



A just weight  
and balance

are the  
LORD'S:

Thus saith the Lord...

- **Habakkuk**
- **Living By Faith  
When God  
Seems Invisible**

- The book of Habakkuk presents a picture of a man of GOD, perplexed by God's seeming tolerance of evil.

- The book of Habakkuk differs from other books of prophecy in one special aspect.
- Instead of taking Jehovah's message directly to the people, he takes the complaint of the people to Jehovah, representing them in the complaint.

- **The life of faith may**  
seem relatively easy  
to accomplish in the  
context of worship  
and religious activity.

- In the beauty  
and wonder  
of worship,

**God seems unusually close,**

and it is not difficult  
to see and sense

His presence and be reminded  
of

His goodness and blessing.

- When all is well it is easy to worship and live faithfully before Him.

- However,  
when God's people  
struggle to live faithfully  
and God seems  
distant or absent  
life gets  
difficult and tiresome.



- What adds to this difficulty is the fact that often, God's ways do not seem compatible with what we know about His character.

- For example,  
how can a  
good and loving God  
allow evil things  
to happen  
to His beloved children?

- **If God is all powerful**  
and all loving,  
**why**  
does He allow  
His children  
to suffer?

- Perhaps the hardest question of all

is the age old question

- If God is who He says He is, then

why do the wicked prosper?

- **Psalm 73**

addresses that very question.

- He started out by acknowledging what he knew to be true about God

- **“*Truly God is good to Israel, to such as are pure in heart.*”**

- However, he went on to admit that the contradiction between this theological truth and his personal experience nearly destroyed him.
- ***“But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; my steps had nearly slipped.”***

- What was it that caused this near spiritual disaster?
- His observation that the wicked seem to prosper and the Godly seem to suffer!

- God's people in every generation have wrestled with the issue of why the wicked prosper.

- More importantly, how are we to respond when evil triumphs and wicked men prosper?



- What are we to do  
when life seems unfair?
- How are we to respond  
when all around us  
are troubles and difficulties  
and God seems  
distant and absent?

- The best answer  
is found  
in the short  
and powerful  
prophecy of  
Habakkuk.

- His prophecy raises the question,
- **“Why do God’s actions at times seem contrary to His nature?”**
- All of us have at times wanted to ask this question.

- More important than God's answer to the question is Habakkuk's response to his circumstance.

- This book takes its name from its author, Habakkuk.
  - The name “Habakkuk” means “one who embraces” (1:1).

- It is interesting to note that **Habakkuk begins** by questioning God
  - **And ends by embracing God in a song of praise** even though God had not chosen to change or alter his difficult circumstance.

- Almost nothing is known about Habakkuk other than his name and his office as a prophet.
  - He prophesied to the Southern Kingdom, Judah, sometime before the Babylonian's carried them away into captivity.
  - It's best 612–605 B.C.

- Times were not good for Israel in Habakkuk's day.
- It had been approximately one hundred years since God had brought His devastating judgment upon the 10 Northern tribes of Israel.



- The Assyrian nation had attacked Judah.
  - Sennacherib, had even surrounded Jerusalem and laid siege to King Hezekiah's army.

- That night over **180,000** Assyrian soldiers perished and Sennacherib retreated to Nineveh.

- Of course, to hear him recount the story in the annals of history, **his version was slightly different.**

- According to him, his army had shut Hezekiah up in Jerusalem *like a bird in a cage.*
- Amazingly, there is no mention of the deaths of his troops.
- Nor does he give a reason why he did not finish Hezekiah and destroy Jerusalem.
- However, all of Judah knew the real story.
- Behind Sennacherib's defeat was the powerful intervention of God!

- Now, almost a century later,  
God's people, Judah,  
were just as wicked if not  
more so than they were before
  - Judah was back to her old  
ways.
- Wickedness, idolatry, injustice  
were once again  
the order of the day!

- Against this backdrop of wickedness one righteous man stands and asks God a question:
  - ***“Lord, How long are you going to let this wickedness among your people go on unchecked and unjudged?”***

- What Habakkuk saw and felt created in him questions about what He knew and believed to be true about God.
  - His theology did not match up with his experience.

- In this crisis,  
God was about to  
**strengthen Habakkuk's**  
**ability to believe**  
**in the unseen**  
and  
**live by faith**  
**and not by sight!**

- Waiting For  
God's Intervention  
Habakkuk 1:1 – 2:1

- This first section consists of two complaints by Habakkuk and God's first answer.

