

MINOR PROPHETS: HABAKKUK

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HABAKKUK

Just a little background:

Habakkuk prophesied about 600 years before the coming of Christ.

The most significant historical event in this time period was the Babylonian invasion of Judah and the following exile.

His contemporaries were Zephaniah and Jeremiah.

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The whole Book of Habakkuk is a prayer ... a conversation between God and his prophet.

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The theme that stands out for me is that it is OK to ask God hard questions. It's OK to tell God we don't understand something or that something is bothering us.

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How long, LORD, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, “Violence!” but you do not save? Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrongdoing? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds. Therefore the law is paralyzed, and justice never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted.

Habakkuk 1:2-4

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“Look at the nations and watch—and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told. I am raising up the Babylonians, that ruthless and impetuous people, who sweep across the whole earth to seize dwellings not their own.”

Habakkuk 1:5-6

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They are a feared and dreaded people; they are a law to themselves and promote their own honor. Their horses are swifter than leopards, fiercer than wolves at dusk. Their cavalry gallops headlong; their horsemen come from afar. They fly like an eagle swooping to devour; they all come intent on violence. Their hordes advance like a desert wind and gather prisoners like sand.

Habakkuk 1:7-9

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They mock kings and scoff at rulers. They laugh at all fortified cities; by building earthen ramps they capture them. Then they sweep past like the wind and go on— guilty people, whose own strength is their god.”

Habakkuk 1:10-11

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Habakkuk responds to God. He's not thrilled about God's answer.

LORD, are you not from everlasting? My God, my Holy One, you will never die. You, LORD, have appointed them to execute judgment; you, my Rock, have ordained them to punish. Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrongdoing. Why then do you tolerate the treacherous? Why are you silent while the wicked swallow up those more righteous than themselves?

Habakkuk 1:12-13

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You have made people like the fish in the sea, like the sea creatures that have no ruler. The wicked foe pulls all of them up with hooks, he catches them in his net, he gathers them up in his dragnet; and so he rejoices and is glad.

Habakkuk 1:14-15

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Therefore he sacrifices to his net and burns incense to his dragnet, for by his net he lives in luxury and enjoys the choicest food. Is he to keep on emptying his net, destroying nations without mercy?

Habakkuk 1:16-17

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God answers Habakkuk:

“Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay.”

Habakkuk 2:2-3

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Habakkuk 2:4-19 God explains to Habakkuk he does see the wicked acts of people and that justice is coming.

“See, the enemy is puffed up; his desires are not upright—but the righteous person will live by his faithfulness—indeed, wine betrays him; he is arrogant and never at rest. Because he is as greedy as the grave and like death is never satisfied, he gathers to himself all the nations and takes captive all the peoples.

Habakkuk 2:4-5

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“Woe to him who piles up stolen goods and makes himself wealthy by extortion!” (Vs. 2:6)

“Because you have plundered many nations, the peoples who are left will plunder you.” (Vs. 2:8)

“Woe to him who builds his house by unjust gain, setting his nest on high to escape the clutches of ruin!” (Vs. 2:9)

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The LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth
be silent before him.

Habakkuk 2:20

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Habakkuk shifts his prayer to acknowledge God's greatness.

LORD, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, LORD. Repeat them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy.

Habakkuk 3:2

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Habakkuk 3:3-15 Habakkuk remembers God's rescue of his people in the past.

Plague went before him; pestilence followed his steps. (V. 5)

I saw the tents of Cushan in distress, the dwellings of Midian in anguish. (V. 7)

You came out to deliver your people, to save your anointed one. You crushed the leader of the land of wickedness, you stripped him from head to foot. (V. 13)

You trampled the sea with your horses, churning the great waters. (V. 15)

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Yet I will wait patiently for the day of calamity to come on the nation invading us. Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior.

Habakkuk 3:16-18

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Habakkuk's conclusion to his conversation with God:

The Sovereign LORD is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to tread on the heights.

Habakkuk 3:19

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Two last points to consider:

God is in control even when we can't see it or understand it.

When the going gets tough, the tough turn to the Lord.