

#Small Group Guide: Look Among the Nations

****God's Heart for Missions | Habakkuk 1:1-5****

Opening Prayer

Begin your group time by asking God to open hearts and minds to His global mission and to reveal where He is already at work in your lives and community.

Ice Breaker

Share a time when God surprised you by working in an unexpected way or through an unexpected person or circumstance.

Key Scripture

****Habakkuk 1:5**** - "Look among the nations, and see; wonder and be astounded. For I am doing a work in your days that you would not believe if told."

Sermon Summary

The prophet Habakkuk cried out to God about the violence and injustice he saw around him. God's response was surprising: "Look among the nations—I'm doing something you wouldn't believe." God's mission has always been global, and He often works in unexpected ways through unexpected circumstances. Our call is to lift our eyes beyond our immediate problems to see God's bigger purpose and join Him in His work among all nations.

Discussion Questions

****Understanding the Message****

1. ****The Prophet's Cry****: Habakkuk asked "How long, Lord?" when he saw violence and injustice. When have you found yourself asking God similar questions about what you see in the world today?

2. ****God's Surprising Answer****: God told Habakkuk He was working in ways the prophet wouldn't believe. Why do you think God's ways often surprise or confuse us? Can you share an example from your own life?

3. ****Looking Beyond****: God called Habakkuk to "look among the nations" rather than just at his immediate problems. What does it look like practically to lift our eyes from our own circumstances to God's global purpose?

****Biblical Perspective****

4. ****God's Heart for Nations****: The sermon traced God's heart for all nations from Genesis to Revelation. Which of these passages stood out to you most, and why?

- Genesis 12:3 (Abraham's blessing to all families)
- Psalm 67:2 (God's way known among all nations)
- Matthew 28:19 (Great Commission)
- Revelation 7:9 (Every nation before the throne)

5. ****Unexpected Methods****: God used a famine to position Joseph, persecution to spread the early church, and even a cross to bring salvation. How does knowing that God uses crises and hardships for His purposes change how you view current difficulties?

6. ****Asking "Why"*****: The pastor gave permission to ask God "why." How does this freedom change your prayer life? Have you been taught that questioning God is wrong? How do the Psalms model honest conversation with God?

****Personal Application****

7. ****Finding God at Work****: Henry Blackaby's principle is "Find out where God is at work and join Him there." Where do you see God working right now—in your family, workplace, community, or world? How might you join Him?

8. ****Sender or Goer****: The sermon stated that every believer is called to be either a sender or a goer (or both). Which role do you sense God calling you to right now? What would obedience look like?

9. ****From Complaint to Worship****: Habakkuk moved from "How long, Lord?" to "The Lord is my strength." What helps you make that same journey from doubt to faith when you're struggling?

Practical Engagement

10. **Acts 1:8 in Action**: Jesus called us to be witnesses in Jerusalem (home), Judea (region), Samaria (uncomfortable places), and the ends of the earth (globally). Identify one specific way your group could engage in missions at each of these levels.

11. **Crisis as Opportunity**: The sermon shared stories of earthquakes, hurricanes, and pandemics opening doors for ministry. What current crisis or challenge might God be using to create ministry opportunities? How can we respond with faith rather than fear?

Key Takeaways

Write these down and share which one resonates most with you:

1. God's mission is never confined to one nation, people, or generation—His heart beats for all nations.
2. Missions start when we stop looking inward and start looking outward.
3. God often uses unexpected people, unusual methods, and unforeseen circumstances to advance His mission.
4. It's okay to ask God "why"—honest questions are part of genuine faith.
5. Every believer is called to participate in missions as either a sender or a goer (or both).
6. Missions begin in our hearts and homes but don't stop there.
7. The ultimate goal of missions is God's glory—every tribe and tongue worshipping before His throne.

Practical Applications

This Week:

- **Pray**: Choose one unreached people group or nation and commit to praying for them daily this week. (Use resources like joshuaproject.net)
- **Look**: Identify one place in your daily routine where you can "look among the nations"—perhaps a refugee family, international students, or immigrant coworkers
- **Give**: Research one missions organization and consider a financial gift to support gospel work

This Month:

- **Learn**: Read a missionary biography or watch a documentary about missions work
- **Connect**: Invite someone from a different cultural background to share a meal with you
- **Serve**: Volunteer with a local ministry serving immigrants, refugees, or international communities

This Year:

- **Go**: Prayerfully consider participating in a short-term missions trip
- **Send**: Commit to regularly supporting a missionary financially and through prayer
- **Mobilize**: Share what you're learning about missions with your family, especially children

Group Challenge

"Here Am I, Send Me" Commitment:

As a group, prayerfully discuss one specific missions initiative you could undertake together in the next 3-6 months. This could be:

- Supporting a missionary as a group
- Organizing a local outreach to international communities
- Planning a short-term missions trip together
- Hosting a missions awareness event at your church
- Partnering with a ministry serving marginalized communities

Write down your commitment and set a date to follow up on progress.

Closing Reflection

Read Habakkuk 3:17-19 together:

"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, the flock be cut off from the fold 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."*

****Reflection Question****: What would it look like for you to have this kind of faith—rejoicing in God's mission even when circumstances are difficult?

Closing Prayer

Go around the circle and have each person pray one sentence, asking God to:

- Open their eyes to where He is working
- Give them faith to trust His unexpected ways
- Use them to reach the nations for His glory

Additional Resources

- ****Book****: *Experiencing God* by Henry Blackaby
- ****Website****: joshuaproject.net (information on unreached people groups)
- ****Podcast****: The Missions Podcast
- ****Organization****: Your church's missions partners (ask your pastor for contact information)

Notes Section

Use this space to write down insights, commitments, or prayer requests from your group discussion:

****Next Steps****: Before your next meeting, follow up on your personal "This Week" commitments and be ready to share what God showed you.