- Habakkuk begins by articulating a "burden" he "saw."



- This is somewhat unusual as normally a prophet would receive the “burden” from God and speak it to the people.

- In Habakkuk's case, **the burden was his own** – received from what he saw going on around him,
- And it motivated him to **speak to God in prayer.**

- **His first complaint is that**  
God had caused him to see  
what was going on  
in the nation of Judah.
  - God had  
**“showed him iniquity and  
caused him to see trouble”**  
(Habakkuk 1:3).
- **Strife** and **plundering**  
were a constant sight  
before his eyes

- As a result,  
the law was  
powerless and  
**injustice**  
and  
**wickedness**  
prevailed.

- **Habakkuk** used **6 different terms** to describe the depravity going on around him:
  - **violence**,
  - **injustice**,
  - **wrong**,
  - **destruction**,
  - **strife**, and **conflict**.
  - Society had sunk **to despicable lows.**

- What made this even more painful was that all of this **came about in 12 short years**

- Just 12 years earlier these same people had witnessed God's gracious intervention in the revival

- He sent under **King Josiah in 621 B.C.**

- (II Kings 22:8-20).

- Clearly and understandably, Habakkuk was deeply troubled by what he saw going on around him – **and God was strangely silent.**

- So, he lifts up his voice and cries out to God.

- In this cry comes his first question /complaint to God.

- Habakkuk asks God four simple questions..

- Two beginning with the phrase “How long?”

- Two beginning with the phrase “Why?”



- In none of this does Habakkuk ever express doubt in God's ability to help.
- That is never a question for him.
  - He knows God can judge and deliver.
- The issue for Habakkuk is why God has chosen not to act up to this point.
  - Why has God tolerated this wickedness for so long?

- **Violence is pervasive**

throughout  
the entire nation.

- **Five times**

we are reminded of how  
violent the nation has become

(Habakkuk 1:2, 3, 9; 2:8, 17).

- So pervasive and powerful was evil in the land that the law had become **paralyzed** and **powerless!**
  - True justice of any kind had vanished from the land, **and the righteous were being oppressed on every side!**  
(Habakkuk 1:4)

- Far from being distant, uninvolved,  
God was about to announce a work  
that would amaze all who heard –  
and it would come to pass before  
their eyes!

- Habakkuk 1:5

***Behold ye among the nations, and  
look, and wonder marvellously;  
for I am working a work in your  
days, which ye will not believe  
though it be told you.***

- He is personally raising up a wicked nation – the **Chaldeans** (**Babylonians**) to do this work of judgment.
- This new nation would be **rough** and **savage**, and **destroying** everything in their path to power.
- They would be utterly “**lawless**” (Habakkuk 1:6-11).

- There is some poetic justice here.
- Violent and lawless  
Judah

would be herself judged  
and violated by a nation  
that was known for  
violence and lawlessness. 46

- God's answer to Habakkuk's first question – **“How long?”** – is
    - **Not very long!**
- I am raising up the nation  
that I have appointed  
to judge you,  
and they are on their way!

- Instead of producing quietness and rest, **God's answer actually created additional distress for the prophet.**



- I am shocked!
- Given Who You are (holy and just), how can You use this wicked nation to do Your righteous work?  
Habakkuk 1:12

- In the first part of his prayer, Habakkuk expressed **impatience** with God's inactivity.
  - **Here he is perplexed** over God's declared action.
- God's determination to use the pagan Babylonians **seemed to directly contradict everything that God was and represented.**

- Habakkuk calls attention to God's purity.
- He describes God as being of “*pure eyes*” (Habakkuk 1:13), indicating God's unwillingness to look favorably on sin and treat wickedness casually.

- This Babylonian nation that God had determined to raise up against Israel was far more wicked than Israel!
- Habakkuk 1:14-17

- Habakkuk has made **his second complaint** and asked His question.
- He is absolutely convinced that **no matter what evidence** to the contrary is going on around him, **God is righteous!**

- With this in mind,  
Habakkuk reaches  
**two important conclusions:**

- **# 1 God will not  
abandon His people**  
nor forget His righteous  
promise to Abraham.  
(Habakkuk 1:12)

- **# 2** He will wait for God  
and ask Him to  
adjust my perspective  
(Habakkuk 2:1)
- Habakkuk will patiently wait  
for God to give answer  
and explain His works.

