

## Habakkuk 1:1-4 – The First Complaint

### Objective: Acting on a burden from the Lord caused by sin

We don't know much about Habakkuk. We do know that he was a prophet in the land of Israel and that his name means to embrace or wrestle. The time this book was written was around 605b.c. during the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah. The biggest thing to look for as we go through the summer is how we can live with peace and strength knowing that God listens and always triumphs evil and sin.

v.1

a. The oracle that Habakkuk the prophet received. (1) **massa'** (**mas-saw'**); **an utterance, a doom, a burden.** This burden that Habakkuk had was not a self-realization – oh look people are inherently evil...help God! No, it was a burden that Habakkuk did not choose to receive. The term pictures something that is lifted up and carried. It is described as the message that God has placed on his shoulders to carry. In fact, this is probably a burden Habakkuk would have never chosen. Can you imagine having this thought in your head all the time? How all you see around you is violence and destruction? In fact, it goes again Habakkuk's understanding of God's character versus what he is seeing.

v. 2

So he decides to complain. But this isn't a normal what's going on God, it is a complete and utter exhaustion of dealing with this burden. Behind the cry "how long?" is the unspoken cry, 'I have my limits God.' God's silence is intolerable to Habakkuk. You see he has been waiting for almost 12 years for an answer. Back in 1 Samuel 8:18 God had warned Israel about wanting a king instead of God. He says, "You will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen, and the Lord will not answer you in that day" (1 Samuel 8:18). The result of their rejection of God as King is that a wicked monarchy would bring them into a state of oppression. The prophet cries, and it seems the Lord will not answer. Left to themselves, they will utterly destroy one another.

We see this type of crying out in Job as well when he says in Job 19:7 - "I cry out, 'Violence!' and you do not answer."

All he wants is for God to explain to him as to why the almighty creator of the earth is not doing anything on this message given to him. He's saying "I just need some kind of answer God, just let me know you are doing something, then I will be satisfied."

Have you ever been there? Cmon God, I need an answer. A little direction so I can step forward. But because of sin God is withholding his answer.

v. 3

Habakkuk describes specifically what is going on around him with in justice, wrong, destruction, violence, strife, conflict. Basically man is killing and hurting their own kind with no sense of concern.

If you took it to our day and age he is basically saying there's the guy who walks into a classroom and shoots 30 innocent people. There's the drunk driver who hits and kills the innocent 4 year old. What do you have to say for that God? Terrorism, corruption, child soldiers, sex slaves, AIDS, people losing their jobs, becoming homeless. How many times have you just watched the news and wanted to kill yourself? That is a small taste of what Habakkuk was feeling. Where's the law in all of this, the courts, the justice?

v. 4

"How can you have peace and justice when the people running the courts are wicked" is what he is telling God here. "You put these people into authority who are so overrun with sin that the righteous are being outnumbered

and justice is perverted. People who should be in jail are roaming the streets. Why do we even have courts of law?"

"Habakkuk's message is timely, and until we come to the same frustration when we see lawlessness and the perversion of justice, we will not understand this book. Habakkuk's burden is heavy upon him because he has a deep seated understanding and desire for holy justice. His cry is a cry of righteous indignations. Our country is characterized by apathy and the death of outrage. We are more angry and animated over the price of gas than we are the suffering and death of men, women, boys and girls because of the AIDS crisis, poverty, disasters and injustice in the hands of wicked rulers." – David Fairchild – Kaleo San Diego Church.

Does injustice ever drive you to your knees? Oracle = burden. Have you ever received a "burden" to do something? Did you wrestle with God about it? Did you pray first then actually do something about it? Blake of Tom's shoes started the company after he took a trip to Argentina. While there he had a burden for the kids because they had no shoes to protect their feet. So he came back to America and went about his normal business like going to school and going to his job. No, his burden became his passion. He did something about it. He created a company that has passed out 140,000 shoes and will pass out 300,000 by the end of this year.

So what is your burden? It's not something general like show Christ to the world, or even this campus. It's specific like Gary who saw the children being solicited to sex across the world. Now he runs International Justice Mission who has saved thousands of kids out of that as well as served as lawyers to put the people responsible behind bars. Or Catherine who left her six figure job as a wall street investor to help prisoners learn business skills while in jail. Then she pairs them with a fortune 500 company who mentors them and gives them a job when they get out. She has helped dropped the rate of those who return to jail to less than 5%. Or me, who has a burden to reach gamers. So we started Overkill. Now we have a network of over 250 people who desire to hear the date of the next LAN party.

You might be saying I had a burden. I've had many burdens and never acted on them...don't worry keep seeking God with a true heart and He will give you another chance. You could be saying I've never had a burden. My friend, are you truly seeking after God as Habakkuk was for 12 years before he became fed up? Where is your heart? Is it yours or God's? When it is His then your burden will come. Regardless of where you are, **IT'S YOUR BURDEN, MAKE IT YOUR PASSION.** When you do this you will truly be living for God.