

## Welcome to the book of Habbakuk!

We have chosen 3:18 as a key verse for Habakkuk that reflects the theme of the “justified ones” rejoicing in God no matter what the circumstance. When considering the outcomes in life it is easy to ask the question why rather than waiting and trusting in the justice of God. A lost loved one, a missed opportunity, God’s discipline for our sin...these are examples of circumstances that test our true trust in God!

Also note the passages listed within the overview chart below. How does each passage relate to the corresponding section title? What do you learn about circumstances as you consider these section titles and central passages? How does the key verse reflect the theme? The burdens of our life must be taken to God where we can receive His vision concerning the big picture - as well as our adjustment to circumstances through prayer!

# HABBAKUK

# Just Rejoice!

**A  
BURDEN**

1:1-4

1

**A  
VISION**

2:1-5

2

**A  
PRAYER**

3:16-19

3

*"Yet I will exult in the Lord!"* 3:18

### Open your heart as you read!

Do you ever encounter difficulties or questions about life that cause you to struggle? Do you find yourself with limited resources and insight to answer and satisfy such tough questions? Are you learning the patience of waiting through these circumstances in joyful, yet painful expectation?

## **KEY FACTS about the book of Habakkuk**

Habakkuk was the last of the minor prophets of Judah, and could be called the “Patient Prophet”. Habakkuk would have to endure Judah’s imminent destruction and patiently await the faithful restoration by God. He would simply have to rejoice despite the circumstances!

There were six minor prophets in all that prophesied to Judah. Obadiah was the “Bitterness Prophet”. He spoke to Israel of the judgment that would come upon the descendants of Esau, Jacob’s brother. Joel could be called the “Latter Days Prophet”, Micah the “Merciful Prophet”, Nahum the “Doomsday Prophet”, and Zephaniah the “Last Chance Prophet”. Together they composed the final message for the nation of Judah before the sorrowful captivity that would last for nearly a century.

### **AUTHOR AND AUDIENCE**

Habakkuk has been called “The Embracer of Why”. Luther said, “...Habakkuk means a heartener, or one who takes another to his heart and his arms, as one soothes a poor, weeping child, telling it to be quiet”. Israel has been taken captive by the Assyrians and the Babylonian captivity is so close that the hot breath of the Babylonians is felt upon the neck of her victims. Habakkuk answers the question “How close were they?!”

Habakkuk observes violence and injustice on every hand. What he sees causes him to cry out, “Why are the wicked prospering in your nation, Lord? Why are the righteous beaten down? Why don’t you do something to right the wrongs of society?” God’s reply stuns Habakkuk. “I am doing something, Habakkuk. I am about to use a nation even more corrupt than Judah..the Chaldeans...to cleanse My people of their wickedness!” In stunned disbelief, Habakkuk responds, “How in the name of holiness can you do that, God?” And when God patiently answers the prophet’s question, Habakkuk responds in prayer and praise.

### **Why Study the book of Habakkuk?**

Don’t be afraid to bring your hard questions to God. But be prepared for a shock when He answers them! People do not sin by asking questions. We sin when we are not willing to accept God’s answer.

We also need to learn to wait on God (Psalm 27:14). People say that God does not speak to men today as He did long ago. A truer statement is that men do not listen today as they did in days gone by. To the man who waits patiently - God will not remain silent.

The life that pleases God is the life of faith. We study Habakkuk because as God-followers, we need a “faith lift”. (brother...)



# Habakkuk Chapter Chart

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## CHAPTER 1

How would you paraphrase Habakkuk's questions into one specific question? In a phrase or sentence - how would you describe the condition of the nation at this point? As God speaks, do you feel He directly answers the question that Habakkuk had asked? What is Habakkuk's first response? Where was Judah's present source of pride?

TITLE \_\_\_\_\_ KEY VERSE \_\_\_\_\_

### What about today?

What is the most heartfelt question that you have ever asked God? There is a distinct difference between asking questions of God and questioning God. Would you say that you are willing to receive God's answers to your questions and accept them by faith? Read 2 Corinthians 5:1-10 with regard to our circumstances.

## CHAPTER 2

What do we learn of Habakkuk's attitude in this chapter? In what ways has it changed or stayed the same as in the proceeding chapter? How can 2:4 be related to Habakkuk? To the nation? What specific crimes are described within this vision? What could be a present day example of 2:15? From this chapter, why would you say that it is easier sometimes for man to have idols rather than serving the Living God?

TITLE \_\_\_\_\_ KEY VERSE \_\_\_\_\_

### What about today?

Would you classify yourself as someone who is patient or impatient when it comes to waiting? How does 2:4 speak to your current spiritual condition? 2 Peter 3:10-18 gives some valuable teaching on the issue of waiting!

## CHAPTER 3

What exactly is Habakkuk requesting in verses one and two of this chapter? What is going on inside of Habakkuk, and how do verses 3-7 give you a clue? How would you paraphrase his request in verse 8? How did God's response make Habakkuk feel? Paraphrase the prophet's words in 3:17.

TITLE \_\_\_\_\_ KEY VERSE \_\_\_\_\_

### What about today?

What principles can we learn about prayer from the example of Habakkuk? What kinds of things do you request when you pray? Note Hebrews 12:1-13 with regard to patient endurance. Habakkuk learned a lesson that few men and women are willing to receive! (You might say that he received a "faith lift" for his sagging countenance!)

# UNJUST STORMS

Habakkuk observes violence and injustice on everywhere in Judah. What he sees causes him to cry out to God with his perplexing questions: “Why are the wicked prospering in your nation, Lord? Why are the righteous beaten down? Why don’t you do something to right the wrongs of society?” God’s reply is even more shocking than the condition of Judah. “I am doing something, Habakkuk. I am about to use a nation even more corrupt than Judah...the Chaldeans...to cleanse my people of their wicked ways.” In stunned disbelief, Habakkuk responds with confidence in God in spite of painful circumstances.

## For Your Consideration...

1. It is easy to take the familiar words of Scripture and casually slide over them without feeling their full impact. For example, read 1 Thessalonians 5:18 aloud. Do you understand the significance of those words? “In EVERYTHING - good times and bad, sickness and health, at the first of the month and the last, when you have a job and when you don’t...give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” Now try the same with the last 3 verses of Habakkuk’s book: “Although the fig tree shall not blossom (or the stock market rise, or my salary go up with inflation, or my health return)...yet I will rejoice in the Lord.”
2. Find out what the name “Habakkuk” means and how it might relate to “rejoicing in justice” and having confidence in even painful circumstances.
3. In the face of all painful circumstances, the believer has 3 responsibilities. See if you can list these opportunities with each series of verses:

James 1:2  
Acts 5:41  
Romans 5:3

James 1:12  
1 Corinthians 10:13b

Matthew 6:13  
John 17:12-15

It has been accurately said, “Sometimes the Lord calms the storm; more often He lets the storm rage and calms His child”. Within the book of Habakkuk, this statement is certainly verified as the Chaldean storm rages over Israel. In spite of that storm, the prophet is able to rejoice (ch. 3) in the midst of a painful circumstance. To conclude this study, observe the prophet’s perspective in a painful position:

He waits on God...2:1;3:16  
He knows God will be glorified...2:14  
He recognizes majesty...3:3-4

He knows God will correct him...2:1  
He worships in the midst of trials...3:2  
He recognizes God’s consistency...3:6b