

January 10th - *Unit 15 Session 4* Elementary

Habakkuk the Prophet

BIBLE PASSAGE: Habakkuk

STORY POINT: Habakkuk learned to have faith and trust in God.

KEY PASSAGE: 2 Chronicles 7:14

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How did God plan to fix what sin broke? Before He created the world, God planned to send the Messiah to save sinners.

Opening Activity: Habakkuk Name Game

Stand or sit in a circle. Choose one player to be the Answerer. Guide others in the circle to ask any question they would like to the Answerer. The goal is to get the Answerer to laugh. The Answerer must respond to each question with the name "Habakkuk (huh BAK kuk)." If the Answerer laughs or says something other than "Habakkuk," the player asking the question becomes the Answerer.

Say: Today's Bible story is about Habakkuk the prophet. He asked God many questions, like "How long do I have to wait for You to answer my prayers?" We'll find out how God responded.

THE BIBLE STORY

Habakkuk (huh BAK kuk) the prophet prayed to God. "How long, O Lord?" he prayed. "How long will I cry to You for help and You do not hear me?" Habakkuk had told God about all the violence that was happening in Judah, but nothing seemed to change. "Why do You let bad things happen? People are fighting and stealing. The bad guys always win," Habakkuk said. God was listening. He knew what was happening. God answered, "Watch! I am doing something amazing, something you wouldn't believe if I told you." Then God told Habakkuk what was going to happen. God was raising up enemies—the mighty Babylonians. No one could stand in their way. Their army would be strong and fast, like hungry eagles that swoop from the sky to catch little mice in a field. The Babylonians were going to come and make God's people prisoners! Would this really happen? Habakkuk wanted the evil in Judah to stop, but the people of Babylon were evil too. "Why do it this way, Lord?" Habakkuk asked. God answered, "I'm going to show you what will happen. Be patient and wait for it. If you are righteous, you will live by

faith. It may seem like evil people are winning now, but they won't win in the end."

God knows how to deal with evil people like the Babylonians. He promised Habakkuk that the people's captivity in Babylon wouldn't last forever. God was going to bring His people back to their land. Habakkuk prayed. People had forgotten about God. They didn't care about sin. They didn't pray. Habakkuk wanted that to change! He wanted people to wake up—to love God and hate sin. "You have done so many amazing, powerful things. Please do it again so everyone will know You. Be merciful to us," Habakkuk said. Habakkuk praised God for His power. The Babylonians were going to come, and life for the people in Judah would be very hard for a while. But Habakkuk had faith, and he would wait for the day when God would rescue His people from the Babylonians. Finally Habakkuk said, "Even if the trees and vines do not produce fruit, even if nothing grows in the fields, and even if there are no sheep in the pens and no cattle in the barns, I will be glad because of the Lord. I will rejoice in God who saves."

Christ Connection: Habakkuk lived at a time when evil seemed to be everywhere. By faith, he trusted God's promise that God would deliver His people. Injustice, violence, and wickedness surround us today, but we can live by faith and trust that Jesus will return to make all things right.

Key passage activity

Lead kids in reading aloud 2 Chronicles 7:14 two times. Then see if they can do it with their eyes closed! Count how many times they peek, the person with the lower amount of peeks is doing really well!

Say: Great job! If you haven't memorized our key passage yet, keep working on it! Memorizing Scripture helps us remember what is true about God and about ourselves. We know that God is just to punish sin, but His heart is for sinners to repent, turn to Him, and receive forgiveness.

Discussion & Bible skills

Ask the following questions:

1. Why do you think Habakkuk chose to praise God no matter what?

Recognize that Habakkuk learned to trust God, who is in control of all things.

Habakkuk had faith that God does what is for His glory and our good. We don't always understand God's ways, but we can trust Him to take care of us.

2. Where do you turn for comfort? Why? Invite your kids to share where they turn when they face difficult circumstances. Remind kids that the Lord is with us and comforts us in our suffering. When we turn to Him, we can find peace and rest.

