



DESERT VIEW BIBLE CHURCH

• HABAKKUK 1 • 3/12/2023

MAIN POINT

We have a limited ability to grasp God's sovereign work in His world, but God can be trusted despite our inability to understand.

INTRODUCTION

Growing up, what usually happened in your house after someone said, "That's not fair!"?

More recently, when has an authority figure taken you seriously about a problem or complaint? What happened next?

We've all asked "that" question in one form or another: Why do the wicked prosper? Why do you good things happen to bad people? Why do bad things happen to good people? Why do bad things happen at all? What we're really asking behind all these questions is, "Why does life seem so unfair?" Or, more accurately, "Why doesn't life

conform to my understanding of fairness?” Those are exactly the kinds of questions Habakkuk, a prophet, asked God throughout his book of the Bible.

UNDERSTANDING

READ HABAKKUK 1:1-11.

What strikes you as most interesting about these verses? Why? What questions come to mind as you read these verses?

As a prophet, Habakkuk ministered to the people of Judah during the reign of an evil king named Jehoiakim. This king allowed wickedness and injustice to flourish among God’s people to the point where Habakkuk became fed up. He wanted answers.

Can you relate to Habakkuk’s frustration? Have you ever questioned God’s sovereignty in a given situation and wondered what He was up to?

READ VERSES 1-4.

At the beginning of his writings, Habakkuk begged God to help him understand how He could allow such a degree of injustice and wickedness to continue among His own people. In a very real sense, he wanted to hold God accountable for the wrongs he saw in the world around him.

Where do you see evidence of injustice in the world today?

Where do you see evidence of injustice or a prevalence toward wickedness in your own community?

Can you relate to Habakkuk's desire to hold God accountable for the condition of the world? Explain.

READ VERSES 5-8.

The old saying goes, "Be careful what you ask for, because you just might get it." When has this saying been true in your life?

How would you describe the Chaldeans in modern terms?

God answered Habakkuk's questions in a decisive way. He had a plan to enforce justice among His people, and He'd already long at work bringing that plan to bear.

READ VERSES 9-11.

What do these verses teach us about the Babylonians?

What do these verses teach us about God?

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

When do we cross the line between sharing honestly with God and judging His actions?

What are some positive ways to express or respond to your dissatisfaction with injustice in this world?

What are some possible ways to take a stand against injustice in the name of Jesus?

Which of these ways is the best option for you and your group?

PRAYER

Pray by thanking God for the example and words of Habakkuk in the Scriptures. Affirm that you and your group members also have questions and confusion – things you don't understand about the injustice in the world. Ask for wisdom and peace as you engage the remainder of Habakkuk's book together in the weeks to come.

COMMENTARY

HABAKKUK 1:1-11

1:1 Oracle is a prophetic proclamation, literally a “lifting up [of voice].” “Burden” (KJV) is another meaning of massa’, though it does not fit the present context well.

1:2-4 Habakkuk lamented to God (how long?) about overt violence... injustice, and oppression during Jehoiakim’s reign. King Josiah (640-609 b.c.) promoted God’s law (2Ki 23:24), but his son and successor Jehoiakim (609-598 b.c.) based his reign on injustice (Jer 22:13) so that God’s law (Hb torah) ceased to be honored.

1:5-6 God responded that He would punish the sins of Judah through an invasion by the Chaldeans (the Babylonians).

1:7 The so-called justice of these invaders was human (from themselves) rather than divine.

1:8 Comparisons with predatory animals (leopards... wolves, and an eagle) illustrate the speed, brutality, and efficiency of the Babylonian military machine.

1:9 Violence (Hb chamas) is the punishment Judah will receive for its own violence (vv. 2-3).

1:10-11 The mighty Babylonian army scoffed at all opposition. The phrase “their strength is their god” suggests they worshiped their own military power (v. 16), though the verse possibly means that they attributed their strength to their national god Marduk.