

Habakkuk 1 “What’s God doing when life gets too heavy?”

1 This is the message that the prophet Habakkuk received in a vision. **2** How long, O Lord, must I call for help? But you do not listen! “Violence is everywhere!” I cry, but you do not come to save. **3** Must I forever see these evil deeds? Why must I watch all this misery? Wherever I look, I see destruction and violence. I am surrounded by people who love to argue and fight. **4** The law has become paralyzed, and there is no justice in the courts. The wicked far outnumber the righteous, so that justice has become perverted. **5** The Lord replied, “Look around at the nations; look and be amazed! For I am doing something in your own day, something you wouldn’t believe even if someone told you about it. **6** I am raising up the Babylonians, a cruel and violent people. They will march across the world and conquer other lands. **7** They are notorious for their cruelty and do whatever they like. **8** Their horses are swifter than cheetahs and fiercer than wolves at dusk. Their charioteers charge from far away. Like eagles, they swoop down to devour their prey. **9** “On they come, all bent on violence. Their hordes advance like a desert wind, sweeping captives ahead of them like sand. **10** They scoff at kings and princes and scorn all their fortresses. They simply pile ramps of earth against their walls and capture them! **11** They sweep past like the wind and are gone. But they are deeply guilty, for their own strength is their god.” **12** O Lord my God, my Holy One, you who are eternal—surely you do not plan to wipe us out? O Lord, our Rock, you have sent these Babylonians to correct us, to punish us for our many sins. **13** But you are pure and cannot stand the sight of evil. Will you wink at their treachery? Should you be silent while the wicked swallow up people more righteous than they? **14** Are we only fish to be caught and killed? Are we only sea creatures that have no leader? **15** Must we be strung up on their hooks and caught in their nets while they rejoice and celebrate? **16** Then they will worship their nets and burn incense in front of them. “These nets are the gods who have made us rich!” they will claim. **17** Will you let them get away with this forever? Will they succeed forever in their heartless conquests?

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/habakkuk/>

Chapter 1 God can use bad times to bring about His good plans.

Exegetically This is what is going on in the Scripture then.

Habakkuk Questions “Why do you make me look (ra’ah)?

Why do you tolerate (nabat) wrong? 1:3

God Answers “Look at (ra’ah) the nations and watch (nabat) 1:5

The awful mystery of God’s plan

“I am raising up the Babylonians, that ruthless and impetuous people, who sweep across the whole earth to seize dwelling places not their own.”

Habakkuk problem of perspective

“O LORD, are you not from everlasting?”

Habakkuk guided and grounded in his faith allows God to overcome his dismay.

"My God, my Holy One...O LORD...O Rock, you have ordained them to punish."

Homiletically This is what the Scripture means for us now.

We often have a limited perspective in difficult times.

²How long, O Lord, must I call for help? But you do not listen! "Violence is everywhere!" I cry, but you do not come to save. ³Must I forever see these evil deeds? Why must I watch all this misery? Wherever I look, I see destruction and violence.

Reality = good times and bad times are the normal way of life in a broken world God is repairing in Christ.

We can respond faithfully in all our situations.

¹²O Lord my God, my Holy One, you who are eternal—surely you do not plan to wipe us out? O Lord, our Rock, you have sent these Babylonians to correct us, to punish us for our many sins.

Habakkuk demonstrates for us a bold and honest faith that is deeply relational with God

"How long?" Psalms 6, 13, 79, 89

"Why do you...?" Psalms 10, 44, 74

Two wrong responses toward God in bad times:

Cynicism =

Legalism =

Consumerism =

Right response: Honest dialogue with God is a necessary part of our faith formation = loving God.

God has total perspective and a redemptive plan at work for ultimate good.

⁵The Lord replied, "Look around at the nations; look and be amazed! For I am doing something in your own day, something you wouldn't believe even if someone told you about it. ⁶I am raising up the Babylonians, a cruel and violent people.

Our question to God is "How long are you going to keep tolerating bad in this world?"
God's answer is "For a while, until it completes my purposes for Christ's redemptive good."