

The Work of Faith Pt. 4

Habakkuk 2:1, CBC April 17, 2024

First issue—why injustice, wickedness unpunished among your people—when will you act **I. Pay attention and you will see my work** LOOK not where you are looking but at the Chaldeans **II. Study the object of My work to learn more of My ways** be astonished, wonder at my work **III. Trust My Word to Bring Justice to All**, seems some time elapsed and Chaldeans have begun their invasion vv. 12-17 and Habakkuk comes once again before God w happenings that seemed incompatible w what he knew about God **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 because of real acts of God on behalf of His people showing absolute certainty of God’s power/eternal nature/trustworthy word; therefore, I can call to you because **We will not die**. **Even** if your promised punishment comes; 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 1**: in order to use them, must look at them; **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? I know YOU are holy, eternal/Word trustworthy, Personal/Our God**, yet you are exalting, enabling those who stomp on Your character and name, taking credit themselves instead of giving it to you; **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**, they treat people as less than human, like animals, like creatures of land or sea 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; **Where Habakkuk sits, it looks bleak**; Robertson notes that Habakkuk’s not a weak faith, but a perplexed faith; “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—as see WORK to prepare for response from God, exercise of faith **II. The Work of Faith Includes Preparation for a Response from God 2:1** **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 reprov’d**. We are given window into how God reveals His counsel to His prophets **Amos 3:7, Jer. 23:18**; focus seems to be more on action of watchman 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—**it happens, where did that come from? I guess I wasn’t paying attention**—no room for that—**paying attention IS your job**; 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; **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?** Because whole job was to relay God’s message to His people, to guard them from departing from God’s Words; supposed to have keen eye, ear to the voice of heaven & then deliver it—**Is. 62:6-7, Ezek. 3:17-21** blood required if didn’t warn; **Zechariah’s tongue silenced until prophecy fulfilled** (John the Baptist born & named) **job of looking toward heaven is often left to prophet, today pastor—your job is to look to heaven, our job is to make it in this world—both should operate in their area of expertise**, **YET Col. 3:1-4, I Pet. 1:7-9, 13** **hope where? With Christ/THERE—where treasure, heart also Matt. 6:21; where do you get your wisdom, righteousness, direction, etc.? from God Jn. 15, I Cor. 1 wisdom from God is foolishness to those perishing; Matt. 4 not live by bread alone; Whatever role God has for His prophets/His elders/bishops/overseers, what does II Cor. 5 say about those Christ has reconciled to Himself?** He has given them the ministry of reconciliation--ambassadors as though God were entreating through us be reconciled to God; **I Pet. 4:10-11** whoever speaks, oracles of God; **do you look to God through Christ for satisfaction, reward, approval? Is your relationship w Jesus most important—daily following Him, consciously yielding to Spirit of God—if so, it will be natural to look there when hit wall down here & expect that God who controls all has something for you even then**—this is Habakkuk’s disposition—lives standing/waiting w eyes toward heaven, expects answer b/c relationship w God; Habakkuk needed “to know how to respond to God’s ways, both in his assessment of injustice and in his conduct amid the consequences of injustice. He revealed a mature wisdom in his determination that this response by shaped by what God himself would say. It is a wise man who takes his questions about God to God for the answers.” Amerding EBC, P. 509; Achtemeier said, “Prophets have no independent wisdom of their own—they are dependent on the word of God (cf. Jer. 42:5-7)—as we too are dependent for a true understanding of what God is doing and must ever search the word now given us in the Scriptures.” Bailey, P. 320 **this would require? 1. Sit in and under God’s Word WHILE in affliction/pressured; Ps. 119:71** (not all time, but intentionally when HAVE no time—10 minutes, half hour??) Collect what know about God and why sure true; what has God said? To whom? What is your relationship with the promise? **Is. 57:13** (THIS is what is behind hanging verses on the wall—do it on wall of mind/heart); (if you are so sovereign, you have your hand in these atrocities) **Ps. 74:1, 9, 12-17, 18-20**, many other verses like this—we are bad, but we are YOUR people; **habits of grace--sitting under Word; reverent prayer**—b/c dependent on Spirit of God for illumination; **I Cor. 2:14-16**; Patience, Perseverance in Waiting Jm. 5 style—**not looking elsewhere until get answer then come back**; comes from role (humility) staying in our place—created under Creator; servant under Master, **child under parent**;

Deuteronomy 27:8 “You shall write on the stones all the words of this law very distinctly.”

Psalms 119:71 It is good for me that I was afflicted, That I may learn Your statutes.

Isaiah 57:13 “When you cry out, let your collection of idols deliver you. But the wind will carry all of them up, And a breath will take them away. But he who takes refuge in Me will inherit the land And will possess My holy mountain.”

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, his right 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.

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 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 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 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 4:10-11 As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

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.