
THE BOOK OF

HABAKKUK

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HABAKKUK 1:5

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THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Habakkuk 1:5 (NIV)

"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."

QUOTE FOR THE WEEK

"...for I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told."

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

This week pray for those who are traveling that they may seek out God's will and His glory. Ask God to give them peace about issues over which they have no control, and to let go of what they do have control over and allow God to be the decision maker and master of all they are and do.

MESSAGE

For most people our expectations about life are either way too high or way too low. From God's perspective they mostly are just not focused properly, usually our expectations about life and circumstances are centered on ourselves, and what we can do or accomplish, NOT on God and his plan or desires for our life. This world continues to be a roller coaster of emotions, high points and low points, all fed by a diet of self-want and desire. These last few months God has taken me to a very different place, a place that I have not been used to. It is a place of change, and a journey like I have never experienced. At times it is lonely; at times it is quiet; and at times leaves me fearful about the future. The fear comes from realizing that I have for too much of my life relied on myself and not on the power and indwelling of God alone. I have attained much of what I have from the focus on me and what I am capable of doing. God is now showing me that He has greater expectations than I do (even though mine have been pretty BIG, and maybe just a little misguided) for my life.

If I would just let go of my worldly view, my control over every move and situation, and allow HIM to be my life, HIS expectations might be met. Yes God alone has to be my power, my source; my partner...God is no longer my co-pilot who I call on when I need a little support, no He is the ONE fully in charge. It is scary only because I know what I can do and accomplish in this life on my own, but not always sure of what he can do, or wants to do (especially without my help). A few years ago I used this devotion to read through and share the book of Habakkuk. This was in done because of the last few verses of the book, verses that I saved from my father's room after he had died. They meant a lot to me then and now are beginning to become even clearer. The book of Habakkuk is a dialogue between God and man at a time that the worst seems to be happening, yet the reliance on God is what makes for life worth living. I trust you will appreciate the repeat tour through Habakkuk over the next few weeks, and that it drives you closer to the Father as it continues to drive me closer as well.

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HABAKKUK 1:1-4

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THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Habakkuk 1:1-4 (NIV)

1 The oracle that Habakkuk the prophet received. 2 How long, O LORD, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, "Violence!" but you do not save? 3 Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrong? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds. 4 Therefore the law is paralyzed, and justice never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

This week pray for those who are traveling that they may seek out God's will and His glory. Ask God to give them peace about issues over which they have no control.

QUOTE FOR THE WEEK

"How long, O Lord, must I call for help, but you do not listen?"

MESSAGE

Sound familiar? I mean from Job... not your own cry. However, is this not the same message we do cry out many times? As we are working our way through life we see so much suffering in our life while others seem to have no trouble at all; and don't we think that is what they deserve: TROUBLE?!?! Habakkuk was frustrated with God. His own nation (Judah) was NOT obeying God's laws and was not being punished. In fact, they seemed to be getting away with all sorts of sins. This was quite the irritation to Habakkuk, and he wanted God to do something about it.

The good news here is that Habakkuk wanted what was right and went to the right source, God Himself. The lesson for us here is to go to God, and no one else. It is easy for us to complain and gripe and gossip about many things, when in reality we simply need to give those things to God, and He promises to handle them. Think of those things that are better left to God this week and turn them over to Him.

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HABAKKUK 1:5-11

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THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Habakkuk 1:5-11 (NIV)

5 "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. 6 I am raising up the Babylonians, that ruthless and impetuous people, who sweep across the whole earth to seize dwelling places not their own. 7 They are a feared and dreaded people; they are a law to themselves and promote their own honor. 8 Their horses are swifter than leopards, fiercer than wolves at dusk. Their cavalry gallops headlong; their horsemen come from afar. They fly like a vulture swooping to devour; 9 they all come bent on violence. Their hordes advance like a desert wind and gather prisoners like sand. 10 They deride kings and scoff at rulers. They laugh at all fortified cities; they build earthen ramps and capture them. 11 Then they sweep past like the wind and go on— guilty men, whose own strength is their god."

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

This week pray that those traveling will hear the words of God. Pray that the daily violence and terror seen on TV and heard on the radio can be understood in the context of God's sovereign control of our lives. Pray for those at home that God will give them the comfort of His peace as their family is away.

