

**ABATT**  
**Habakkuk**

Christian Life Assembly  
 Jim Hoffman

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**Faithful On-line Members**

**Phyllis & Manny Melachrios**



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**The Minor Prophets**

<b>Prophet</b>	<b>Date of Writing</b>	<b>Prophesied to:</b>
Obadiah	845-750	Israel/Edom
Joel	835-796	Judah
Jonah	793-753	Niniveh
Hosea	753-715	Israel
Amos	760-755	Israel/Judah
Micah	770-710	Israel/Judah
Nahum	663-612	Niniveh
Habbakuk	610-605	Judah/Nations
Zepheniah	635-625	Judah/Assyria/Nations
Haggai	520	Judah
Zechariah	520-470	Judah
Malachi	460-410	Judah

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### The Minor Prophets

- Habakkuk will be the last of the minor prophets to speak to Judah before they go into exile.
- He offers no hope his people will be shielded from the Babylonians, just certain doom for their nation.
- What Habakkuk will say just before their enemy comes is consistent with God's messages to his people for the previous 100 years.

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### The Minor Prophets

• Isaiah 6:8 And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me." 9 And he said, "Go, and say to this people: **"Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive.' 10 Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed."**

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### New Testament Parallel

2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 2:10 "and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. 11 Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, 12 in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

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The Minor Prophets

When a people resists God's calls, God will not behave as an impotent grandparent who has tried and tried without success. God always succeeds and will then move on from warning to acting. God will have a people who will deliver his word, his Son, and his redemption plan – it will happen.

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The Minor Prophets

- The Book of Habakkuk was likely written between 610 and 605 B.C. and authored by Habakkuk.
- The prophet Habakkuk decries the sins of Judah but grapples with the fact that God's chosen people will suffer at the hands of an enemy even more wicked than they.
- The Babylonians, who will be used by God against his people are also known as the "Chaldeans".

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The Minor Prophets

God can, and does, use evil people and nations to accomplish his purposes without endorsing everything they do.

- Egypt
- Assyria
- Babylon
- Rome

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### The Minor Prophets

- Habakkuk lived during the final decades of Judah, the southern kingdom, and he saw the coming threat of Babylon.
- Habakkuk writes a series of poems directed to God, wherein he lodges complaints and then demands God do something about them!
- **He accuses his people of nothing and makes no claim to be speaking for God – but he sure is speaking to God.**

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### The Minor Prophets

- “The oracle that Habakkuk the prophet saw.”
- “Oracle” is translated in several ways in the Bible – in this instance it should be considered as a heavy weight, or a burden.
- **His prophecy is a lament – he is in mourning for his nation and for what he sees coming as the Babylonians consume land all around them.**

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### The Minor Prophets

Bear in mind God is more interested in Judah’s spiritual condition than he is in their comfort. 😊

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### The Minor Prophets

- Habakkuk knows the Babylonians are at the gates (within a few years) and about to come in and conquer Judah.
- He was struggling with, **“who are these godless Babylonians to be the instruments of God?”**.
- Habakkuk’s concern is petty – he does not protest against the coming judgment but instead decries God’s selection of who will deliver it.

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### Complaint #1

- Hab 1:2 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? NLT
- Habakkuk accuses God of not listening.
- **People who lament, tend not to express what God is actually doing because they are often too caught up in their own pain to really notice.**

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### The Minor Prophets

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.

The language above implies God is either unjust or immoral – it is a direct accusation of wrongdoing. 😞

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### The Minor Prophets

- The answer God actually gives is literally, **“you wouldn’t believe me if I told you”**.
- Hab 1:5 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.” NLT
- **What wouldn’t he believe? That God would use the Babylonians to “move” Judah to a better place.**

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### The Minor Prophets

**Pain causes us to move in ways we otherwise would not move and go to places we otherwise would not go.**

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### God’s Answer

- The Chaldeans were the Isis warriors of their day.
- **To be clear the Babylonians were coming to conquer Judah, but ultimately, they were being sent by God to help them.** (Wait? What?)
- Habakkuk complained that God was not listening to his cries for help – the answer God gives is, **“the most helpful thing I can do for you and your people is bring swift, devastating, judgment.”**

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God's Answer

• Habakkuk 1:6 For behold, I am raising up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, who march through the breadth of the earth, to seize dwellings not their own. 7 They are dreaded and fearsome; their justice and dignity go forth from themselves. ESV

• In effect, God is saying, **“I am listening and my people have sunken so low the only way out is to bring so much pain they will have to repent”.**

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God's Answer

Interesting fact: Daniel is no doubt born around the time Habakkuk is prophesying. So do not pity those who are born in our day as the next Daniel could be born into our mess.

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God's Answer

• Habakkuk continues to struggle with this idea that God would use the “really” ungodly to punish the “less” ungodly.

• **God is not looking for a slightly better version of his wayward people.**

• **He is looking for a people who will seek him and his holiness wholeheartedly.**

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The Minor Prophets

A slightly higher caliber of sinner is never God's target.



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The Minor Prophets

- Who God used to chasten his people is probably the least important point to consider in the equation – what is far more important than “who” is “why”.
- **It will do Habakkuk no good to cry “foul” that the people God would use were worse than Judah.**
- **What will do Judah good is to quietly repent of their sins and seek refuge and mercy in God. They are still in a far better position than the Babylonians.**

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**Complaint #2**

- Habakkuk 1:12 Are you not from everlasting, O Lord my God, my Holy One? We shall not die. O Lord, you have ordained **them** as a judgment, and you, O Rock, have established **them** for reproof. ESV
- Lord, you are better than that aren't you? – You are the eternal God.
- **You should not unleash a vicious, ungodly nation like Babylon on your people – that must be wrong!**

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The Minor Prophets

“God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.”

