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Habakkuk

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Habakkuk

Chapter 1

¹The message that Habakkuk the prophet received,

²“Yahweh, how long will I cry for help, and you will not hear?

I cry out to you, ‘Violence!’ but you will not save.

³Why do you make me see iniquity and look upon wrongdoing?

Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and contention rises up.

⁴Therefore the law is paralyzed, and justice does not last for any time.

For the wicked surround the righteous; therefore false justice goes out.”

⁵“Look at the nations and observe them; be amazed and astonished!

For I am surely about to do something in your days that you will not believe even if it is told to you.

⁶For look! I am about to raise up the Chaldeans—that fierce and impetuous nation—

they are marching throughout the breadth of the earth to seize dwelling places that were not their own.

⁷They are terrifying and fearsome; their judgment and splendor proceed from themselves.

⁸Their horses also are swifter than leopards, quicker than the evening wolves.

So their horsemen come galloping,

and their horsemen come from a great distance—they fly like an eagle swift to devour.

⁹They all come for violence;

all their faces moving forward, and they gather captives like sand.^[1]

¹⁰So they mock kings, and rulers are only a mockery for them.

They laugh at every stronghold, for they pile up earth and capture them.

¹¹Then they sweep past like the wind and pass on—guilty men, those whose might is their god.”

¹²“Are you not from ancient times, O Yahweh my God, my Holy One? We will not die.

O Yahweh, you have ordained them for judgment, and you, O Rock, have established them for correction.

¹³Your eyes are too pure to gaze upon evil, and you are not able to look on wrongdoing with favor;

why then have you looked favorably on those who betray?

Why are you silent while the wicked swallow up those more righteous than they are?

¹⁴You make men like fish in the sea, like creeping things without a ruler over them.

¹⁵He brings all of them up with a fishhook;

he drags men away in his fishnet;

he gathers them together in his dragnet;

so he rejoices and he is glad.

¹⁶Therefore he sacrifices to his net

and burns incense to his dragnet,

for by his net his portion is fat,

and his food is the richest kind.

¹⁷Will he therefore keep emptying his net,

and will he continually slaughter the nations without mercy?"

1:9 ^[1] is very difficult; many modern versions have other interpretations.

Chapter 2

¹I will stand at my guard post and station myself on the watchtower,

and I will watch carefully to see what he will say to me

and how I should turn from my complaint.^[1]

²Yahweh answered me and said,

"Record this vision, and write plainly on the tablets so that the one reading them might run.

³For the vision is yet for an appointed time and it hastens to the end and will not fail.

Though it delays, wait for it. For it will surely come and will not tarry.

⁴Look! He whose desires are not right within him is puffed up. But the righteous will live by his faith.

⁵For wine betrays the arrogant man so that he will not abide,

but enlarges his appetite like Sheol and, like death, is never satisfied.

He gathers to himself every nation and collects for himself all of the peoples.

⁶Will not all these create a saying to ridicule him and a taunting song and riddles about him, saying,

'Woe to the one increasing what is not his own! For how long will you increase for yourself the weight of the pledges you have taken?'

⁷Will not your debtors rise up suddenly, and those awake who will make you tremble?

You will be spoil for them.

⁸Because you have plundered many peoples, all the remnant of the peoples will plunder you.

For you have shed human blood and acted with violence against the land, the cities, and all who live in them.

⁹Woe to the one who carves out evil gains for his house,
so he can set his nest on high to keep himself safe from the hand of evil.'

¹⁰You have devised shame for your house by cutting off many people, and have sinned against yourself.

¹¹For the stones will cry out from the wall, and the rafters of timber will answer them,

¹²Woe to the one who builds a city with blood, and who establishes a town in iniquity.'

¹³Is it not indeed from Yahweh of hosts
that peoples labor for fire and all the other nations weary themselves for nothing?

¹⁴Yet the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Yahweh as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁵Woe to the one who forces his neighbors to drink—
you pour out your wrath^[2] and you make them drunk
in order to look at their nakedness.'

¹⁶You will have your fill of shame instead of glory.
Now it is your turn! Drink, and you will expose your uncircumcised foreskin!
The cup in the right hand of Yahweh is coming around to you,
and disgrace will cover your glory.

¹⁷For the violence done to Lebanon will overwhelm you and the destruction of animals will terrify you.
For you have shed the blood of man and you have acted with violence against the land, the cities, and all who live
in them.

¹⁸What does an idol profit you when its maker has shaped it or a metal image, a teacher of lies?
For its maker trusts his own handiwork when he makes these mute gods.

¹⁹Woe to him who says to the wood, Wake up! Or to the silent stone, Arise!' Can these things teach?
See, it is overlaid with gold and silver, but there is no breath at all within it.

²⁰But Yahweh is in his holy temple! Let all the earth be silent before him."

2:1 ^[1], which is what the Hebrew text has, some modern versions have or .
2:15 ^[2], or as .

Chapter 3

¹The prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, according to Shigionoth.^[1]

²Yahweh, I have heard your report, and I fear.

O Yahweh, revive your work in the midst of the years; in the midst of the years make it known;
remember to have compassion in your wrath.

³God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. *Selah*.

His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise.

⁴His brightness was like the light; rays flashed from his hand;
and there he hid his power.

⁵Deadly disease went before him,
and the plague followed at his heels.

⁶He stood and measured the earth; he looked and made the nations tremble.
Even the eternal mountains were shattered, and the everlasting hills bowed down.
His ways are everlasting.

⁷I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction, and the tent curtains in the land of Midian trembling.

⁸Was your wrath against the rivers, O Yahweh? Was your anger against the rivers,
or your fury against the sea,
when you rode upon your horses and your victorious chariots?

⁹You removed the sheath from your bow; you called for many arrows! *Selah*.
You split the earth with rivers.

¹⁰The mountains saw you and twisted in pain.
Downpours of water passed over them; the deep sea raised its voice.
It lifted up its waves on high.

¹¹The sun and moon stood still in their high places
at the light of your arrows as they fly,
at the gleam of your flashing spear.

¹²You have marched over the earth with indignation. In anger you have threshed the nations.

¹³You went out for the salvation of your people, for the salvation of your anointed one.
You crush the head of the house of the wicked to lay him bare from the thigh up to the neck. *Selah*

¹⁴You have pierced the head of his warriors with his own arrows since they came like a storm to scatter us,
their gloating was like one who devours the afflicted in a hiding place.

¹⁵You have trampled on the sea with your horses, on the surge of the great waters.

¹⁶I heard, and my inner parts trembled! My lips quivered at the sound.
Decay enters into my bones, and my legs tremble beneath me
Yet I will wait quietly for the day of distress to come upon the people who invade us.

¹⁷Though the fig tree does not bud

and there is no fruit on the vines;
and though the produce of the olive tree fails
and the fields yield no food;
and though the flock is cut off from the fold
and there are no cattle in the stalls,

18yet, I will rejoice in Yahweh.

I will be joyful because of the God of my salvation.

19The Lord Yahweh is my strength

and he makes my feet like the feet of a deer.

He makes me tread on my high places.

For the music director, on my stringed instruments.

3:1 ^[1], which may refer to musical directions for singers.

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