

God's Astonishing Answer to Injustice Pt. 3

Habakkuk 1:5-11, CBC February 14, 2024 Psalm 23

Habakkuk pours out heart **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—When?** I've been crying to You, when will you act? **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 **III. It has infiltrated even the institutions set up to bring justice** 4 Therefore the law is ignored And justice is never upheld. For the wicked surround the righteous; therefore justice comes out perverted. **Question: Why?** how could righteous/compassionate God NOT ANSWER/act when cry to Him for help in these twisted unrighteous situations? desires deliverance, God responds **I. Pay attention and you will see my work** 5 "Look among the nations! Observe! If you do as God intends, you will Be astonished! Startled & Amazed!!! See something else happening that elicits Wonder! incredulity, disbelief, Because I am doing something in your days—You would not believe if you were told. **Why? What?** 6 "For behold, I am raising up the Chaldeans, NOT where you looking—not in Judah, Assyria, or Egypt, I am addressing problem of injustice and perversion among my people with the Chaldeans; LOOK at the Chaldeans and see MY HAND **II. Study the object of My work to learn more of My ways** looked at vv. 6-11, saw people so fierce/unfeeling that all swept away before them; THIS fierceness, swiftness, violence, destruction, hopelessness, would astonish/wonder/hold your attention if you experienced what described; but what SHOULD they be astonished at? **III. Trust My Word to Bring Justice to All** I AM WORKING—many of words/pictures describing Chaldeans describe God and His work as well; ie. THEY v. 6 march throughout the earth To seize dwelling places which are not theirs. GOD enabled Israelites to do same; **Deut. 6:10-12** 7 "They are dreaded presence and work of God brought same dread (**Gen. 15:10-12**); they feared; God feared **Mal. 1:13-14, Deut. 7:21, Gen. 28:17**; They collect captives like sand. 10 "They mock at kings And rulers are a laughing matter to them. They laugh at every fortress And heap up rubble to capture it. 11 "Then they will sweep through like the wind and pass on. They are unstoppable; Has God's promises to Israel failed? Is He untrustworthy—moody, not able to care for people? NO, God said perhaps some 800 years ago w **blessings/curses Mt. Ebal/Gerizim that Deut. 28:15, 49**; No, God unstoppable; **Psalm 2:2-5** who is greater? God, therefore **Ps. 2:12** HIS is the heart of rest of v. 11 **But they will be held guilty, They whose strength is their god."** I AM DOING SOMETHING—process what we've heard; God is using violence to stop violence, wickedness to judge wickedness—come to more of what this looks like in next verses, but when only focus on what can see/hear/feel/fear/desire, MISS God's work and deliverance—if truly looking to God, then must widen scope of handling injustice to include? **Who might this be/include in your life—can you think of any injustice against you, something twisted—God could be using for you/for all of us?** **Fleshed this point out by going to Acts 13:41** quoting v. 5; Paul speaking to many who supposedly feared God and knew Scripture; some glad to hear, especially some Gentiles, yet many Jews rejected and resisted with violence; **why couldn't they see it?** convinced how they interpreted was correct; jealous of power lost when THEY not mature/dispenser of "right"; too hard or too overconfident to rethink and pick through absolutes; **but part of gospel Paul gave was that JEWS were large part of those who rejected Messiah—would have to take blame/judgment that came from rejecting God's Word, Messiah; Failure to listen to God through His appointed means leads to lying about God and His will, misleading yourself and others.** look what people of day said that countered what God's men and God's Word said; **Jer. 5:12, 6:14, 7:8-10, 8:11-12**; yet God says differently **But they will be held guilty, They whose strength is their god."** For those in Acts, God's Word speaks clearly for insisting that seeing correctly and not listening to God's Word and messengers; **I Thess. 2:14-16**—this is SAME word of judgment for those confident in own power and hand in OT; for Assyria, for Nebuchadnezzar, for Chaldeans **Is. 10:12-17, Dan. 4:30-34, Jer. 50-51** **Apply:** okay, but still afraid of Chaldeans whether seeking to fear God or not—THEY loom larger because THEY right here (existential—human, here, reality) what do I do with fear during periods of judgment? REAL fear for Habakkuk, rest of God-fearing Jews even while fear among those who dishonored God—**what is the hope for those who are afraid to obey God even when seems no good outcome?** **what purpose do the Matt. 6:25-32 illustrations serve in helping us obey Matt. 6:24,33?** **You don't think God is at work, He is doing more than you think—He cares, don't even think of accusing Him not working or caring; Failure to see God rightly concerning judgment leads to self-righteous judgment of God and others and looking to God to eliminate our fears rather than looking to Him to speak truth to us IN our fears;** watch WHAT looking to God for—Don't let wrong things hold attention; **after all these things the Gentiles seek; YOU seek Him first;** tendency to focus on injustice—instead God telling through prophet to SEE God and remember His words **Charge—When?** I've been very busy—LOOK! OBSERVE! I am doing something first about YOUR sin—violence, twisting law; Hab. 1:5-6 w **Jer. 6:22-23, 30**; tendency to focus on Chaldeans (fierce and wicked) **charge--Why?** This doesn't fit w Your character; remember Deut. 28 curses just as true as blessings; but also words of blessing for those who will respond even in judgment; **Next we fall into same trap as Judah in Habakkuk's day, Jews in Paul's day, like Habakkuk, we must come before God to change our perspective which includes exposing us as well as them; Their justice and authority originate with themselves. We ALL know that pride is dangerous and that we are not the final word, yet w yet how do we end up even as professing Christians being our own authority?**

