

HABAKKUK: GOD WHY DON'T YOU ACT?

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Today I'm going to look at the short prophecy of Habakkuk. **What might it say about our times ... what might it say to us personally?**

It is not a very well-known prophecy — though there are some very well-known passages:

- The just shall live by faith
- In wrath remember mercy
- For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea

Habakkuk is unique in that the prophet speaks to God ... not ... as is usual ... to the people.

Habakkuk has a problem with God.

What is God up to?

Why aren't You dealing with the terrible corruption among Your people Judah?

Habakkuk sees a Godless nation — corrupt leadership ... violence ... greed. Just like our nations today!

Habakkuk 1:1-4 HABAKKUK'S QUESTION

1 The burden which the prophet Habakkuk saw.

2 **O LORD, how long shall I cry,**

And You will not hear?

Even cry out to You, "Violence!"

And You will not save/deliver.

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.

4 **Therefore the law is powerless,**

And justice never goes forth.

For the wicked surround the righteous; *(the wicked outnumber the righteous)*

Therefore perverse judgment proceeds.

He's upset. **There is evil everywhere.** And — **no justice!**

Habakkuk has been praying — but God doesn't seem interested?

Habakkuk's society (Judah of 600 BC) is much like ours? How much corruption ... injustice ... perversion ... fake news ... lies ... violence ... lack of justice — do we see?

Habakkuk was very concerned about the state of his country. **Do we sigh and cry about the abominations in our societies?**

Question Number 1 (of 2)! Habakkuk is bold. **Why aren't you doing something God?!**

He was probably hoping that God will stir up some sort of spiritual revival?

The answer was —NO!!

Habakkuk 1:5-6 GOD'S RESPONSE

5 **"Look among the nations and watch—**

Be utterly astounded!

For I will work a work in your days *(fairly soon)*

Which you would not believe, though it were told you.

6 **For indeed I am raising up the Chaldeans,** *(The Babylonians led by Nebuchadnezzar)*

A bitter and hasty nation

Which marches through the breadth of the earth,

To possess dwelling places that are not theirs.

**God's answer! I am doing something! But not revival —
INVASION! DESTRUCTION!**

God is sending the Babylonians (Nebuchadnezzar) to crush and destroy His people.

The Babylonians were known for their cruelty and “scorched earth” policy.

Habakkuk 1:7-10

7 **They are terrible and dreadful;**

Their judgment and their dignity proceed from themselves.

8 Their horses (*military*) 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.

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.

God describes their violence and destruction. He knows all about it!

Habakkuk is stunned! He can't believe it?

**Question 2 is: How can God possibly use the Babylonians?
They're much worse than Judah!**

Habakkuk 1:12-17 HOW CAN YOU DO THIS GOD?

12 **Are You not from everlasting,**

O LORD my God, my Holy One?

We*shall not die. (**Emendations of the Sopherim — the people who had charge of the scriptures — ORIGINAL TRANSLATION probably said: YOU SHALL NOT DIE*)

O LORD, You have appointed them for judgment;

O Rock, You have marked them for correction.

13 **You are of purer eyes than to behold evil.**

And cannot look on wickedness. *(Yes God can — and has to!)*

Why do You look on those who deal treacherously,

And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours

A person more righteous than he? *(Us and Judah)*

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?

Habakkuk reminds God how pure He is. How can He allow a wicked nation to gather up Judah like fish in a net?

Yet Judah had forsaken God. Turned to idols. Selfish ... dishonest ... violent ... corrupt — rejected and despised all of God's prophets.

God's patience has run out. He's waited about 800 years. **They won't heed His prophets — action is now required.** (Remember: Jeremiah and Zephaniah were warning the people during this time).

Here in 2025 ... **we could speculate that God is raising up Islam —as His tool — soon to attack and devastate those who continue to ignore Him** (including modern-day Jerusalem).

Question 1 : Why aren't You doing anything?

