

# SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

For the week of August 20-26, 2023  
"WHEN GOD SEEMS ABSENT"

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## GETTING STARTED

*To the facilitator: Use this section to introduce the topic. If possible, give a brief recap of the sermon.*

Share a memorable point, a spiritual lesson, a personal application, a question, or something that challenged you from the sermon last Sunday.

If you could give your younger self advice about expectations versus reality, what funny piece of wisdom would you share?

## GROUP DISCUSSION

### Read Habakkuk 1:1-11

1. What do we know about the historical context of Habakkuk's message? What was happening in Judah during that time? In what way were Habakkuk's concerns and questions relevant to the people of his time? Can you think of examples from recent history or current events that mirror the questions that Habakkuk was grappling with?
2. Habakkuk feels like God is not responding to his cries for help. How does his questions and doubts resonate with our own struggles to understand God's ways? Have you ever experienced a situation where you felt like God was silent or distant? How did you handle it?
3. In verse 5, God declares that he will do something that the people wouldn't believe even if they were told. What do you think went through Habakkuk's mind when he these words? What character and nature of God do you see in this statement?
4. The Babylonians' pride is emphasized in these verses 6-11. How does their arrogance intersect with the concept of God's sovereignty and their role in his plan? How can human pride hinder our capability to fully submit to God's purposes in our lives?
5. How can we develop the ability to see beyond the surface of events and recognize God's underlying purposes, as Habakkuk had to do with the Babylonians? What practices or perspectives can help us view challenges and difficulties as opportunities for growth and learning?

6. How comfortable are you with questioning God when you encounter challenges, injustices, or difficulties in your life? Has there been a recent situation that caused you to question God's plan? How did you handle it and how did God respond to you?
7. In what ways can Habakkuk's interaction with God serve as a model for your own prayer life and communication with God during times of confusion or questioning? Are there other biblical figures who experienced doubts and uncertainties that you can relate to and learn from?
8. **NEXT STEPS**  
*God the Father did what was right to save us by sending Jesus. You can trust him to do the right thing in your life.*
  - I will not hesitate to come to God in reverence with my questions.
  - I will remember that God sees the bigger picture and not me.
  - I will balance my expectations with my understanding of God's sovereignty and his goodness.

*Don't forget to:*

- Go through the devotionals every day this week.
- Have a regular daily time of prayer and reading of God's Word.

## CLOSING THE SESSION

Close the session by taking the time to pray for one another. Consider the following as you pray:

- Pray that God would strengthen your faith, increase your trust, and give you spiritual eyes to see the ways he is working in your life.
- Pray for relationships to grow with other Christ-followers, that you will encourage and care for one another.
- Pray for your unsaved family, friends, and loved ones.
- Pray for protection, provision, healing and comfort for everyone who's going through physical, emotional, mental and spiritual pain.

## BIBLE READING GUIDE

August 21	Habakkuk 1:1-4
August 22	Habakkuk 1:5-11
August 23	Exodus 5
August 24	Colossians 3:15-24
August 25	2 Kings 19:8-19
August 26	Haggai 1:12-2:5
August 27	Psalms 150