

Habakkuk 1-2

The Just Shall Trust

(The Major Point of the Minor Prophets)

The burden which the prophet Habakkuk saw.² O LORD, how long shall I cry, And You will not hear? Even cry out to You, “Violence!” And You will not save.³ Why do You show me iniquity, And cause *me* to see trouble? For plundering and violence *are* before me; There is strife, and contention arises. 4 Therefore the law is powerless, And justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous; Therefore perverse judgment proceeds.

Intro: Young woman shaking Vending machine
A) Ever been frustrated with God? – Puzzled by His performance or a perceived lack of performance?

B) Asked- God how come You are not doing anything? – Not answering my prayer?
1) God do you even hear me?

C) If you have ever been in that place - **YOU** are not alone – **Habakkuk** – could relate!

If Jonah was the prodigal prophet and the pouting prophet -

Habakkuk could be called the Puzzled prophet

A) Habakkuk is Puzzled because he is walking by sight but that is all going to change as He learns to walk by Faith.

B) The book of Habakkuk is different from the other minor prophets

C) Habakkuk has some prophetic tones to it –

1) But it is more of a Journey between the prophet and his God

B) Habakkuk was written 2500 yrs ago – but it is incredibly contemporary.

Everyone wrestles at times with questions like....

A) Why am I here and what is my purpose – where am I going?

B) We wrestle at times with questions like why is this happening to me

1) Why isn't this happening for me – Injustice in the world

C) **Big one: Why do bad things happen to good people or why do bad things happen to God's people.**

1) Habakkuk was a wrestler!

Habakkuk's name means to wrestle and to Embrace.

A) He starts off wrestling with those types of questions –

B) He is wrestling with God's ways - but will eventually come to embrace God's Will!

1) Great Journey with God

C) **Book opens in gloom and ends in glory**

1) Begins with a question and ends with an exclamation point

D) Ch 3 Psalm of Praise – 4 stanza – Wed at FTF – Sovereignty and glory of God

Habakkuk was writing during a time after the nation of Israel had experienced a Revival under the reign of KING JOSIAH

A) But the Revival is now only a distant memory – Immorality was rampant – current king was wicked

B) Written in the 20 year span between the fall of Nineveh and the fall of Judah.

C) And Habakkuk Is Crying out to God – But he feels like his cries are falling on deaf ears

1) In fact the 2nd time that he uses the word – cry in v.2 it is really the word Scream-

D) Lord how long will I cry & you don't hear – How long will I scream & you will not save

Habakkuk is looking at the lawlessness, the injustice and the wickedness going on in his nation

A) He is saying Lord you need to do something – getting really bad!

B) How many of you have ever thought that or said that about our nation

1) Lord you need to do something it is getting really bad!

C) We look at the # of babies being aborted every year – the legalization of Marijuana –

1) Gay Marriage – transgender bathrooms – sex trade – Porn industry – Racial conflicts

D) Lord you need to do something it is getting really bad

1) We see how far we have turned from God – we cry out – **Lord do something! Bring Revival**

Habakkuk has made this an issue of prayer for a long time – **HOW LONG?**and it seems like he has received no answer.

A) God always answers prayer: Yes – No – Wait

B) Sometimes **the wait** answer is just silence

C) Apparently that is what Habakkuk was dealing with – **How long will I cry out and you will not answer.**

1) Lord I am screaming but it doesn't seem like you are listening.

But God was listening – He is always listening –

A) And in V. 5 God is going to answer and His answer is going to radically surprise and confuse Habakkuk.

B)) He is expecting God to send a Revival like He did when Josiah was King but God has something different in store.

5 “Look among the nations and watch—Be utterly astounded! For I will work a work in your days which you would not believe, though it were told you.

{Try me

6 For indeed I am raising up the Chaldeans, A bitter and hasty nation which marches through the breadth of the earth,

To possess dwelling places that are not theirs. 7 They are terrible and dreadful; their judgment and their dignity proceed from themselves.

B) Habakkuk says – **God how come you are not doing anything and God says I am doing something!**

1) I am going to send a nation that is more wicked than your nation to be a rod of correction for you.

