

Survey of Habakkuk

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1. The author of the book of Habakkuk is identified in 1:1 and 3:1 as none other than the prophet Habakkuk. The meaning of his name is derived from the verb *habaqa*, which means “to embrace.”
2. Habakkuk was one who chose to embrace God regardless of whether or not there appeared to be any earthly benefit from doing so (cf. 3:16-19).
3. Reference to the imminent Babylonian (also called Chaldean) invasion (1:6; 3:16) establishes a date for the writing of Habakkuk around 609 – 597 B.C. This date places Habakkuk’s ministry during the early part of Jehoiakim’s reign of Judah. Jehoiakim was a wicked godless king who led Judah away from faithfulness to God (cf. 2 Kings 23:34-24:4; Jer. 22:17). Thus, Jeremiah and Habakkuk were contemporaries.
4. The main thrust of the book of Habakkuk is to reveal a God who leads his people by faith not by sight (2:4; 1:3,4). Remember that Habakkuk was ministering during a time in which Judah had repeatedly been called to repentance and yet stubbornly refused to obey God faithfully.

Prophets	Time	Spoke To
Jonah→ Amos→ Hosea	Pre-exilic	Israel
Isaiah→ Jeremiah → Micah→ Nahum→ Habakkuk→ Zephaniah	Pre-exilic	Judah
Ezekiel→ Daniel → Obadiah	Exilic	Judah
Haggai→ Zechariah→ Joel→ Malachi	Post-exilic	Judah

Outline

1. The Fright of Sin (1)
2. The Fall of Sinners (2)
3. The Faith of Saints (3)

Main Points and Applications

1. God’s ways are higher than our ways (1:5, 6, 13; Isa. 55:8, 9). It may not seem plausible that God would use someone more wicked than us to chasten us, but that might be his way. When God revealed to Habakkuk that he intended to use Babylon as his rod of judgment, Habakkuk had trouble believing that God could use a nation more corrupt than Judah to chasten it. See Rom. 2:4-11.

2. For those who exalt their own physical strength, consider 1:10-11. Babylon thought no one was tougher. Who considers that the greatness of God demands the humility of man? In what ways are we guilty of the pride of strength?
3. Let us not doubt the surety of God's word even though his plans do not unfold on our perceived best schedule (2:3; Eccl. 3:1-8). The slowness of God does not negate his word it only testifies to his control.
4. The righteous put their trust in God not in the morning news or the latest "scientific theory" (2:4; 3:16-19; Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11). We walk by faith not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7). We are to trust God even when we cannot "figure out" his justice or plans. What does this say about the way we evaluate God's word?
5. Men and nations grow weary trying to establish themselves – all for nothing (2:13). It is God's ways and glory that will be established regardless of all opposition (2:14). Where then should we put our efforts? Consider Matt. 16:17-18. Why is there sometimes a reluctance to give to and establish the church?
6. Foolish we are when we think we are in charge of events around us (2:18-20). God is still in the control center of heaven and earth; we must sit down and get quiet whenever he commands.
7. Consider one of the primary concerns of God – salvation (3:13, 18). In what ways should this affect us?
8. The only hope for living when facing a God who punishes sinners is faith in his mercy (2:4; 3:2; Heb. 10:37-38). In what is your faith? What is the proper object of faith?
9. Have we established a proper embrace of our God (3:16-19)? Those who quietly wait upon the Lord are strengthened for living (Isa. 40:31). To truly embrace God we must embrace the person of God (3:1-3), the power of God (3:4-12), and the plan of God (3:13-19).