

Habakkuk Intro & Background Pt. 4

Habakkuk 1:1, CBC December 20, 2023 83 (Red): Come, O Come Emmanuel

Cleaning Lists highlighted, Caroling Dec. 22nd 9pm; 1:1 oracle—burden—often speaking of judgment/doom, here, focus on divine revelation in dialogue b/n Habakkuk and God; theme of book includes injustice, doubt, questioning, fears, suffering, looking for hope, but Elizabeth Achtemeier “shows that Habakkuk is not primarily about (1) the justice of God, a theme the prophet assumes rather than debates; (2) human doubt since the prophet maintains strong communion with God and expects the right answers from God; (3) human suffering and helplessness before the world’s evil powers, that being the setting of the book not the theme.” Bailey, p. 276 **Key is posture, What do you think should be the posture we take in face of injustice, doubts, fears, and lack of hope and what fights against it? 1. Come before God honestly and humbly** numerous godly men dared question God, wanting to know/understand more of His workings—Moses, Jeremiah, Job, Habakkuk; can you think of others? **what happens if fail to be honest with God?** perhaps problem doesn’t start w relationship w God; **what prevents honesty in other relationships and what does this do to relationships?** YET, honesty must have boundaries—not just free for all with justice, doubt, suffering/ helplessness **2. Come seeking to submit to God’s Word, but make connections to your life with careful precision** “Habakkuk’s message is relevant to all times and peoples, as we are taught in the full scope of the canon (II Tim. 3:16-17). But the problem is this: how can we contemporize his words without weakening the meaning they had in their original setting? It is all too easy to declare that we are under no obligation to discover the meaning Habakkuk’s message had for its original author or first audience. But we do so at the risk of losing the authority and any objective controls over what the text is saying. After all, it was the prophet who stood in the council of God, not we. And it is the author who must first state what he means to say if we are to gain any sense of what the Spirit of God is saying to our day and generation.” Pp. 149-150 Kaiser, *The Communicator’s Commentary* **How would we “declare that we are under no obligation to discover the meaning Habakkuk’s message had for its original author or first audience?” What did all these men have that we might be in danger of forgetting when we confront these topics? What else do you think we need?** what does it mean to set your mind on things above; what does it mean to lay up treasures in heaven? What does, “when the fullness of time came,” and “the time past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desires of the Gentiles . . . live no longer for the lusts of men but for the will of God.” **Achtemeier concludes, Habakkuk not primarily about justice of God, human doubt, nor human suffering and helplessness, but “Habakkuk is ‘above all else a book about the purposes of God and about the realization of his will for his world.’”** Bailey, P. 276 perhaps could say, **THEME of Habakkuk: The Path of Faith in the Providence of God**, Look at this book to humbly learn about God’s providence; in order to do this, posture must **3. Avoid the easy route of venting and taking apart. Come prepared to do the hard work to build up your faith.** need something more sure than you—need not to KNOW all, but to know that HE knows all—true faith grows IN struggle—in allowing the inadequacy of what you have to help you follow thoughts to roots, to see in new light AS look again at God and what He has said/done; process is messy, takes work; **“A faith without some doubts is like a human body without any antibodies in it. People who blithely go through life too busy or indifferent to ask hard questions about why they believe as they do will find themselves defenseless against either the experience of tragedy or the probing questions of a smart skeptic. A person’s faith can collapse almost overnight if she has failed over the years to listen patiently to her own doubts, which should only be discarded after long reflection. Believers should acknowledge and wrestle with doubts—not only their own but their friends’ and neighbors’. It is no longer sufficient to hold beliefs just because you inherited them. Only if you struggle long and hard with objections to your faith will you be able to provide grounds for your beliefs to skeptics, including yourself, that are plausible rather than ridiculous or offensive.”** Tim Keller, *The Reason for God*, p. xxiii **besides the first two points we’ve covered, what will keep examining our doubts from ending with more self-focus—either in our findings or our failings?** Instead of us demanding complete answers acceptable to us, (leaving focus on us, our rights, immediate justice, immediate pieces lining up so world makes sense/under our control), look for more than this--fellowship with God; **true fellowship w God gives secure identity and confidence in His ability so free to represent Him instead of own story/journey—free to learn more of His character, His eternal purposes so free to worship and trust** **“How did one defend the justice and righteousness of God in a world where God no longer chose to speak or reveal himself or his ways? As Otto notes, ‘In view of the empirical situation of need, Habakkuk’s understanding of God lost its self-evident quality. . . . The idea of God can become totally clear again only when the reality of the experienced world becomes totally clear.’ Habakkuk dared to question all easy theological answers he had learned. He fought through real life situations with God. Only then did he affirm traditional theology, but it is a theology with firm roots in more than other people’s traditions and textbooks. Now he affirmed the justice of God on the basis of personal experience struggling with God and finding God in the midst of worship. ‘The prophet’s probing of Yahweh’s will dispels any thought that the Lord may not judge covenant and cosmic sin equally. The wicked of all nations will be punished.’ On the other hand, ‘God is so great in His sovereignty He is even able to use human sin for His own purpose. . . . He did not force the Babylonians to assume the role of world conqueror. That was their own goal. . . . God allowed them to do what they themselves wanted to do, but He used it for His purposes.’”** Waylon Bailey, p. 280 **process to figure out deeper understanding of role, place to look for hope, what to do with sins/injustices;** ie. Today’s justice looks NOW—make all right—DANGEROUS—not including enough data, not looking far enough OR trusting God to bring final justice AND forgiveness (**watch this w children/each other—don’t fix it all, answer all questions—teach them to look beyond resolution for life/obedience**) Habakkuk’s path forward trusting God’s providence includes recognizing that some sins will have consequences that continue our whole time down here ie. **Jer. 22:30**—on other hand, God is able to give fellowship w Himself; there IS joy with Lord EVEN in torturous short-term (end of Habakkuk); b/c God is eternal—His justice/forgiveness will be seen as righteous as look beyond you to His eternal timing; when faith NOT in perfect understanding, seeing how YOUR situation “fixed/restored,” then have hope in God’s trustworthy word and plan that goes beyond your life; look at God’s larger plan that even includes Jehoiachin in **Matt. 1:11-12** in generation of Joseph—who though not REAL father, acted as earthly father of Jesus—**Jer. 23:5-6** shows hope in Messiah even in face of condemnation of final kings of Judah; believing this, Habakkuk freed to live and faith to grow even through torturous times to glory of God AND ability to be thankful and worship **4. Look for areas to meditate and worship**—2:1 wait, 3 ends w worship—supreme value—what? God’s presence and works; Explore the Book—book begins with a sob and ends with a song p. 208 . **Why?** posture prepared to see God! so, in face of bewilderment, still has assumptions about nature of God that set him up to grow, to receive from God—**Bailey pp. 284-285 Faith’s path in the providence of God includes both problems and certainties;** clear evidence of Habakkuk’s

faith in God as we learn about God's trustworthiness to keep His promises to Israel and therefore to us--1:12, 2:4, 3:2, 17-19 May God give us this posture so we too can grow through doubts, injustices, and periods of suffering;

Jeremiah 22:30 "Thus says the LORD, 'Write this man down childless, A man who will not prosper in his days; For no man of his descendants will prosper Sitting on the throne of David Or ruling again in Judah.' "

Jeremiah 23:5-6 "Behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD, "When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land. 6 "In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, 'The LORD our righteousness.'"

Matthew 1:11-12 Josiah became the father of Jeconiah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. 12 After the deportation to Babylon: Jeconiah became the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel.