

The Work of Faith Pt. 3

Habakkuk 1:12-2:3, CBC April 10, 2024

First issue—why injustice, wickedness unpunished among your people—when will you act—God’s Astonishing Answer to Injustice **I. Pay attention and you will see my work** **LOOK** not where you are looking (Judah, Assyria, Egypt), but at the Chaldeans and see MY HAND—be astonished, wonder at my work **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 vv. 12-17 **had** Habakkuk taking to God what now seeing that seems incompatible with God; starts with assumptions **I. The Work of Faith Includes Examining the Object of Your Faith in Light of Current Circumstances**, vv. 12-17 **12 Are You not from everlasting, O LORD**, covenant God, **LORD** Yahweh, Jehovah; **my God**, Elohim—the Powerful Creator, **stating** facts that all Jews would affirm as core of their identity; 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; **ON basis of absolute certainty of God’s eternal nature/trustworthy word, I can call to you because We will not die** **But** God promised punishment if disobeyed, 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 assumptions about God’s character, **My Holy One** problem b/c **13 Your eyes are too pure to approve evil, And You can not look on wickedness with favor. 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—they treat people as less than human, like animals, like creatures of land or see that squashed; Busy about their own greatness and agenda; **17 Will they therefore empty their net And continually slay nations without sparing? Problem 2:** what will happen to Your people if they are not disciplined, but swallowed up by ones you say are YOUR tool? **who is source** v. 14? God Himself **Which parts of God’s character seem to be attacked here? His power to bring about His Word; ALSO His defending of His holy Name**; how can they be Your tool when they they don’t even give you credit! **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.** Their nets are their gracious god—will you allow this? Aren’t you jealous for this honor? **ALSO**, how can Your people see you as good and sufficient when cry to You and swallowed up? Hard to not wander looking for goodness during time of discipline—especially if feel that will die in process; **Where Habakkuk sits, it looks bleak; Robertson notes that Habakkuk’s not a weak faith, but a perplexed faith; still comes to God these two times!** and now **II. Includes Preparation for a Response from God 2:1** 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—what must that faith persevere against? **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; this would be danger of pragmatism—end justifies means; make look for goodness/relief/deliverance **APART** from God; **THIS** essence of sin (ALL that separates us from God—**THAT** is the heart of sin) do you care about being separated from God? **must be careful for what value or will seek another god to get it** “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.’” J. N. Boo Heflin in Bailey verse 1 gives us answer—see example of faith—**THIS** is exercise of faith—what can we learn? **What does Hab. 2:1 include in the work of faith and what is required to do this work?** **I 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.** We are given window into how God reveals His counsel to His prophets **Amos 3:7, Jer. 23:18**; Picture given is military; defensive preparation—guard post/rampart; Yadin described Mizpah as a typical fortified city of time; solid wall 600 yards long, 4 yards thick on average, and 12 yards high—buttressed at weak points w total of ten towers; crowned by balcony w crenelated parapet—gate guarded by 2 towers Amerding, p. 509 **Stand and station** focus seems to be more on action than location; stationed to watch for anything noteworthy, enemies, danger of any kind, any happenings—**I will stand/station** I must go to work of watching, must be alert, keen eye, **how well do** you do w work of watching? after couple hours? When nothing there/happening, thoughts drift, start picking up less even as become aware of some of minute parts of surroundings—blade of grass, hole in tree, rock half-submerged in ground—**it happens, where did that come from? I guess I wasn’t paying attention**—no room for that—**paying attention IS your job**; how about when **MANY** things going on? lifeguarding, or just watching something on tv **PAUSE** if want to talk when watching something so don’t miss either show or what person saying **don’t relish if WHOLE job is paying attention**—I guess that is why much technology when comes to surveillance—it does its job all the time; even prophet couldn’t force God to speak, but must watch/wait; pulled away from rest of society to “concentrate specifically on God and what God would say when God decided to speak.” Bailey, p. 320 **work of waiting for God’s Word AND work of preparing to respond rightly to answer; idea here of God bringing judgment on the judgment/complaint brought to Him (bookend to v. 12); how will I respond (implies that believes God WILL answer)—attitude, obedience to tell others (contra Jonah); Why must prophet wait for God’s word and prepare for how to respond to it?**

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 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 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 and 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.
Luke 6:20-28 And turning His gaze toward His disciples, He began to say, “Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. 21 “Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh. 22 “Blessed are you when men hate you, and ostracize you, and insult you, and scorn your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Man. 23 “Be glad in that day and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven. For in the same way their fathers used to treat the prophets. 24 “But woe to you who are rich, for you are receiving your comfort in full. 25 “Woe to you who are well-fed now, for you shall be hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep. 26 “Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for their fathers used to treat the false prophets in the same way. 27 “But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.
1 Peter 1:7-9, 13 so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 8 and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, 9 obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls. 13 Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus 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 do not believe, “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.