QUOTE FOR THE WEEK

"Look...and be utterly amazed...I am going to do something...that you would not believe..."

MESSAGE

With these words from God Almighty, it is time to put on the seat belts and be ready for anything. That is exactly what happens: something utterly amazing. God answers Habakkuk's prayer to provide justice to those people in his nation who are not obeying the Law. God tells Habakkuk that He intends to raise up another nation (the Babylonians, "...ruthless and impetuous people...") to carry out His justice. God Himself describes them in verse 11 as, "...guilty men, whose own strength is their god." This is a tough passage to read for most of us. We tend to see God as one who has very neat and clean ways to carry out His justice. To know that He uses methods beyond our understanding is somewhat disturbing to us.

As we continue in Habakkuk we will see the final answer from God, but it is important to point out that He knows how tough it will be for us to accept this response from Him. Look again at verse 5, as God says, "For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told." Are you listening to God this week? Or to the many other voices that are whispering (and yelling) in your ears (and eyes)?

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HABAKKUK 1:11-2:1

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THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Habakkuk 1:11-2:1 (NIV)

11 Then they sweep past like the wind and go on—guilty men, whose own strength is their god." 12 O LORD, are you not from everlasting? My God, my Holy One, we will not die. O LORD, you have appointed them to execute judgment; O Rock, you have ordained them to punish. 13 Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrong. Why then do you tolerate the treacherous? Why are you silent while the wicked swallow up those more righteous than themselves?

QUOTE FOR THE WEEK

"O Lord, are you not from everlasting?"

14 You have made men like fish in the sea, like sea creatures that have no ruler. 15 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. 16 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. 17 Is he to keep on emptying his net, destroying nations without mercy? Habakkuk 2

1 I will stand at my watch and station myself on the ramparts I will look to see what he will say to me, and what answer I am to give to this complaint.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

This week pray that God will allow those traveling to ask the tough questions. Pray that those traveling will not only ask the questions, but will prepare themselves for the answers God will provide.

MESSAGE

Just as we are shocked by the comments and actions of God in last week's passage, so is Habakkuk. These guys are even WORSE than Judah in terms of righteousness. These are the REALLY bad guys. How can you use the thoroughly rotten guys to bring justice to the merely bad guys? This is the question Habakkuk asks in verse 13, "Why are you silent while the wicked swallow up those more righteous than themselves?" It does not make sense to Habakkuk, and it does not seem to make sense to us. Habakkuk questions God on His methods but also correctly waits for an answer from God

(chapter 2, verse 1, "I will look to see what he will say to me, and what answer I am to give to this complaint.") This is the way God wants our relationship with Him to be. Yes, He wants us to question this world we live in. He also, though, wants us to wait for an answer and listen to it when He speaks. He also wants us to understand that our relationship is with HIM and based in HIM and not others.

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HABAKKUK 2:2-20

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THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Habakkuk 2:2-20 (NIV)

2 Then the LORD replied: "Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. 3 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. 4 "See, he is puffed up; his desires are not upright— but the righteous will live by his faith - 5 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. 6 "Will not all of them taunt him with ridicule and scorn, saying, " 'Woe to him who piles up stolen goods and makes himself wealthy by extortion! How long must this go on?' 7 Will not your debtors suddenly arise? Will they not wake up and make you tremble? Then you will become their victim. 8 Because you have plundered many nations, the peoples who are left will plunder you. For you have shed man's blood; you have destroyed lands and cities and everyone in them. 9 "Woe to him who builds his realm by unjust gain to set his nest on high, to escape the clutches of ruin! 10 You have plotted the ruin of many peoples, shaming your own house and forfeiting your life. 11 The stones of the wall will cry out, and the beams of the woodwork will echo it. 12 "Woe to him who builds a city with bloodshed and establishes a town by crime!

QUOTE FOR THE WEEK

"For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord..."

13 Has not the LORD Almighty determined that the people's labor is only fuel for the fire, that the nations exhaust themselves for nothing? 14 For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. 15 "Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbors, pouring it from the wineskin till they are drunk, so that he can gaze on their naked bodies. 16 You will be filled with shame instead of glory. Now it is your turn! Drink and be exposed ! The cup from the LORD's right hand is coming around to you, and disgrace will cover your glory. 17 The violence you have done to Lebanon will overwhelm you, and your destruction of animals will terrify you. For you have shed man's blood; you have destroyed lands and cities and everyone in them. 18 "Of what value is an idol, since a man has carved it? Or an image that teaches lies? For he who makes it trusts in his own creation; he makes idols that cannot speak. 19 Woe to him who says to wood, 'Come to life!' Or to lifeless stone, 'Wake up!' Can it give guidance? It is covered with gold and silver; there is no breath in it. 20 But the LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him."

