

# Welcome to Habakkuk

One of the noblest pursuits a child of God can embark upon is to get to know and understand God better. The best way we can accomplish this is to look carefully at THE BOOK, His Book, the Book He has written, the Bible, which communicates who He is and His plan for mankind.

There are a number of ways we can study the Bible, but one of the most effective and simple approaches to reading and understanding God's Word involves three simple steps:

**Step 1: Observation** Pray that the Holy Spirit reveals to you, "What does the passage say?"

**Step 2: Interpretation** What does the passage mean?

**Step 3: Application** What am I going to do about what the passage says and means?

NOW, LET'S DIVE INTO EACH STEP OF STUDYING HABAKKUK.

HERE'S A SUGGESTED STUDY GUIDE:

## Week of May 3:

- Monday: Read the entire book!
- Tuesday: Listen to Pastor Drew's sermon from Sunday and read the introduction on page 2.
- Wednesday: Complete the questions, p. 3.
- Thursday: Complete the questions, p. 4.
- Friday: Review pages 3 and 4

## Week of May 17.

- Monday: Yes, read Habakkuk again.
- Tuesday: Listen to Pastor Drew's sermon from Sunday.
- Wednesday: Complete the questions, p. 7.
- Thursday: Complete the questions, p. 8.
- Friday: Review pages 7 and 8.

## Week of May 10

- Monday: Read the book of Habakkuk again.
- Tuesday: Listen to Pastor Drew's sermon from Sunday.
- Wednesday: Complete the questions, p. 5.
- Thursday: Complete the questions, p. 6.
- Friday: Review your answers on pages 5 and 6.

## Week of May 24

- Monday: Yes, read Habakkuk again.
- Tuesday: Listen to Pastor Drew's sermon from Sunday.
- Wednesday: Complete the questions, p. 9.
- Thursday: Complete the questions, p. 10.
- Friday: Review pages 9-10

## Introduction

Habakkuk is completely different from all the other prophets. He does not address Judah, Israel or Israel's enemies. Instead the prophet comes to God with his perplexing questions which have plagued the human race for years. He is a man troubled by what he observes around him, he sees a dying world and it broke his heart. Why is there evil in the world? Why do the wicked seem to be winning? Habakkuk took his questions and concerns to God and the book records these conversations.

**Date:** 640-609 B.C. some suggest 612 to 588 or 606 & 597. It was probably written toward the end of Josiah's reign; possibly into the reigns of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, Judah's last evil kings. Nineveh and the Assyrian empire had fallen and Habakkuk's enemy is now the Chaldean nation -- the neo-Babylonians. Jehoiakim was the king who burned the parchment roll of the prophet Jeremiah and Zedekiah was the king who allowed him to be thrown into a cistern and later rescued. Along with Jeremiah it was one of the last books written before the exile and captivity.

**Author:** Habakkuk a contemporary of Jeremiah but little else is known about him, except that he was a man of strong faith. His name means "embracer" or "one who embraces another".

**Written to:** Judah (the southern kingdom) and God's people everywhere. It is a book with special appeal to honest doubters with questions concerning God's government of this present world. It models an attitude of humility, expectancy and willingness to hear what God has to say to us.

**Historical Setting:** Babylon (modern day Iraq) was becoming the dominant world power and Judah would soon feel Babylon's destructive force. Judah would fall and Jerusalem was destroyed in 586 B.C.

**Message:** Habakkuk contains a dialog between the prophet and God as Habakkuk questions what he sees happening around him. There is in this book no call to repentance as in the prophecies from Hosea to Nahum where such phrases as "it shall come" and "while there is yet time." By the time Habakkuk comes along judgement had begun and there was no longer time for Israel to repent.

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

Habakkuk begins by questioning God's ways that appear to him unfathomable if not unjust, but he ends the book with a beautiful confession of faith, trust and hope in the midst of wickedness, strife and oppression run rampant. God makes it clear that eventually the corrupt destroyer will itself be destroyed and Habakkuk learns to wait and rest in his trust that God's justice will come according to His own time and plan.

**Outline:**

- Chapter-1:1-11 Habakkuk's first question and God's answer.
- Chapter 1:12-2:20 Habakkuk's second question and God's answer.
- Chapter 3 Habakkuk's prayer vision and joyous commitment of faith.

**Read Chapter 1:1-11**

1. What problems were troubling Habakkuk? (Give verse)





Note: The Chaldeans or neo-Babylonians ruled the ancient Near East from 612 -539 B.C. They had conquered Assyria and Egypt but they were wicked, tyrannical and aggressive. They were proud of their military might, strategies, armies and weapons. With no regard for humanity they brought home plunder and prisoners from the nations they conquered. Their riches came from the misfortunes of others and they trusted in themselves and their might.

2. A. Does the way God is working here sound logical to you?

B. Can you think of other instances where God seems to work in illogical ways?

C. What "rod" has God used on you and did it seem unjust at the time?

3. How do you see the grace of God in the way God handles Habakkuk?

4. Do you think doubt is the opposite of faith?

5. Does God always answer our questions?
  
6. Read Psalm 73. What situations baffled Asaph the author of this Psalm? (Give verse)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What questions would you ask of God?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. Though God does not answer Habakkuk immediately, what sort of attitude does he show? (2:1)
  - Is this a good way to pray? Describe it.
  - How do we come by this kind of faith according to Romans 10:17? Explain in your own words.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. What troubled Asaph in Psalm 73?
  - What truth did God reveal to Asaph in Psalm 73 which answered his doubts and confusion? (Give verses).
  - By contrast, what happens to the wicked ungodly people who seem to prosper on earth? (Verse)

- What about the godly?

10. Read Habakkuk 1:12- 2:20: What wonderful phrase does God give to Habakkuk in answer to his second question which should also be our guideline when our prayers seem unanswered or life situations baffle or discourage us?

What does that phrase mean to you?

11. How is the same thought repeated in the following verses?

- Rom. 1:17
- Gal. 3:11

12. What beautiful description of faith did we learn in Heb. 11:1?

13. How does this phrase “live by faith” seem to contradict our human nature?

14. God uses the Chaldeans as a typical example of a wicked nation. What were the sins listed? (Verses)

15. What things have your hands made that give you a sense of security and cause you to forget to trust in God?
16. What woes accompany the aforementioned sins? (Verses)
17. What promise of encouragement does Habakkuk give to all who are suffering such oppressions?
18. What does "be silent before Him" mean to you?
20. How is verse 4 the answer to every problem the Christian faces today?

### Read Chapter 3

1. What are Habakkuk's requests?
2. Did Habakkuk seem to resent or accept God's discipline of Judah?
3. When have you accepted God's discipline and learned a valuable lesson from it?

Note: These verses (3-15) of Habakkuk's prophesy are both symbolical and poetic. It seems to link God's deliverance of old (in the time of Exodus) with an end deliverance yet to be fulfilled.

4. Which verses remind you of the Exodus?
  
5. Which verse might anticipate the calamities of the imminent Babylonian invasion?
  
6. Is there a situation in your life now that requires you to wait in faith and trust?
  
7. Give several phrases which describe the majesty, power or judgement of God.
  
8. Put Habakkuk's resolution of faith in your own words.
  
9. What controlled Habakkuk's feelings?
  
10. What tends to control the feelings of many people today?

11. What attribute comes to mind when you think of deer or mountain goats on high cliffs?

How can that apply to us.

12. When have you recently chosen to walk in God's strength and found that He brought you through triumphantly?

13. What is God's ultimate answer to Habakkuk as to why evil people prosper and the righteous people suffer?