

Pastor Dave – Sunday Sun 28th July

A study in Habakkuk – Chapter 1:1-4

The Burden: Faith in Times of Confusion.

Habakkuk – a great Old Testament Book.

Society has melded to want immediate responses in our communication.

- Postal services
- Telegraph
- Telephone
- Email
- Texting – Messaging
- Apps
- more immediate responses and feedback

We agonise when we don't get a response.

- We expect an immediate response.

Question – What happens when we pray to the Lord and cry out to him and don't get the speedy response when we think we should?

What happens if we don't get the. Response we think we should get.

- Do we struggle with that?

The book of Habakkuk shares with engages he has with God and his crying out to the Lord.

The first prayer for Habakkuk is him asking God some questions and God isn't giving him the immediate response he is seeking.

The second prayer we see he doesn't like the answers he is getting anyway!

Sermon Title – The Burden: Faith in Times of Confusion.

Dr Jim Roscup – basic outline of the of Habakkuk in his book an Exposition on Prayer:

Igniting the Fuel to Flame Our Communication with God

Chapter One - The complaints against the Lord

Chapter Two - The complaints against the Lord

Chapter Three - The Confidence in the Lord.

The First Prayer – Chapter 1 verses 1-4

Habakkuk 1:1-4 Christian Standard Bible

1 The pronouncement that the prophet Habakkuk saw.

Habakkuk's First Prayer

² How long, LORD, must I call for help
and you do not listen
or cry out to you about violence
and you do not save?

³ Why do you force me to look at injustice?
Why do you tolerate^[a] wrongdoing?
Oppression and violence are right in front of me.
Strife is ongoing, and conflict escalates.

⁴ This is why the law is ineffective
and justice never emerges.
For the wicked restrict the righteous;
therefore, justice comes out perverted.

Question – Have you ever prayed to the Lord like that and had some honest conversations with God before?

Habakkuk is having a very honest conversation with the Lord.

3 Things to consider.

Reason for the title – The Burden: In A Time of Faith and Confusion is the word burden is actually in this passage.

Depending on whether you are using a new translation or not you may not see it.

Habakkuk 1:1-4 Christian Standard Bible

1 The pronouncement that the prophet Habakkuk saw.

Out of all the English translations the King James is probably the best on this.

The pronouncement or word oracle – the word is Massa – literally meaning burden – a burden he has and is sharing with God and with us!

By what he sees around himself, he is...

- Broken hearted.

- Frustrated with Justice.

We look around and are burdened and frustrated by what we see.

The Minor Prophets are minor due to the fact they are shorter books.

Habakkuk as a prophet of God doesn't actually make proclamations to the nation of Israel or to the rulers around him.

- It is actually a personal conversation he is having with the Lord.

He lived around 605 BC.

He is not found or made mention of anywhere else in scripture.

What God says to Habakkuk in His response to him.

Verse 6 -

Habakkuk 1:6 Christian Standard Bible

⁶Look! I am raising up the Chaldeans,^[a]
that bitter, impetuous nation
that marches across the earth's open spaces
to seize territories not its own.

What we know is if God is the Chaldeans - Habakkuk lived just prior to this.

The Assyrians have already been dealt with.

This informing us that he probably lived around the fall of Nineveh.

- Put in this time we get to see what environment of society he is living in.

All this giving is an idea of what Habakkuk is crying out to the Lord for.

Reference made to 2 Kings 23 and 24.

Manasseh the most wicked Judean King that the divided kingdom had.

2 Kings 21 Christian Standard Bible

Judah's King Manasseh

21 Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hephzibah. **2** He did what was evil in the LORD's sight, imitating the detestable practices of the nations that the LORD had dispossessed before the Israelites. **3** He rebuilt the high places that his father Hezekiah had destroyed and reestablished the altars for Baal. He made an Asherah, as King Ahab of Israel had done; he also bowed in worship to all the stars in the sky and served them. **4** He built altars in the LORD's temple, where the LORD had said, "Jerusalem is where I will put my name." **5** He built altars to all the stars in the sky in both courtyards of the LORD's temple. **6** He sacrificed his son in the fire,^[a] practiced witchcraft and divination, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did a huge amount of evil in the LORD's sight, angering him.

7 Manasseh set up the carved image of Asherah, which he made, in the temple that the LORD had spoken about to David and his son Solomon: "I will establish my name forever in this temple and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel.

Verse 9

9 But they did not listen; Manasseh caused them to stray so that they did worse evil than the nations the LORD had destroyed before the Israelites.

This is the kind of king that had ruled in Israel.

- To the point where God said I am going to deal with Manasseh's sin in a grievous way.

The next king did what was right in God's sight.

Josiah was a godly king – routing out all of the idol worship – the godlessness in the nation. A top-down reform. Convicted about his own sin and the nations sin. Did what was right in God's sight – he did an amazing reformation.

- Then king Josiah dies.
- Then his son Jehoahaz for a brief period of time is king and dies young.

Then Jehoiakim becomes king and does what is evil in the sight of the Lord.

2 Kings 24 Christian Standard Bible

Jehoiakim's Rebellion and Death

³ Indeed, this happened to Judah at the LORD's command to remove them from his presence. It was because of the sins of Manasseh, according to all he had done, ⁴ and also because of all the innocent blood he had shed. He had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, and the LORD was not willing to forgive.

Habakkuk looking out over Israel knowing what had gone before and he sees wickedness and violence that had happened under the previous kings.

- Now he cries out to the Lord.

