

Your Notes

“God, why haven’t You judged the moral depravity of the U.S.?”

1:1-4 Habakkuk’s first question: “Why do the sins of Your people go unpunished?”

1:5-11 God’s answer: “The Chaldeans will discipline Judah.”

1:12-2:1 Habakkuk’s second question: “How can You, holy God, use an unholy instrument?”

2:2-20 God’s answer: “The righteous will live by faith, and the proud will be punished.” **3:1-19** Building on God’s words, character, and past actions, Habakkuk **trembles, exults, and trusts**—in his God!!

1:1-4 Habakkuk’s first question: “Why do the sins of Your people go unpunished?”

:1 The oracle which Habakkuk the prophet saw.

:2 How long, O LORD, will I call for help, And You will not hear? I cry out to You, "Violence!" Yet You do not save.

:3 Why do You make me see iniquity, and cause me to look on wickedness? Yes, destruction and violence are before me; strife exists and contention arises.

:4 Therefore the law is ignored and justice is never upheld. For the wicked surround the righteous; therefore, justice comes out perverted.

God hears and answers our prayers, but He may not do it our way. We don’t know the way or time, but **we do know Him!** 1 Pet. 3:12 is helpful.

How does this passage help you in dealing with your questions, confusion, and ‘unanswered’ prayers?

In what areas do you need to turn from your unrest and confusion and trust God? _____

What will lead us to tremble before, exult in, and trust our God?

FOR NEXT WEEK: Please read Habakkuk 1:5-11. In these verses, how does Yahweh answer Habakkuk’s questions and prayers? How does He describe His instrument for the discipline of Judah? If you put God’s words into our everyday language, what would His answer sound like? Notice the last part of :11. How does Yahweh conclude His answer to Habakkuk’s prayer? What have you learned about Yahweh in His answer? What about His answer causes you to tremble, exult, and trust Him?

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“**God, why haven’t You judged the moral depravity of the U.S.?** The ungodly seem to be getting away with sin. The justice system seems to make decisions by what the judges or people want, not based on law. People are running amok in the streets yet the police don’t/can’t, are prevented from taking action. The consequences of lawless actions seem to be light. Because I know You are holy and just and impartial, how can You seem to not be doing anything about the injustice, the ungodliness, of the world? **Yahweh, please do something!**” These are our questions and the questions and even demands of an OT prophet. His name was Habakkuk. Date is around 605 B.C.

In his case, the two southern tribes known as Judah had turned from God. The people were openly sinning, strife existed, the law was ignored, justice was not upheld. The wicked surrounded the righteous. “How long, O Yahweh, will I call for help and You will not hear?” How we can identify! Do we ever question God and His ways, or His inactivity, or His fairness, or His silence?

1:1-4 HABAKKUK’S FIRST QUESTION: “WHY DO THE SINS OF YOUR PEOPLE GO UNPUNISHED?” **1:5-11** GOD’S ANSWER: “THE CHALDEANS WILL DISCIPLINE JUDAH.”

1:12-2:1 HABAKKUK’S SECOND QUESTION: “HOW CAN YOU, A HOLY GOD, USE AN UNHOLY INSTRUMENT?” **2:2-20** GOD’S ANSWER: “THE RIGHTEOUS WILL LIVE BY FAITH, AND THE PROUD WILL BE PUNISHED.” **3:1-19** BUILDING ON GOD’S WORDS, CHARACTER, AND PAST ACTIONS, HABAKKUK **TREMbles, EXULTS, AND TRUSTS**—IN HIS GOD!!

READ 1:1-4. HABAKKUK’S FIRST QUESTION: “WHY DO THE SINS OF YOUR PEOPLE GO UNPUNISHED?”

:1 READ. This is the message the prophet Habakkuk received from Yahweh in a vision. Oracle can mean utterance or burden, what is lifted up. Habakkuk is struggling to comprehend the ways of God. He writes out what he sees.

:2 READ. “O Yahweh, Your lack of response doesn’t seem to go along with what I know about You.” Yahweh means the self-existent one, I AM. “You appear unhearing of my prayers. You appear indifferent to Judah’s sins. What’s up? I’m confused about Your silence. I cry out yet You don’t save.”

Save means to deliver from what oppresses or restricts. Habakkuk thought he knew the answers, yet Yahweh wasn’t acting in accordance with his prayers. “I’ve been calling out for a long time. Can’t You hear me? I point out the obvious issues but You don’t act in accordance with my prayers. Do what I want You to do!” Don’t equate silence with inactivity. God is at work! 1 Pet. 3:12 (Ps. 34:15-16) makes it clear the Lord’s ears attend to the righteous’ prayer.

