

# Old Testament Survey

## Habakkuk

### ***The Meaning of Habakkuk***

The name of Habakkuk is of unknown origin. The theme of this book is the problem of faith. How can God use a godless nation to punish Judah?

### ***General Outline of Habakkuk***

- I. Problems of Faith - Habakkuk 1:1-2:20
  - A. How can a holy God permit sin to go unchecked? - Habakkuk 1:1-12
    1. Oppression is rampant in Judah - Habakkuk 1:2-5
    2. The Chaldeans will be God's executor of punishment - Habakkuk 1:6-12
  - B. How can God permit a wicked nation to triumph over his covenant people - Habakkuk 1:13-2:20
    1. The ruthlessness and cruelty of the Babylonians - Habakkuk 1:13-17
    2. The believer to wait humbly, trusting for God's answer - Habakkuk 2:1-4
    3. God will in turn judge the Chaldeans for their five sins - Habakkuk 2:5-19
    4. God's continued sovereignty over His earth - Habakkuk 2:20
- II. Doubts All Settled: The Prayer of Faith and Unshakable Trust - Habakkuk 3:1-19
  - A. Prayer for revival - Habakkuk 3:1-2
  - B. Past judgments of the Lord are a sure token for the future - Habakkuk 3:3-16
  - C. The believer's joy in God alone - Habakkuk 3:17-19

### ***Authorship and Time of Composition***

1. Habakkuk appears to have ministered during the reign of Jehoiakim. The Chaldeans are mentioned as being well-known and formidable.
2. The best date would seem to be after the fall of Nineveh in 612 B.C. and maybe even after the Battle of Carchemish in 605 B.C.
3. Habakkuk's message of the subjugation of Judah by the Chaldeans appears to be soon. This would place the writing sometime around 607 or 608 B.C.
4. The exploitation of the poor as mentioned in Habakkuk 1:2-4 are seen by some critics as referring to Egyptians (which would date it around 608 B.C.), or by the Assyrians (which would place it prior to 612 B.C.). The best information, however, would identify the oppressors of Habakkuk 1:2-4 as wealthy Judeans and not outsiders.
5. Some liberal scholars split the book into multiple sources. A pre-exilic author may have written Habakkuk 1-2, but a later author most definitely wrote Habakkuk 3.

*Again, all of this is based on the faulty reasoning, evolutionary approach, and anti-supernatural bias of the modern critic.*

6. Some point to the fact that the Habakkuk scroll in the Qumran cave omitted chapter three.

*However, there is space on the scroll for a third chapter. Furthermore, the nature of the third chapter is that of a song, and may have been omitted for those reasons. In any case, the LXX does include all three chapters.*

***The Message of Habakkuk***

1. The Jewish nobles, allied with corrupt leaders and law courts, are robbing and oppressing the poor. Because of this they will be judged by the Babylonians.

*Interestingly enough, during Nebuchadnezzar's first and second deportations mostly it was the wealthy that were carried into captivity, leaving the poor in the land.*

2. Habakkuk, however, has a problem with God using the godless Chaldeans to punish Judah. The Judeans, as bad as they were, were still more righteous than the Chaldeans.

*This is an apparent problem. However, God's answer is that although the Chaldeans will be used to bring judgment on Judea, in turn they will be judged for their sins. In the end, God's righteous character and justice will be evident to all.*