

HABAKKUK

1-2a **HABAKKUK ... & GOD**

1-2a **COMPLAINT #1**

HOW LONG WILL I CRY OUT? WHY DON'T YOU LISTEN? (1-2)

TORAH NEGLECTED

VIOLENCE & INJUSTICE

CORRUPT LEADERSHIP

1-2b **COMPLAINT #2**

WHAT? BABYLON IS EVEN WORSE THAN ISRAEL!

I'LL STAND LATCH & WAIT FOR GOD TO RESPOND TO ME! (2-1)

THEY DIRT THEIR POWER! THEY TREAT HUMANS LIKE ANIMALS! THEY TREAT NEVOK NATIONS!

1-2c **RESPONSE #1**

LOOK! I'M RAISING UP THE BABYLONIANS...

1-2d **RESPONSE #2**

GOD WILL BRING BABYLON DOWN!

GOD MAY USE CORRUPT KINGDOMS, BUT DOESN'T FORGIVE THEM!

ALL NATIONS ARE ACCOUNTABLE TO GOD'S JUSTICE.

VISION ABOUT AN APPOINTED TIME!

1-2e **RESPONSE #3**

RIGHTEOUS WILL LIVE BY THEIR FAITH!

12b **FIVE WOES**

THE OPPRESSIVE INJUSTICE OF BABYLON

1) UNJUST ECONOMICS

2) SLAVE LABOR

3) IRRESPONSIBLE LEADERS

4) IDOLATRY

1-2f **COMPLAINT #3**

HABAKKUK PLEADS WITH GOD

RENEW YOUR WORK IN OUR DAYS! (3-1)

3-2 **HABAKKUK'S PRAYER**

APPEARS IN POWER! SIMILAR TO MICHAEL & NINJA 1... & TO HT. SMH (1998)

3-3 **GOD**

YOU CRUSH THE HEAD OF THE EVIL HOUSE. (3-3)

ARCHITECTURE OF EVIL NATIONS

3-4 **A FUTURE EXODUS**

YOU SAVE YOUR PEOPLE AND YOUR ANOINTED ONE. (3-11)

3-5-19

3-17-18

EVEN IF THE FIELDS PRODUCE NO FOOD, I WILL FIND JOY IN GOD MY SAVIOR.

SHINING EXAMPLE OF THE "Righteous" LIVING BY FAITH

3-12 **GOD'S ANSWER TO Habakkuk**

Later Generations

3-13 **WHEN GOD WILL:**

- DEFEAT EVIL
- BRING JUSTICE TO ALL
- RESCUE THE OPPRESSED

3-14 **A PAST EXODUS**

BECOMES AN Image OF

3-15 **A FUTURE EXODUS**

created by the Bible Project

WEEK 7

100

TIMELINE

HABAKKUK



*All dates are approximate

2022

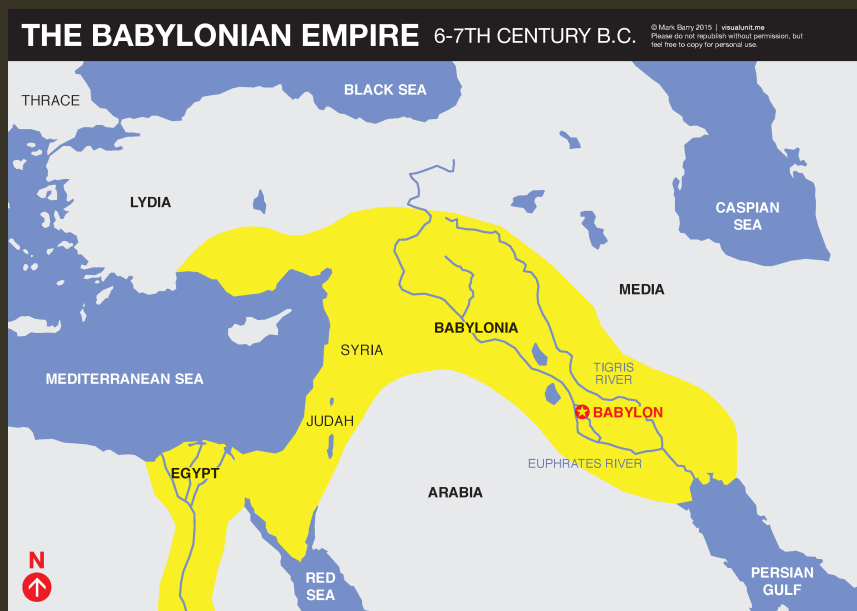
HABAKKUK

- Once again, very little is known about this minor prophet.
- Hab 3:19 tells us that he was not only a prophet but also a composer of music.
- Habakkuk means "embrace".
- He was regarded as a prophet of faith who, ironically, wanted answers for God's apparent disregard for the righteous.

THE DATE OF HABAKKUK

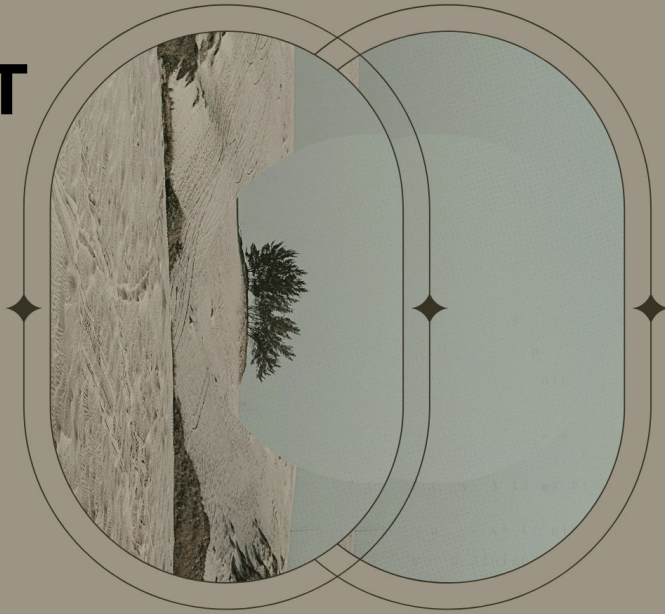
- His reference to Babylon indicates that they had already begun to become an independent presence (626).
- The latest the book could have been written would be 605 because the judgment of Judah is in the future.
- The state of affairs in Judah suggests that Josiah is no longer king (died 609 in battle with Neco).
- The description of moral and civil anarchy suggests the early years of Jehoiakim (608-605), just before the initial invasion/deportation.

BABYLONIAN EMPIRE



PURPOSE STATEMENT

- *To examine the issue of God's justice on a national level.*
- *To discuss theodicy.*
 - How does a just God use a wicked nation like Babylon as his instrument for punishment?



BABYLON

- His description in 1:5-11 is extremely graphic.
- Babylon had begun to overwhelm the nations in their quest for universal domination.
- They acted in proud self-sufficiency.
 - This caused Habakkuk to reconcile their behavior with the fact that God would use them to punish Judah and the nations (1:13).
 - One of the issues for the prophets was that Assyria, which had been a rod of discipline for Israel, was passing from the national scene, and Judah had yet to be punished.
- God agrees with Habakkuk that Babylon was a wicked people who had covered their garments in blood in their quest for the wealth of the nations.





BABYLON

- Yahweh had allowed them to prosper and succeed, but they would later incur this judgment. All appeals to their gods would be useless on that day.
 - While Assyria had passed from the national scene, God would use Babylon.
- 3:1-15 is a prayer that Habakkuk composed to celebrate Yahweh and his works in history.
- In light of the past, Judah could take confidence in what Yahweh would do for his people.
- No matter what happens, all will be well, for Yahweh is sovereign.

