

## How Long Do I Have to Wait, God?

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Rev. Lex DeLong / General

Major Posts from Minor Prophets: Be an Influencer / Patience; Wait / Habakkuk 1:1–11

When the world seems to be falling apart around you, you can find peace when you cry out to God to help you understand and Look out for what God is doing and will do in the wave of evil that surrounds you.

### Notes

06/04 Habakkuk 1:1-11, "How Long Do I Have to Wait, God?" Subtitle: How to find peace in waiting, Scripture: Psalm 100.

[Question 1 and God's answer ("How Long?" Wait and watch, God is in control, but man thinks he is)]

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Number 8 in the order of the Minor Prophets.

### **Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah: An Introduction and Commentary 1. Title (1:1)**

The oracle (see p. 19) was received 'in a vision' (NEB, JB) by Habakkuk, who is here called a prophet. This title is rare in book headings (see Hag. 1:1; Zech. 1:1), and is taken by some to indicate that Habakkuk was a professional prophet, one who earned his living serving as a prophet at the temple or court, unlike Amos (cf. Amos 7:14). While this is not certain, he at least was recognized in this period of apostasy as one who spoke the message of God.

### **Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah: An Introduction and Commentary 1. The Man**

Habakkuk loved God, but he was prepared, as few others would be, to engage him in a probing dialogue about the rightness of his actions. Most believers, of course, encounter a time in their spiritual life when they doubt or question God. Few, however, as Job did, openly debate the issues. Even rarer is an individual who will stand before God and confront him with apparent anomalies in his actions towards mankind. This is what the prophet Habakkuk did, even going a step beyond this to challenging God on the response which he gives to Habakkuk's initial question.

### **Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah: An Introduction and Commentary 1. The Man**

Less is stated in the Bible concerning Habakkuk than almost any other prophet. Not even his father, tribe or hometown are mentioned. His name is apparently not Hebrew but comes from the Akkadian word for some plant or fruit tree.<sup>1</sup> Akkadian speakers were intimately involved in the life of Israel at this period (see pp. 42–43 below).

Being written during a time prior to the fall of Judah to the Babylonians (Chaldeans), Habakkuk was thus a contemporary of Nahum, Zephaniah and Jeremiah.

### **Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah: An Introduction and Commentary 2. The Times**

Judah had witnessed the downfall and exile of her northern sister Israel slightly more than a century previously. She herself had not learnt, however, that repeated violation of the covenant with God on her own part would not be left unpunished forever. She would now, according to the prophet, be faced with a similar fate herself.

The prophecy anticipates the Babylonian's defeat, which finally took place before the combined power of the Indo-Aryan Medes and Persians who, under Cyrus, captured Babylon in 539 BC.

The structure of the book is fairly simple and has a feel like that of Jonah, or the dialogue between God and Job in Job 38 to the end of the book.

#### **Structure of Habakkuk:**

- ++Habakkuk 1:1-4 Habakkuk questions God
- ++Habakkuk 1:5-11 God answers
- ++Habakkuk 1:12-17 Habakkuk questions God again
- ++Habakkuk 2:1-20 God answers again

- ++Habakkuk 3:1-19 What Habakkuk concludes from God's answers

Habakkuk is a picture of simple interaction between God and a man who is committed to God. It is a simple presentation of the impact of one's faith in the wake of distress, change, and the unraveling of life as one knows it.

Habakkuk asks God the questions that every child of God, at one time or another asks of God.

### **Questions Habakkuk asks God:**

- ++How Long Do I Have to Wait, God?  
God's timing is perfect
- ++Why Don't You Do Something, God?  
God is already at work
- ++Help Me See You, God  
God is and can be seen, all around us and in His Word

Habakkuk then comes to two conclusions, once God has answered Him.

### **Habakkuk's Two Conclusions:**

1. ++What God has revealed of Himself Habakkuk 3:1-15.
2. ++How Habakkuk must respond to God's truth Habakkuk 3:16-19.

### **This little Minor Prophet:**

- ++Represents a personal God

- ++Demonstrates a personal relationship
- ++Presents an absolute truth defined by God
- ++Demands its reader's to respond

## **How Long Do I Have to Wait, God?**

How to find peace in waiting

God will prove that He is your God

God will prove that He defines right and wrong

God will prove that He alone determines destiny

God will prove that He is worthy to be trusted

God will prove that He is worth the wait

Accept these truths from Habakkuk and you can find peace.

You can find peace in waiting if, like Habakkuk, you are willing to Trust in God despite the circumstances that surround you.

When the world seems to be falling apart around you, you can find peace when you cry out to God to help you understand and Look out for what God is doing and will do in the wave of evil that surrounds you.

When it seems like the world is falling apart around you...

# Cry Out to God Habakkuk 1:1-4

Remember that God is truly the only One who can change what is going on. Our involvement might impact things in small ways, but only God can change, especially the things that we see, we cannot change.

## Cry Out to God Habakkuk 1:1-4

1. ++Ask God to help you understand vv. 1-3a
2. ++Confess to God how you see things vv. 3b-4

God certainly wants us to be involved with confronting evil, when we can, and chastises us when we don't.

### Proverbs 24:11–12 NASB95

<sup>11</sup> Deliver those who are being taken away to death, And those who are staggering to slaughter, Oh hold *them* back. <sup>12</sup> If you say, "See, we did not know this," Does He not consider *it* who weighs the hearts? And does He not know *it* who keeps your soul? And will He not render to man according to his work?

### Proverbs 21:15 NASB95

<sup>15</sup> The exercise of justice is joy for the righteous, But is terror to the workers of iniquity.

### Isaiah 1:17 NASB95

<sup>17</sup> Learn to do good; Seek justice, Reprove the ruthless, Defend the orphan, Plead for the widow.

### Matthew 25:40 NASB95

<sup>40</sup> "The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, *even* the least of *them*, you

did it to Me.'

**Ephesians 5:11 NASB95**

<sup>11</sup> Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them;

When we see an injustice that we have the power, at least to confront in one fashion or another, and we choose to do nothing, it is sin, as we see in James 4:17.

**James 4:17 NASB95**

<sup>17</sup> Therefore, to one who knows *the* right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.

**Romans 12:9 NASB95**

<sup>9</sup> *Let* love *be* without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.

If you wonder or even fear what might happen if you do stand up against evil, remember God's promise through the prophet Isaiah.

**Isaiah 41:10 NASB95**

<sup>10</sup> 'Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'

But, when life looks like it is falling apart all around you and it seems like there is nothing you can do about it, then God gives you something you can do in the midst of it...

*Review:*

## **Cry Out to God** Habakkuk 1:1-4.

Ask God to help you understand vv. 1-3a

Confess to God how you see things vv. 3b-4

When it seems like the world is falling apart around you...

# **Look Out for God** Habakkuk 1:5-11

## **Look Out for God** Habakkuk 1:5-11

1. ++See God's plan vv. 1-8

Even in the Calamity

2. ++See their evil vv. 9-11a

Recognize evil is evil

3. ++See the end vv. 11b

How futile man's strong rebellion against God is

How unavoidable the guilt is in the end

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