

Habakkuk

¹ The message that Habakkuk the prophet received,

² “Yahweh, how long will I cry for help, and you will not hear?

I cry out to you, 'Violence!' but you will not save.

³ Why do you make me see iniquity and look upon wrongdoing?

Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and contention rises up.

⁴ Therefore the law is weakened, and justice does not last for any time.

For the wicked surround the righteous; therefore false justice goes out.”

Yahweh replies to Habakkuk

⁵ “Look at the nations and examine them; be amazed and astonished!

For I am surely about to do something in your days that you will not believe when it is reported to you.

⁶ For look! I am about to raise up the Chaldeans— that fierce and impetuous nation— they are marching throughout the breadth of the land to seize homes that were not their own.

⁷ They are terrifying and fearsome; their judgment and splendor proceed from themselves.

⁸ Their horses also are swifter than leopards, quicker than the evening wolves.

So their horses stamp,

and their horsemen come from a great distance—they fly like an eagle hurrying to eat.

⁹ They all come for violence; their multitudes go like the desert wind, and they gather captives like sand. *

¹⁰ So they mock kings, and rulers are only a mockery for them.

They laugh at every stronghold, for they heap up earth and take them.

¹¹ Then the wind will rush on; it will move past—guilty men, those whose might is their god.”

Habakkuk asks Yahweh another question

¹² “Are you not from ancient times, Yahweh my God, my Holy One? We will not die.

Yahweh has ordained them for judgment, and you, Rock, have established them for correction.

¹³ Your eyes are too pure to gaze upon evil, and you are not able to look on wrongdoing with favor;

why then have you looked favorably on those who betray?

Why are you silent while the wicked swallow up those more righteous than they are?

¹⁴ You make men like fish in the sea, like creeping things without a ruler over them.

¹⁵ He brings all of them up with a fishhook; he drags men away in his fishnet;

* **1:9** The Hebrew text translated here as *their multitudes go like the desert wind* is very difficult; many modern versions have other interpretations.

he gathers them together in his dragnet;
so he rejoices and he is glad.

¹⁶ Therefore he sacrifices to his net
and burns incense to his dragnet,
for by his net he lives in luxury,
and his food is the richest kind.

¹⁷ Will he therefore keep emptying his net,
and will he continually slaughter the nations
without mercy?"

2

¹ I will stand at my guard post and station myself
on the watchtower,
and I will watch carefully to see what he will say
to me
and how I should turn from my complaint. *

² Yahweh answered me and said,
"Record this vision, and write plainly on the
tablets so that the one reading them might
run.

³ For the vision is yet for a future time and will
finally speak and not fail.

Though it delays, wait for it. For it will surely
come and will not tarry.

⁴ Look! The one whose desires are not right
within him is puffed up. But the righteous
will live by his faith.

⁵ For wine is a betrayer of the arrogant young
man so that he will not abide,

* **2:1** Instead of *how I should turn from my complaint*, which is what the Hebrew text has, some modern versions have *how I should answer when he replies to my complaint or how I should answer when he rebukes me*.

but enlarges his desire like the grave and, like death, is never satisfied.

He gathers to himself every nation and gathers up for himself all of the peoples.

⁶ Will not all these create a saying to ridicule him and a taunting song about him, saying,

'Woe to the one increasing what is not his! For how long will you increase the weight of the pledges you have taken?'

⁷ Will the ones biting at you not rise up suddenly, and the ones terrifying you awaken?

You will become a victim for them.

⁸ Because you have plundered many peoples, all the remnant of the peoples will plunder you.

For you have shed human blood and acted with violence against the land, the cities, and all who live in them.

⁹ 'Woe to the one who carves out evil gains for his house, so he can set his nest on high to keep himself safe from the hand of evil.'

¹⁰ You have devised shame for your house by cutting off many people, and have sinned against yourself.

¹¹ For the stones will cry out from the wall, and the rafters of timber will answer them,

¹² 'Woe to the one who builds a city with blood, and who establishes a town in iniquity.'

¹³ Is it not from Yahweh of hosts that peoples labor for fire and all the other nations weary themselves for nothing?

14 Yet the land will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Yahweh as the waters cover the sea.

15 'Woe to the one who forces his neighbors to drink—
you express your anger † over and you make them drunk
in order to look at their nakedness.'

16 You will be filled with shame instead of glory.

Now it is your turn! Drink, and you will expose your uncircumcised foreskin!

The cup in Yahweh's right hand is coming around to you,
and disgrace will cover your glory.

17 The violence done to Lebanon will overwhelm you and the destruction of animals will terrify you.

For you have shed human blood and you have acted with violence against the land, the cities, and all who live in them.

18 What does the carved figure profit you? For the one who has carved it, or who casts a figure from molten metal, is a teacher of lies;

for he trusts his own handiwork when he makes these mute gods.

19 'Woe to the one saying to the wood, Wake up! Or to the silent stone, Arise!' Do these things teach?

See, it is overlaid with gold and silver, but there is no breath at all within it.

† 2:15 There is some question about whether the Hebrew should be translated as *anger* or as *wineskin* .

20 But Yahweh is in his holy temple! Be silent before him, all the land.”

3

1 The prayer of Habakkuk the prophet: *

2 Yahweh, I have heard your report, and I am afraid.

Yahweh, revive your work in the midst of these times; in the midst of these times make it known;

remember to have compassion in your wrath.

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 With brightness like the light, two-pronged rays flash from his hand; and there he hid his power.

5 Deadly disease went before him, and the plague followed him.

6 He stood and measured the earth; he looked and shook the nations.

Even the eternal mountains were shattered, and the everlasting hills bowed down.

His path is everlasting.

7 I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction, and the fabric of the tents in the land of Midian trembling.

8 Was Yahweh angry at the rivers? Was your wrath against the rivers, or your fury against the sea,

* **3:1** The Hebrew text adds the expression *on shigionoth*, which may refer to musical directions for singers.

when you rode upon your horses and your
victorious chariots?

⁹ You have brought out your bow without a
cover; you put arrows to your bow!

Selah

You divided the earth with rivers.

¹⁰ The mountains saw you and twisted in pain.

Downpours of water passed over them; the deep
sea raised a shout.

It lifted up its waves.

¹¹ The sun and moon stood still in their high
places

at the flash of your arrows as they fly,

at the lightning of your flashing spear.

¹² You have marched over the earth with indig-
nation. In wrath you have threshed the
nations.

¹³ You went out for the salvation of your people,
for the salvation of your anointed one.

You shatter the head of the house of the wicked
to lay bare from the base up to the neck.

Selah

¹⁴ You have pierced the head of his warriors
with his own arrows since they came like
a storm to scatter us,

their gloating was like one who devours the poor
in a hiding place.

¹⁵ You have traveled over the sea with your
horses, and heaped up the great waters.

¹⁶ I heard, and my inner parts trembled! My lips
quivered at the sound.

Decay comes into my bones, and under myself I
tremble

as I wait quietly for the day of distress to come
upon the people who invade us.

17 Though the fig tree does not bud
and there is no produce from the vines;
and though the produce of the olive tree
disappoints
and the fields yield no food;
and though the flock is cut off from the fold
and there are no cattle in the stalls, this is
what I will do.

18 Still, I will rejoice in Yahweh.
I will be joyful because of the God of my
salvation.

19 The Lord Yahweh is my strength
and he makes my feet like the deer's.
He makes me go forward on my high places.
—To the music director, on my stringed
instruments.

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