

Bringing Injustice Before God Pt. 2 Habakkuk 1:2-4, CBC January 3, 2024

As you study, memorize Habakkuk, what do you see? Look for theme, **The Path of Faith in the Providence of God**, humbly learn of God's providence in face of injustice, seemingly silent and inconsistencies from God, suffering; how? Key is posture, **1. Come before God honestly and humbly** honesty must have boundaries—not just free for all when torn up with brokenness **2. Come seeking to submit to God's Word, but make connections to your life with careful precision** about God—then look for Him, His values, what He is doing then/with them even as go to Him with where you are, not where you should be **3. Avoid the easy route of venting and taking apart. Come prepared to do the hard work to build up your faith.** true faith grows IN struggle—in allowing the inadequacy of what you have to help you follow thoughts to roots, to look again at God and what He has said/done; need faith in something/One more sure than you; process is messy, takes work; need not to KNOW all, but to know HE knows all; 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; then free to **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.** Language of lament found in Psalms—**Ps. 74:1** (group) **Ps. 13:1-3** (individual)—“how long” implies been doing it for long time—says not hear b/c seemingly no expected response; **cry out**—shout, roar, scream b/c of distress or horror, (emotions of one who can't get away, Zedekiah **II Ki. 25:7**) **Job 19:7-8** what brings this response from you? here **violence**—society falling apart, couple sources defined as **flagrant violation of moral law by which man injures primarily his fellowman; physical brutality only one possible expression**; ie. Jehoiakim—ruthless and merciless—cut up scroll and threatened lives of Baruch and Jeremiah—Jer. 36:20-26; only king mentioned to have killed a prophet **Jer. 26:20-23**—don't romanticize job of representing God—Jeremiah/Habakkuk had tough job to OBEY God—**cry out VIOLENCE!** (6x in book) also v. 3, 9, 2:8, 17 2x; testing Habakkuk Baker comments, Habakkuk's theological understanding of God as just/righteous not matched by experience of God—I KNOW you are holy/righteous, **I call, you will not hear?** Amerding, failure to act calls into question the righteousness of either the petitioner or the one addressed; **What happens to our prayer life (or fights against it) in the face of these questions?** **What does this reveal about our prayer life/relationship with God?** surprising for how much talk about God, how quickly stop crying to Him, stay before Him; **easier to complain about Him then talk to Him;** “God helps those who help themselves” perhaps figure He will do what He will do whether pray or not, so we just try to do right thing ourselves, find “Christians” focusing where we are focusing and stop looking to God Himself; **Luke 18:1-8** how would you sum up this call to prayer & what parallels with our situation in Habakkuk? calls for perseverance in prayer in face of injustice and indifference; **Bailey--God is friend of honest doubter who dares to talk to God rather than about him p. 277** **learn to cry out to God—learn to stay there as only source** (ie. Hard to parent when child looks for out—first, w other parent, then team w other siblings, then look to friends, friend's parents, teachers; same at work, church—I always cringe when hear someone say, I've checked w 3 pastors when not working through w pastor/body that have) same w God—**stay w Him & don't jump to conclusions**—see this in chapter 2, end of 3—**part of humble posture we need comes from remembering that we are not the only one asking this how long question** **Ex. 16:27-28, Num. 14:9-11, Matt. 17:17**—**what should these “HOW LONG” passages do for us?** Remind us that there is more wrong going on then what we notice—including our own-- **I Sam. 8:18, Is. 59:1-2, be amazed God hears ANY sinner;** look at Lk. 18 from this perspective; **Learn from Habakkuk—this question can be asked in faith/trust:** includes coming to God, continuing fervently in prayer even when faith is shaken; when asked in trust, then join those asking from HEAVEN **Rev. 6:10** **Applic: If God present and righteous in face of “violence,” then pressure causing you to scream or fall apart part of helping your faith get roots—THIS wrestling of Habakkuk IS part of being servant of God**

