



# THE BOOK OF HABAKKUK



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# INTRODUCTION

Like other Old Testament prophets, what we know about Habakkuk is very limited, in fact we know almost nothing. We do know that his name means, 'to embrace' or 'to hold on' and he was probably a Levite who was a member of the Levitical choir, **Habakkuk 3:19**.

His ministry probably spanned the reigns of Josiah, 640-609 B.C., Jehoahaz, 609 B.C., and Jehoiakim, 609-598 B.C., with the prophecy set in Jehoiakim's reign around 605 B.C.

There is a saying that says, 'a good man is hard to keep down', but a better saying would be, 'hopeful people are hard to keep down.' Habakkuk was one of those people, he was a faithful man who loved God and his people.

He questioned God and complained to God, not out of anger, but out of deep compassion for his people and what was going on around him. He teaches us that it's not wrong to question God, in fact, God wants us to ask questions. His work coincided with Jeremiah and Zephaniah.

## THE DATE

The book was probably written around 605 B.C. The reason for this date is because around 610 B.C. this is the time of the Babylonians or Chaldeans.

We know that in 614 B.C. Nabopolassar married his son Nebuchadnezzar to Ametius the Median Princess, and so, joined the Medians. In 612 B.C. Nineveh was destroyed and in 605 B.C. the Babylonian Kingdom under Nebuchadnezzar grew to its fullest extent and power. It was at his death the Babylonian Kingdom fell. And so, Habakkuk was probably written when Babylon would have been at her prime.

## BACKGROUND

God is going to use the Chaldeans to bring about judgment on Judah. The Chaldeans refer to the Babylonian empire which overthrew the Assyrian empire in 612 B.C. and defeated Pharaoh Necho of Egypt at Carchemish in 605 BC. Pharaoh Necho also defeated and killed King Josiah of Judah at the battle of Megiddo, **2 Kings 23:29 / 2 Chronicles 35:20**. After these victories, Judah was at the mercy of the Chaldeans.

Josiah had repented of the idol worship of Judah, but the reformation of Josiah had proved ineffective to stop the evil and disobedience of the nation of Judah.

Now God must punish them, and so, He's stirring up and going to the Chaldeans to punish His people, just like He used the Assyrians to punish the Northern Kingdom, 722/21 B.C.

God had allowed the Assyrians to conquer the Northern Kingdom of Israel, this was during Habakkuk's ministry, and now He's brought the threat of the Babylonians to the Southern Kingdom.

## THE BOOK

The theme of the book is simply this, ‘the supremacy of God’s judgement on the wicked’.

The book itself is unique in that it takes the form of a dialogue between Habakkuk and God. It concerns the Southern kingdom of Judah. We can’t say if it was specifically spoken to the people, but it was certainly recorded for the people.

## OUTLINE

Habakkuk’s First Complaint. **Habakkuk 1:1-4** God Answers Habakkuk. **Habakkuk 1:5-11** Habakkuk’s Second Complaint. **Habakkuk 1:12-2:1** God Answers Habakkuk. **Habakkuk 2:2-2:20** Prayer in song by Habakkuk. **Habakkuk**

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## CHAPTER 1

### HABAKKUK’S FIRST COMPLAINT

‘The prophecy that Habakkuk the prophet received. How long, LORD, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, ‘Violence!’ but you do not save? Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrongdoing? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds. Therefore, the law is paralyzed, and justice never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted.’ Habakkuk 1:1-4

The KJV uses the word ‘burden’ instead of the word ‘prophecy’ and notice that this burden was given to Habakkuk himself, not to God’s people. He was given the burden as a way of offering complaints to God concerning all the suffering His people were going through because of their own unbelief.

In the context of this suffering, what we need to remember is that God’s people are suffering simply because they rejected God, rejected His laws and oppressed the poor among themselves. God had told them and warned them if they turned away from Him, then He would turn them over to the nations.

Habakkuk’s first question to God is simply this, why are the wicked people not punished?

He’s been praying a long time and he thinks God doesn’t hear him. To him, it looks as though God is inactive. He seems to be looking at things from a human perspective and he seems to expect a human reaction from God.

Habakkuk needed to understand that God was working on His timetable, not man’s, and God’s ways are different from man’s ways, **Isaiah 55:8-9**. God was going to allow this to go on until He purified His people through captivity so that the promises which were made to Abraham could be fulfilled, **Genesis 12:1-3**.

Habakkuk speaks up on behalf of the few righteous people who haven’t given up on God or turned away from Him. He’s speaking mainly to his own people, he recognises that they’re surrounded by injustice, oppression, wickedness and bribery.

# HABAKKUK OUTLINES THE SINS OF THE NATION:

1. Destruction, there's no respect for property.
2. Violence against other people.
3. Strife, arguing and conflict.

Because of these sins, the law has lost its authority and its application and people don't want to live up to the law anymore, there's no longer any justice. The righteous are kept down, being oppressed and people don't want any do-gooders around to change anything.

## GOD'S ANSWER

'Look at the nations and watch—and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told. I am raising up the Babylonians, that ruthless and impetuous people, who sweep across the whole earth to seize dwellings not their own. They are a feared and dreaded people; they are a law to themselves and promote their own honour. Their horses are swifter than leopards, fiercer than wolves at dusk. Their cavalry gallops headlong; their horsemen come from afar. They fly like an eagle swooping to devour; they all come intent on violence. Their hordes advance like a desert wind and gather prisoners like sand. They mock kings and scoff at rulers. They laugh at all fortified cities; by building earthen ramps they capture them. Then they sweep past like the wind and go on—guilty people, whose own strength is their god.' Habakkuk 1:5-11

God's answer to Habakkuk's question is simply this, 'I'm working on it, you may not see it, but trust Me, I'm working'. **Revelation 6:10-11**.

