

Habakkuk

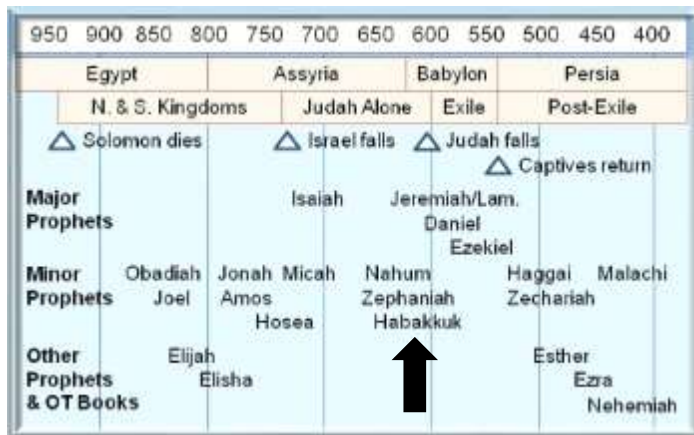
Habakkuk pleads with God to stop the injustice and violence in Judah, and God does, through the even worse Babylonians. Why? The end result is both nations have a revival,

Author: Habakkuk

In Habakkuk – Jesus is the Praying Evangelist

Habakkuk 3:19

"The Sovereign LORD is my strength."



TEACHER: 3 CHAPTERS

Habakkuk (written under the Law) solidified for posterity the phrase, "the just shall live by his faith." Habakkuk is quoted in Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews. This prophesy was written around 600 years before Christ. Less is known about the prophet Habakkuk than any other author in the Bible. (There are Jewish traditions and Jewish apocryphal books that teach he is a descendant of Joshua, and the child Elisha brought back to life, the son of the Shunammite woman. Bel and the Dragon is a Catholic addition to Daniel that claims he was taken by Angels to Daniel in the lion's den with lunch. I don't believe any of those claims. Just an F.Y.I.)



The image to the left is of the "Peshier Habakkuk." The commentary of Habakkuk found among the Dead Sea Scrolls in Qumran. The Book of Habakkuk is repeated in the Peshier with near perfection, written on leather. It has deteriorated some, but I thought it a treat to show you a picture.
Thanks to Wikipedia for permission to post it.

TEACHER:

Habakkuk 1 starts with a proclamation that the Lord revealed this message to the Prophet Habakkuk.
The text opens in prayer.

CH. 1

STUDENT:

² O LORD, how long must I call for help before you listen, before you save us from violence? ³ Why do you make me see such trouble? How can you stand to look on such wrongdoing? Destruction and violence are all around me, and there is fighting and quarreling everywhere. ⁴ The law is weak and useless, and justice is never done. Evil people get the better of the righteous, and so justice is perverted. (GNT)

TEACHER:

God agrees with his prayer, and tells the prophet what He plans to do about it.

STUDENT:

Then the LORD said to his people, "Keep watching the nations around you, and you will be astonished at what you see. I am going to do something that you will not believe when you hear about it. ⁶ I am bringing the Babylonians to power, those fierce, restless people. They are marching out across the world to conquer other lands. ⁷ They spread fear and terror, and in their pride they are a law to themselves. (GNT)

TEACHER:

Habakkuk minds his manners, but is shocked that God would use the Babylonians.

STUDENT:

LORD, from the very beginning you are God. You are my God, holy and eternal. LORD, my God and protector, you have chosen the Babylonians and made them strong so that they can punish us. ¹³ But how can you stand these treacherous, evil men? Your eyes are too holy to look at evil, and you cannot stand the sight of people doing wrong. So why are you silent while they destroy people who are more righteous than they are? (GNT)

TEACHERS:

The prophet retreats to his watchtower. A time of solitude and prayer to wait for an answer. And the answer comes.

CH. 2

STUDENT:

The LORD gave me this answer: "Write down clearly on tablets what I reveal to you, so that it can be read at a glance. ³ Put it in writing, because it is not yet time for it to come true. But the time is coming quickly, and what I show you will come true. It may seem slow in coming, but wait for it; it will certainly take place, and it will not be delayed. (GNT)

⁴ Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith. (KJV)

TEACHER:

The Lord continues by listing the depth of the offenses. Speak out as we read if the Lord gives you insight.

STUDENT:

1. Wealth is deceitful.
2. Greedy people are proud and restless—like death itself they are never satisfied.
3. They conquer nation after nation for themselves.
4. You take what isn't yours, but you are doomed! How long will you go on getting rich by forcing your debtors to pay up?"