ASSYRIAN-BABYLON TIMELINE

- In 668, Ashurbanipal came to the Assyrian throne, and Assyria was at the height of its glory.
- By the end of the reign, deterioration was evident.
- In the mid-650s, the Egyptian Pharaoh began to push Assyria out of Egypt, and Ashurbanipal was unable to stop it because of a civil war happening in Assyria.
- Ashurbanipal's brother, Shamash-shum-ukin, was attempting to wrest control of Babylon from Ashurbanipal.
- This was ultimately unsuccessful, but left the region unstable until the collapse of Assyria.
- In 630, Ashurbanipal gave his son Ashur-etil-ilani the reins of the empire.
- In 627, Ashurbanipal died, and Shamash-shum-ukin seized Babylon.

ASSYRIAN-BABYLON TIMELINE

- In 626, the Chaldeans push out Shamash-shum-ukin and establish an independent Babylonian state under the rule of Nabopolassar.
- Nabopolassar brought the ANE under Babylonian control and delivered the new empire into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar.
- As Assyrian power waned, the reforms of Josiah began to take place in Judah.
- Josiah had wide-sweeping reforms, but they did not change people's hearts.
 - After his death (609), the stage is set for the Babylonian invasion. By 605, Nebuchadnezzar (Babylon) comes to Jerusalem, places it under tribute, and begins deportations (Daniel). By 586 Babylon will have completed sieged and destroyed Jerusalem.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

- Organized around the prayers of the prophets and the responses by the Lord.
- The main question of the book is "why do the wicked go unpunished" – why was Assyria passing from the scene, and Judah had gone unpunished?
- God's response in 1:5-11 shows that this situation would not last long because Judah would come under the punishment of the Babylonians. The wicked do not go unpunished.
- Habakkuk then prays and asks God about the involvement of the Babylonians because they were so wicked. They were more wicked than Israel, so why would God choose to use them?



ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

- God affirms what he says is going to happen and then addresses Habakkuk's concerns.
- God does not seem to defend his own justice.
- God tells us that human responsibility lies not in having all the answers but in the proper response to God.
 - 2:4 "But the righteous will live by faith".
- Paul quotes 2:4 in Rom 1:17 and Gal 3:11 to emphasize faith over works.
 - **Rom 1:17** "For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, 'The righteous shall live by faith.'
 - **Gal 3:11** "Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for 'The righteous shall live by faith.'"
- Habakkuk recognizes the obligation to live in right relationship with God, to trust him and his justice.
- He then prays that God will be merciful in his wrath.
- There will be judgment and wrath. The result would be an acceptance of God's justice.

GOD'S POLICY IN HANDLING NATIONS

- Habakkuk did not suggest that the people were not deserving of punishment, but how could a just God use a wicked nation?
- In some ways, Habakkuk is similar to Job[?]. How do we understand God's justice when the innocent are suffering or the wicked are prospering?
- We find the answer in God's response:
 - **Job-** God appears in a theophany to show that we are limited in our understanding of who God is.
 - **Habakkuk-** God appears in a theophany again in Habakkuk 3.

THEODICY

- This display of God's presence should be enough to promote trust even when answers don't seem forthcoming.
- God also gives some answers to Habakkuk (unlike Job).
- This forms the core message of the book when Habakkuk asks why God would use the wicked Babylonians to accomplish his purposes.
 - **2:4-5:** God addresses individual responsibility.
 - Even when the world is in confusion and God's plans and purposes aren't always clear, the righteous person has the responsibility to conduct themselves with integrity.
 - **2:6-20:** God will punish the Babylonians for their wickedness, but that time had not yet come.
 - His use of the Babylonians did not signal His approval of them.