C) It would be like you and I praying for America

1) God I know you see the wickedness – the carnality the rebellion – **DO SOMETHING**

D) God says: **I am – I am going to send ISIS in to do a major strike on every single major city in America – many will die**

E) Most of US would find that really unsettling –

1) most of us if not all of us would be like – What? – **NO WAY!!!!**

F) We would find that A **VERY difficult answer to hear.**

1) See the Babylonians were known for the brutality and their wickedness - **V.8-17 Describes the fierceness and the brutality they were known for.**

Their horses also are swifter than leopards, And more fierce than evening wolves. Their chargers charge ahead;

Their cavalry comes from afar; They fly as the eagle that hastens to eat.

9 “They all come for violence; Their faces are set like the east wind. They gather captives like sand. {Swift and Powerful

10 They scoff at kings And princes are scorned by them. ,{full of pride no respect for authority of others -

They deride every stronghold, For they heap up earthen mounds and seize it.

11 Then his mind changes, and he transgresses; He commits offense,

Ascribing this power to his god.” {When Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem he declared it a victory for his god – our god is stronger than your God idea

Now Habakkuk is really confused – questions this plan! – He says to the Lord

12 Are You not from everlasting, O Lord my God, **my Holy One? This doesn't sound like my God.**

YOUR CHARACTER: You are holy in your ways – this doesn't seem right – you the Holy one would use the wicked.

He protests

We shall not die. O Lord, You have appointed **them for judgment;** O Rock, You have marked **them for correction.** {**Lord I know things are bad right now in Israel – but if you are going to judge someone – shouldn't it be them.**

13 You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness.

Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours A person more righteous than he? {In Habakkuk's mind this is a moral dilemma - **Lord we might be bad – but they are worse – How can you use them to Judge us?**

IF God choose ISIS to judge America – many of us with feel the same way right?

A)We understand Habakkuk's wrestling.

B)He continues in his description of Babylon

14 Why do You make men like fish of the sea, Like creeping things that have no ruler over them?
15 They take up all of them with a hook, They catch them in their net, And gather them in their dragnet. Therefore they rejoice and are glad.
16 Therefore they sacrifice to their net, And burn incense to their dragnet; Because by them their share is sumptuous And their food plentiful.
17 Shall they therefore empty their net, And continue to slay nations without pity?

Habakkuk compares the Babylonians to merciless fisherman who are gather up the nations in their nets for their own consumption.

A)So Questioning God - Why would you do this-

B)Seems completely out of character for you that you would allow these merciless people to punish your people without pity?

C)Habakkuk is saying not only did I have something else in mind –

1)I could think of a better tool for punishment than the prideful arrogant Babylonians

D)God what are you doing? – **He is shaking the vending machine** – not FAIR – NOT RIGHT!

E)HOW many of you have been in Habakkuk's shoes at some point in your life –

1)God this is not FAIR – NOT RIGHT

2)Lord – I hesitate to even say this: But I wonder if you even know what you are doing right now? -

In Chapter 2 Habakkuk does something really smart! –

A)Especially when in need of direction – clarity or VISION!

V.1 I will stand my watch And set myself on the rampart, And watch to see what He will say to me, And what I will answer when I am corrected.

Now there are 3 Key components in this verse that are Necessary for receiving Vision, Direction and Clarity from the Lord

A)**1st – Component is Isolation**- Habakkuk goes to the TOWER

B) Habakkuk knows that if he is going to hear God speak he has to get away!

C)Away from the routine – away from distractions – away from daily pressures.

1)For Habakkuk that meant –his prayer tower – stand watch: He moves from **Wrestling to Watching**

D)God's way: Peter – Joppa – roof- Quiet place / time Heart

2nd is Determination:

A)When he needed an answer Habakkuk said **I will stand my watch**

B)Notice he didn't say I should spend some time w/ the Lord – maybe next week or when it is convenient

1) No his attitude was one of I need to hear from the Lord & I am going to go to my tower – Now!

