

Yahweh, the Almighty God of Israel, is with us
"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet,
and shew my people their transgression,
and the house of Jacob their sins." Isaiah 58:1

Famous Believers

Study Prayerfully & Study Carefully

Habakkuk

Habakkuk was a prophet of Judah. His book is the 8th of the ‘**minor**’ prophets. The book is not dated, but was obviously written before the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed at the time of the Babylonian captivity. We shall consider the book in three parts:

1. The First Complaint

Habakkuk 1: 2: ***"O LORD, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear! even cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save!***
3: ***Why dost thou shew me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance? for spoiling and violence are before me: and there are that raise up strife and contention.***
4: ***Therefore the law is slacked, and judgement doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore wrong judgement proceedeth."***

In other words: Why aren't you doing something about my complaints, my many prayers about current injustices? If you are a God of justice, why aren't you noticing the evil that is gaining the ascendancy? Why aren't you taking action? How long must I cry for help and you do not answer?

That was how the prophet Habakkuk analyzed the situation and prayed to the LORD. It was a prayer millions of people pray even today. Have you not even whispered it yourself? Where is God? What is He doing about the world's myriad problems? Evil, violence, greed and rape are getting the upper hand: but what is God doing about it? **Where is He? Why is He so silent?**

Yahweh Answers Habakkuk

Habakkuk 1: 5: ***"Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously: for I will work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told you.***
6: ***For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwelling places that are not theirs."***

In other words: I am, in fact, already doing something about evil. I am rousing the Chaldeans to punish evil doers and you Habakkuk will be astonished when that work is finished.

Habakkuk Continues

Habakkuk 1: 12: ***"Art thou not from everlasting, O LORD my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O LORD, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction."***

Habakkuk recognizes Yahweh's involvement in the punishment of wrong-doers: and how that the Chaldeans are indeed ruthlessly punishing many nations in exactly the way that Yahweh had described: but still a **moral problem** remains which prompts the second complaint.

2. The Second Complaint

Habakkuk 1: 13: *“Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: **wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously**, and holdest thy tongue when the **wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?**”*

In other words: You are a holy Person who cannot look upon evil and injustice without taking action. But why are you so silent when the wicked (Chaldeans) are punishing people far more righteous than themselves?

Habakkuk's reasoning continues: I realize that I have been rash to even reason like this, to talk out plainly in this way to God. But that's how it looks to me.

Yahweh's Answer

Habakkuk 2: 2: *“And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.*

3: 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.

4: Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.”

In other words: Record this vision concerning my plans. Record it plainly so that even people in a hurry may understand it. In the final analysis, on the **Day of Judgement**, the wicked (the one whose soul is not right with Yahweh) will be punished with death - eternal death! But the just, the righteous, those who do what I say is right, will live because of their faith! Wait for this final outcome. It may appear to be taking a long time: but it will most certainly take place. It will occur.

These facts about the final punishment of the wicked are taught throughout the Scriptures. See (Psalm 37). The Psalms contain many passages which tell of how evil seems to be in power at the moment, **that crime pays**. But the fact is God is in charge and on the **Day of Judgement** every one will realize this.

This passage confirms the above.

Psalm 73: 1: *“**Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.***

2: But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped.”

Psalm 73: 3: *“For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.”*

They, the wicked, appear to thrive and they have everything they want.

Psalm 73: 4: *“For there are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm.*

5: They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men.

6: Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment.

7: Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish.

8: They are corrupt, and speak wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily.

9: They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walketh through the earth.

10: Therefore his people return hither: and waters of a full cup are wrung out to them.

11: And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High?

12: Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches.”

Whereas the righteous appear to be doing good all for nothing. This reasoning was more than I could fathom:

Psalm 73: 13: *“Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency.*

14: For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.

15: If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children.

16: When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me;

17: Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end.

18: Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction.

19: How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors.

20: As a dream when one awaketh; so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.

21: Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins.

22: So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee.”

Yahweh's Methods

- Yahweh always punishes pride, violence and wickedness. So do not ever think that He is doing nothing about all the wickedness on this earth. He is punishing, albeit in a limited way; because His mercy also extends to the wicked. Initially He uses outside forces to punish Israel. More often than not these forces are far worse than the people they are punishing.

- Yahweh then punishes that outside force, laying it low as He did the ancient Babylonians. They may for the time being appear to thrive in all that they do; but their victory is short lived. Moreover, in the final analysis, on the great **Day of Judgement** - they will perish. That is how they will end.
- But the just, the righteous, those who have chosen the path of **faith** and **obedience** will live for all eternity. They may have suffered punishment for their sins at the hand of the wicked. But that is not their end by any means. The reward of the righteous is life eternal in the Kingdom of Heaven. That is a reward far in excess of anything we can remotely imagine.

That is how Yahweh works. Remember these facts.

3. Habakkuk's Prayer / Testimony

In wrath remember mercy.

Habakkuk 3: 1: *"A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet upon Shigionoth.
2: O LORD, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O LORD, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy."*

The prophet sees Yahweh in vision.

Habakkuk 3: 3: *"God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise.*

4: And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand: and there was the hiding of his power.

5: Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet.

6: He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways are everlasting.

7: I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction: and the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble.

8: Was the LORD displeased against the rivers? was thine anger against the rivers? was thy wrath against the sea, that thou didst ride upon thine horses and thy chariots of salvation? "

Habakkuk 3: 9: *"Thy bow was made quite naked, according to the oaths of the tribes, (of Israel) even thy word. Selah. Thou didst cleave the earth with rivers."*

The rescue of Israel

Habakkuk 3: 10: *"The mountains saw thee, and they trembled: the overflowing of the water passed by: the deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high.*

11: The sun and moon stood still in their habitation: at the light of thine arrows they went, and at the shining of thy glittering spear."

Verse 11: The assistance that was given to Joshua (Joshua 10: 12-13)

Joshua 10: 12: *"Then spake Joshua to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.*

13: And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day."

The final punishment of nations.

Habakkuk 3: 12: *"Thou didst march through the land in indignation, thou didst thresh the heathen in anger."*

Salvation

Habakkuk 3: 13: *"Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed; thou woundedst the head out of the house of the wicked, by discovering the foundation unto the neck. Selah.*

14: Thou didst strike through with his staves the head of his villages: they came out as a whirlwind to scatter me: their rejoicing was as to devour the poor secretly.

15: Thou didst walk through the sea with thine horses, through the heap of great waters."

The day of trouble and distress which is about to come to the people of Yahweh.

Habakkuk 3: 16: *"When I heard, my belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice: rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble: when he cometh up unto the people, he will invade them with his troops."*

The prophet now has a much clearer understanding of the Almighty's methods and ends his book with this **magnificent declaration of faith.**

Habakkuk 3: 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.

19: The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places. To the chief singer on my stringed instruments."

4. Are You Discouraged?

So was **Habakkuk**; so was **Moses**; so was **Elijah**: "Let me die" said Elijah. So was **Job**. Oh what a staggering experience was his! So was **Isaiah**: "**Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.**" (Isaiah 6: 5) So was **David**, **Jeremiah**, **John the Baptist**, **JESUS** and every **Apostle** in turn: loneliness, sorrow, poverty, hardship, misunderstanding, betrayal, slander, persecution and in many cases - even death!

These experiences, in varying degrees, are common to all believers. **But in truth we are winning because Yahweh is with us.** And though His methods seem strange and His silence **extremely difficult to understand**, in actual fact He is working His purposes out. And as a beautiful token of sure victory He gives all His sons and daughters inner peace and joy which only the true believer can understand. These spiritual possessions enable us to echo the words of Habakkuk the prophet.

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

AMEN!

In the Son's Name — For the Father's glory.

Elder: Max W. Mader

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