

Habakkuk 1

Jesus

Introduction

- **Author:** Habakkuk
 1. Name: Lit. Embraced by God
 2. Possibly a Levite associated w/ Temple singers v 3:19
 3. Prophesied during fall of Nineveh in 612BC
 4. Prophesied events from 625BC–606BC

Most prophets have w/ **Messages from God**
Habakkuk begins w/ **Questions for God**

Q. Will evil go unpunished?
A. All evil will be punished... **in My time and in My way**

- **Date Written:** 607BC?

After Assyria and Egypt are conquered at Carchemish the Babylonians under the leadership of Nebuchadnezzar are now moving toward Judah now in decline after their courageous reformer King Josiah died in **609BC**. Presently, wickedness is prevailing in Judah as Habakkuk begins to prophesy its soon destruction and exile to Babylon.

Ever questioned when God will finally judge the evil in our country?
Murder of Innocent, Perversity, Apostacy

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|------------------------------------|----------|
| 1. Habakkuk's First Complaint | 1:1-1:4 |
| 2. God's First Response | 1:5-1:11 |
| 3. Habakkuk's Second Complaint | 1:12-2:1 |
| 4. God's Second Response | 2:2-2:20 |
| 5. Habakkuk's Prayer of Submission | 3:1-3:19 |

I. Prophet Asks When Will You Judge the Wickedness of Our Nation?

1 The burden which the prophet Habakkuk saw.

- **Burden:**
 1. **Lit. Oracle:** Usually addressed to/regarding a foreign nation
 2. Here the prophet speaks of **his own nation... Israel**

Prophesy Habakkuk receives is a burden from God... Word heavy to bear

2 O Lord, how long shall I cry, And You will not hear? Even cry out to You, "Violence!" And You will not save. **3 Why do You show me iniquity, And cause me to see trouble? For plundering and violence are before me; There is strife, and contention arises.**

- **Lord:** Actually, **LORD** covenant Name for God **YHWH**
- **Habakkuk** dealing w/two issues affecting him personally...

1. **Loss:** Watching his nation completely fall away from God
2. **Frustration:** God [the I AM] seemingly letting it happen

- **Vexed:** Lit. Tortured by what he sees. Loss. Helplessly watching...

2 Peter 2:7 [God] delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the **filthy conduct** of the wicked 8 for that righteous man, dwelling among them, **tormented [KJV Vexed]** his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds

- **All I see** is Violence, Sin, Trouble, Rioting
- **All I feel** is Strife and Contention...

When will you judge our Nation?

4 Therefore the **law is powerless**, And justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous; Therefore **perverse judgment proceeds**.

- **Law is powerless:** Lawlessness prevails
 1. Wicked far outnumber the righteous
 2. Wicked intimidate/threaten the righteous

There is a perversion of Justice. The wicked are set free with a smile while the righteous are falsely accused/even convicted. **Our nation is in a state of Cognitive Dissonance:** The state of having **inconsistent** thoughts, beliefs, or attitudes, especially as relating to behavioral decisions and attitude change.

It is obvious to any thinking person this is the way it is supposed to be
So why is this happening? Vexed by loss and frustrated by helplessness

A Broken Judicial System is the sign of soon demise for a Nation

Isaiah 59:14 Justice is turned back, And righteousness stands afar off; For **truth is fallen** in the street, And equity [fairness] cannot enter.

Isaiah 29:21 [The wicked...] **make a man an offender by a word**, And lay a snare for him who reproves [criticizes] in the gate, And turn aside the just by empty words.

- **Cancel culture...Righteous become prey**

Isaiah 59:15 So **truth fails**, And he who departs from evil **makes himself a prey**. Then the Lord saw it, and it displeased Him That **there was no justice**.

Amos 5:10 They hate the one who rebukes in the gate, And they abhor the one who speaks uprightly.

**We can totally relate to Habakkuk's Sorrow/Frustration
Spirit of Truth vexed within us...We may say with Jeremiah...**

Jeremiah 12:1 Righteous are You, O Lord, when I plead with You; Yet **let me talk with You about Your judgments**. Why does the way of the wicked prosper? **Why are those happy who deal so treacherously?**

Habakkuk deals with the questions that come up when someone **really believes God**, yet looks around and the world doesn't seem to match up with how God wants it. Habakkuk sees it -especially remembering the prior times of revival under King Josiah - and asks, "Lord, why are you allowing this?" [Guzik]

When Will You Judge the Wickedness of Our Nation?