C) **I will put myself in the place –and I am not leaving until I hear something**

NEED VISION

1st Place of Isolation

2nd Determine to go there – get to your Tower – don't let anything keep you from it

#3 When you go there go w/ a heart of Expectation

A)Habakkuk – goes to the Tower – I am going to watch to see what the Lord will say to me

B) Not what He might say / not what I hope He says to me or what I wish – He says to me

C)He goes to the Tower w/ a Heart that is expecting to hear from God

D)This is one of the main reasons I Journal- heart Attitude of expectation.

1)Secretary – Bosses office. – Note pad – iPad – ready

Devo time with God – Journal – iPad - Ready to write down – meditate on it all through the day-

A)Syncs with phone – computer

B)Vision is important

Give us clear vision that we may know where to stand and what to stand for, because unless we stand for something, we shall fall for anything.

Peter Marshall

C)Habakkuk put himself in a place to receive clear vision –

1)and the Lord answered.

2 Then the Lord answered me and said: "Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, That he may run who reads it. {Billboard – understandable

3 For the vision is yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie.

Though it tarries, wait for it; Because it will surely come, It will not tarry.

Now in V. 4-19 God tells him three things:

Beneficial for us today.

#1 I am going to judge Babylon so don't worry about it

A)I am using Babylon as an instrument now –

B)Important to Realize God had already warned his people about their sin -numerous times

1)But they were not listening –

C)God says – I am going to do something a little more Drastic to get their attention.

1)But the Babylonians will eventually be destroyed.

D)First thing God shows him!

#2 Habakkuk you need to see the Big picture- look beyond the present into the future. V.14 For the earth will be filled With the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, As the waters cover the sea.

A)Reminding Habakkuk – look there is a day coming in the future - when all the earth will see MY Glory –

B)Habakkuk – don't worry I am still on the throne!

1)I see what is going on – and I have a plan!

C)Worried about the Presidency – I put people in Power
BIG PICTURE

#3 In the meantime learn to have faith – V.4 the just shall live by faith – or we might say it this way: The Just shall Trust!

Now That statement is at the Foundation of the Christian Faith

A)THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH!

B)It is a statement that is found 3 times in the NT

1) Paul used it to form the foundation of his two most important epistles Galatians and Romans -
2)**Galatians 3:11 & Romans 1:17**

C) The Writer of Hebrews also quotes this passage in talking about Faith – in Hebrews 10:38

1) *The Just shall live by Faith*

Who are the Just?

Romans 5:1,2 ¹Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Now what does it mean to be Justified ?

A)Pastor Chuck - **Just as if you never sinned** – that is a good definition but it is not the best –

B) **The Word Justification in the Greek is a term of Jurisprudence - It is a legal term**

1) It means more than the Judge simply declaring that you have been forgiven / but it means that the Judge declares you Righteous – **NO CRIME!**

C) When the Judge hits the gavel & says **this man is guilty, but we'll put him on Probation** that is NOT JUSTIFICATION

Or if the Judge says this man is guilty but I will let him off the hook this time – just a warning –

A)That is not Justification

B)Now if the Judge puts me on Probation or lets me off the hook w/ just a warning

1)I walk out happy – but also ashamed – I blew it

C)But Justification is when the Judge hits the gavel & says **the charges are untrue**

1)that is Justification – Declared righteous

But wait you say – I am guilty – THE charges are true – I sinned – broke God's law!

A)See that is the Beauty – not in God's eyes – Christ paid the Price –

B) Your sin transferred to Him

- 1) His Righteousness is transferred to You –
Just as if you never sinned

2 Corinthians 5:21 “For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

C) THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH – THE JUST TRUST.

The Just live by faith in that reality –

A) We are accepted in the beloved – because we are in Christ.

B) Not trying to earn God’s favor – but believing we already have it because of our connection to Jesus!

Hard thing for some to learn - In the year 1508 a priest by the name of Martin Luther was living a life of trying to earn God’s favor.

