

Outline of
Habakkuk



Introduction

Writer

Habakkuk. His name means love's embrace. Martin Luther gave a striking definition of his name, which cannot be improved upon: "Habakkuk signifies an embracer, or one who embraces another, takes him into his arms. He embraces his people and takes them to his arms, i.e., he comforts them and holds them up, as one embraces a weeping child, to quiet it with the assurance that, if God wills, it shall soon be better." This is all that is known of the writer, except that he was the doubting Thomas of the Old Testament. He had a question mark for a brain.

Time

Probably written during the reign of Josiah, about the time of the destruction of Nineveh and the rise of Babylon to power. Habakkuk appeared in the twilight, just before the darkness of the captivity. FORM: The closing statement, "For the chief musician on my stringed instrument" (ARV), reveals that this is a song. The last chapter is a psalm. The entire prophecy is a gem of beauty. It has been translated into a metric version by Dr. Gaebelein. Delitzsch wrote, "His language is classical throughout, full of rare and select turns and words." Moorehouse wrote, "It is distinguished for its magnificent poetry."

Message

The book opens in gloom and closes in glory. It begins with an interrogation mark and closes with an exclamation point. Habakkuk is a big WHY? Why God permits evil is a question that every thoughtful mind has faced. The book is the answer to the question: Will God straighten out the injustice of the world? This book answers the question: Is God doing anything about the wrongs of the world? This book says that He is. The book is the personal experience of the prophet told in poetry, as Jonah's was told in prose.

Theme

Faith. Habakkuk has been called "the prophet of faith." The great statement of Habakkuk 2:4, "The just shall live by faith," has been quoted three times in the New Testament: Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38.

Source: Dr. John Vernon McGee (1904 – 1988), THRU THE BIBLE RADIO NETWORK

HABAKKUK

Chapters 1-2

Wrestling with God

Miserable

Shouting

Prayer

Impatient

Asks for justice

Down in dumps!

Chapter 3

Resting in God

Happy

Singing

Praise

Patient

Asks for mercy

On a high!

HABAKKUK

THE PROPHET (1')

A. COMPLAINING PRAYER (1²-2²⁰)

1. GOD DOES TOO LITTLE (1²-11)

QUESTION: Why don't bad suffer?

ANSWER: Bad will suffer – Babylonians!

2. GOD DOES TOO MUCH (1¹²-2²⁰)

QUESTIONS: Why use worse to punish bad?

Why do good suffer?

ANSWERS: Good will survive!

Worse will suffer!

B. COMPOSED PRAISE (3¹-19)

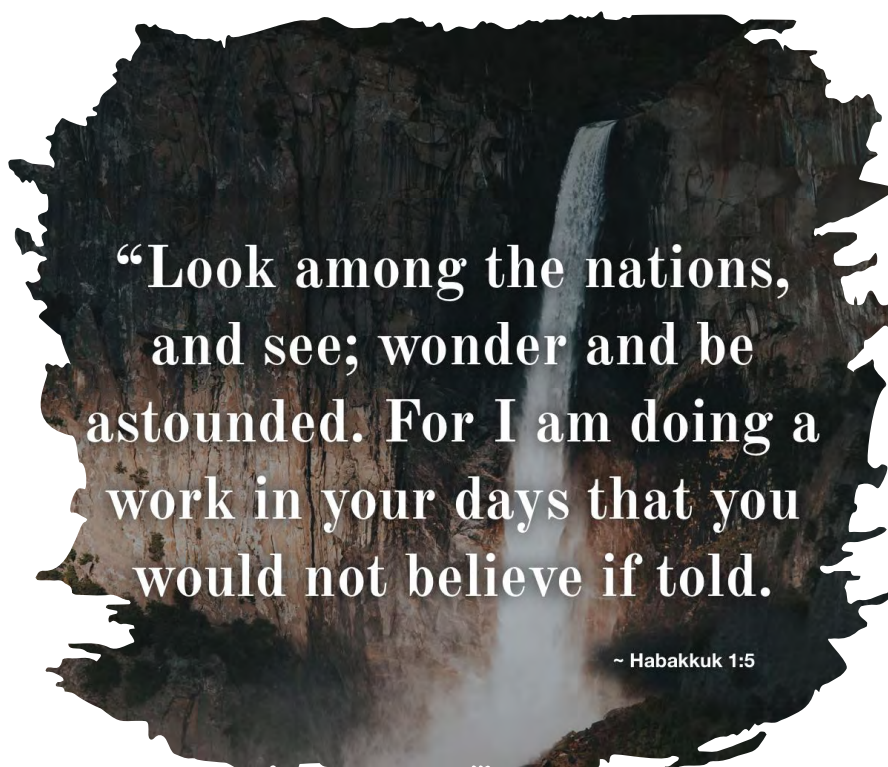
1. TREMBLES AT GOD'S PAST ACTION (1-16)