II. God Answers I Am about to Judge My People

5 "Look among the nations and watch—Be utterly astounded! For I will **work a work** in your days Which **you would not believe**, though it were told you.

Glad you asked Habakkuk...

- **Work a work?** Actually, something ominous/impressive is about to happen

Isaiah 55:8 My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways, says the Lord.

- **Q. When will you act Lord:** Are we ready for God to act?

God sometimes answers prayer

In a way we would never believe/think of/or even want

6 For indeed I am raising up the **Chaldeans, A bitter and hasty nation** Which marches through the breadth of the earth, To possess dwelling places that are not theirs.

- **God's Response:** Not too good to be true...**but too bad to be true** [Guzik]

The worst of all answers: God will use His enemies to punish His people
The Chaldeans [Babylonians] are coming for you!

- **Habakkuk shouldn't have been surprised...**

Prophesied by Moses 1000 yrs. earlier Consequences of a Nation forsaking the Living God

Deuteronomy 28:47 [Sin of Ingratitude] "Because you did not serve the Lord your God with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of everything, 48 therefore you shall serve your enemies, whom the Lord will send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in need of everything; and He will put a yoke of iron on your neck until He has destroyed you. 49 **The Lord will bring a nation against you from afar**, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flies, a nation whose language you will not understand, 50 a nation of fierce countenance, which does not respect the elderly nor show favor to the young.

Are there times when we stop asking for God's mercy on our Nation and start asking for His Judgement? Are we really ready for that? [NJC]

- **God kept His Word...**

1. Josiah the great reformer/King of Judah is dead

2. Israel's depravity became worse than surrounding pagan nations...

2 Chronicles 36:17 Therefore [God] brought against them the king of the Chaldeans, who killed their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had **no compassion** on young man or virgin, on the aged or the weak; He gave them all into his hand.

- **They are bitter and hasty:** Lit. Discontent/Running toward you
- They will dispossess you live in your homes

I am raising them up to Judge you...That's what you asked for...right?

- **Q.** I thought You could just send a little targeted fire from heaven/little rebuke?
- **A.** They are beyond listening. Mark 3/ Mat 12

There comes a time to judge. We don't now what we have till it's gone

7 They are terrible and dreadful; Their judgment and their dignity proceed from themselves. 8 Their horses also are **swifter than leopards**, And more fierce than evening wolves. Their chargers charge ahead; Their cavalry comes from afar; They **fly as the eagle that hastens to eat**.

- **Judgment proceeds from themselves:** No regard for established laws of others
Terrible/Dreadful/Proud/Fast/Fierce/Hungry

Lamentations 4:19 [Jeremiah after the fact] Our pursuers were swifter Than the eagles of the heavens. They pursued us on the mountains And lay in wait for us in the wilderness.

- **Ezekiel prophesied the cruelty of Babylon...**

Ezekiel 7:24 Therefore I will bring the **worst of the Gentiles**, And they will possess their houses; I will cause the pomp of the strong to cease, And their holy places shall be defiled.

Ezekiel 21:31 I will pour out My indignation on you; I will blow against you with the fire of My wrath, And deliver you into the hands of brutal men who are **skillful to destroy**.

Men are not good. Unregenerated men fight to be simply "kind of okay". For a time, the Holy Spirit will to an extent restrain the innate evil of men and demons fully displayed at the crucifixion of the Son of God. That time will soon end and all hell will break loose on earth when God removes His bride and lets men and demons have their way. [NJC]

- **Babylonians:** Evil Men skillful to destroy
 1. Slow roasted alive in barrel over fire
 2. Killing sons of a King then plucking his eyes out

We forget how good we have it...God's gracious blessings on our Nation
Even a brief study of human history reveals the short lifespan of Nations before destruction

8 Cycles of Nations and Individuals [Henley]

1. **Ratification** All the consensus establishments [in contemporary America, The Entertainment Establishment, Information Establishment, Academic Establishment, Political Establishment, Corporate Establishment] and a critical mass of the general population **agree that the God who**

has revealed Himself in time and space is the true God, the foundation of the nation, and the Being to whom both the leaders and the people are accountable.