Verses 1-4

Habakkuk 1:1-4 Christian Standard Bible

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⁴ This is why the law is ineffective
and justice never emerges.
For the wicked restrict the righteous;
therefore, justice comes out perverted.

Habakkuk's prayer given what he is seeing around him – injustice and oppression.

He knows who God is and His character.

- A Holy God who deals with sin.

Question – Habakkuk asking God – “Why aren’t you doing something about this”?

Our circumstances can obscure what we know about God and cause us to doubt.

- Habakkuk was missing what God was doing.

Habakkuk – for him God was doing nothing – but God is at work!

God’s Response – Verse 5

Habakkuk 1:5 Christian Standard Bible

God’s First Answer

⁵ Look at the nations^[a] and observe—
be utterly astounded!
For I am doing something in your days
that you will not believe
when you hear about it.

The Prophet Isaiah had said that God’s way are higher than ours.

Isaiah 55:8 Christian Standard Bible

⁸ “For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
and your ways are not my ways.”
This is the LORD’s declaration.

- We in our human capacity are unable to fully grasp what God is doing.

Point # 2 – In Our Doubt Look at The Bigger Picture.

God to Habakkuk – “You need to look at the bigger picture”

The answer to come doesn’t faze Habakkuk.

This is the answer God gives him.

Habakkuk 1:5-11 Christian Standard Bible

God's First Answer

⁵ Look at the nations^[a] and observe—
be utterly astounded!

For I am doing something in your days
that you will not believe
when you hear about it.

⁶ Look! I am raising up the Chaldeans,^[b]
that bitter, impetuous nation
that marches across the earth's open spaces
to seize territories not its own.

⁷ They are fierce and terrifying;
their views of justice and sovereignty
stem from themselves.

⁸ Their horses are swifter than leopards
and more fierce^[a] than wolves of the night.
Their horsemen charge ahead;
their horsemen come from distant lands.
They fly like eagles, swooping to devour.

⁹ All of them come to do violence;
their faces are set in determination.^[d]
They gather prisoners like sand.

¹⁰ They mock kings,
and rulers are a joke to them.
They laugh at every fortress
and build siege ramps to capture it.

¹¹ Then they sweep by like the wind
and pass through.
They are guilty;^[a] their strength is their god.

In the second prayer.

Question - You are a Holy God, how are you using a wicked people to do justice?

- A plan God is choosing to use on a sinful rebellious people of the Babylonians, to discipline the children of Israel.
- You need to see the bigger picture here.
- You need to trust me as I am a Holy and Mighty God.

As Christians we have the entire word of God and the privilege to see how God works out His plan – what happens to the Babylonians.

Pastor Dave mentioned that in this moment he jumped to Daniel Ch 4.

- Remembering that the Babylonians did come in and take the children of Israel captive – taking them back to Babylon – David being one of the prophets that ministered for God in Babylon.

With the story of king Nebuchadnezzar.

“Look at this vast kingdom that I have made – all the wonderful things that I have done”!

- God humbles this ruler – 7 years living like a beast – eat grass – being like a crazy person.

At the end of this time Nebuchadnezzar comes to his sense and prays to a God Almighty! – because He is God Almighty.

All because God was working His plan.

Last verses.

Point # 3 – Allow God in This Process to Strengthen Your Faith and Trust in Him.

Habakkuk begins to really trust God in a more mature way.

- We need to trust God in His plan.

Galatians 4:4-7 Christian Standard Bible

⁴When the time came to completion, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶And because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our^[a] hearts, crying, “Abba,^[b] Father!” ⁷So you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then God has made you an heir.

Jesus came at just the right to time to redeem sinful people.

Habakkuk was a sinful person – who came to trust God – God called him to be a prophet to nation of Judah.

Surrounded by sinful people who needed to be redeemed.

- The biggest problem was not just oppression or violence – the biggest problem was sin.

God sent His son Jesus Christ to die – at the right time – die upon the cross of calvary – to be buried and to rise again three days later – to redeem sinful people.

Many of us have trusted Christ as Saviour – we are redeemed sinful people!

- We are not just sons or daughters – we are Aires.

Think about what Jesus said to His disciples...

John 14 Christian Standard Bible

The Way to the Father

14 "Don't let your heart be troubled. Believe^[a] in God; believe also in me.

Our biggest problem is not the sinfulness of the culture that we are in – our biggest problem is that each and every one of us are a sinful people and we need Jesus to save us.

- Prepare a place for you.

Thomas says...

John 14:5 Christian Standard Bible

5 "Lord," Thomas said, "we don't know where you're going. How can we know the way?"

Revelation – When Jesus comes again, he is going to deal with sin and injustice.

- Thomas "Lord how do we know"!

Jesus' response...

John 14:6 Christian Standard Bible

6 Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

We need to remember that Jesus is the way.

Challenge.

Christian – We need to be strengthened in our faith even though things look bleak around us, as we look around at how things in the world around us are going.

Thinking the same as Habakkuk – “Why Lord are you putting up with this”?

We need to remember that Jesus is Lord – and that God is doing a work – even if we can't see it.

We need to trust that God is working His plan and his purposes.

But He has called us to do what God has called us to do in the days that we live.

- To proclaim that – Jesus is the way, the truth and the life and that no one comes to the father but through Him.

We need to get our eyes off of our circumstances and get them back on the Lord and remember that God is doing something that we sometimes don't know about.

But if he lets us in on it, we should rejoice that He is doing an awesome work.