



# Habakkuk

## Background Information *Life Application Study Bible*

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

Setting : Babylon was becoming the dominant world power, and Judah would soon feel Babylon's destructive force.

"This book records Habakkuk's dialogue with God concerning the questions 'Why does God often seem indifferent in the face of evil?' and 'Why do evil people seem to go unpunished?' Other prophetic books brought God's word to people, this brought people's questions to God." - LAB

1. God why aren't you doing anything? Why is evil prospering?
2. Why do evil people get away with evil things?

As you read and study this book, I pray that you would be encouraged. I pray that God would speak to you. This book has really opened my eyes to my attitude towards God's answers in my life, or lack of. I have learned that I am not entitled to know everything I want to know. I have learned that God is working through the silence. I have been reminded that God works things out for the good of his will in his timing.

*Lord,*

*I pray that you be with those reading this book and study. May we be sensitive to the Spirit's convictions in our lives and be open to your words and teachings. May we be patient as Habakkuk was in waiting for your answers.*

*Lord, I pray that we would be able to rejoice in all that you do. Even when we are in hard circumstances or suffering, you are with us. Even when we cannot understand what is happening, you are in control. When it feels like you are silent, you are working.*

*May we remember that you are powerful.*

*In your name always. Amen*

*I used my Life Application Study Bible for a lot of the research on this book. I have indicated when I have used this Bible with LAB.*

# Habakkuk

## Chapter 1

v2-4

Habakkuk is crying out to God. The nation is becoming more corrupt. We can sometimes wonder where God is as this world becomes more evil and wickedness seems to prosper. It's easy to over look that God is in fact, still in control.

Habakkuk's cry to God sounds like many of the complaints we hear today in and outside the church.

- God do you hear me?
- God will you save me?
- God why aren't you doing anything?
- Where are you God?

God hears us. God has already saved us. God is doing and has done. We may not see what God is doing, but we have to have faith and believe that it is already done.

v5-11

God responds to Habakkuk. Just like God tells Habakkuk, he is "doing a work... that you would not believe if told."

The Chaldeans - Babylonians

The Chaldeans were to rise to power, but they were just as corrupt as the Assyrian Empire. "...they loved to collect captives (v9), were proud of their warfare tactics (v10), and trusted in their idols and military strength (v11)." - LAB

v1:12-2:1

v13 Habakkuk's (the people's) second question

Habakkuk could not understand why God would use another nation, more wicked than Judah, to deliver his punishment. "Evil is self destructive and it is never beyond God's control. God may use whatever unusual instrument he chooses to correct us or punish us. When we deserve punishment or correction, how can we complain about the king of 'rod' God uses on us?" - LAB

v2:1

"The watchman and watchtower, often used by the prophets to show an attitude of patient expectations, are pictures of Habakkuk's attitude of patient waiting and watching for God's response." - LAB

How do we wait for God's answers? Are we patiently waiting or are we riddled with anxiety, ready to take control? God always answers. It may not be the answer we want or when we want it, but he always answers.

# Habakkuk

## Chapter 2

v2-8

God's answer to Habakkuk

Punishment was coming, even if it was slow to come. God told Habakkuk to wait. When we wait, we have to trust that God will do, in his timing. "To trust God fully means to trust him even when we don't understand why events occur as they do." - LAB

Babylon, like many corrupt nations, trusted in themselves. As Christians we are to trust in God and live in Christ. How we live tells others what/who we believe in.

"Babylon was proud, trusted in itself and its military might, and lived to satisfy its own lusts at the expense of captives. But these very sins would rise up to judge it, and the captives it wronged would strip and taunt Babylon. Justice would come slowly, but it would come." - LAB

v9-17

Babylon rose up in wealth, strength and power through deception and sin. God's judgement would come. Even when we think God does not see the sins of others, he does and he judges in his timing.

v18-20

We create our idols. We give them power over us and replace God with them. When we put all our hope and trust in something we created or lifted high, we are just trusting in ourselves.

Ps 135:15-18

"The idols of the nations are silver and gold, the work of human hands. They have mouths but do not speak, they have eyes but do not see, they have ears but do not hear, nor is there any breath in their mouth. Those who make them become like them, so do all who trust in them."

In the Bible and in many religions today, idols were a created statue or physical thing that was worshipped. Idols are anything that we trust, believe or worship above God.

When we worship idols, we are worshipping something we created.

"... it (idolatry) is trusting in what one has made, and therefore, in one's own power as creator and sustainer. If we say we worship God, but we put our trust in bank accounts (money), homes, businesses, and organizations, then we are idolaters." - LAB



True worship is when the creation worships its maker! We are the creation of a living God, not a lowly idol. And God deserves all the glory and honor.

Do we trust God with our money? With our family? With our jobs? With the people in our lives? Do we trust him enough to put him before everything?

Idols are not alive, but God is. God lives in his holy temple. We are his temple. "Idolaters command their idols to save them, but we who worship the living God come in silent awe, great respect and reverence. We acknowledge that he is in control and knows what he is doing." - LAB



# Habakkuk

## Chapter 3

This chapter is Habakkuk's prayer.

"Habakkuk praised God for answering his questions. Evil will not triumph forever; God is in control and he can be completely trusted to vindicate those who are faithful to him. We must quietly wait for him to act." - LAB

v2-16

Like you have been reading in Proverbs and read in Hosea\*, God disciplines his people. He disciplines out of love and necessity. He loves us too much to let us stay in our sin. God wants what is best for us.

"Habakkuk knew that God was going to discipline the people of Judah and that it wasn't going to be a pleasant experience. But he accepted God's will, asking for help and mercy. Habakkuk did not ask to escape discipline, but accepted the truth that Judah needed to learn a lesson.

God still disciplines in love, to bring his children back to him (Heb 12:5-6) Accept his discipline gladly, and ask him to help you change." - LAB

"Habakkuk paints a picture of God delivering his people out of Egypt... It is not enough to be awed by God's power. We need discipline in order to learn how to obey and live for him." - LAB

v17-18

Habakkuk ends his prayer in rejoicing!

"Crop failure and death of flocks would devastate Judah. But Habakkuk affirmed that even in the times of starvation, he would rejoice in the Lord. Habakkuk's feelings were not controlled by the events around him but by faith in God's ability to give him strength. When nothing makes sense, and when troubles seem more than you can bear, remember that God gives strength. Take your eyes off your difficulties and look to God." - LAB

This is my prayer. That I would rejoice in God always. That my emotions would not be controlled by the things going on around me. That my faith would be in God's ability to strengthen me. I pray my eyes would always be on God.

\*If you are reading along in my 90 Day Bible Reading Plan, you would have already read Hosea and are slowly going through the book of Proverbs by the time we reach Habakkuk.