PRINCIPLES FROM THE SCALE

- Jeremiah introduced the concept of the scale when considering God's interactions with humanity (we also see it in Hosea and Nahum).
- As evil is put on one side over generations, there will come a time when it will significantly outweigh the good.
- As the evil dish pulls down, it will hit the button, signaling that judgment is now required.
- As is the case with Jonah, the mandated judgment can, at times, be postponed by repentance. This act puts weight on the good side and lifts the dish off the button.

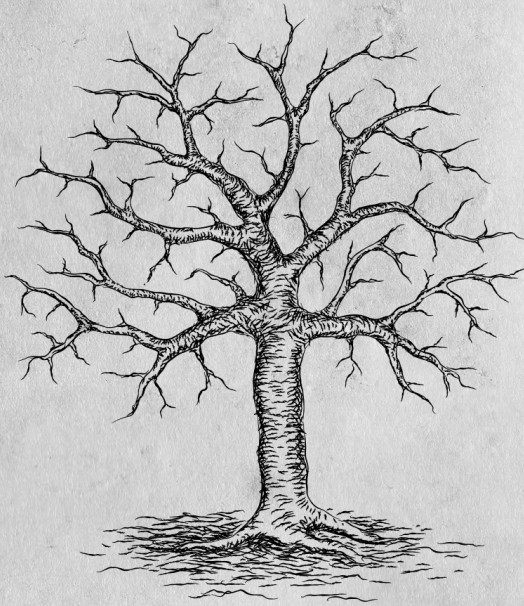


PRINCIPLES FROM THE SCALE

- Good conduct seems to carry more weight than evil conduct,
 - *"You shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments."* (Deut 5:9-10)
 - The effects of wickedness are felt to the 4th generation, but good acts influence thousands of generations.
- The scale is emptied only when God judges the wickedness that has been accumulated.
 - **Exodus 32:34** – Moses makes an impassioned plea for God's mercy after they had worshipped the golden calf.

PRINCIPLES FROM THE SCALE

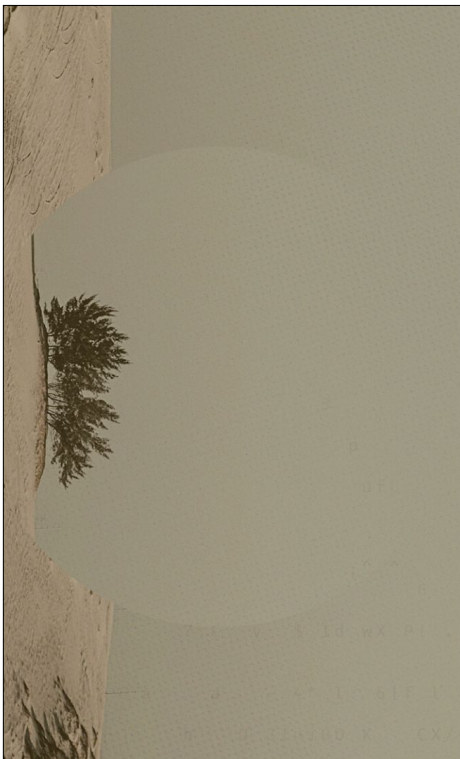
- **"To Whom Much is Given, Much is Required" (Luke 12:48)**
 - This is an explicit statement in the NT of what is implicit in the OT.
 - This helps us understand why God often seemed more lenient with the pagans than with his own people. God will tolerate a lot more from the pagans than he will from his chosen people.
 - For those who had the law revealed to them, they would be judged by God for less offense than those who had not had it revealed.
 - This is the basis of what Habakkuk is trying to figure out.
 - Babylon was more wicked than Israel; Israel should have known better.
 - Not only did they have the law, but they also had the prophets.
 - The time of their judgment had come, but the time of judgment for the Babylonians had not yet come.



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**

Habakkuk 3:17-18



SUMMARY

- It gives us confidence that God is sovereign and in control of the world.
- We can't expect to be privy to the inner workings of God's day-by-day operations, but we can rest assured that his purposes are being accomplished.