A) This young priest was so painfully aware of his sin & his short comings that he would whip his body / starve himself almost to death

B) He would torture himself Physically / sleep in the cold, crawled for miles on his knees, fasted for weeks

1) He would pay indulgences/ he would do penance

C) He was trying anything to make up for the wickedness he felt inside

1) Because he was so aware of God’s holiness & so aware of his own sinfulness

D) So One day in 1508 he was climbing the steps into a large Cathedral on his knees in another attempt to make up for his sin

- 1) As he climbed the steps on his knees there was a verse that was going round & round in his brain – the verse Romans 1:17

E) Paul is talking about the Message of the gospel –
¹⁷For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”¹⁸

Suddenly it hit him – the just Living by faith – not penance /

A) not religious ritual not living trying to attain a righteousness thru following Rules & Regulations

B) He understood that the Christian experience is not ‘Do, do, do’ — it’s ‘DONE!’ Jesus did it all.

1) It is not my trying to get it together / but it is placing my faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ

C) And then living my life based on that Premise – I am Just -

D) Through that Revelation: the Reformation was birthed / & the Church was forever changed as many others caught the vision

1) Moved from rituals and regulations and RELIGION to RELATIONSHIP based on faith in the finished work of Christ

The Just shall Live by faith !!!!!

A) Listen I have great news for you today!

B) You can get rid of the burden of trying to be spiritual.

You can Get rid of the notion that if you have morning devotions ten times in a row,

A) God owes you a blessing.

B) You are in God’s Favor – if you are Just – Nothing you earned – you just embraced by faith

So does that mean - *I don’t have to have morning devotions?* No, you don’t.- ‘I can sleep in?’ Yeah, you can.

A) ‘I don’t have to pray, or study the Word?’ - Nope.

B) Listen you don’t have to do any of those things – NOT A HAVE TO – IT IS A GET TO!

1) **NOT A DUTY – IT IS DEVOTION** – not labor – flows from love

C) Everyday – you and I GET TO SPEND TIME WITH GOD!

1) EACH day I wake up by faith – believe – God loves me – for me – waiting for me to talk to Him

D) He wants to talk to me through His word!

1) Amazing privilege!

When I fell in love w/ my wife – No one had to twist my arm to spend time w/ her – I wanted to see her every day { Bummed if I couldn’t }

A) I am the same way – now –

B) Friday is my day off – our day together –
{ Something comes up I’m bummed

1) Jealous for our time together –

C) I don’t drag myself on dates w/ her – I look forward to it – I long for it –

1) Awesome part of our relationship –

God is jealous for you! – Loves to spend time with you!

A) The Just they live by faith! Trust me –

B) Enjoy me – Know they are loved by me – changes everything about the way they LIVE!

Now don’t miss this What the Lord does here is really interesting and insightful –

A) In V. 4 He makes a contrast – Babylon and Nebuchadnezzar and Habakkuk and anyone else – that is going to live by faith in the Lord

“Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith. {Contrast – continues to describe the proud – this is what he does – what he is given to – opposite of faith.

The Proud

5 “Indeed, because he transgresses by wine, *He is a proud man*, And he does not stay at home. Because he enlarges his desire as hell, And he *is like death*, and cannot be satisfied, He gathers to himself all nations And heaps up for himself all peoples.

6 “Will not all these take up a proverb against him, And a taunting riddle against him, and say, ‘**Woe to him who increases What is not his—how long?** And to him who loads himself with many pledges’?

V.6-20 He pronounces 5 woes on the Proud – this is what the proud person is given to.

A) Opposite of the person living by faith

#1 Given to Greed

7 Will not your creditors rise up suddenly? Will they not awaken who oppress you? And you will become their booty.

8 Because you have plundered many nations, All the remnant of the people shall plunder you, Because of men’s blood And the violence of the land and the city, And of all who dwell in it.

The Babylonians were extremely wealthy – but they gained their wealth by plundering other nations

A) This is often a characteristic of anyone who doesn’t live a life of faith is they are given to greed.

B) Thinking: I Need to get as much as I can to secure my future

C) Those living by faith are not given to greed – but they are generous – trusting God for their future.

1) Givers – not hoarders – not afraid to tithe – to help others they are trusting God for their provision.

#2 V.9-11 Given to Injustice

“Woe to him who covets evil gain for his house, That he may set his nest on high, That he may be delivered from the power of disaster!