Question 2: How can You possibly do this?

Habakkuk 2:1

1 I will stand my watch

And set myself on the rampart,

And watch to see what He will say to me,
And what I will answer when I am corrected. *(He expects to be corrected. He knows that he is “missing something”. A good attitude to have)*

Habakkuk expects an answer (do we?). He is prepared to wait. (Are we?)

Habakkuk 2:2-3

2 **Then the LORD answered me and said:**

“Write the vision

And make it plain on tablets,

That he may run who reads it. *(those who run should then spread the news)*

3 **For the vision is yet for an appointed time;** *(vision — revelation)*

But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie.

Though it tarries, wait for it;

Because it will surely come,

It will not tarry.

This vision is not just for Habakkuk! Write it legibly on tablets of wood (probably covered in wax) — so that it can easily be read.

Those who read the vision:

1. “The Babylonians are coming — you should run!

2. And — Spread the news elsewhere!”

Habakkuk 2:4

4 **“Behold the proud,**

His soul is not upright in him; *(those who don’t need God — will perish!)*

But the just shall live by his faith. *(“Just” — the righteous person will survive — by their faithfulness — someone who looks to God and trusts God)*

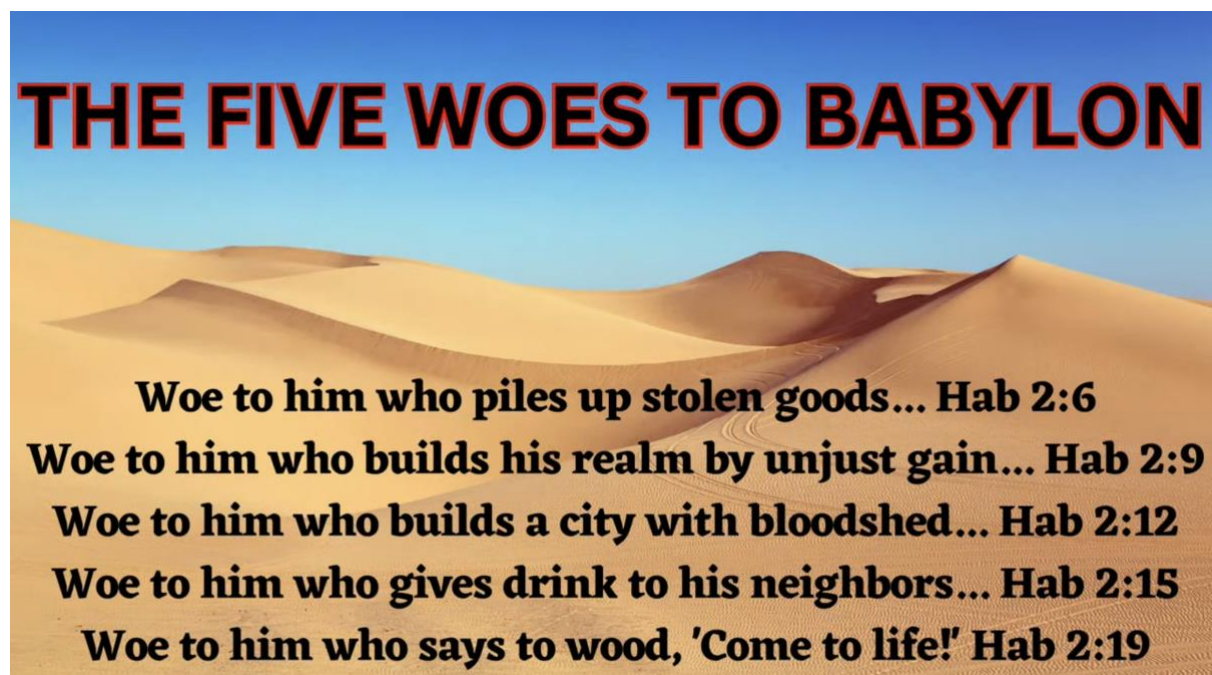
Don't worry Habakkuk — not all will be destroyed. **The righteous will live ... because He's faithful.** The proud will perish.

