

Bringing Injustice Before God Pt. 4 Habakkuk 1:2-4, CBC January 17, 2024 ????

As you study, memorize Habakkuk. Look for theme. **The Path of Faith in the Providence of God; how? Key is posture.** 1. Come before God honestly and humbly 2. Come seeking to submit to God's Word, but make connections to your life with careful precision 3. Avoid the easy route of venting and taking apart. Come prepared to do the hard work to build up your faith. 4. Look for areas to meditate and worship—in face of bewilderment, Habakkuk still has assumptions about nature of God that set him up to grow, to receive from God—in this context, Habakkuk brings injustice b/r God **I. I went to the right place with injustice, but there is no action.** 2 **How long, O LORD, will I call for help, And You will not hear? I cry out to You, "Violence!" Yet You do not save.** **Question: Why?** how could a righteous/compassionate God NOT ANSWER WHEN I CRY TO HIM FOR HELP IN THESE twisted unrighteous SITUATIONS? **II. Because of your inaction, wickedness proliferates** while wickedness/evil/injustice/strife/contention elicit many responses from us, v. 3 people/Habakkuk's options are limited—can't get away; 3 **Why do You make me see iniquity, And cause me to look on wickedness?** forced to stay and see 1st word pair **iniquity/wickedness** 2nd word pair **Yes, destruction and violence are before me;** social oppression; the stronger, selfish against weaker in society 3rd word pair, **Strife exists and contention arises.** Spreads! word for lawsuits/going to court against others, Devour/blame one another, think Gal. 5:15—bite/devour, consume one another; **God—too much! b/c you don't seem to be acting, wickedness just keeps piling on; Punish wickedness; don't let it continue!** **III. It has infiltrated even the institutions set up to bring justice** 4 **Therefore the law is ignored And justice is never upheld.** Talking @ boundaries—purpose? allow to live, flourish, to create in peace—who would be against that? Then **how does the law get ignored? What would justice not upheld imply?** Different purpose, so boundaries pushed to side/run over trying to uphold that purpose; then justice not upheld b/c distracted by other's distraction/ignoring—they follow another agenda, we follow another agenda; **law's purpose?** To answer this must look to source; law came from God Himself as part of relationship for their own good **Deut. 10:12-13;** and yet, mere possession of the most perfect system of justice not enough; if that relationship is not maintained (taken seriously, meditate), law practically ineffective; "God's law is numbed." Robertson, p. 140 **key words in our covenant/constitution** We acknowledge that this Constitution and By-laws is but a tool, and that apart from the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in our midst, it will prove ineffective in maintaining a vibrant and obedient local body of believers. **Remember new covenant promise in Jeremiah?** God's words would be? Written on their hearts—Paul says, II Cor. 3:2, YOU are our letter . . . ; **our lives live out reality of the law of God in heart—What does your life show about attention to God's Law, your honor to God as true center? Where are you distracted individually? Family? Here at church—what results from God's Law ignored/justice not upheld?** **For the wicked surround the righteous; Therefore justice comes out perverted.** Twisted, bent out of shape—**what does this mean?** We don't live with NO justice—people follow their own reality, their own goals, their own prioritization of right/wrong/punishments—take a little from different places; **not only follow, but enforce it on you/me;** but when God doesn't define righteousness, when apply sloppily b/c not yielding to God's revelation every time, then not end with God's product; end w chaos, unmanageable; Jm. 3:14-16 wisdom from below filled w bitter jealousies/ selfish ambition—earthly/natural/ demonic—disorder/every evil thing; **time when wicked would have been more hesitant to challenge victims so openly, but now, not stopped, so did openly,** Kaiser therefore, those seeking to honor God's law drowned out, worn down, or watered down by others—**where do we feel this pressure? How does it work?** Family, friends—no one wants to feel like conscience for world with all applications; when you try to seek/accomplish His goals which include THEM, but takes extra work to be with those who enjoy different things, get upset about different things; they don't notice, want you, or seek to use you; **We don't like where law ignored/justice never upheld/wicked surround righteous/justice perverted leads, so what are our options?** 1. Take matters into own hands to carve out livable space 2. pine for past--Josiah FOUND law buried in the temple trash, rejoiced over it, NOW abandoned by son Jehoiachim—since law no longer consulted for moral or spiritual guidance, true justice could no longer come to light; 3. righteous still must live God's word/law; **But what would process of putting God's Word/Law as final in practice have to include in these situations?** 1. **Diligence to actually do it instead of talk about it**—desire not enough; **what work are you doing to lift up relationship with God and His words/laws/goals?** 2. **Acknowledge that God's word lives because God is working** whether see/understand it or not (ie. Vv. 5-11) remember works in past, look for hand in present; 3. **Quiet other voices in order to listen to voice of God**--must look deeper/higher/farther than the noise—(ie. Just like failure to make disciples AS God would have us to roots itself in our BEING a disciple as He would have us to—**follow Christ to God, see all Christ IS for the believer**); 4. **A longer timetable for change** this a messy/Twisted situation for people of God; messy process for solution—don't just look at mess in world—the twisted justice/ignoring law plays out when pass blame/don't deal w the specific situations that WE come across/have voice in; we miss much b/c don't continue digging b/c tired of hamster wheel—around and around w little change; **so just put the puzzle away w/o finishing it;** but if distracted, others distracted—STILL must pay attention; still must accomplish w interruptions/emergencies/ tearing down—requires patience, compassion for sinners even while deal w effects of their sin AND bringing God and His will into discussion which brings more emotion/ animosity; **Learn from Habakkuk: Calling to God w Injustice,** obeying God's law when others don't **includes suffering effects of those enforcing law being crooked along with the rest of society; means** the heaviness of no outside peace, foundations shaken b/c of conflict/heavy emotions b/c of injustice, desertion by others as others follow their own solution, fighting doubts that make you abandon law for other source of truth **A mature faith is one that both sees the issues at hand and yet remains steadfast, living in light of God's providence.** requires much forgiveness, looking farther for justice; comes from applying God's identity and resources **Col. 3:12 identity holy, beloved, chosen, armor of God Eph. 6; seems impossible?** great cloud of witnesses Heb. 12 calling us to keep going; but look higher! Humility with these heavy issues requires remembering with whom you are speaking; **Otto points out that Habakkuk's "lament is made possible by the knowledge of the complete Otherness of Yahweh."** Bailey, p. 277 remember goodness of God and His promised blessing for those who keep His Law **James 1:25** remember Jesus, for joy set before Him, endured the cross Heb. 12; **Do you know what you get when stay in and before Him in prayer and under His Word seeking to live His will even in dark?** see more of weight/complexities of sin AND see mercy of God in coming into dark world, not just dealing w from distance; AND, you get to see more of Him and His will which we will now come to in vv. 5-11; **where do you need to lift up both God's law and look to the gracious source of that Law so that you don't ignore His law and pervert His justice?** **Learn from Habakkuk**

Deuteronomy 10:12-13 "Now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require from you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, 13 and to keep the LORD'S commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good?"

James 1:25 But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.