

The Work of Faith Pt. 2

Habakkuk 1:12-2:3, CBC March 20, 2024 I Will Wait for You

Habakkuk pours out heart bringing injustice b/r God **I. I went to the right place with injustice, but there is no action.** V. 2 I've been crying to you, **When?** will you act? **II. Because of your inaction, wickedness proliferates** v. 3 **III. It has infiltrated even the institutions set up to bring justice** v. 4 **Question: Why?** how could righteous/compassionate God NOT ANSWER/act when cry to Him for help in these twisted unrighteous situations? God's Astonishing Answer to Injustice **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!** Wonder! disbelief, **Why?** Because I am doing something in your days—You would not believe if you were told. **What?** NOT where you looking (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** **III. Trust My Word to Bring Justice to All** seems some time elapsed and Chaldeans have begun their invasion (one says after 605 when Nebuchadnezzar defeated Egypt, rest of Assyrian Empire); while God answers initial questions, **NOW takes new pieces of God's answer and holds them against what He knows about God;** When something doesn't seem to fit—must look again at object of faith; yes, questions, but start with assumptions

I. Includes Examining the Object of Your Faith in Light of Current Circumstances. vv. 12-17

12 Are You not from everlasting, O LORD, my God, my Holy One? You are eternal God—Elohim **my God**—the Powerful Creator, but also covenant God, **LORD** Yahweh, Jehovah; **stating facts that all Jews would affirm as core of their identity;** **Deut. 33:27-28, Ex. 3:14-15**—their God, promises to **THEM**—looked through personal reiterating of those promises to patriarchs, to Israel as people in Exodus, Deut., to house of David II Sam. 7:12-16; **ON THIS BASIS, I can call to you because We will not die** (might be YOU will not die—referring to eternity of God as at beginning of verse, the two are related—IF God were to die/NOT from everlasting, they would be defeated) **the impossibility of God to die—HE IS FROM EVERLASTING means that there will always be a remnant or the rest of Your words can't come true;** looks back over history of God's people and sees other times of faltering faith, but God true to His word; therefore, they **CAN'T** annihilate us like it seems they will do; But God promised punishment if disobeyed **II Sam. 7:14**, therefore fits that, **You, O LORD, have appointed them to judge; And You, O Rock, have established them to correct. Rock** common OT description of God, giving stability, place of refuge; continues w God's character—this is source of problem **My Holy One** **13 Your eyes are too pure to approve evil, And You can not look on wickedness with favor.** think Leviticus—purification laws to cleanse selves from contact w impurity—but cleanness of heart needed to be w holy God; **Ps 51:7, Ezek 36:25-27**. Jesus as purification for sins Heb. 1:3, 9:14; **THESE truths about God stand in face of what seems to be taking place; Why do You look with favor On those who deal treacherously?** **Problem 1:** in order to use them, must look at them; **eyes too pure** (can not even stay on evil, let alone participate in it by making things go right for them instead of crushing wickedness; **I know YOU are holy, eternal/Word trustworthy, Personal/Our God;** yet you are exalting those who stomp on that part of your character; **Where Habakkuk sits, it looks bleak, still comes to God!** Robertson notes that **Habakkuk's not a weak faith, but a perplexed faith;** sees God's hand in it as He has answered first lament in vv. 1-4 God you DO bring justice and correction through whomever you wish, but **THIS** violent, wicked nation? **VV. 14-17 goes farther; 14 Why have You made men like the fish of the sea, Like creeping things without a ruler over them?** Helpless group of land or sea creeping things—ie. Fish, ants, locusts—swarm, run from danger, but powerless; Gen. 1, Ps. 8 says made to rule over creation, but brought to level of fish w no leader/rule/helplessly trapped; **15 The Chaldeans bring all of them up with a hook, Drag them away with their net, And gather them together in their fishing net. v. 15** personal net vs. dragnet that few people would pull together in semi-circle; With seeming little effort, everything defense stopped and they are captured, brought to complete dependence on their captors for future life and purpose; Assyrian tradition stick hook through sensitive lower lip of captors & stringing together (**Robertson**); cruel way to make people yield to their wishes; **kings, nations caught in net—squirming together, helpless—all in days work, no care for people at all;** **Therefore they rejoice and are glad. 16 Therefore they offer a sacrifice to their net and burn incense to their fishing net; Because through these things their catch is large, And their food is plentiful. v. 16** worship--**they won't even give YOU credit** when you lift them up—busy about their own agendas; **17 Will they therefore empty their net And continually slay nations without sparing?** no relief—treated like dirt (ever felt like that? Just brushed off? Happening for years, will be years; think of social systems—women in Bible times, slaves, blacks, dalits, etc.) all mass murders throughout history—lack of mercy goes against character of God, seems like we are helpless b/r them—going to be wiped out, not disciplined but even deeper, **who is source** v. 14? God Himself **Which part of God's character seems to be attacked here?** His power to bring about His Word; **ALSO** His defending of His holy Name; **His ability to be seen as good and sufficient by His people—ie. No need to look elsewhere b/c He is good;** merciful; giver of hope; They They are happy, existing on destroying/plundering helpless ones and are thankful to the source of their happiness—their nets give them everything they want! They think it is their god—will you allow this? Aren't you jealous for this honor? **Ps. 9:13-14** vs. **Rom. 1:25**—**what do these people** get from God? **Rom. 1:18** wrath—where is it? Are you not our God? They are unstoppable—are they god? are they not answerable to You? If so, won't You stop them before they swallow us up v. 13? More righteous—sure, we are wrong, perverted—but there are those who are seeking You—THEY are punished also; what hope do we as righteous have? we are Yours—discipline us but don't abandon to one more powerful? **Bailey THIS is not God bringing order out of chaos; it is allowing godless to think they ARE god making God seem very distant from active hand in His creation according to His holy character;** **Problem 2:** what will happen to Your people if they are not disciplined, but swallowed up? Northern tribes wiped out by Assyria! King Hezekiah pled with God as Sennacherib of Assyria came against Jerusalem; Micah 5:1-2 promised ruler coming from Bethlehem whose goings forth from everlasting; **this seems to be working against your stated purposes!** bleak picture presented