2. TRUSTS IN GOD'S FUTURE PROTECTION (17-19)

I. Perplexity of the prophet

Chapter 1

- A. First problem of the prophet, vv. 1-4**
Why does God permit evil?
- B. God's answer, vv. 5-11**
God was raising up Chaldeans to punish Judah (v. 6).
- C. Second problem of the prophet (greater than first), vv. 12-17**
*Why would God permit His people to be punished by a nation more wicked than they?
Why did He not destroy the Chaldeans?*



II. Perspicuity of the prophet

Chapter 2

- A. Practice of the prophet, v. 1**
He took the secret problem to the secret place.
- B. Patience of the prophet, vv. 2, 3**
He waited for the vision.
- C. Pageant for the prophet, v. 4**
The great divide in humanity: One group, which is crooked, is flowing toward destruction; the other group, by faith, is moving toward God. This is inevitable.

D. Parable to the prophet, vv. 5-20

The application is self-evident from the vision. The Chaldeans, in turn, would be destroyed. God was moving among the nations.



III. Pleasure of the prophet

Chapter 3

A. Prayer of the prophet, vv. 1, 2

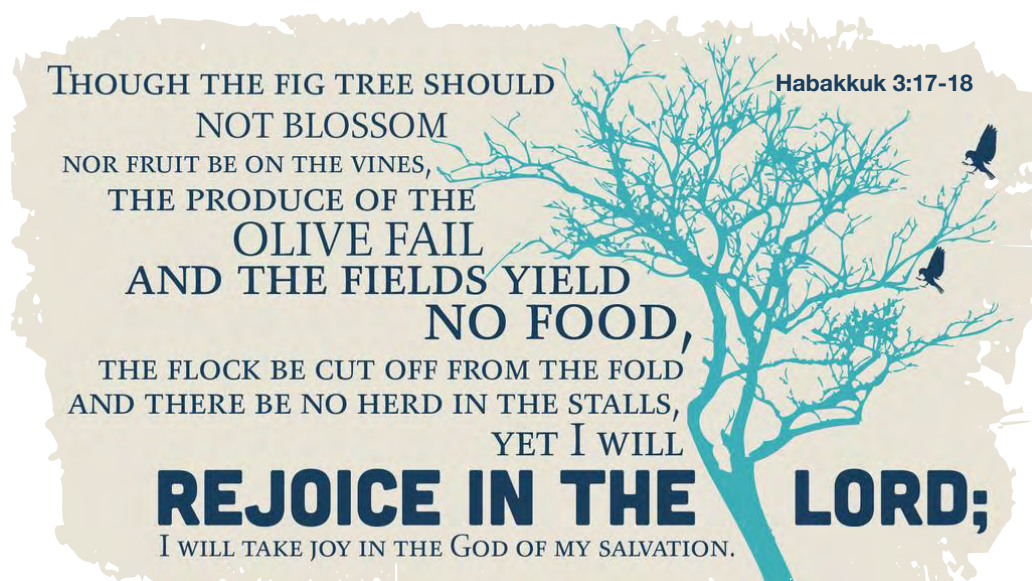
The prophet, who thought God was doing nothing about evil, now asks Him to remember to be merciful. Was he afraid that God was doing too much?

B. Program of God, vv. 3-15

God rides majestically in His own chariot of salvation (v. 8).

C. Position of the prophet, vv. 16-19

He will rejoice (v. 18). He has come from pain to pleasure.



Quiz on Habakkuk

1. Habakkuk says that the just shall live by what?

2. In Chapter 2, the Lord tells Judah via Habakkuk that the earth will be filled with what?

3. In Habakkuk's prayer in Chapter 3, he asked the Lord to repeat what in their day?

4. In spite of fruit, crop and animal failures in Chapter 3, what was Habakkuk going to do?

5. In Chapter 2, what was Habakkuk asked to write plain?

6. In Chapter 3, what covered the heavens and filled the earth?

7. In Chapter 2, what does the Lord say about building a city with blood and injustice?

8. What does the Lord say about idolatry (or trusting in one's creation), in Chapter 2?

9. At the end of Chapter 2, what does it say the whole earth should do?

10. At the end of Chapter 3, who does Habakkuk say is his strength?

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