You that have conquered others will be in debt yourselves and be forced to pay interest. Enemies will come and make you tremble. They will plunder you! ⁸ You have plundered the people of many nations, but now those who have survived will plunder you because of the murders you have committed and because of your violence against the people of the world and its cities.

5. You are doomed! You have made your family rich with what you took by violence (*GNT edited for clarity and brevity to a list by the author*)

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STUDENT:

6. Your schemes have brought shame on your family; by destroying many nations you have only brought ruin on yourself.
7. You founded a city on crime and built it up by murder. ¹³ The nations you conquered wore themselves out in useless labor, and all they have built goes up in flames.

The LORD Almighty has done this. ¹⁴ But the earth will be as full of the knowledge of the LORD's glory as the seas are full of water.

You yourself will drink and stagger. The LORD will make you drink your own cup of punishment, and your honor will be turned to disgrace. ¹⁷ You have cut down the forests of Lebanon; now you will be cut down. You killed its animals; now animals will terrify you.

8. This will happen because of the murders you have committed and because of your violence against the people of the world and its cities.

¹⁸ What's the use of an idol? It is only something that a human being has made, and it tells you nothing but lies. What good does it do for its maker to trust it—a god that can't even talk!

Can an idol reveal anything to you? It may be covered with silver and gold, but there is no life in it.

²⁰ The LORD is in his holy Temple; let everyone on earth be silent in his presence.

(*GNT edited for clarity and brevity to a list by the author*)

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TEACHER:

Chapter 3 is Habakkuk's closing prayer. We will break it up to explain and clarify, but the whole chapter is 1 prayer.

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CH. 3

STUDENT:

O LORD, I have heard of what you have done, and I am filled with awe.
Now do again in our times the great deeds you used to do.
Be merciful, even when you are angry. (GNT)

TEACHER:

Habakkuk loves the stories from the past, and now asks in faith, that God would repeat them in his day.

STUDENT:

God is coming again from Edom; the holy God is coming from the hills of Paran.
His splendor covers the heavens, and the earth is full of his praise.
⁴ He comes with the brightness of lightning; light flashes from his hand,
there where his power is hidden. (GNT)

TEACHER:

This passage is referring to the Exodus. Specifically when Israel had left Egypt, and was in Edomite territory organizing the people, and building the Tabernacle while God's presence was visualized in splendor.

STUDENT:

He sends disease before him and commands death to follow him.
⁶ When he stops, the earth shakes; at his glance the nations tremble.
The eternal mountains are shattered; the everlasting hills sink down,
the hills where he walked in ancient times. (GNT)

TEACHER:

This passage refers to the wandering in the wilderness covered in Numbers.

STUDENT:

I saw the people of Cushan afraid and the people of Midian tremble.
⁸ Was it the rivers that made you angry, LORD? Was it the sea that made you furious?
You rode upon the clouds; the storm cloud was your chariot, as you brought victory to your people.
⁹ You got ready to use your bow, ready to shoot your arrows, Your lightning split open the earth.
¹⁰ When the mountains saw you, they trembled; water poured down from the skies.
The waters under the earth roared, and their waves rose high. (GNT)

TEACHER:

This passage refers to the conquering of the Promised Land after the crossing of the Jordan.

STUDENT:

At the flash of your speeding arrows and the gleam of your shining spear,
the sun and the moon stood still.

¹² You marched across the earth in anger; in fury you trampled the nations.

¹³ You went out to save your people, to save your chosen king.

You struck down the leader of the wicked and completely destroyed his followers

¹⁴ Your arrows pierced the commander of his army when it came like a storm to scatter us,
gloating like those who secretly oppress the poor You trampled the sea with your horses,
and the mighty waters foamed. (GNT)

TEACHER:

This next passage refers to Joshua 10, where the sun stood still, during battle as the Lord fought with Israel.

STUDENT:

I hear all this, and I tremble; my lips quiver with fear.

My body goes limp, and my feet stumble beneath me.

I will quietly wait for the time to come when God will punish those who attack us. (GNT)

STUDENT:

Even though the fig trees have no fruit

and no grapes grow on the vines,

even though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no grain,

even though the sheep all die and the cattle stalls are empty,

¹⁸ I will still be joyful and glad, because the LORD God is my savior.

¹⁹ The Sovereign LORD gives me strength.

He makes me sure-footed as a deer

and keeps me safe on the mountains. (GNT)

TEACHER:

How beautiful, to end exactly where he started. After all the prophecy, and coming destruction, and his inability to do anything about it, Habakkuk rests in his faith. The just shall live by faith.

NEXT LESSON ZEPHANIAH

Tomb of Habakkuk



".....but the just shall live by his faith." Habakkuk 2:4