3. What hope do we have when evil seems to be everywhere? Even though evil may sometimes seem to win in the world, God is really in control. Like Habakkuk, we can have faith and trust in God. Sooner or later, God will punish the wicked, but it will be in His own time and in His own way.

Craft: Questions from You!

Use a marker or pencil to fill in your Questions from You paper provided in the bag. Then display the paper when done. Read some of the questions aloud to get kids thinking. See if you, the parent, can answer any.

Say: Ask kids if they ever have questions about things they do not understand. Remind them that God is in control of all things, and invite them to think of more questions they would like to ask God.

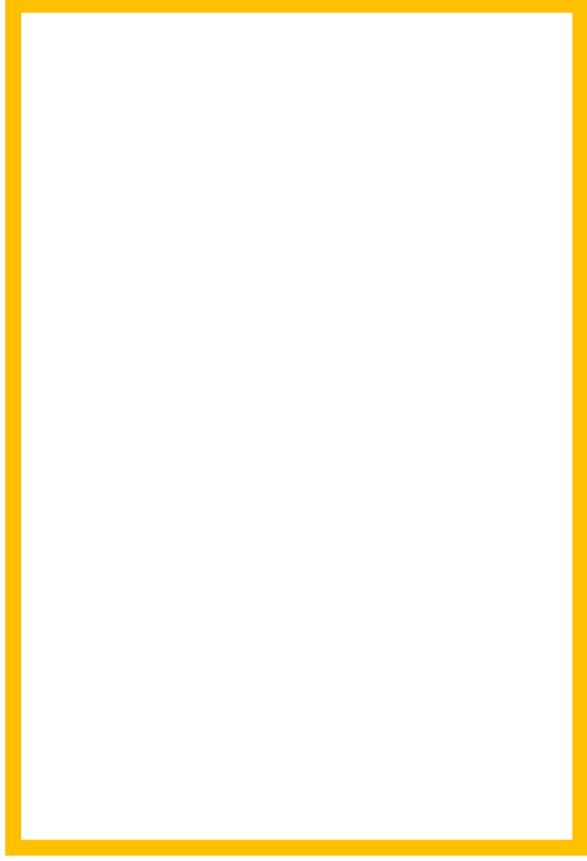
Reflection and prayer

Ask your kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or about the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Whom can I tell about this story?

End by praying together

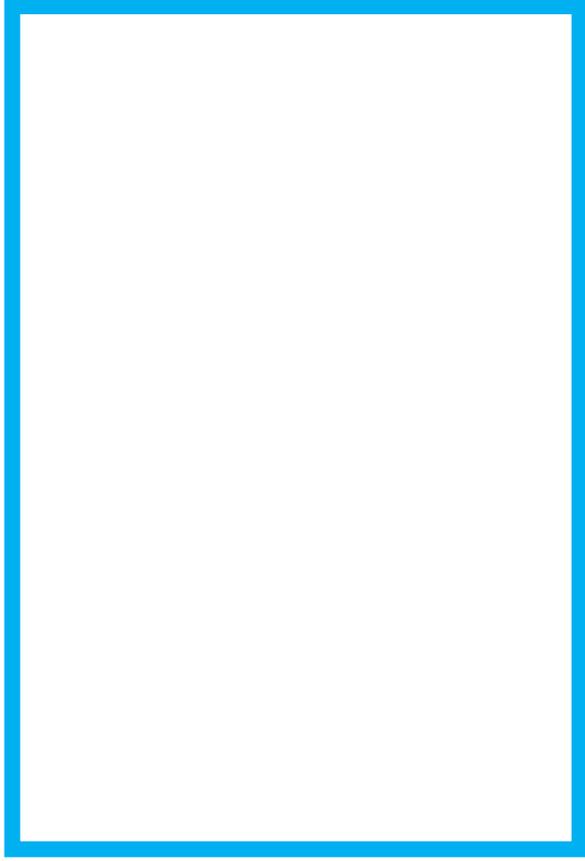
God I always wondered about...



God why do people do...



God I want to know about...



God how come...