II. Because of your inaction, wickedness proliferates

3 Why do You make me see iniquity, And cause me to look on wickedness? Yes, destruction and violence are before me; Strife exists and contention arises. what do we naturally do when we see strife/contention/conflicting wills? Why? What motivations/goals/fears are involved? Why is it important to evaluate what is behind what we do in these situations? Get in and fight or get out—observe, but don't want to contribute more/do something wrong; v. 3 people/Habakkuk's options are limited--can't get away; **make me see iniquity—cause me to look** forced to stay and see what? 1st word pair **iniquity/wickedness** injustice, depravity, evil & wrong; same words numerous times, but also **Num. 23:21** misfortune/iniquity; trouble/wickedness Balaam to Balak/Moabite king—though Israelites have sinned/ been punished, not enough to wipe them out/curse them; **Habakkuk describes filth farther**, 2nd word pair—**destruction & violence** (same pair Amos 3:10; Jer. 6:7) social oppression; the stronger, selfish against weaker in society (ie. Think when you think someone deserves something, but it is TOO MUCH!) **strife/contention** (3rd word pair also used together in **Pr. 17:14**), strife that spreads! Devour/blame one another, think Gal. 5:15—bite/devour, consume one another; Jm. 3:14-16 wisdom from below filled w bitter jealousies/selfish ambition—earthly/natural/demonic—disorder/every evil thing, **strife--word for lawsuits/going to court against others** **Kaiser**—denounce one another to the authorities; **God—too much! b/c you don't seem to be acting, wickedness just keeps piling on—NO stopping (ie. Like living in city w police unable to keep up)** Punish wickedness; don't let it continue! if you are numb, not desiring to right wrongs, escape b/c too big OR b/c too afraid of doing it wrong, you are part of problem (hence commands to seek justice, help those suffering under injustice)—**but what does an eternal perspective on wickedness spreading around you and righting wrongs also include?**

Exodus 16:27–28 It came about on the seventh day that some of the people went out to gather, but they found none. 28 Then the LORD said to Moses, “How long do you refuse to keep My commandments and My instructions?”

Numbers 14:9–11 “Only do not rebel against the LORD; and do not fear the people of the land, for they will be our prey. Their protection has been removed from them, and the LORD is with us; do not fear them.” 10 But all the congregation said to stone them with stones. Then the glory of the LORD appeared in the tent of meeting to all the sons of Israel. 11 The LORD said to Moses, “How long will this people spurn Me? And how long will they not believe in Me, despite all the signs which I have performed in their midst?”

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?”

Deuteronomy 28:15, 29 “But it shall come about, if you do not obey the LORD your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you: 29 and you will grope at noon, as the blind man gropes in darkness, and you will not prosper in your ways; but you shall only be oppressed and robbed continually, with none to save you.

1 Samuel 8:18 “Then you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the LORD will not answer you in that day.”

2 Kings 25:7 They slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, then put out the eyes of Zedekiah and bound him with bronze fetters and brought him to Babylon.

Job 19:7–8 “Behold, I cry, ‘Violence!’ but I get no answer; I shout for help, but there is no justice. 8 “He has walled up my way so that I cannot pass, And He has put darkness on my paths.

Psalms 13:1–3 How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? 2 How long shall I take counsel in my soul, Having sorrow in my heart all the day? How long will my enemy be exalted over me? 3 Consider and answer me, O LORD my God; Enlighten my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death,

Psalms 74:1 O God, why have You rejected us forever? Why does Your anger smoke against the sheep of Your pasture?

Proverbs 17:14 The beginning of strife is like letting out water, So abandon the quarrel before it breaks out.

Isaiah 59:1–2 Behold, the LORD’S hand is not so short That it cannot save; Nor is His ear so dull That it cannot hear. 2 But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear.

Jeremiah 26:20–23 Indeed, there was also a man who prophesied in the name of the LORD, Uriah the son of Shemaiah from Kiriath-jearim; and he prophesied against this city and against this land words similar to all those of Jeremiah. 21 When King Jehoiakim and all his mighty men and all the officials heard his words, then the king sought to put him to death; but Uriah heard it, and he was afraid and fled and went to Egypt. 22 Then King Jehoiakim sent men to Egypt: Elnathan the son of Achbor and certain men with him went into Egypt. 23 And they brought Uriah from Egypt and led him to King Jehoiakim, who slew him with a sword and cast his dead body into the burial place of the common people.

Matthew 17:17 And Jesus answered and said, “You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him here to Me.”

Luke 18:1–8 Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart, 2 saying, “In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and did not respect man. 3 “There was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, ‘Give me legal protection from my opponent.’ 4 “For a while he was unwilling; but afterward he said to himself, ‘Even though I do not fear God nor respect man, 5 yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out.’ ” 6 And the Lord said, “Hear what the unrighteous judge said; 7 now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them? 8 “I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”

Romans 2:5 But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,

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.

James 5:1–6 Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries which are coming upon you. 2 Your riches have rotted and your garments have become moth-eaten. 3 Your gold and your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure! 4 Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields, and which has been withheld by you, cries out against you; and the outcry of those who did the harvesting has reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. 5 You have lived luxuriously on the earth and led a life of wanton pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. 6 You have condemned and put to death the righteous man; he does not resist you.

James 5:7–11 Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. 8 You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. 9 Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door. 10 As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. 11 We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord’s dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.

Revelation 6:10 and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”