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v90

Habakkuk

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Table of Contents

Habakkuk **4**
Habakkuk 1 4
Habakkuk 2 5
Habakkuk 3 7

Habakkuk

1 ¹ I am Habakkuk the prophet. This is the message that Yahweh gave me in a vision.

2 I said, “Yahweh, how long must I keep praying to you for help before you respond?

I ask you to rescue us from people who are acting violently everywhere,
but you do not rescue us!

3 Why do you make me keep seeing people doing evil?
Why do you not punish people who are doing what is wrong?

I see people destroying things and acting violently,
and there is fighting and quarreling everywhere.

4 No one obeys your instruction, and judges never decide cases fairly.

Wicked people always defeat righteous people in the courts,
so that no one ever gets justice.”

5 Yahweh replied to me, “Look at the completely amazing thing happening among the other nations;

you will be astounded,
because I am doing something during this time that you would not believe
even if someone told you about it.

6 I am making the Chaldeans powerful; they are fierce and swift soldiers.

They will march across the entire earth

and conquer countries that do not belong to them.

7 They are terrifying people who do whatever they want and pay no attention to the laws of other countries.

8 Their horses are faster than leopards
and fiercer than wolves at night.

Their horsemen gallop swiftly from distant places;
they swoop down like eagles rushing to kill their prey.

9 They all advance with the purpose of acting violently. They advance like a desert wind, gathering prisoners as numerous as grains of sand.

10 They mock the kings and rulers of other countries
and laugh at all the cities with high walls.

They pile up dirt against those walls
and climb up to capture those cities.

11 They rush past like the wind and move on.
But they are very guilty, because they think that their own military power is their god.”

12 Then I said, “Yahweh, you have always been God from ancient times.

You are my Holy One; we will not die.

You have appointed the Chaldeans to judge us and punish us.

You are our Rock, and you have sent them to correct us.

13 You are pure, and you cannot endure seeing evil,

so why are you tolerating treacherous people?

Why do you say nothing

when wicked people destroy people who are more righteous than they are?

14 You treat us like fish in the sea

or like other sea creatures that have no one to rule over them.

15 The soldiers of Chaldea treat us like fish; they pull us out with hooks

or catch us in their nets, and they rejoice and celebrate.

16 They worship the weapons with which they capture people and offer sacrifices to them

and burn incense in front of them. They say, 'Those weapons have enabled us to become rich and eat expensive food.'

17 Will you allow them to keep conquering people?

Will you allow them to keep destroying people of other nations without showing any mercy?"

2 ¹ After I said that, I said to myself, "I will climb up into my guard post,

and stand there in my watchtower.

I will wait there to find out what Yahweh will say,

to know how I should answer."

2 Then Yahweh replied to me,

"Write plainly on tablets what I am revealing to you in this vision,

and then read it to a messenger

so he can run with it to tell it to other people.

3 In this vision I will talk about things that will happen when I decide.

They will certainly happen in the future, I do not lie.

You want those things to happen immediately, but they are not happening.

But wait patiently for them to happen!

When they occur, they will occur quickly, and not slowly.

4 Think about the people in that proud nation!

They are certainly not doing what is righteous.

But people who are righteous will live

because they faithfully do what I want them to do.

5 Drunk armies are foolish, they cannot stop pillaging.

No matter how much they kill and steal, they want more.

They will conquer every people group they encounter.

6 But soon all those whom they have captured will ridicule the soldiers from Babylonia!

They will make fun of them, saying,

"Terrible things will happen to you who have stolen things from other countries!

You got many things by forcing people to give them to you.

But you certainly will not keep those things for long!"

7 Suddenly those you owe a debt to because you pillaged them will come to pillage you.

You will be afraid.

They will recapture all the things that you stole from them.

8 You stole things from the people of many nations.

You murdered people of many people groups,

and you destroyed their land and their cities.

So those who are still alive will steal valuable things from you.

9 Terrible things will happen to you people of Babylonia who build big houses

with money that you got by forcing others to give it to you.

You are proud, and you think that your houses will be safe

because you have built them in places where you can easily defend them.

10 But because you have destroyed others,

you have harmed yourself and disgraced your own family!

11 The very stones in the walls of your houses

and the wooden beams in your ceilings show that you did evil things to get them

12 Terrible things will happen to you people of Babylonia who kill people in order to build cities,

cities that you build by using money that you have gotten by committing crimes.

