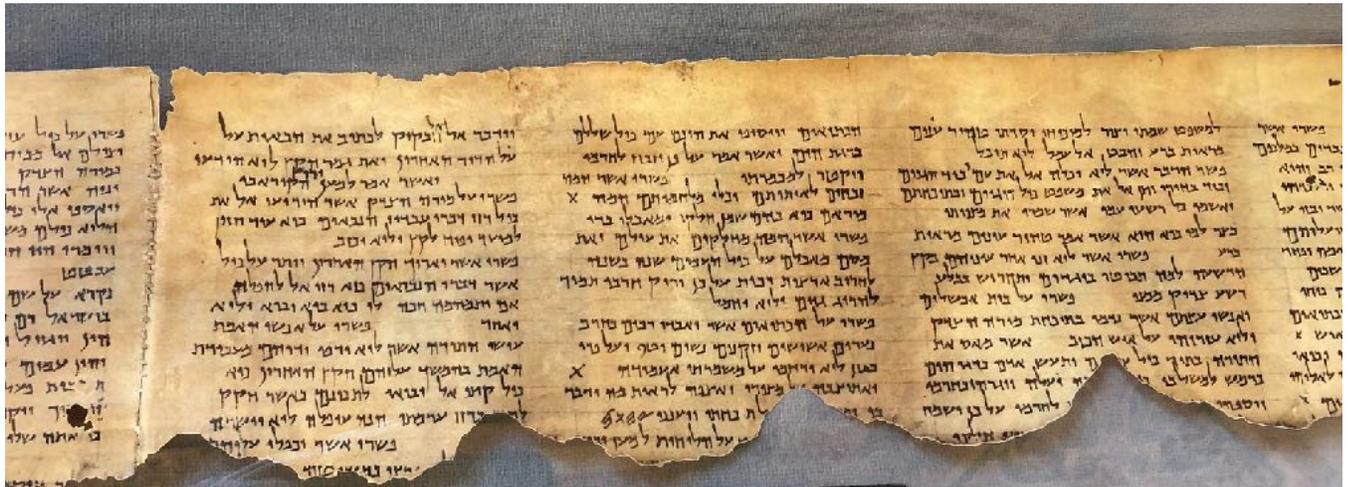


Daily View

"But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called 'today'" Hebrews 3:13

March 24, 2020



Commentary on the book of Habakkuk, Cave 1 (Dead Sea Scrolls). Photo taken at the Lanier Theological Library, Houston, Texas

**Though the fig tree should not blossom,
nor fruit be on the vines,
the produce of the olive fail
and the fields yield no food,
and there be no herd in the stalls,**

**Yet I will rejoice in the Lord;
I will take joy in the God of my salvation.
God, the Lord, is my strength;
he makes my feet like the deer's;
he makes me tread on my high places.**

Habakkuk 3:17-19

News

Dawn Herrin is having gall bladder surgery today; keep her in your prayers. Take a look at the church directory and contact a couple of people today to see how they are doing. Keeping connected is a challenge, under the circumstances, but Christians don't live "under the circumstances." It's important.

Heading in the Right Direction

The passage above, from Habakkuk, has always been one of my favorites. The verses need context, though, to be fully understood. Take a moment to read this short book this week; you'll be rewarded. (FYI, Jeff Carr and I will be discussing the book on April 2nd on Facebook Live at 11 AM).

Habakkuk is unique among the prophets. It's the record of the prophet's prayers and God's answers. The challenge for Habakkuk is that God's answers do not make any sense to him. Sometimes, the answers don't fit the questions. We think God should go one way, and he goes the other way, and it confuses us. The quote above reveals Habakkuk's choice to accept God's baffling answer; though it confused Habakkuk, in the end, he got on board with God. "The righteous shall live by faith" (2:4) and Habakkuk wanted, more than anything, to be righteous. He wanted to go in the same direction as God.

Sometimes, it's hard to follow God's directions because they seem counter-intuitive. When we visit Hawaii, we have to change our way of thinking about "directions." It's almost impossible to speak in terms of "east & west" or "north & south" because the island is more round than square and surrounded by water. Californians know that if we're facing in the direction of the ocean, it's west, more or less. In Hawaii, it's hard to figure out which way you are facing at any given time. The Hawaiians know this so they've come up with two words that help when giving directions: "mauka" means "toward the mountains"; "makai" means "toward the sea." So instead of saying "turn right" or "go south" they point you to the mauka or makai side of the island. It's not flawless, but it helps.

When God says "mauka" we may be tempted, like Habakkuk, to say "makai." But the writer of Proverbs, twice, says, "there is a way which seems right to a man but the end is the way of death" (Proverbs 14:12; 16:25). God gives us a roadmap; some of the roads are superhighways; some seem like bumpy, dirt roads going who-knows-where. We wonder, "how can this possibly be the right way?" But, if we have the spirit of Habakkuk, we say, "I'll go the way he tells me to go, even when it doesn't make sense." "The righteous shall live by faith..." (2:4).

In his best selling book on Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Eric Metaxas says, "when someone asked Bonhoeffer why he didn't join the "German Christians" in order to work against [the Nazis] from within, he answered that he couldn't. 'If you board the wrong train,' he said, 'it is no use running along the corridor in the opposite direction.'" Faith is not about trying to figure everything out. Faith is about facing in the direction God wants us to go in, and going that way. - dp

Opinions expressed in this publication are my own. Email me at dpaulposey@mac.com or text me at (530) 558-5057