“The just shall live by faith” is quoted 3 times in the New Testament. (“Faith” is used here as a noun — meaning faithfulness). **The righteous continue to believe ... keeping the faith.**

Same for us. It's not “having faith” once — its continuing to believe — keeping the Faith.

And important to shun pride — **“God resists the proud”!** Yet our societies devote an entire month to “Pride!”

I won't read verses 5-19 — The list of 5 woes (curses) that God announces against Babylon. God highlights 5 special areas of national corruption.



God makes it clear to Habakkuk that after He's used Babylon to judge Judah — He will then judge Babylon. They'll get what's coming to them!

Woe is a curse. Jesus cursed the fig tree — it withered and died!

Also cities on the shore of Lake Galilee — Capernaum ... Chorazin ... Bethsaida — they are just ruins today because Jesus cursed them!

The one town that Jesus didn't curse is Tiberius — it is still there (2,000 years later). Interesting?

The 5 woes are against Babylon here. They will also apply to end-time Islam (Mystery ... Babylon The Great).

Habakkuk 2:20

20 “But **the LORD is in His holy temple**. *(God is in control!)*
Let all the earth keep silence before Him.”

Habakkuk: Shape up and shut up you people — BE QUIET! BE HUMBLE BEFORE GOD!

It looks like Habakkuk saw the big picture — learned his lesson — **God's in charge and knows what He's doing!**

His mood is very different in Chapter 3 — he's got it! God's in His Holy Temple — all is well with the world.

Habakkuk 3:1-2

1 **A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, on Shigionoth.** *(A song?)*
2 **O LORD, I have heard Your speech and was afraid;**
O LORD, revive Your work in the midst of the years!
In the midst of the years make it known;
In wrath remember mercy.

A prayer for mercy for God's people — even though wrath must come. God is full of mercy — so a prayer He'll answer if He can.

Habakkuk 3:3-4

3 **God came from Teman,**
The Holy One **from Mount Paran.** *(From the region of Sinai [in Arabia] — around the Red Sea).*
His glory covered the heavens,
And the earth was full of His praise.

4 **His brightness was like the light;** (*talking about the Lord Jesus*)

**He had rays flashing from His hand,
And there His power was hidden.**

5 **Before Him went pestilence,
And fever followed at His feet.**

Verse 3: God will come (The Hebrew verb allows for future tense).

This seems to be talking about Jesus' return ... marching in glory and might from Sinai to Jerusalem!

As prophesied by Moses:

Deuteronomy 33:2

2 And he said:

"The LORD came from Sinai,

And dawned on them from Seir;

He shone forth from Mount Paran,

And He came with ten thousands of saints; (Saints in Hebrew: "Holy Ones" — the resurrected saints or angels?)

From His right hand

Came a fiery law for them.

Habakkuk 3:5-7

5 Before Him went pestilence,

And fever followed at His feet.

6 **He stood and measured the earth;**

He looked and startled the nations.

And the everlasting mountains were scattered,

The perpetual hills bowed.

His ways are everlasting.

7 **I saw the tents of Cush(an) in affliction;** (*Sudan ... Arabia region — by the Red Sea*).

The curtains of the land of Midian trembled. (*Arabian area*)

Habakkuk 3:8-11

8 O LORD, were You displeased with the rivers,

Was **Your anger against the rivers,**

Was **Your wrath against the sea,**

That **You rode on Your horses,**

Your chariots of salvation?

9 Your bow was made quite ready;

Oaths were sworn over Your arrows. (*Weapons of warfare*)

You divided the earth with rivers.

10 The mountains saw You and trembled;

The overflowing of the water passed by.

The deep uttered its voice,

And lifted its hands on high.

