

## **Habakkuk 3:2-10 + 19**

A prayer of Habakkuk that takes the form of a vision of God's sovereignty.

Habakkuk 3:2 - "in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy."

**Habakkuk 3:3** - "God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran." Or, from the direction of Mt. Sinai, where God demonstrated his manifestation of power to Israel at the first.

The next few verses are a reflection of God's power and authority over the universe as exhibited in the upheavals and earthquakes and that were part of the Deluge.

There are three examples of God's control over time itself - the ancient mountains disintegrate, the primeval hills are flattened. He travels on the ancient road."

The "ancient" mountains = Hebrew "ad" meaning continuous existences, usually referring to God's existence. But in this case, God disintegrates them. Then, the "primeval" hill = Hebrew "olam" = eternity. But God flattens them. Finally, His ways are "ancient" or "everlasting" (olam - outside of time). To "travel the ancient roads" points to God's path and plans being beyond the constraints of time.

Then comes the reference that makes this a "Flood" haftarah:

**Habakkuk 3:8-10** - "Was the LORD displeased against the rivers? was thine anger against the rivers? was thy wrath against the sea, that thou didst ride upon thine horses and thy chariots of salvation? Thy bow was made quite naked, according to the oaths of the tribes, even thy word. Selah. Thou didst cleave the earth with rivers. The mountains saw thee, and they trembled: the overflowing of the water passed by: the deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high."

God's "bow" is a symbol of his strength, in this case it is "naked = plainly evident" and "sworn by an oath" to be directed against the earth itself. His bow of judgment toward the world was later reversed in the symbol of the rainbow, to point away from the earth, to confirm his promise never to destroy the world by water again.

(Nevertheless, a flood is often used as a symbol of God's judgment - see Isaiah 28 and its New Testament fulfillment at Pentecost, when metaphors of flood, burning of chaff at the threshing floor and a mighty wind are all evident. The rest of Habakkuk 3, though not part of this haftarah, also reflects this, not to mention the victory of the promised Deliverer in vs. 13 - "for salvation with thine anointed; thou woundedst the head out of the house of the wicked." This hope remains, even "though the fig tree shall not blossom ... yet I will rejoice in the LORD.")

The final verse is, as usual in a haftarah, one of hope and comfort for Israel:

**Habakkuk 3:19** - "The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places. To the chief singer on my stringed instruments."

"High places" is the Hebrew "bamah," usually signifies the places where idolatrous worship took place. To "walk upon" those places meant there was no longer a belief or fear or respect for the idol's power.