10 You give shameful counsel to your house, Cutting off many peoples, And sin *against* your soul. 11 For the stone will cry out from the wall, And the beam from the timbers will answer it.

A person who is not given to faith and is given to greed will turn to injustice to get ahead

A) They will be those who cut corners in business – do what they need to do rather than trusting God

B) Those living by faith – more concerned with their integrity than the bottom line. –

1) Doing things the right way

#3 V.12-13 Given Violence – Babylon was given to brutality and violence

“Woe to him who builds a town with bloodshed, Who establishes a city by iniquity! 13 Behold, is it not of the Lord of hosts That the peoples labor to feed the fire, And nations weary themselves in vain?

The person who is not living by faith will be one who will start to lash out – panic

A) Rather than trust God they get defensive – they try to take matters into their own hand – doesn’t matter who they run over in the process

B) Husbands with their wives – Employers with employees the only way I can lead –

1) I have to show them who is the boss – Threats – strong arm tactics

C) Those who don’t live by faith – given to violence strong arm tactics

#4 V.15-16 Woe Take advantage of others

“Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbor,
Pressing *him* to your bottle, even to make *him*
drunk, That you may look on his nakedness!

16 You are filled with shame instead of glory. You
also—drink! And be exposed as uncircumcised! The
cup of the Lord’s right hand *will be* turned against
you, And utter shame will be on your glory.

Indictment against using Seduction and drunkenness to get their way – take advantage of others

A) We might be thinking – I would never do that –
get someone drunk to take advantage of them.

B) But how many use things like Guilt trips as a form of manipulation to do the same thing-

1) We guilt people in to doing what we want them
to do.

C) Because we are unwilling to trust that God can
move on hearts – that the Lord **is going bring it all
to Fruition!**

1) I can trust this situation into his hands – His nail
scarred hands – Loves me and He is for me! -

D) His ways are perfect – His timing is perfect!

#5 5th Woe - Given to Idolatry V.17-20

For the violence *done to* Lebanon will cover you,
And the plunder of beasts *which* made them afraid,
Because of men’s blood And the violence of the land
and the city, And of all who dwell in it.

18 “What profit is the image, that its maker should
carve it, The molded image, a teacher of lies,
That the maker of its mold should trust in it,
To make mute idols?

19 **Woe to him who says to wood, ‘Awake!’**
To silent stone, ‘Arise! It shall teach!’
Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver,
Yet in it there is no breath at all.

20 “But the Lord is in His holy temple.
Let all the earth keep silence before Him.”

Psalm 115:8 They make idols like themselves

A) **Idolatry is really – self worship** - make an idol a
god that acts the way I would act and responds to
things the way I would respond.

B) When we are not trusting in God – doing the
same thing –

C) We are basically putting ourselves on the throne

of our lives

1) Can’t trust you – God – Trust myself!

So How are you living today: Faith – Trust in the Lord

A) Faith in YOU? - **YOU ON THE THRONE**

B) Manipulate others because you can’t trust God
to work?

C) Cut corners in business – because can’t trust
God to provide – doing it the right way?

1) Given to greed – stingy instead of Generous ?

D) IF ANSWER IS YES – Not Living – existing –

Now right in the middle of all this Woe stuff.
There is an island of hope in the sea of Woe
14 “*For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge
of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the
sea.*

A) Now this is important for Habakkuk to hear in
all of this.

B) The “glory” of Babylon will NOT last, but the
glory of the Lord will abide forever.

Reminder of the Big Picture – I am going to set up
a Kingdom on the earth that will be filled with my
glory - Jesus is coming back –

A) His glory now? –

2 Thess 1:10 *when He comes, in that Day, to be
glorified in His saints and to be admired among all
those who believe,*

B) Now I love that Phrase – that is the Lord’s
desire for each of us – that he would be glorified in
us –

Matt 5: *Let light so shine - Glorify your father
who is in heaven –*

C) He is glorified when we know that we are
Justified
Faith in Christ

D) When we LIVE BY FAITH – trusting in His
Love

E) The Cross is our reminder!