Hebrews 12

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The Minor Prophets

2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 22:36 You have given me the shield of your salvation, and your ***gentleness*** made me great.

Chasten, force, deal harshly with, help, exercise, humble, and afflict.

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The Minor Prophets

- Hab 2:1 I will take my stand at my watchpost and station myself on the tower, and look out to see what he will say to me, and what I will answer concerning my complaint.
- Like a child, Habakkuk says, “I am going to watch, and I won’t stand down until he tells me what he is going to do.”
- For some reason we tend to think God needs to behave as we want him to and explain himself when he doesn’t.

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### The Minor Prophets

When people, even Christians, complain about the angry God of the Old Testament they reveal their ignorance of what he was doing. Without regard for the cost, even to himself, he promised redemption and he will deliver redemption for his glory and our good.

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### God's Answer

- God responds to his 2<sup>nd</sup> complaint by appointing Habakkuk as stenographer.
- Habakkuk 2:2 And the Lord answered me: **“Write the vision; make it plain on tablets**, so he may run who reads it. 3 For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay.”  
ESV
- **The vision is about the future – not only will God use Babylon, but when he is done using them, he will judge them.**

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### God's Answer

- **“so he may run who reads it”** – make the letters so big they can be read if you are running by.
- **“If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay.”**
- **What Habakkuk thought was inaction is actually action, and what he saw as a delay is actually God's perfect timing – my ways are not your ways. 😊**

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The Minor Prophets

As we look around us in our day it becomes easy to assume God is not responding to our prayers – but sometimes what seems like inaction is actually the very action we need.

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The Minor Prophets

- Habakkuk 2:4 “The just shall live by his faith”. KJV
- **In effect God is saying to Habakkuk, “don’t order your life by what you see, order your life by what I say.”**
- The message to Habakkuk (and us) is that the proof of our faith can be seen in how much we trust him to give us his best for us.

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The Minor Prophets

Look at life through the lens of God’s objectives; not ours.  
(what is God working on?)

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### The Minor Prophets

- So if you find yourself being chastened by God, don't waste your time on any unfairness you think exists – spend your time returning to God!
- This is good advice even if you are like Habakkuk who assumed his days were few.
- “Occupy ‘til I come”, “Redeem the time because the days are evil”, and “do not nullify the grace of God” in your last years.

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### The Minor Prophets

- Five “woes” are pronounced on Babylon – a.k.a., “the case against Babylon”.
- Woe #1 – to the Babylonians for they have stolen much wealth through brute force. (Hab 2:6-8)
- Woe #2 – to the Babylonians for they have flaunted their ability to be out of harms way for retaliation. (Hab 2:9)

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### The Minor Prophets

- Woe #3 – to the Babylonians for they have built cities on the backs of slave laborers. (Hab 2:12)
- Woe #4 – to the Babylonians for they got others drunk and then humiliated them with nakedness. (Hab 2:15)
- Woe #5 – to the Babylonians for they have openly practiced idolatry. (Hab 2:19)

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The Minor Prophets

Given the same conditions (power and wealth), most nations eventually become Babylon.

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The Minor Prophets

- Judah was far from what God wanted for them.
- **That is just the way it works – God will not allow his people to live in sin without consequences. No “ifs”, “ands”, or “buts”.**
- God will work to correct us when we sin before we do irreparable harm to ourselves – that is what a loving Father does!

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The Minor Prophets

The next three slides are from chapter 3.

They describe what happens when God shows up to confront evil - everyone pays attention.

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### The Minor Prophets

• Hab 3:2 O Lord, I have heard the report of you, and your work, O Lord, do I fear. In the midst of the years revive it; in the midst of the years make it known; in wrath remember mercy. 3 God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah His splendor covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. 4 His brightness was like the light; rays flashed from his hand; and there he veiled his power. 5 Before him went pestilence, and plague followed at his heels. 6 He stood and measured the earth; he looked and shook the nations; then the eternal mountains were scattered; the everlasting hills sank low. His were the everlasting ways. 7 I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction; the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble. 8 Was your wrath against the rivers, O Lord? Was your anger against the rivers, or your indignation against the sea, when you rode on your horses, on your chariot of salvation?

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### The Minor Prophets

• 9 You stripped the sheath from your bow, calling for many arrows. Selah You split the earth with rivers. 10 The mountains saw you and writhed; the raging waters swept on; the deep gave forth its voice; it lifted its hands on high. 11 The sun and moon stood still in their place at the light of your arrows as they sped, at the flash of your glittering spear. 12 You marched through the earth in fury; you threshed the nations in anger. 13 You went out for the salvation of your people, for the salvation of your anointed. You crushed the head of the house of the wicked, laying him bare from thigh to neck. Selah 14 You pierced with his own arrows the heads of his warriors, who came like a whirlwind to scatter me, rejoicing as if to devour the poor in secret.

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### The Minor Prophets

• 15 You trampled the sea with your horses, the surging of mighty waters. 16 I hear, and my body trembles; my lips quiver at the sound; rottenness enters into my bones; my legs tremble beneath me. Yet I will quietly wait for the day of trouble to come upon people who invade us. 17 Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, 18 yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation. 19 God, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like the deer's; he makes me tread on my high places.

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