II. Includes Preparation for a Response from God 2:1

What dangers do you see that Habakkuk (you/I) must avoid in the work of faith when confronted with seeming incompatibility between knowledge of God and the present happenings? To wrongly assess true needs and therefore look for answers to them instead of real need; danger of pragmatism is? AND what is the essence of sin? NOT

merely act, but personal—against God; separates from God; **commandment number 1 is NOT don't murder/steal or love neighbor, it is? LOVE GOD; must be careful for what value or will seek another god to get it—Ps. 16:11)** v. 17 how long can God remain silent? He is right to ask this, but then must wait and see; THIS is the exercise of faith—LOOK to God! “Habakkuk has two alternatives now. ‘ He can allow his doubts to be either destructive or creative. He can use his doubts, struggles, and agonizing questions to turn from God and to renounce his faith. Or he can keep his hold on God, trusting him for an answer.’” Heflin in Bailey **I will stand on my guard post And station myself on the rampart; And I will keep watch to see what He will speak to me, And how I may reply when I am reproved.**

What does Hab. 2:1 include in the work of faith and what is required to do this work?

Exodus 3:14–15 God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM”; and He said, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’ ” 15 God, furthermore, said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is My name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations.

Exodus 17:6 “Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink.” And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

Deuteronomy 32:4, 18 “The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He. 18 “You neglected the Rock who begot you, And forgot the God who gave you birth.

Deuteronomy 33:27–28 “The eternal God is a dwelling place, And underneath are the everlasting arms; And He drove out the enemy from before you, And said, ‘Destroy!’ 28 “So Israel dwells in security, The fountain of Jacob secluded, In a land of grain and new wine; His heavens also drop down dew.

2 Samuel 7:14 “I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men,

Psalms 9:14 That I may tell of all Your praises, That in the gates of the daughter of Zion I may rejoice in Your salvation.

Psalms 9:13–14 Be gracious to me, O LORD; See my affliction from those who hate me, You who lift me up from the gates of death, 14 That I may tell of all Your praises, That in the gates of the daughter of Zion I may rejoice in Your salvation.

Psalms 18:2 The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

Psalms 19:14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my rock and my Redeemer.

Psalms 51:7 Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Isaiah 62:6–7 On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen; All day and all night they will never keep silent. You who remind the LORD, take no rest for yourselves; 7 And give Him no rest until He establishes And makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

Jeremiah 23:18 “But who has stood in the council of the LORD, That he should see and hear His word? Who has given heed to His word and listened?

Lamentations 5:21–22 Restore us to You, O LORD, that we may be restored; Renew our days as of old, 22 Unless You have utterly rejected us And are exceedingly angry with us.

Ezekiel 3:17–21 “Son of man, I have appointed you a watchman to the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from My mouth, warn them from Me. 18 “When I say to the wicked, ‘You will surely die,’ and you do not warn him or speak out to warn the wicked from his wicked way that he may live, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. 19 “Yet if you have warned the wicked and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered yourself. 20 “Again, when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I place an obstacle before him, he will die; since you have not warned him, he shall die in his sin, and his righteous deeds which he has done shall not be remembered; but his blood I will require at your hand. 21 “However, if you have warned the righteous man that the righteous should not sin and he does not sin, he shall surely live because he took warning; and you have delivered yourself.”

Ezekiel 36:25–27 “Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. 26 “Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 “I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.

Amos 3:7 Surely the Lord GOD does nothing Unless He reveals His secret counsel To His servants the prophets.

Romans 1:25 For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

1 Corinthians 2:14–16 But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. 15 But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one. 16 For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE WILL INSTRUCT HIM? But we have the mind of Christ.

1 Corinthians 10:1–4 For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; 2 and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; 3 and all ate the same spiritual food; 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ.

1 Peter 2:6–8 For this is contained in Scripture: “BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNER stone, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.” 7 This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, “THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone,” 8 and, “A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE”; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed.

1 Peter 4:12–13 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; 13 but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation.