

# A STUDY OF HABAKKUK

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## HABAKKUK

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The Book of Habakkuk is noted for its literary beauty. Nothing much of him is known. He is called the GRANDFATHER of the Reformation. Habakkuk 2:4 — “the just shall live by his faith” became the spark which set off the reformation by Martin Luther.

He prophesies to Judah.

### I. The Burden of Habakkuk (1 - 2)

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## Chapter 1

The meaning of the prophet’s (Habakkuk’s) name is “He who embraces, a wrestler.” We know that he wrote his prophecy by inspiration of the Holy Spirit — God breathed — God spoken — sometime before the prophecy was fulfilled or it would be a history and not a prophecy.

Most everyone at once when reading this book thinks of father Jacob wrestling with an angel of Jehovah. Thus he had influence with God as well as with man.

We know by experience how occasions have arisen in our lives when we, too, in deep prayer have taken God in our hands and have said as Jacob put “I will not let you go until Thou bless us” — and we did receive the blessing.

Habakkuk’s purpose was that Judah was sinning and God had not let it go by without doing anything.

The prophet forgets that God never forgets — either the praises of men nor of the sins of mankind. God is always the same: plenteous in mercy and severe in His chastisement.

This prophecy is directed to Judah.

**Verse 1**

What the prophet saw.

**Verse 2**

When I call for assistance, I even mention there is violence in the camp. There is no answer.

**Verse 3**

Jehovah, you cause me see sin, and I saw wickedness. Destruction and violence is before me.

**Verse 4**

God's Law is ignored — the sinful are in charge of justice, and thus justice is weakened.

**Verse 5**

But Jehovah replies, Observe, if you will, the nations of the world, and you will wonder what I shall do. I will cause such wonder that you wouldn't believe if it were told you.

**Verse 6**

Of all things, it is the Babylonians I'm using — a fierce people whose armies march, conquering everything in its path.

**Verse 7**

They are to be dreaded. Their only law is the law they conceive.

**Verse 8**

And talk about armaments. Their engines of destruction begin with their horses — faster than leopards, brighter than wolves. Their horsemen stride through all encampments. They seem to fly as the eagles to devour, and they do devour.

**Verse 9**

All join together uncontrollable. Their numbers are without count. They collect prisoners like sand.

**Verse 10**

They hold all kings in derision. And Rulers? They laugh them off with every fortress until it becomes rubble.

**Verse 11**

As a whirlwind, they will set and pass on. But I shall find them guilty whose strength is their idol.

**Verse 12**

Are you, O God, eternal? Are you not Jehovah, the Holy One? We cannot die. Thou, O Jehovah, hast appointed them for judgment, and established them for correction.

**Verse 13**

We have read, we have learned that thou cannot approve sin. Then why do the

sinner's have full reign? Are you taking the transgressor's part? Why art Thou not disturbed at the doings of the sinners?

**Verse 14**

It looks like Jehovah, that Thou hast made men as fish. There's no real ruler over them.

**Verse 15**

The Chaldeans (Babylonians) are expert fishermen. They have hooks. They have their nets. The fish they catch are human beings. They hook their prey; they drag their nets with success.

**Verse 16**

Now, as heathens they are, they sacrifice to their nets. They burn incense to their nets. Because of them, their catch is large. Thus their food is abounding.

**Verse 17**

Their nets are empty — ready for the next catch!

## **Chapter 2**

**Verse 1**

With this verse the cry of the Prophet is completed. He, like Jonah, waited to see the action of Jehovah. And Jehovah answers:

**Verse 2**

Record the vision. Write it on tablets so that the one who reads it flees to tell others.

**Verse 3**

The vision is held back for the chosen time. The word of God stands put. It shall be fulfilled.

**Verse 4**

“Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall” (Proverbs 16:18). As for the proud one, his is not perfect within him.

“But the just shall live by his faith.” Oh, when the sinner realizes that “by grace are you saved, though faith, and not of yourself, it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man shall boast” (Ephesians 2:8, 9), then He trusts the risen Saviour and is justified.

Martin Luther found after many years, even being a priest, the wealth, the perfect redemption is by faith alone.

**Verse 5**

Wine betrays the haughty man. He leaves his family. He enlarges his sinful desire. He, like death, never has enough. He, the enemy, gathers to himself by exploits, the nations.

**Verse 6**

He becomes a drunkard. All men shall mock him. He increases, but not his own. He makes himself wealthy by loans.

**Verse 7**

His creditors call for full payment. The borrower becomes a slave to the lender.

**Verse 8**

Phoenicia, Babylon — have looted many nations. His wealth is not his, but loot. He has caused much blood shed. Reckoning time is on its way.

**Verse 9**

The enemy, by his gain, has stored up for the future. But “things” are not eternal. Your house shall suffer.

**Verse 10**

Things you have gained shall be multiplied loss for yourself. Taking the loot, you had to slay the owners. You have sinned against yourself.

**Verse 11**

From the very foundation of your dwelling place, up the walls, even the framework will answer.

**Verse 12**

“Woe to him who builds a city with bloodshed and founds a town with violence.”

**Verse 13**

It is not of Jehovah Sabbaoth. All the peoples suffer and the nation grows weary.

**Verse 14**

For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah — as the waters cover the sea.

Along with Isaiah (19:1), Habakkuk, filled with the Spirit of Jehovah, looks for Messiah Jesus’ reign, when nations shall war no more, and perfect peace shall abound.

**Verse 15**

The terribleness of mankind that causes men to lead in a drunken debauchery, disrobing his friend.

**Verse 16**

Disgrace shall be this man. But you will be the one who is disrobed. The cup of defeat, defilement will come to you and you shall drink of it. Complete disgrace shall be your portion.

**Verse 17**

Poor Lebanon — lost in disgrace by you, Babylon. For the cry of human blood that was needless shall demand recompense.

**Verse 18**

What good is an idol? Its maker is a man. Is the idol a teacher? Doesn’t the man know that the maker trusts in his own handiwork? — Idols that have no speech.

**Verse 19**

What about this? To his idol, he says “Awake.” To a dumb stone, “Arise.” And this is your teacher? It is overlaid with gold and silver, yet not a breath inside it.

**Verse 20**

“But Jehovah is in His holy Temple. Let all the earth be silent before Him.”

## Chapter 3

### Verse 1

A prayer of Habakkuk. Wasn't it Benjamin Franklin who said this was the most beautiful poetry in the world.

### Verse 2

What a verse for revival!

“I have heard of thee, O Jehovah, and I fear thee.”

It was a dear one who said, “Before I was saved, I feared what harm God could do to me, but after I was saved, I feared what harm I could do to God” (G. Campbell Morgan).

Oh, may Israel and Judah abound in love and obedience to Thee. “In thy wrath, remember mercy.”

O Jehovah, revive Thy work in the midst of the years. Make it known; in wrath remember mercy “As we, who have been one of God's servants, want a revival, we promise that we will be faithful to the task, winning the lost. But we forget that the work we are called to do is Jehovah's work.

It is God who stirs the hearts, who called the backslider to repent and turn from his sin. We are not talking about getting saved, that is all by grace through faith, but we are speaking about true holiness that comes wholly of God.

We can get to the place where God lets us realize that our work is His work. Are we found to be unfaithful stewards of the ministry of God?

We can't pray a revival down, except in our own hearts. We have read books on “how to have a revival” by authors who have never seen a revival.

The Spirit of God works upon people in a mysterious way — “the wind that bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” How do we know that when we trust Christ as our Saviour? How do we know when the wind bloweth? By feeling it? No, the Scriptures say “thou hearest the sound.” Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God (Romans 10:17).

Revivals break out in different places, as the Holy Ghost wishes.

### Verse 3

He came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mt. Paran. Then the heavens are covered with His splendor. Oh, when Revival comes, the earth is full of His praise.

### Verse 4

The Sunlight is likened unto His radiance. He had horns coming out of his hand. Where does the power of God come from? Power is hidden in Jehovah's hand.

### Verse 5

Almighty God is He!

**“Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none**

**else. Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient the things are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure...I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it” (Isaiah 46:9-11).**

**“I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory” (Isaiah 46:13).**

All things are subjected unto His power as before Him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at His feet.

He created the heavens and the earth. All things are for His glory. Only men, made in the likeness of God, rebuke Him, will not be subjected to His will. Oh, friend what is in our lives? A rebellious spirit? Stop, yield to Him and acknowledge His glory.

#### **Verse 6**

He has measured the earth and separated the nations. The perpetual mountains were shattered, and the perpetual hills collapsed. His ways are eternal.

#### **Verse 7**

Oh, to have been with the Prophet as He saw God’s glory. The tents of ethiopia come into sight. And the people of Midian are afraid.

#### **Verse 8**

Were you displeased, Lord, at the rivers? Or was thine anger against the Rivers? What had they done to merit Thy judgment?

Was thy wrath against the se, for all the things of creation are under your control. I know now.

Thou didst ride on thine horses and thy chariots of Salvation.

#### **Verse 9**

Thou did not bare thy bow. Israel swore to obey Thy laws, knowing retribution would be yours. The rivers divided the earth. Thou didst divide the earth with rivers.

#### **Verse 10**

The mountains subjected themselves to Thee and feared. Floods gushed forth. Yes, the mighty depths uttered its voice of submission.

#### **Verse 11**

Sun and Moon stood where they were placed. But their radiance dimmed in the light of Thy arrows and at the appearance of Thy gleaming spear.

#### **Verse 12**

With anger Thou didst march through the earth. In wrath Thou didst trample the nations.

#### **Verse 13**

Thou didst march for the salvation of Thy people; for the salvation of Thy people. For the salvation of Thine anointed. Thy enemies suffered Thy blows as Thou didst strike the head of the evil house to lay open the wound from thigh to neck.

**Verse 14**

The enemies of Israel have tried every device known to destroy the heirs of salvation. They came as a cyclone to scatter me. Their shout was with glee as they thought they could devour in secret the poor.

**Verse 15**

Thou hast marched through the sea with thine horses — through great waters.

**Verse 16**

When I heard the great commotion, I ached in my stomach; my lips quivered. It seems that my bones were crumbled within me. Oh, for the peace to enjoy in the coming troublesome times of invasion by the enemy.

**Verse 17**

Here Habakkuk stands by faith upon the promises of God and His salvation.

It's possible: That the fig tree shall not bear, nor shall there be fruit in the vines. And the labor of the olive pressing shall fail. And the field shall not produce its intended grain. The flock shall be cut off from the fold. And no herds shall be in the stalls.

**Verse 18**

Yet I will rejoice in Jehovah! I will be happy in the God of my salvation!

**Verse 19**

The Jehovah (Lord) Elohim (God) is my strength. The speed of the deer shall be mine, and bring me safely over the mountains.

To the choir director, on my stringed instrument.