11 The sun and moon stood still in their habitation;

At the light of Your arrows they went,

At the shining of Your glittering spear.

CHRIST ARMED FOR BATTLE!!

Habakkuk 3:12-13

12 **You marched through the land in indignation;** (*The Day of The Lord*)

You trampled the nations in anger.

13 **You went forth for the salvation of Your people,**

For salvation with Your Anointed.

You struck the head from the house of the wicked. (*the Antichrist?*)

By laying bare from foundation to neck.

Verses 12 and 13: Compare:

Isaiah 63:1-4

1 **Who is this who comes from Edom,**

With dyed garments from Bozrah,

This One who is glorious in His apparel,

Traveling in the greatness of His strength?—

“I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save.”

2 **Why is Your apparel red,**

And Your garments like one who treads in the winepress?

3 **“I have trodden the winepress alone,**

And from the peoples no one was with Me.

For **I have trodden them in My anger,**
And **trampled them in My fury;**
Their blood is sprinkled upon My garments,
And I have stained all My robes.

4 For the day of vengeance is in My heart,
And the year of My redeemed has come.

**God marches through the land and strikes the head (leader)
of the house of the wicked — the Antichrist ultimately!**

Habakkuk 3:14-15

14 **You thrust through with his own arrows**
The head of his villages.

They came out like a whirlwind to scatter me;
Their rejoicing was like feasting on the poor in secret.

15 **You (God) walked through the sea with Your horses,**
Through the heap of great waters. (*Sounds like Moses crossing the Red Sea*)

**Habakkuk sees in the future the victorious battles of
Almighty God — as He defeats all evil.**

This ties in with Revelation 19 and Jesus' return on the White Horse
for the battle of the Great Day of God Almighty.

Habakkuk 3:16

16 **When I heard, my body trembled;**
My lips quivered at the voice;
Rottenness entered my bones;
And I trembled in myself,

That I might rest in the day of trouble.
When **he** comes up to the people, ("**he**" — *the Antichrist*)
He will invade them with his troops.

**Habakkuk trembles at the thought of the invading
Babylonians.**

Habakkuk 3:17-18

17 Though the fig tree may not blossom,

Nor fruit be on the vines;
Though the labor of the olive may fail,
And the fields yield no food;
Though the flock may be cut off from the fold,
And there be no herd in the stalls— (*wherever you look ...*)

18 **Yet I will rejoice in the LORD.**
I will joy in the God of my salvation. (*Habakkuk has “figured it out”*)

Habakkuk is at peace. His faith restored.

He won't be moved by what he sees — even if Babylon scorches the whole land?

God has it all in hand. **Habakkuk will WALK BY FAITH AND NOT BY SIGHT.**

Ultimately ... the victory is God's. God will use Babylon (in our day ... Islam?) ... but will then judge it fully.

GOD IS RIGHTEOUS AND WILL PREVAIL.

Habakkuk need not worry ... or accuse God of being out of touch!

Habakkuk 3:19

19 **The LORD God is my strength;**

He will make my feet like deer's feet,

And **He will make me walk on my high hills.**

To the Chief Musician. (*The choirmaster*) With my stringed instruments.

Elated! TO BE SUNG ... WITH STRINGED INSTRUMENTS.

Psalm 137 tells of people weeping by the Rivers of Babylon when they remembered Zion ... being asked to sing “one of the Songs of Zion”. It may well have included the Song of Habakkuk?

SUMMARY

Chapters 1 and 2. A lament and challenge to God. Why are you not getting involved?

Chapter 3. A song of rejoicing. God is working it all out!

We can all be dismayed as we look around our nations today. So often ... the wicked seem to be prospering? Our country is a Godless country! Terrible state!

But as Habakkuk finally came to see — God has it in hand. When the time is right He'll take action.

GOD KNOWS BEST! AND VERY SOON — HE WILL SORT IT OUT!