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

This week pray for those who are at home without their loved one who is traveling. Pray that God will answer the tough questions they have. Pray that God will reach out with answers that are real and alive, showing His power and His glory.

MESSAGE

The answer from God comes in poetry and verse with which we are unaccustomed. God has an answer

for Habakkuk as well as for us. His answer is found within the questions and answers posed by God in chapter 2

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MESSAGE

. Throughout the chapter, God describes the ultimate condemnation of all those who are without righteousness. Verse after verse tells of those who use all things at their disposal for **THEIR** own benefit and pleasure. They are all guilty, some are not more righteous than others; **ALL** are guilty of sin before God. God's final answer to all is in verse 16 when He says "The cup from the Lord's right hand is coming around to you...," a reminder that God alone is in full control, bringing about the final judgment, and He **WILL** bring about that final judgment. God goes on to say that the idols of their false religion offer nothing to depend on. He ends the chapter with the power of His throne, verse 20, "But the Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before Him."

We can question God, but as Job also saw, we have to accept His final answer, even if we are unsure or unable to fully comprehend. God has said to Habakkuk (and to us) that His methods are His and all mankind will face the final justice of God and God alone. His methods are not ours to know at all times, but they are supremely righteous. Not an easy answer, but our response to it determines our faith and reliance on Him. Next week we see Habakkuk's response.

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HABAKKUK 3:1-19

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THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

Habakkuk 3:1-19 (NIV)

1 A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet. On shigionoth. 2 LORD, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, O LORD. Renew them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy. 3 God came from Teman, the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah. His glory covered the heavens and his praise filled the earth. 4 His splendor was like the sunrise; rays flashed from his hand, where his power was hidden. 5 Plague went before him; pestilence followed his steps. 6 He stood, and shook the earth; he looked, and made the nations tremble. The ancient mountains crumbled and the age-old hills collapsed.

His ways are eternal. 7 I saw the tents of Cushan in distress, the dwellings of Midian in anguish. 8 Were you angry with the rivers, O LORD? Was your wrath against the streams? Did you rage against the sea when you rode with your horses and your victorious chariots? 9 You uncovered your bow, you called for many arrows. Selah You split the earth with rivers; 10 the mountains saw you and writhed. Torrents of water swept by; the deep roared and lifted its waves on high. 11 Sun and moon stood still in the heavens at the glint of your flying arrows, at the lightning of your flashing spear. 12 In wrath you strode through the earth and in anger you threshed the nations. 13 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. Selah 14 With his own spear you pierced his head when his warriors stormed out to scatter us, gloating as though about to devour the wretched who were in hiding. 15 You trampled the sea with your horses, churning the great waters. 16 I heard and my heart pounded, my lips quivered at the sound; decay crept into my bones, and my legs trembled. Yet I will wait patiently for the day of calamity to come on the nation invading us. 17 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, 18 yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior. 19 The Sovereign LORD is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to go on the heights. For the director of music. On my stringed instruments.

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

This week pray for those that are traveling that they will see the vision that God sees in their life. Ask God to reveal to them His will and His future plans for their life.

QUOTE FOR THE WEEK

"I stand in awe of your deeds, O Lord."

MESSAGE

Habakkuk uses chapter 3 to give God the glory. He does not pretend to understand the exact whys and wherefores of God's judgment. He repeats many questions of God's power and how He uses it, but he also acknowledges the most important fact. Verse 19: "The Sovereign Lord is my strength..." This final chapter is a testament to a man of God. It gives us

insights as to how God walks and talks with His servants (that's us!) While the nation is at war, his own people under attack from a vicious and ruthless nation, and his life at a point of despair, this is what we hear from Habakkuk: "Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails

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MESSAGE

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

All around him are questions and concerns, poverty and war, pain and anguish, but he has his focus on what God is going to do. This week keep your focus on what God is going to do for you.