Genesis 15:10-12 Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, and laid each half opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds. 11 The birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away. 12 Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, terror and great darkness fell upon him.
Genesis 28:17 He was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."
Deuteronomy 6:10-12 "Then it shall come about when the LORD your God brings you into the land which He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you, great and splendid cities which you did not build, 11 and houses full of all good things which you did not fill, and hewn cisterns which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant, and you eat and are satisfied, 12 then watch yourself, that you do not forget the LORD who brought you from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.
Deuteronomy 7:21 "You shall not dread them, for the LORD your God is in your midst, a great and awesome God.
Deuteronomy 8:15 "He led you through the great and terrible wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water; He brought water for you out of the rock of flint.
Deuteronomy 28:15 "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:
Deuteronomy 28:49 "The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as the eagle swoops down, a nation whose language you shall not understand,
Psalm 2:2-5 The kings of the earth take their stand And the rulers take counsel together Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, "Let us tear their fetters apart And cast away their cords from us!" 4 He who sits in the heavens laughs, The Lord scoffs at them. 5 Then He will speak to them in His anger And terrify them in His fury, saying,
Psalm 2:12 Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish in the way, For His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!
Jeremiah 5:12 They have lied about the LORD And said, "Not He; Misfortune will not come on us, And we will not see sword or famine.
Jeremiah 6:14 "They have healed the brokenness of My people superficially, Saying, 'Peace, peace,' But there is no peace.
Jeremiah 6:22-23, 30 Thus says the LORD, "Behold, a people is coming from the north land, And a great nation will be aroused from the remote parts of the earth. 23 "They seize bow and spear; They are cruel and have no mercy; Their voice roars like the sea, And they ride on horses, Arrayed as a man for the battle Against you, O daughter of Zion!" 30 They call them rejected silver, Because the LORD has rejected them.
Jeremiah 7:8-10 "Behold, you are trusting in deceptive words to no avail. 9 "Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery and swear falsely, and offer sacrifices to Baal and walk after other gods that you have not known, 10 then come and stand before Me in this house, which is called by My name, and say, 'We are delivered!'—that you may do all these abominations?
Jeremiah 8:11-12 "They heal the brokenness of the daughter of My people superficially, Saying, 'Peace, peace,' But there is no peace. 12 "Were they ashamed because of the abomination they had done? They certainly were not ashamed, And they did not know how to blush; Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; At the time of their punishment they shall be brought down," Says the LORD.
Lamentations 4:12 The kings of the earth did not believe, Nor did any of the inhabitants of the world, That the adversary and the enemy Could enter the gates of Jerusalem.
Zephaniah 2:10-11 This they will have in return for their pride, because they have taunted and become arrogant against the people of the LORD of hosts. 11 The LORD will be terrifying to them, for He will starve all the gods of the earth; and all the coastlands of the nations will bow down to Him, everyone from his own place.
Malachi 1:13-14 "You also say, 'My, how tiresome it is!' And you disdainfully sniff at it," says the LORD of hosts, "and you bring what was taken by robbery and what is lame or sick; so you bring the offering! Should I receive that from your hand?" says the LORD. 14 "But cursed be the swindler who has a male in his flock and vows it, but sacrifices a blemished animal to the Lord, for I am a great King," says the LORD of hosts, "and My name is feared among the nations."
Galatians 5:13 For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.
1 Thessalonians 2:14-16 For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, for you also endured the same sufferings at the hands of your own countrymen, even as they did from the Jews, 15 who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out. They are not pleasing to God, but hostile to all men, 16 hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved; with the result that they always fill up the measure of their sins. But wrath has come upon them to the utmost.
1 Peter 4:12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you;
Revelation 2:10 'Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.'