:3 READ. “I’m surrounded by people who love to argue and fight. You make me see wickedness, destruction, violence, yet You seem to be indifferent.” The Judeans were immoral (2 Kings 23:7). According to 2 Kings 23:10, they were even sacrificing their children to fire. They were maliciously intending to injure others. There was the disintegration of the nation into factions. They were constantly fighting. It seemed beyond Habakkuk’s comprehension that God wasn’t doing anything about it.

:4 READ. “The law has become paralyzed, useless, and there is no justice given in the courts. The few righteous people remaining are surrounded by the wicked. Justice is twisted and perverted until it comes out injustice! The greatest tragedy is the people’s neglect of God and His law. They don’t care about the content of Your Word.” They were looking for another source of deliverance. Habakkuk was frustrated but kept his focus on Yahweh.

Judah was declining spiritually, morally, and politically. From the prophet's perspective, it seemed the people had passed the point of no return. God would agree. READ **JER. 7:27-34**. They were a wicked people! Their sins would require God's action, a redemptive work only He could do. He was their only hope, but the Judean people wouldn't turn to Him.

In Habakkuk's mind, drastic action by God was the only alternative. Look at today. Abortion, pornography, divorce, legalizing sin, punishing the right and rewarding the wrong, drunkenness, immorality, injustice in the courts, no final authority, no such thing as absolute truth.

Destruction and violence are before us; strife exists and contention arises. Therefore God's truth is ignored and justice is never upheld. The wicked surround the righteous; therefore, justice comes out perverted. Go through Rom. 1:24-32 to read the results of not honoring God. For Christians the questions are: "Will we trust Him even when He appears silent? Appears to be indifferent? Is allowing certain things to happen? Will we trust Him, regardless? What will lead us to tremble, rejoice, and exult in our God?"

Habakkuk was convinced that the need was for God to save, send a revival! But was that the real need? Would Yahweh even answer Habakkuk, and if He did, what kind of reassuring answer would He give him and us?

GOD HEARS AND ANSWERS OUR PRAYERS, BUT HE MAY NOT DO IT OUR WAY. WE DON'T KNOW THE WAY OR TIME, BUT WE DO KNOW HIM! 1 PET. 3:12.

HOW DOES THIS PASSAGE HELP YOU IN DEALING WITH YOUR QUESTIONS, CONFUSION, AND 'UNANSWERED' PRAYERS? IN WHAT AREAS DO YOU NEED TO TURN FROM YOUR UNREST AND CONFUSION AND TRUST GOD? WHAT WILL LEAD US TO TREMBLE BEFORE, EXULT IN, AND TRUST OUR GOD?

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EXTRA NOTES:

1:1-4 The oracle which Habakkuk the prophet saw. **:2** How long, O LORD, will I call for help, And You will not hear? I cry out to You, "Violence!" Yet You do not save. **:3** Why do You make me see iniquity, and cause me to look on wickedness? Yes, destruction and violence are before me; strife exists and contention arises. **:4** Therefore the law is ignored and justice is never upheld. For the wicked surround the righteous; therefore, justice comes out perverted.

A prayer: Everlasting Yahweh, we know You are the great "I AM", You are our God, our Holy One. You are the just Judge. You, O Rock, use what You will to correct. Because of Your character, Your words, and Your past actions, we know the Judean sinners and sins will be dealt with.

Yet because we know Your Son Jesus and understand Your love, we realize all sinners and sins have now been dealt with. Jesus dealt with us as sinners and with our sins in His death on the cross. We use symbols, like crackers and juice, to remember Jesus' body given and His blood shed.

Your Son Jesus said, **"This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me. This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."** Then the apostle Paul adds, **"For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. Before partaking let a person examine himself, and then eat of the bread and drink of the cup."**

We examine ourselves to see if we truly belong to our Lord Jesus, whether we've by faith received Him as Lord. We examine ourselves to deal with any issues the Holy Spirit brings to mind. We deal with them or commit to deal with them. Then we gratefully and joyfully partake together.

A time of prayerful examination.

While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." The crackers are the symbol of Jesus' body, given for us.

Have someone pray. Pass out the unleavened crackers. Read Mt. 27:32-50.

And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins." The cup is the symbol of Jesus' blood, shed for us.

Have someone pray. Pass out the juice. Have Mark sing a song.