13 But Yahweh, commander of the angel armies, has declared that fire will destroy everything built by people who do things like that;

they will have worked hard uselessly.

14 But in contrast, just as water fills the oceans,

Yahweh will fill the earth with people who know how glorious he is.

15 Terrible things will happen to you people of Babylonia,

who cause people who live in nearby countries to become drunk.

You force them to drink a lot of drugged wine

until they are drunk and then they walk around naked because you are happy when you see that.

16 But you are the ones whom Yahweh will soon disgrace instead of honor.

Yahweh will make you drink so much wine that you will also stagger around drunk and naked.

Yahweh will powerfully judge and curse you,

and everyone will see that you are weak and not strong.

17 You did violent things to the people in Lebanon,

and you killed the wild animals there,

so you will be punished severely for doing that.

You have killed many people

and you have destroyed their lands and their cities.

18 An idol that someone carves or casts from metal does not help anyone at all;

it only deceives the people who trust it.

The person who makes an idol trusts something that he himself created,

something that cannot even
 speak! **19** Terrible things will
 happen to you who say to
 lifeless idols that are made of
 wood or rock,
 'Wake up!'

Stone idols certainly cannot tell
 you what you should do;

they look nice because they
 are covered with silver and
 gold,
 but they are not alive.

20 But Yahweh is in his holy
 temple;
 everyone on the earth should
 be silent in his presence!"

3 **1** Habakkuk the prophet
 prayed this prayer, set to the tune
 called Shigyonoth.

2 Yahweh, I have heard reports
 about what you have done,
 and I am in awe of all you
 have done.

Do again in our time what you
 did long ago!

Even when you are angry with
 us,
 act mercifully toward us!

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

His glory covered the sky,
 and praise for him filled the
 whole earth.

4 He shone like the sunrise;
 his rays of light flashed from
 his hands,
 and that is where he conceals
 his awesome power.

5 Sickness went ahead of him
 like a soldier,

and burning disease followed
 behind him.

6 He stopped and surveyed the
 earth.

He looked at the nations and
 made them tremble.

The mountains that have existed
 from the beginning of time
 collapsed;

the ancient hills crumbled.

He has always existed and
 always will.

7 I saw that the people in the
 tents of Cushan were distressed,
 and the people of Midian were
 trembling like tent curtains.

8 Yahweh, were you angry at the
 rivers and streams?

Were you furious at the sea?

No! You rode on your horses and
 on your chariots

to defeat your enemies and
 rescue your people.

9 You took your bow out of its
 cover, ready to shoot.

You made ready your arrows,
 just as you had promised.

You split the ground, and water
 gushed out in rivers.

10 The mountains trembled
 when they saw you.

A great flood of water rushed
 past.

The ocean depths roared loudly
 and seemed to raise their
 hands high in the air.

11 The sun and the moon
 stopped moving
 as your arrows flew through
 the sky like flashes of light
 and your shining spear
 gleamed brightly.

12 You marched across the land
 in your anger,

and you trampled the nations
in your fury.

13 You went out to rescue your
people,
to save the king you had
chosen.

You crushed the ruler of the
wicked people,
destroying his power from his
crown to his very foundation.

14 With the enemy's own spear
you killed their leader,
who had come rushing like a
whirlwind to scatter us
and gloated like they were about
to devour helpless people in
hiding.

15 You smashed through the sea
on your horses,
churning through the great
surging waves.

16 When I heard this, my
stomach churned inside me;
at the sound of it, my lips
trembled.

My bones felt like they were
rotting,
and my legs gave way beneath
me.

However, I will wait quietly for
the time when disaster

comes to the people who are
attacking us.

17 The fig trees may not
blossom,
and there may be no grapes
on the vines.

The olive trees may produce
nothing,
and the fields may yield no
crops.

The flocks of sheep and goats
may disappear from the
pastures,
and there may be no cattle in
the stalls.

18 Even so, I will rejoice because
I know Yahweh.

I will be joyful because
Yahweh is the God who saves
me.

19 Yahweh the Lord makes me
strong.

He makes me as sure-footed
as a deer

and enables me to go safely to
the high places.

(This is for the choir director to
use when the people sing this
prayer with stringed
instruments.)