkuk can imagine
 - all will face judgement (v.12)
 - nothing can escape that judgement (eg v.6)

Recognition of relationship with him (v.16b-19)

- Easy to get a bleak picture from all this talk of judgement:
 - a God who, even if justifiably, has got it in for us!
 - not someone we'd maybe particularly want to know or spend time with?
- But the close of the book shows up the shallowness of such an inference:
 - he is good, worthy, and deserving of our love, loyalty and worship, even if life

Habakkuk 3:1-19 In wrath remember mercy Fintry, 18/4/2010, am

treats us bad... (v.16b,17)

- proper assessment of life is that he alone is one who gives strength, gives us firmness of foot through lives ups and downs (footage of deer on heights in Himalayas...)
- We know the full details of the salvation he has won for us, the extent of his love:
 - Jesus, the Cross, his Resurrection...
 - here the tones are darker, the backdrop against which the light of his victory at the Cross shines all the brighter...
 - but even here Habakkuk can see that God is worthy of all honour, all worship, all praise...

Conclusion

- Habakkuk wanted to see a renewal of God's mighty deeds in his day:
 - how much more should we, who have tasted his merciful goodness and know his Son Jesus as our Saviour and Lord, desire that God would renew in our day his wonderful deeds!
 - pray and pray and pray...