

**STORM WARNINGS!****#8 – HABAKKUK: OUR COMPLAINTS AND GOD’S ANSWERS****HABAKKUK 1 – 3**

**Habakkuk:** A contemporary of Nahum, Zephaniah, and Jeremiah. Within Judah, under corrupt and evil kings, there was violence, strife, and injustice. His name means “to embrace” or “to wrestle” and in his book, he does both. He wrestles with God regarding injustice, and then by faith, he embraces and praises God and clings to His promises.

**I. Habakkuk: Asking the Universal Questions (Chapter 1)**

- **Why do I call for help, and you do not \_\_\_\_\_? (1:2)** – Under the corrupt and evil king Jehoakim (II Kings 23:37), the situation in Judah had deteriorated into violence, chaos, and injustice. Jehoakim was a puppet of first Egypt, then Babylon; and allowed the Babylonians to take away the first Jews into exile. Habakkuk had cried for help to God, yet He was silent. In fact, the situation got worse. This is an age old question, why do some heartfelt prayers of faith seem unanswered. Habakkuk’s frustration is obvious.
- **Why do you tolerate \_\_\_\_\_ and wrong? (1:3)** – Judah had become a nation of great oppression and injustice. The rich and powerful controlled the system and the poor were oppressed, with no legal protections. What made it intolerable to Habakkuk was that these were God’s people and the justice system should reflect God – the holy and righteous law-giver. God’s law was not merely handled unfairly, it was turned upside down. Wrong was right, and right was wrong. Those who were righteous were bullied and punished. How could God tolerate this from His people? It showed great disrespect to God.
- **God’s Answer: I Am raising up the Babylonians for \_\_\_\_\_ (1:6)** – God answers Habakkuk, and Habakkuk doesn’t like it. I Am raising up the Babylonians, who will sweep through Judah. They were a “guilty” people, whose strength was their God (vs. 11).
- **Habakkuk: How can you use the \_\_\_\_\_? (1:13)** – The Babylonians were much more evil than Judah. How can the righteous God use the more evil to punish the less evil?

**II. God: Responding with Reassuring Revelation (Chapter 2)**

- **Listen for and remember God’s \_\_\_\_\_ response (2:1)** – Habakkuk saw himself as a watchman (guard) on the walls of Jerusalem, vigilant for God’s warnings of the danger to come. When God’s revelation came, it was made plain on the tablets – written down so the message was not confused or lost. That is what Habakkuk did, and we have it for today. God’s revelations always wait for His appointed time, not ours. Today, we need to be God’s watchmen, being vigilant and waiting for God’s revelation to inform and warn the world. We must be patient, and not so busy with our own lives that we miss it, for God’s true revelation will not prove false.
- **The Babylonians trust in themselves, but the just (righteous) will live by \_\_\_\_\_ (2:4)** – Though God will use the Babylonians in judgment, their own judgment will come because they trust in themselves. In contrast, the just (righteous) will live by faith – trust in God – not pride, faith in themselves and their own efforts. This key statement is repeated in Romans 1:17 and Galatians 3:11, as a reminder it is not our own efforts that make us

righteous, but faith in Christ and His sacrifice that make us righteous in the eyes of God. Spiritual pride (pride in your own religious efforts) is like Babylonian pride and will be judged.

- **Woe! To the \_\_\_\_\_ (2:6 – 20)** – Though the Babylonians would be used as an instrument of judgment on Judah, God would also judge them for their greater evil. “Woe” means retribution and great misery. God declares “woe!” in four areas of Babylonian evil:
  - 1) Plundering other nations (verses 6 – 8)
  - 2) Using unjust gain to build fortresses for protection (verses 9 – 11)
  - 3) Intoxicating others for sensual perversity (verses 15 – 17)
  - 4) Idolatry – creating their own gods (verses 18 – 20) which are powerless rather than worshipping the one true God

### **III. Habakkuk’s response: A prayer of praise to God (Chapter 3)**

*Now that God has spoken, Habakkuk no longer is complaining, he is praising! He gives a prayer of praise through faith to God!*

- **Praise for the \_\_\_\_\_ of God (3:1-2)** – Habakkuk remembers God’s past glory and deeds, and counts on God to renew them again. Today, when we struggle spiritually, we need to remember and praise God for His past deeds and in faith count on Him to work through today’s troubles showing His grace and mercy.
- **Praise for the \_\_\_\_\_ of God (3:3-11)** – Habakkuk tells us that God’s glory fills the heavens and praise (from His creation) fills the earth. The vastness and mysteries of the universe declare the glory of God. The beauty of His earthly creation praises Him. His is Lord over all creation and commands it according to His good pleasure and will.
- **Praise for the coming \_\_\_\_\_ of God (3:12-19)** – Though judgment and calamity were coming to Judah, Habakkuk would wait patiently for the Lord to deliver His people (3:13). He would be joyful in “God our savior” (3:18). How could he wait? Because the sovereign Lord “is my strength” (3:19). We cannot see all that God is doing, or all that He will do, but we can be assured that He is God and will do what is right in His own eyes. Knowing this can give us confidence and hope in a confusing world.

**Answers: I. Listen; injustice; judgment; Babylonians. II. Revelation; faith; Babylonians. III. Work; greatness; salvation.**