

Love & War #4

When God Seemingly Allows Sin to Go Unpunished

Word

Scripture Reference

Habakkuk 1:1-11

Discussion Questions

1. What do you wonder about when you see unpunished injustices in your society? How do you wish those injustices should be dealt with?
2. Habakkuk, a righteous prophet of God, lived in Judah during the reign of King Jehoiakim. He prophesied between the fall of Nineveh and the Babylonian invasion of Judah. It was a time when Judah was in decline because of great corruption, spiritual immorality and fear among the people because of the rise of empires that threatened their borders. Judah was looking for allies in the wrong places to help strengthen them instead of trusting God and looking up to Him for help. Habakkuk dialogued with God and wanted God to pour out divine judgment to those who were evil. He thought that God was not doing anything to deal with or punish those who were doing injustices and other evil things, and that God seemed to be indifferent. And he thought that this indifference contradicted God's character of being just. He felt that His character and action were inconsistent to one another. In your Christian life, do you ever wonder why God seemingly allows sin to go unpunished? Discuss how you personally want God to act in regards to injustices happening in your life or in the society you live in.
3. Read Habakkuk 1:1-11. Habakkuk asked God a two-fold question to find out how He operates when He deals with your request.
 - a. *Question #1:* "Does God not hear our prayers (v.1-2)? Saddened by the violence and corruption around him, Habakkuk poured out his heart to God. He asked how long must he call for help, but God was not listening. Have you even been in a similar situation as Habakkuk? Share a desperate plea to God that you wanted so much for Him to respond and yet He didn't seem to answer. Do you give up praying then or continue praying?"
 - b. *Question #2:* "Why does God allow evil to continue (v.3-4)? He asked God why He made him look at injustices and violence. He further asked why God would tolerate wrong. And because of God's lack of response, people disregard God and no longer obey Him. Do you entertain in your mind the same question that Habakkuk had? Do the injustices in your life or in your surrounding cause you to doubt God? Share how your faith has remained

strong in spite of unanswered questions in your mind about how God acts.

4. This two-fold question sums the question of why God seemingly allows sin to go unpunished. God answered Habakkuk questions with two answers that revealed how God acts.
 - a. *Answer #1:* God's ways are often incomprehensible and unexpected (v.5). God responded by telling Habakkuk that he would do amazing acts that would utterly amaze him. Share how in your situation, you tend to focus on your problems instead of looking how God might have been using other people or circumstances to help you deal with your problem in an amazing way. Do you agree that oftentimes you do not understand God's ways? Read Isaiah 55:8-9. What does it reveal to you about God? Discuss why you don't have to fully understand everything God is doing to believe Him or to see Him at work.
 - b. *Answer #2:* God's ways are often strange and unconventional (v.6-11). God didn't only act in an unexpected way in dealing with the sin of Judah, but it was in a strange and unconventional way. He rose up Babylonians to give justice to Judah. He used them to discipline His people. God brings back people to Him differently; others may be in a strange way. Share how different testimonies of people have blessed you. Isn't it amazing that no stories are the same? No one can tell God what to do. God's answer disclosed that He would show His justice in a surprising way.

Walk

God's strange and unconventional way of how He worked out how you could be saved from your sin shows that God can do anything in this world.

Many did not understand that salvation, which is through God's Son, who is worshipped in heaven, had to incarnate to save you. He dealt with your sin in a very unconventional way. How would you thank Him for what He did for you on the cross? Do you accept His ways and trust Him instead of doubting Him?

Worship & Prayer

Heavenly Father, your mysterious ways are beyond my human understanding. I admit that many times I wonder why you do not hear my prayers, or ask the question why you would allow sin to continue around me. But thank you that Your ways are not like my ways. Your ways may be incomprehensible and unconventional compared to what my human understanding can handle, but You are God and You know what you are doing. Thank You Lord God that you dealt with my sin problem in a very unconventional way of sending your Son Jesus Christ to die for my sin. And because of that, I became a recipient of eternal life when I put my trust in Him for my salvation. Thank you. In Jesus' Name, Amen.