

## **Habakkuk – God speaks to a society gripped by frustration**

**Audience:** Judah (southern Kingdom) and God’s people everywhere

**Date written:** Around 630 – 620 BC. Contemporaries: Nahum, Zephaniah, Joel, and Jeremiah.

**Setting:** Babylon was a rising world power and would soon be the dominant force in the world. Judah would soon feel her destructive force. The faithful in Judah would need much encouragement, and God, through Habakkuk, is giving them the divine worldview.

**Purpose:** To show that God is still in control of the world despite the apparent triumph of evil.

**Key verse:** 3.2...

### **Outline:**

Habakkuk’s Complaints (1-2)  
Habakkuk’s Prayer (3)

### **Megathemes...**

1. Struggle and doubt – best to come directly to God with them
2. God’s sovereignty – God is always in control of this world in spite of the apparent triumph of evil
3. Hope – comes from knowing God and that He has a plan that will succeed and it includes those who trust in Him

### **Thoughts...**

Life can be confusing. The powerful are usually not very nice. Why do they seem to be winning? Why are the innocent so often run over by the various systems in our world? Somehow, we seem to sense the importance of the individual, the dignity of the human life, the degrading effect of ruthlessness upon the spirits of those who give in to this ruthless struggle for power and control. Where is God in this destructive force against the human spirit? What is He doing about things on this fallen planet?

Habakkuk was a man who sought answers. Troubled by what he observed, he asked difficult questions. These questions were not merely intellectual exercises or bitter questions. Habakkuk saw a dying world, and it broke his heart. Why is there evil in

the world? Why do the wicked seem to be winning? He boldly and confidently took his complaints directly to God. And God answered – with an avalanche of proof and prediction.

When Habakkuk was troubled he brought his concerns directly to God. After receiving God’s answers, he responded with a prayer of faith. Habakkuk’s example is one that should encourage us as we struggle to move from doubt to faith. We don’t have to be afraid to ask questions of God. The problem is not with God and His ways, but with our assumptions and limited understanding of Him.

1.1-4...**1<sup>st</sup> Question:** How long will You tolerate violence?

1.6...God’s answer – the Babylonians will deliver justice. If Habakkuk couldn’t handle the lack of God’s action in the face of injustice, how can he handle God’s use of the more-evil-than-we-are, Babylonians handing out these divine judgments?

1.12-13...**2<sup>nd</sup> Question:** But God how can You use people more wicked than we are to bring judgment on us?

2.1...I will stand and watch how God will answer me

2.2-4...God’s answer – it will amaze everyone, but it will happen.

The righteous will need to live by faith

2.6, 9, 12, 15, 19... 5 woes against the wicked

2.14...the earth will be filled with knowledge of God’s glory

2.20...God is in His holy temple – so be silent before Him

3.1-3...Habakkuk ends his questioning with **a song of submission** and praise: Lord, do Your amazing deeds once again – evil will NOT triumph, God is in control, and He can be completely trusted to vindicate those who are faithful to Him. We must wait patiently for Him to act (3.16) and choose to live by faith (2.4) that He will deal with evil in His time and in His way (3.17-19).

Habakkuk’s final prayer seems to be written in the form of a song.

This would make it much easier to pass on to the people and to each succeeding generation.

3.17-19...no matter what, I will rejoice in the Lord, my Savior

Wow! What a way to end a prayer, a song, and a book! In the process of growing in our walk with God we will often have to enter into the valley of doubt in order to learn to live by a deeper faith.