2. **Relapse of memory** In Israel's experience this begins with the death of Joshua and his generation. Generally, the consensus establishments turn from their belief in God, and the critical mass of the population centering on the Lord begins to fade.
3. **Rebellion** Turning away from God in behavior, ethics and moral value is the nature of this stage. Lawlessness abounds, along with apostasy. Will Durant described it accurately: "Conduct, deprived of its religious supports, deteriorates into [epicurean](#) chaos..."

Epicureanism: An ancient school of philosophy founded in Athens by Epicurus. The school rejected determinism and advocated hedonism [pleasure as the highest good], but of a restrained kind: mental pleasure was regarded more highly than physical, and the ultimate pleasure was held to be freedom from anxiety and mental pain, especially that arising from needless fear of death and of the gods.

Pursuit of Happiness in Declaration of Independence assumes at least a respect for God/ His Word

- Worship of Pleasure apart from God leads to chaos not satisfaction:

Why does Epicureanism always fail? Because unregenerate man by definition is selfish. Because everyone's pursuit of pleasure is different and eventually our pleasurable pursuit deprives others of their pleasurable pursuit leaving everyone **miserable in their own selfishness**. Only the Holy Spirit enabling selflessness/humility can bring satisfaction to man. [NJC]

- **Godless society will not go unpunished**

1. **God's Passive Wrath:** Rome never conquered but imploded
2. **God's Active Wrath:** Using enemies/nature/catastrophes as described in OT
3. **E.g., Pompeii:** Sowed to the fleshly nature/Godless
 - Ravaged by Earthquakes
 - 79AD Destroyed by Vesuvius in 18 hours after 600 yrs. of existence
 - Today see remains w/pornography/filth on walls/bodies fixed in time

Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

- **# 3 Rebellion...**

Judges 17:6 In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

From Rebellion to Chaos-From Chaos to Judgment...

4. **Refiner's Fire** In this stage, the consequences of forgetting God and the rebellion that follows begin to fall upon the nation. Israel experiences spiritual and societal lethargy, and falls into captivity. For modern times, Durant writes that "life itself, shorn of consoling faith, becomes a burden alike to conscious poverty and to weary wealth."
5. **Remembrance** Things get so bad in the Refiner's Fire stage that individuals in the nation begin wondering what has gone wrong... what was left behind. They find one another, and, together, begin a search for lost values. Prophets arise, give guidance, but are persecuted. Nevertheless, they point the way back to God, His Kingdom, and the values it represents.
6. **Repentance** A remnant of the nation's populace grows into a critical mass, and begins to repent for its own sins as well as the sins of its society. They "stand in the gap" for the land. [Ezekiel 22:20] God hears from heaven, forgives their sins, and begins to heal their nation. [2 Chronicles 7:14]
7. **Revival** God listens to the prayers of His remnant, and releases spiritual renewal throughout the

nation. The number turning back to God swells. Culture is transformed. Benjamin Franklin described the atmosphere of New England during the Great Awakening when he wrote that "one could not walk through the town in an evening without hearing psalms sung in different families of every street."

8. **Rest** The culmination is expressed in the words of Judges 3:11 and other passages: "And the land had rest forty years" [a generation]. During the "Rest" stage, ratification of the nation's belief in and focus on God is recovered and sustained until the cycle begins again. [Henley]

**Is a Nation always given an opportunity to repeat the cycle?
America is not Israel and does not share all the same promises as Israel**

1. **Is there is a line that can be crossed?** Academia/Government/Entertainment
2. **Is the line now behind us?** Are we too comfortable to even to know?
3. **Have men become too good/evolving into a more compassionate monkey** than could ever again violently/cruelly take over a nation? **Don't think so.**

Babylonian Chariots are Rolling
Cavalry flies like an Eagle that *hastens to eat...*

9 "They all **come for violence**; Their faces are set like the east wind. They gather captives like sand. 10 They scoff at kings, And princes are scorned by them. They deride every stronghold, For they heap up earthen mounds and seize it.

- Habakkuk regrets asking the question?

This is who they are: Terrible/Dreadful/Proud/Fast/Fierce/Hungry

- **This is what they do/going to do to you**

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 1. They have come for violence | They like it |
| 2. They gather slaves numerous as sand | Trophies |
| 3. They disrespect those in authority | Kings/Princes |

They heap up earthen mounds and seize the city

- **This shook Habakkuk to the core:** Knew Assyrians starved out Samaria in North

11 Then his mind changes, and he transgresses; He commits offense, **Ascribing this power to his god.**"

- Ascribing victory to their demon God Nebo/Marduk
- Babylonians would only survive 70 years as a world power

Daniel 5:4 [Nebuchadnezzar's grandson Belshazzar] drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone.

