

## Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

### Part 449 – The Burden Habakkuk Did See Through Empty Their Net (Habakkuk 1:1-17)

1. From the first verse of this book, what can we know about the vision Habakkuk saw? It was a burden: *“The burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see”* (**Habakkuk 1:1**).

- Cf. **Isaiah 13:1, Isaiah 15:1, Isaiah 17:1, Isaiah 19:1, Isaiah 21:1, Isaiah 21:11, Isaiah 22:1, Isaiah 23:1, Isaiah 30:6, Nahum 1:1, Zechariah 9:1, Zechariah 12:1, and Malachi 1:1**
- This burden is not pleasurable in any way to Habakkuk. He is troubled by it (cf. **Lamentations 2:11** and **Daniel 4:5; 7:15; 7:28**) and the context bears that out.

2. What did Habakkuk say that reveals how burdensome this vision was to him?

*“(2) O LORD, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear! even cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save! (3) Why dost thou shew me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance? for spoiling and violence are before me: and there are that raise up strife and contention. (4) Therefore the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore wrong judgment proceedeth”* (**Habakkuk 1:2-4**).

- Habakkuk wanted to know how long he needed to cry [cry out] as other prophets felt at times for various reasons (**Psalms 6:1-4, Psalms 13:1-2, Psalms 35:17, Psalms 74:9-10, Psalms 79:5, Isaiah 6:8-12, and Jeremiah 47:6**).
- Even an angel asked “how long” (**Zechariah 1:12**)?
- There were times where God shut out the prayers of the prophets (**Lamentations 3:8**) for a reason (**Jeremiah 7:1-16, Jeremiah 11:11-14, and Jeremiah 14:7-11**).
- Habakkuk did not like what he was being shown. Think about why (**Jeremiah 4:31, Micah 7:1-4, and Galatians 4:8-11**).
- The law is slacked [ceased; fainted] (**Psalms 119:126, Mark 7:13, and I Corinthians 1:17**).
- The wicked overtaking the righteous (**Proverbs 1:11-18 and Jeremiah 5:26-31**). \*More on this in verse 14-15
- Wrong judgment as a result (**Amos 5:7; 7:12**).

3. What work did God say He was going to work that was terrible and dreadful?

He was planning to raise up the Chaldeans: *“(5) Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously: for I will work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told you. (6) For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces that are not theirs. (7) They are terrible and dreadful: their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves. (8) Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves: and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall*

*come from far; they shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat. (9) They shall come all for violence: their faces shall sup up as the east wind, and they shall gather the captivity as the sand. (10) And they shall scoff at the kings, and the princes shall be a scorn unto them: they shall deride every strong hold; for they shall heap dust, and take it" (Habakkuk 1:5-10).*

- The heathens would be surprised (**II Kings 21:12** and **Jeremiah 19:3**) at what God was planning and did (**Lamentations 4:11-12**).
- Not just for amazement, but God wasn't just employing the Chaldeans against the erring of His people only (**Jeremiah 9:25-26** and **Jeremiah 25:1-29**).
- The Chaldeans [aka Babylonians; **Jeremiah 21:4**] were fierce (**Isaiah 39:6-7**, **Jeremiah 4:5-13**, **Jeremiah 5:15-17**, **Jeremiah 25:38**, and **Jeremiah 39:1-10**).

4. Did God think that the Chaldeans were going to glorify Him?

No (cf. **Isaiah 13:1-14:14:23**): *"Then shall his mind change, and he shall pass over, and offend, imputing this his power unto his god" (Habakkuk 1:11).*

- The ASV 1901 renders this passage: "Then shall he sweep by as a wind, and shall pass over, and be guilty, even he whose might is his god." This fits **Daniel 4:29-33** and **Daniel 5:1-31**
- Even if the translation in the KJV is correct, God empowered Babylon (**Jeremiah 27:5-7**).
- Giving glory to any other, whether self or a false deity, was wrong (**Proverbs 25:27** and **Jeremiah 2:26-28**).

5. What did Habakkuk conclude was God's reason for raising up the Chaldeans?

That he had established them for judgment; for correction: *"Art thou not from everlasting, O LORD my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O LORD, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction" (Habakkuk 1:12).*

- God is everlasting, eternal (**Deuteronomy 33:27**, **Psalms 90:1-2**, **Psalms 93:2**, **Psalms 102:24**, and **I Timothy 1:17**).
- He is the Holy One of Israel (**Psalms 89:18** and **Isaiah 41:14**).
- God had raised up leaders and nations to correct; judge His people. For example, in addition to the Chaldeans (**Jeremiah 46:25-28**), God did such with Sennacherib king of Assyria (**II Kings 19:20**; **19:25**).

6. What did Habakkuk say about God's eyes?

Habakkuk wanted to know how God could have pure eyes, yet see and not respond to those who deal treacherously: *"Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he" (Habakkuk 1:13)?*

- First, we must address the fact that this passage is NOT teaching that God is somehow literally blind or deaf or literally incapable of seeing iniquity (**I Samuel 16:7, Psalms 139:1-15, Proverbs 15:3, Proverbs 5:21, Jeremiah 23:24, and Hebrews 4:13**).
- What it does mean is that He doesn't like seeing it, doesn't want to see it, etc. (**Psalms 5:4-5, Psalms 11:4-7, Proverbs 6:16-19, and I John 1:5-6**).
- We will address Habakkuk's question about God doing nothing regarding the evil He saw in the next question.

7. Did Habakkuk understand why God looked on those that dealt treacherously and unsparingly and didn't say anything about it?

NO: *"(13) Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he? (14) And makest men as the fishes of the sea, as the creeping things, that have no ruler over them? (15) They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag: therefore they rejoice and are glad. (16) Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous. (17) Shall they therefore empty their net, and not spare continually to slay the nations"* (**Habakkuk 1:13-17**)?

- There were times wherein God's prophets wanted God to react (**Psalms 50:3**). God didn't always react immediately (**Psalms 50:20-23**).
- We understand why (**Romans 2:4**). Habakkuk, like others, did not (**Psalms 10:1-18**).
- Habakkuk's complaint is that his perception of man, as God created man in his view, is that man is easily preyed upon and caught in nets. Among God's people, not even considering those outside, there were trap-setters (**Jeremiah 5:26**).
- So, think about this. God has made man and given man freewill. He warns man not to be easy prey (**Proverbs 14:15, Matthew 7:15-20, Luke 12:1, Philippians 3:1-2, Colossians 2:4-8, etc.**).
- Who is to be blamed when men fall into traps, get caught, etc.? Is it God's fault? NO! It is the fault of those who refuse to be aware (**II Peter 3:17**).
- Habakkuk knows he will be held accountable for his complaints (**Habakkuk 2:1**).