- **So often we charge God foolishly;**
  - Then when God's answer **does not conform to our thinking,** we seek judge God!
    - **Not Habakkuk.**
  - **He faithfully waits for God to set all things right,** including his own personal thinking about the matter!



- There are some important reminders for us as God's people as we sit upon our "watch-tower" waiting for God to answer.

- First,  
we are to remember  
that righteousness  
is not optional for us  
no matter what the  
circumstances around us  
may be.
- We are called to obey  
even when  
we don't understand.

- Second,  
we are to remember that  
all of history is really  
more about God  
and not about men.

- We must view history  
from God's perspective  
and not our own.

- **Third**  
**we are to**  
**rest patiently**  
**on God's character.**

- He is the **holy One**.

- He is the **rock!**

- **So what is the godly man to do**  
when the wicked seem to prosper?
  - He is to **continue** to be godly.
  - He is to continue to **faithfully** wait upon the Lord.
    - The godly man must **live by faith**  
when the world is up-side down!

- ***“Then the Lord answered me and said:  
Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it!”***
- **Finally, God’s answer arrives.**
  - He instructs Habakkuk to do **three specific things.**

- **(1)** He is to preserve the Answer/Vision by writing it down on tablets of stone.
- Similar instructions given to Moses.

- (2) **He is to proclaim the Answer/Vision clearly and plainly .**
- It must be plainly stated **and made available to all!**
  - This was not just a private word of comfort; this was intended to be **for all of God's people.**



- **(3)** He is to perform according to the Answer/Vision

- **“That he may run who reads it”**

- That it may be **read with ease.**

- Habakkuk 2:3 (KJV)

- *For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.*

- **It is God's time and His way.**
- God's plans and time tables **are never affected by man!**
  - He will act at exactly the appointed time, **and though it seem to be delayed to us,** it will come right on God's schedule.

- (Habakkuk 2:4)
- These verses contain the central phrase to all of God's dealings with
- His people in any age:  
“*The just shall live by faith!*”

- God proceeds to announce five “Woe” oracles upon Babylon the proud.
- In contrast to the just man who because of his faith in God would live, this proud and independent nation who looked to themselves and not to God, would die!<sup>69</sup>

- God proclaims their imminent and sure demise in a series of five very graphic “woe.”
  - Each woe is stated in terms of poetic justice indicating that God would devise a punishment according to the crime.

- **1. The Plunder**

would be Plundered  
(Habakkuk 2:6-8)

- Babylon is depicted as having increased goods by seizing and taking the goods of another;
  - Now what he had taken **would be taken from him.**

- **2. The invincible**  
will no longer be invincible  
(Habakkuk 2:9-11)
- Babylon sinned  
**without fear**  
because they believed  
they were untouchable.



- **3.** Her workers would build,  
but what they built  
**would end up burned with fire!**

(Habakkuk 2:12-14)

- In contrast

**God's influence and power**

would spread throughout  
the whole earth!

**All the world would know Him!**

(Habakkuk 2:14)

- **4. The Shameless**  
would be Shamed  
(Habakkuk 2:15-17)
- **There was no limit**  
to the shameful deeds  
this nation would do  
against other nations,  
lands, and people!

- 5. **Their trust in dumb idols**  
would be useless.  
(Habakkuk 2:18-20)
  - **The final woe**  
is pronounced against them  
for their worship  
to lifeless idols.

- He presents a vivid picture of the Lord's going forth in the days of old to save His people, the implication being that His past mercies to Israel are a pledge of His future mercies toward them.  
(Habakkuk 3:3-16).

- Habakkuk 3:17-19 (KJV)

- 17 Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls:

- 18 Yet I will rejoice in the LORD,  
I will joy in the God of my salvation. .

- Habakkuk who has raised such searching questions...

- Now declares that come what may

**he will hold steadfastly to the Lord**

and like Job declares his faith..

- "***Though He slay me,  
I will hope in Him.***"

(Job 13:15).

- The final conclusion of Habakkuk is that we must allow God to be God.
  - To do things His way and in His own good time.
    - The righteous will “*live by his faith*”  
(Habakkuk 2:4)
- The key verse of this entire book!

- When life falls apart  
at the seams,  
we must

“*live by faith*”

Romans 1:17



**Doors of the church  
are open.**

**Spirit & Bride Say**

**“Come”**

**Revelation 22:17**

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