- **God writes on the wall...**

1. Knees knocked/Bowels loosed
2. **God said:** You/Babylon are finished. Mede/Persians on way

Babylon was the world's dominating power for only 70 years!

The question "when will God judge the evil of our Nation" is answered

**The worst of all answers: I will use My enemies to punish My people
The Chaldeans are coming for you!**

- Talk is over. Mercy is over. Grace is over. **The line has been crossed...**

III. Prophet Asks Why are You going to Judge Us Like That?

12 Are You not from **everlasting**, O Lord my God, my Holy One? We shall not die. O Lord, You have **appointed them for judgment**; O Rock, You have marked them for correction.

- **Habakkuk is Vexed:** ... pricked in the kidneys/seat of emotion

Did You really say that!

- You are Everlasting/You are our God

Deuteronomy 33:27 The eternal God is your refuge, And underneath are the everlasting arms; **He will thrust out the enemy from before you...**

Malachi 3:6 [Promise to Israel] "For I am the Lord, I do not change; Therefore **you are not consumed**, O sons of Jacob.

You are my Holy One and have promised David a remnant...Messiah

Yet we dare not presume to be rescued by the goodness of God in the midst of brazen rebellion. He is always good and at the same time always just. He will leave a remnant as He promised...but it might not be you. [NJC]

- They are **appointed for Judgment**/They are marked by You **for correction**

13 You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours A person more righteous than he?

**You are too holy to use these heathens to teach us a lesson
We're not that bad. Not as bad as them? Really?**

- God already used Assyria to judge/take captive northern kingdom...

Isaiah 10:5 "Woe to Assyria, the **rod of My anger** And the staff in whose hand is My indignation. 6 I will send him against an ungodly nation, And against the people of My wrath I will give him charge, To seize the spoil, to take the prey, And to tread them down like the mire of the streets. 7 Yet he does not mean so, Nor does his heart think so; But **it is in his heart to destroy**, And cut off not a few nations.

God uses the sinful nature of man for His own purpose...even to judge His own people
God uses who and what He wants...it's all His...even the Devil

- **Habakkuk:** Why them. **God:** Because I said so
- **John the Baptist:** Imprisoned began to question Jesus' timing/ways

Luke 7:23 [Tell John] ...blessed is he who is **not offended because of Me.**

- Not offended at My timing/Not offended at My ways. Remember own words John...

John 3:30 He must increase, but I must decrease. 31 He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all.

**Sometimes we need a Holy Attitude Adjustment.
God is always faithful to Oblige**

- **Habakkuk continues to question God...**

14 Why do You make men like fish of the sea, Like creeping things that have no ruler over them? 15 They take up all of them with a hook, They catch them in their net, And gather them in their dragnet. Therefore they rejoice and are glad. 16 Therefore they **sacrifice to their net**, And burn incense to their dragnet; Because by them their share is sumptuous And their food plentiful. 17 Shall they therefore empty their net, And continue to slay nations without pity?

- **Q.** Why are you going to allow us to be treated like animals?
- **A.** Because you're acting like animals and not people of God

You presume that my goodness will excuse your blatant rebellion

- **Habakkuk:** God...FYI They will not give you glory. Continue to be bad. Just sayin'
- **God:** Don't worry Habakkuk...I will deal with them. You have enough on your plate

**Do we want God to judge our Nation? Where are we at as a Nation?
Abortion/Perversity/Lies/Broken Judicial System?**

- **When we stop fearing the LORD...We should start fearing the LORD**
- **Judah never imagined it could happen:** Too comfortable in their sin...

Jeremiah 25:9 ... behold, I will send and **take all the families of the north,** says the Lord, and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land, against its inhabitants, and against these nations all around, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, a hissing, and perpetual desolations.

- America is somewhere between Rebellion/Refiners Fire [Closer to the fire]
- **So... Do we want Mercy or Judgment?** ... We want a God-fearing Nation

**Begins with the prayers of God's people leading to Repentance/Regeneration
Spiritual Revival of individuals and our nation...Even if just one more time**