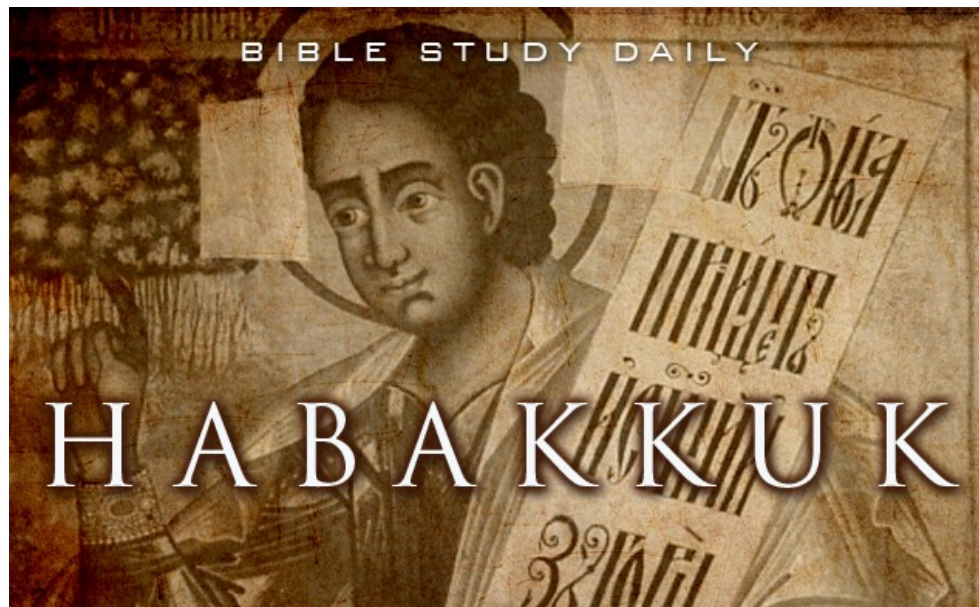




BIBLE STUDY DAILY



This document contains the introduction to the book of Habakkuk as well as my study notes for the book.

Name

The book of Habakkuk is named for its author, Habakkuk the prophet. We cannot be sure of the meaning of Habakkuk's name. A majority of scholars argue for a Hebrew meaning based on the word $h\bar{a}b\bar{a}q$ which means "to embrace" or "to wrestle."

Some scholars suggest the name is Akkadian from the word $h\bar{a}mba\bar{q}u$ which is the name of a garden plant. This interpretation seems unlikely to me.

When we read the book it seems as though Habakkuk is wrestling with God, attempting to understand God's purpose, and finally comes to the conclusion that he must accept God and live by faith whether he understand everything about God's purpose or not.

Author

Habakkuk pronounced an oracle from the Lord (v. 1).

Genre

Prophecy (seventh of twelve books commonly referred to as the "Minor Prophets").

Literary Form

Poetic prophecy except for a prose introduction in verse 1.

Time Frame

Habakkuk does not precisely date the book. The reference to Babylonians in [Habakkuk 1:6](#) would indicate a seventh century B.C. time period. There are three time periods put forth by the majority of scholars: 1) the reign of Manasseh (697-642 B.C.), 2) the reign of Josiah (640-609 B.C., or 3) the reign of Jehoiakim (609-598 B.C.).


I think the most likely date is between 606-604 B.C. which corresponds with the Babylonians victory at Carchemish (605 B.C.). This aligns well with the description Habakkuk provides in [Habakkuk 1:7-11](#).

Emphasis

The emphasis of the book of Habakkuk is on God's greatness and His sovereignty, His holiness and justice, and the need to trust in God and live a righteous life.

Outline

- 1) Habakkuk complains about injustice in Judah (1:1-1:4)
- 2) God's first response to Habakkuk (1:5-1:11)

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- 3) Habakkuk questions God's fairness (1:12-2:1)
 - 4) God's second response to Habakkuk (2:2-2:20)
 - 5) Habakkuk's psalm to God (3:1-3:19)

What I Noticed Today (Habakkuk 1)

Habakkuk 1

In verse 1 Habakkuk receives an oracle (a burden).

In verses 2-4 Habakkuk asks the Lord three questions:

- 1) How long will I have to cry out for help before you (Lord) answers? (v. 2a)
- 2) How long will I have to point out violence and you (Lord) do not save? (v2b)
- 3) Why Lord aren't you doing something about these wrongs? (v. 3)

Habakkuk says because of these issues the law is paralyzed, justice is not served, and the wicked are taking over the righteous.

In verses 5-11 the Lord responds saying He will take action and when He does people will be amazed. God's plan is to use the Babylonians (aka Chaldeans) to bring justice to the people of Judah. They will come swiftly and take many captives.

Note: When God responds, He responds using the plural form of "you" indicating that He is speaking to Habakkuk and the people.

In verses 12-17 Habakkuk lodges a second complaint to God asking three more questions:

- 1) Are you (Lord) not the everlasting God? (v. 12)
- 2) Why do you allow traitors to swallow up the righteous? (v. 13)
- 3) Will you allow the merciless (Babylon) to continue killing nations forever? (v 17)

Habakkuk 2

In verse 1 Habakkuk announces he will take his position on the watchtower and listen for God's answer to his complaints (the six questions in vv. 1:2-4, and 1:12-17).

In verses 2-5 the Lord responds telling Habakkuk to write down His answers so that they could be taken by messengers to the people. The Babylonians are puffed up says the Lord, they are not righteous, but the righteous will live by faith (see Romans 1:17). The Babylonians used wine to betray others, they were greedy, and never had enough of war and death. They plundered and took captives and did it all for their own benefit.

In verses 6-20 Habakkuk writes a song of five woes, each having three

stanzas, against the Babylonians (Chaldeans).

Woe #1 in verses 6-8. Because the Babylonians heap up what is not theirs by plundering others, they will be plundered.

Woe #2 in verses 9-11. The Babylonians had built themselves up by cutting off other nations.

Woe #3 in verses 12-14. The Babylonians built their nation by bloodshed (implies murder) and lies.

Woe #4 in verses 14-17. The Babylonians made their neighbors drunk so they could take advantage of them. Because of this, the Lord's judgment will come.

Woe #5 in verses 18-20. This final stanza does not begin with "woe" but asks what benefit comes from the making of idols. The woe is then announced on the person who worships the idol thinking the idol is a live god.

Habakkuk 3

Habakkuk 3 is a prayer of praise (a doxology) to the Lord.

In verse 1 the prayer of Habakkuk according to Shigionoth.

Note: "Shigionoth" is not a person. It is an unusual Hebrew word and in this case, the meaning probably has musical or liturgical significance.

In verses 2-3 Habakkuk has heard God's report and it has made him afraid. God has come from Teman and the Holy One from Mt. Paran (the Lord appeared to Moses at Mt. Paran, Deuteronomy 33:2).

In verses 4-7 Habakkuk describes God appearance. God appeared as a light. A plague proceeded him and pestilence followed him. God measured the earth and shook the nations. The reference to Cush and Midian is to the nations that were on either side of the Red Sea when the Lord led the people out of Egypt.

In verses 8-15 Habakkuk describes God's actions on earth.

In verse 16 Habakkuk trembles at hearing the actions of the Lord. He will wait quietly for the day of trouble when his nation is invaded.

In verses 17-19 even if fruit trees and olives trees fail along with all the other crops and all the animals are gone, Habakkuk will rejoice in the Lord. In the midst of these tribulations, he will rely on the Lord for his strength.