

Habakkuk Overview

Why study this book: Have you ever asked the question “God, if you are in control of everything, why does evil so often win?” God shows us, through Habakkuk, how we may struggle with God but in the end learn to trust Him no matter how bleak or confusing the present circumstances appear to be. Faith is an integral part of being a fully devoted follower of Christ. In fact, Habakkuk helps us learn how faith doesn’t mean you have to understand everything about God in order to trust Him.

Author: Habakkuk – a prophet in the nation of Judah. He is mentioned nowhere else in the Old Testament, and virtually nothing is known of his background.

Date: Around 605 B.C. There are no specific time references in the book. However, it was likely written during the reign of the wicked King Jehoiakim of Judah, prior to the beginning of the Babylonian invasions of Judah in 605 B.C.

Main Point: Having hope when life seems dark...to reflect on the apparent triumph of evil in light of God’s sovereignty. Key verses include: 1:5-6, 2:4, 3:2.

Setting: Habakkuk wrote and prophesied in Judah, but his comments arose out of the rising military situation coming from Babylon. He was writing to the people of Judah, the southern kingdom.

Outline:

1. Why does God permit injustices? (1:1-17)
 - a. The first complaint (1:2-4)
 - b. The Lord’s reply/The bitter and hasty nation (1:5-11)
 - c. The second complaint (1:12-17)
2. The righteous will live by His faithfulness (2:1-20)
 - a. The Lord’s second reply/self-destructiveness of tyranny (2:6-20)
 - i. First woe (2:6-8)
 - ii. Second woe (2:9-11)
 - iii. Third woe (2:12-14, 17)
 - iv. Fourth woe (2:15-16)
 - v. Fifth woe (2:18-20)
3. Habakkuk’s Prayer/a psalm of praise (3:1-15)

Habakkuk was a man with legitimate questions for God. Many times we question something during our walk and never really understand why. Some people take it as doubt or “falling away.” Others believe it is how we stay “fresh” in the faith. However we take it God encourages it because being a follower of Christ is not easy. But, we can learn from Habakkuk how “living in peace is not about having the answers; it is about committing the questions to the One who does.”