

Habakkuk (“Embrace”)

Introduction: Habakkuk focuses on the struggle which we often have with God’s justice. He emphasizes the need to wait for Yahweh to act in His perfect wisdom and power. He is worried about God’s silence. Are you?

As David Dorsey reminds us: “The similarities are striking; but the contrast between the two forces is even more striking: Yahweh is vastly superior to Babylon; and he will destroy it. The point is clear: There are powerful human forces out there, and Yahweh may use some of these forces to do His destructive work of punishment. But do not fear them. Rather, place your trust in Yahweh, whose power is vastly superior to any human force. Faith in almighty Yahweh is well-placed faith.” Thanks to David Dorsey.

- 1) **Habakkuk’s first complaint:** how long must I wait for your justice?—1:2-4
- 2) **Yahweh’s first answer:** coming of the powerful army of Babylon—1:5-11
- 3) **Habakkuk’s second complaint:** how can you allow the wicked to destroy nations more righteous than themselves—1:12-17
- 4) **FOCUS:** wait, for in the end the wicked will be punished, but the righteous will live by faith—2:1-5
 - a) A statement of humble anticipation—2:1
 - i) Remaining alert for God’s response.
 - b) God reveals truth to Habakkuk—2:2-5
 - i) Record and spread God’s message—2:2
 - ii) Be patient as God works out its fulfillment in His time—2:3
 - (1) Trust and don’t be impatient.
 - (2) Delay is only in the heart of man; God is working the details according to His own plan. (Feinberg)
 - iii) Living by faith—2:4
 - (1) The wicked (i.e. Babylon) are self-centered.
 - (2) This is not a momentary act of believing but of a living, enduring trust in God. Its very durability is proof of its reality. (MacArthur & Mayhue)
 - (3) This means being loyal to God and obedient to his law, even when outward circumstances make it difficult, as they did in Habakkuk’s day. In modern speech we may perhaps use the word “integrity”.... (UBS)
 - (4) Quoted 3x in the NT: Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38
 - (5) In contrast with the self-reliant, boastful ways of the unrighteous, the righteous are found to be reliant on God and faithful to Him. (Blue)
 - iv) God will punish the wicked in His time—2:5

- 5) **Yahweh’s answer to the second complaint:** “woes” upon wicked; they will be punished; all wrongs will be righted—2:6-20
 - a) The wonderful promise of 2:14.

- 6) **Yahweh’s final answer:** coming of the even more powerful army of Yahweh, who will vanquish Babylon and rescue Israel—3:1-15

- 7) **Habakkuk’s final resolution of his first complaint:** I will wait for God’s help as long as it takes, no matter what; he is my source of joy—3:16-19

- 8) **Things for us to remember (think, feel, do):**
 - a) In the final consummation, no one will doubt God’s justice and mercy. Not that he will give a final, exhaustive theoretical theodicy, but when he is revealed to all in the second advent of Christ, all doubts will be transformed into ashamed silence or reverential praise. (MacArthur & Mayhue)
 - b) A proper biblical theodicy recognizes God’s right to do as he pleases, to not explain himself, to condemn sinners for the evil in the world, and to call sinners to accept him as the remedy for evil. God is just and good because justice and goodness are his very nature. God vindicates his justice by helping people see history from his perspective. (MacArthur & Mayhue)
 - c) The righteous are those who are courageous enough to accept God’s word of promise is a world dominated by apparent injustice, because they know that He cares for His people even when He appears distant and uninvolved. (Bailey)