

Troubled Times

Sunday Morning, February 5, 2012

Thesis:

God Blesses the Righteous in Times of National and/or Global Judgment

Introduction:

King Josiah - Godly King That Promoted the Law of God

King Johoiakim - Evil King

God Brought Judgment on Israel and Surrounding Nations Through Babylon of the Chaldeans

I. God Still Judges Nations/The World Today

Habakkuk Speaks to God on Behalf of the People

(Habakkuk Chapter 1)

1 The oracle that Habakkuk the prophet saw.
2 How long, LORD, must I call for help and You do not listen or cry out to You about violence and You do not save?
3 Why do You force me to look at injustice? Why do You tolerate wrongdoing? Oppression and violence are right in front of me. Strife is ongoing, and conflict escalates.
4 This is why the law is ineffective and justice never emerges. For the wicked restrict the righteous; therefore, justice comes out perverted.

Habakkuk's Complaint to God
(vss 1-4)

5 Look at the nations and observe— be utterly astounded! For something is taking place in your days that you will not believe when you hear about it.
6 Look! I am raising up the Chaldeans, that bitter, impetuous nation that marches across the earth's open spaces to seize territories not its own.

Chaldean's (Middle East Today)
Powerful People/Terrorists

7 They are fierce and terrifying; their views of justice and sovereignty stem from themselves.

8 Their horses are swifter than leopards and more fierce than wolves of the night. Their horsemen charge ahead; their horsemen come from distant lands. They fly like an eagle, swooping to devour.

9 All of them come to do violence; their faces are set in determination. They gather prisoners like sand.

10 They mock kings, and rulers are a joke to them.

They laugh at every fortress and build siege ramps to capture it.

Other Powers Are "A Joke" To Them

11 Then they sweep by like the wind and pass through. They are guilty; their strength is their god.

Habakkuk's Second Prayer

12 Are You not from eternity, Yahweh my God? My Holy One, You will not die. LORD, You appointed them to execute judgment; my Rock, You destined them to punish us.

God is Our "Rock"

13 Your eyes are too pure to look on evil, and You cannot tolerate wrongdoing. So why do You tolerate those who are treacherous? Why are You silent while one who is wicked swallows up one who is more righteous than himself?

Often Times It Is Difficult to Understand What God is Doing

14 You have made mankind like the fish of the sea, like marine creatures that have no ruler.

15 The Chaldeans pull them all up with a hook, catch them in their dragnet, and gather them in their fishing net; that is why they are glad and rejoice.

16 That is why they sacrifice to their dragnet and burn incense to their fishing net, for by these things their portion is rich and their food plentiful.

17 Will they therefore empty their net and continually slaughter nations without mercy?

The More Wicked Nations Are Used to Punish Nations

II. Habakkuk Waits For God's Response

(Habakkuk Chapter 2)

1 I will stand at my guard post and station myself on the lookout tower. I will watch to see what He will say to me and what I should reply about my complaint.

Wait on the Lord!

What Will God Say to My Complaint?

2 The LORD answered me: Write down this vision; clearly inscribe it on tablets so one may easily read it.

3 For the vision is yet for the appointed time; it testifies about the end and will not lie. Though it delays, wait for it, since it will certainly come and not be late.

National Punishment Will Come

The Day of God's Wrath - The Tribulation Period Will come

4 Look, his ego is inflated; he is without integrity. But the righteous one will live by his faith.

The Righteous Will Live By Faith

(Romans 1:17)

For in it God's righteousness is revealed from faith to faith, just as it is written: The righteous will live by faith.

(Galatians 3:11)

Now it is clear that no one is justified before God by the law, because the righteous will live by faith.

(Hebrews 10:38)

But My righteous one will live by faith; and if he draws back, I have no pleasure in him.

(Habakkuk Chapter 2 - cont.)

5 Moreover, wine betrays; an arrogant man is never at rest. He enlarges his appetite like Sheol, & like Death he is never satisfied. He gathers all the nations to himself; he collects all the peoples for himself.

The Five Woes

6 Won't all of these take up a taunt against him, with mockery and riddles about him? They will say: Woe to him who amasses what is not his— how much longer?— and loads himself with goods taken in pledge.

Woe or Warning Number 1:

Woe to him who amasses what is not his

Judgment on Woe 1:

7 Won't your creditors suddenly arise, and those who disturb you wake up? Then you will become spoil for them.

8 Since you have plundered many nations, all the peoples who remain will plunder you— because of human bloodshed and violence against lands, cities, and all who live in them.

9 Woe to him who dishonestly makes wealth for his house to place his nest on high, to escape from the reach of disaster!

Woe or Warning Number 2:

Woe to him who dishonestly makes wealth

Judgment on Woe Number 2:

10 You have planned shame for your house by wiping out many peoples and sinning against your own self.

11 For the stones will cry out from the wall, and the rafters will answer them from the woodwork.

Woe or Warning Number 3:

12 Woe to him who builds a city with bloodshed and founds a town with injustice!

Judgment on Woe Number 3:

13 Is it not from the LORD of Hosts that the peoples labor only to fuel the fire and countries exhaust themselves for nothing?

14 For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD's glory, as the waters cover the sea.

Woe or Warning Number 4:

15 Woe to him who gives his neighbors drink, pouring out your wrath and even making them drunk, in order to look at their nakedness!

Judgment on Woe Number 4:

16 You will be filled with disgrace instead of glory.

You also—drink, and expose your uncircumcision! The cup in the LORD's right hand will come around to you, and utter disgrace will cover your glory.

17 For your violence against Lebanon will overwhelm you; the destruction of animals will terrify you because of your human bloodshed and violence against lands, cities, and all who live in them.

Woe or Warning Number 5:

18 What use is a carved idol after its craftsman carves it? It is only a cast image, a teacher of lies. For the one who crafts its shape trusts in it and makes idols that cannot speak.

19 Woe to him who says to wood: Wake up! or to mute stone: Come alive! Can it teach? Look! It may be plated with gold and silver, yet there is no breath in it at all.

Judgment on Woe Number 5:

20 But the LORD is in His holy temple; let everyone on earth be silent in His presence.

God Will Have the Final Word!

III. Habakkuk's Third Prayer (A Song Submitted by Habakkuk)

(Habakkuk Chapter 3)

1 A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet. According to Shigionoth.

2 LORD, I have heard the report about You; LORD, I stand in awe of Your deeds. Revive Your work in these years; make it known in these years. In Your wrath remember mercy!

3 God comes from Teman, the Holy One from Mount Paran.

Selah His splendor covers the heavens, and the earth is full of His praise.

4 His brilliance is like light; rays are flashing from His hand. This is where His power is hidden.

5 Plague goes before Him, and pestilence follows in His steps.

6 He stands and shakes the earth; He looks and startles the nations. The age-old mountains break apart; the ancient hills sink down. His pathways are ancient.

7 I see the tents of Cushan in distress; the tent curtains of the land of Midian tremble.

8 Are You angry at the rivers, LORD? Is Your wrath against the rivers? Or is Your rage against the sea when You ride on Your horses, Your victorious chariot?

9 You took the sheath from Your bow; the arrows are ready to be used with an oath. Selah

You split the earth with rivers.

10 The mountains see You and shudder; a downpour of water sweeps by. The deep roars with its voice & lifts its waves high.

11 Sun & moon stand still in their lofty residence, at the flash of Your flying arrows, at the brightness of Your shining spear.

12 You march across the earth with indignation; You trample down the nations in wrath.

13 You come out to save Your people, to save Your anointed. You crush the leader of the house of the wicked and strip him from foot to neck.

Selah

God Will Crush His Enemies!

14 You pierce his head with his own spears; his warriors storm out to scatter us, gloating as if ready to secretly devour the weak.

15 You tread the sea with Your horses, stirring up the great waters.

Habakkuk's Confidence in God Expressed

16 I heard, and I trembled within; my lips quivered at the sound. Rottenness entered my bones; I trembled where I stood. Now I must quietly wait for the day of distress to come against the people invading us.

Stand in Fear of God!

17 Though the fig tree does not bud and there is no fruit on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, 18 yet I will triumph in Yahweh; I will rejoice in the God of my salvation!

Although In Difficult Times Habakkuk Trusted God

Conclusion:

19 Yahweh my Lord is my strength; He makes my feet like those of a deer and enables me to walk on mountain heights!

The Righteous Will Be Given Grace to Stand!
(and Climb Up to Mountain Heights!)