God is directly involved in the Babylonians growing in strength to dominate the world, although Nebuchadnezzar thought he did it all by himself, **Daniel 4:30**. The world and everything in it are under God's control.

God made the Babylonians ruthless and impetuous, they were colonists and uncontrollable. They had a well-trained army who were bent on evil. They were valiant warriors with no respect for other nations. They were a guilty people who had great confidence in their own ability. Judgement would come from Babylon.

And just like many people today, 'self' was their god and millions of people worship themselves daily. Christians too, can at times, be so inwardly looking, that they are absolutely selfish, they think of no one but themselves, **Philippians 2:4**.

God is the One who is raising up the Babylonians. It was Nabopolassar's son, Nebuchadnezzar, who succeeded his father as king of Babylon, and it was during this time that Habakkuk made his complaints to God concerning the suffering of God's people.

The Babylonians were so full of pride that they became a law unto themselves, invading nation after nation as their gods directed them.

They were like 'leopards' waiting patiently to conquer the nations, they were like fierce 'wolves', as they ravaged anyone they conquered and they were like, the 'eagle', eager to sweep down to capture their prey. They were like the 'desert wind', they would come and take God's people into captivity and leave the land a dry derelict place.

They would build ramps against the cities they conquered, and no one could stop them. if they could capture and conquer the Assyrian capital city of Nineveh, then no nation was too big for them.

They trusted in their own strength but what they didn't know is that God was using them, God was going to use them to bring about judgment on Judah. They gave their own gods all the credit when in reality it was all God's doing, God was working in and through them to bring about His purpose.

When we look at Habakkuk's first complaint to God, and when we read God's answer to His complaint, it's easy to see that he doesn't understand why God would work through the evil Babylonians in order to oppress His own people.

## HABAKKUK'S SECOND COMPLAINT

'LORD, are you not from everlasting? My God, my Holy One, you will never die. You, LORD, have appointed them to execute judgment; you, my Rock, have ordained them to punish. Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrongdoing. Why then do you tolerate the treacherous? Why are you silent while the wicked swallow up those more righteous than themselves? You have made people like the fish in the sea, like the sea creatures that have no ruler. The wicked foe pulls all of them up with hooks, he catches them in his net, he gathers them up in his dragnet; and so, he rejoices and is glad. Therefore, he sacrifices to his net and burns incense to his dragnet, for by his net he lives in luxury and enjoys the choicest food. Is he to keep on emptying his net, destroying nations without mercy?' Habakkuk 1:12-17

Habakkuk's second question is simply this, how can you punish unrighteous Judah with more unrighteous Babylon?

It's almost as though he's saying to God, 'you cannot get your holy hands dirty'. Habakkuk saw the righteousness of God, but it blinded him to the truth that God could indeed get involved with the Babylonians and raise those people to the power that He did.

Habakkuk's faith in God is evident here, he knows God's people wouldn't be wiped out of existence, like so many other nations before. He knows His people would continue, regardless of the suffering that they would endure at the hands of the Babylonians. He knows that God had raised up the Babylonians in order to discipline His people.

God is so holy, He cannot look at anything which is unholy and so Habakkuk is asking God, 'how could you look to an unholy nation like Babylon to accomplish your work of disciplining your holy nation?'

Judah as a nation had seriously become unrighteous and it was because of their unrighteousness that God allowed the Babylonians to destroy Jerusalem and the temple.

It's a sad truth that even though some of Judah were righteous, they too would have to suffer the consequences along with the unrighteous.

Imagine the fisherman returning from a good day's catch, he unloads the fish and piles them up, this is God's people, caught, helpless and thrown into a pile.

The 'net' is the Babylonian gods to whom they give credit, but as I mentioned earlier they didn't realise that it was God who was working in and through them to accomplish His purpose.

Habakkuk saw Judah just below Babylon on his scale of badness, how can you look upon those people God! Look at what they do! He described people of the world as fish and Babylon as fishermen, they use hooks, then nets, then dragnets, which shows progression. Then comes the sacrifices and it's clear they worship materialism, always wanting more.

And so, Habakkuk's second question is about to be answered, how long will you use these people?

# APPLICATION

As Christians, we think we see God's heart so clearly but sometimes we're blinded because we don't see or don't want to see the coming future judgement for some, that is Hell, it exists, and people need to know that it's real.

There are times when we may not see God at work but whenever we're tempted to think God isn't working, we need to remember that God isn't indifferent, He isn't inactive.

We must remember that God doesn't create evil, but He does use evil to accomplish His will, we see this in the Babylonians, and we see this in the New Testament with Judas, Pilate and the Jewish leaders.

People do ask, why does God create so much suffering and pain in the world?

And the answer is, He doesn't, if people are honest enough with themselves, they will see that all the wars, oppression and suffering are usually done by the hands of men, but God allows it to happen, why?

Who knows! Maybe He wants the created to know that He is the Creator and they need to turn to Him in obedience, **Psalm 81:12 / Romans 1:24-25**.

## CHAPTER 2

'I will stand at my watch and station myself on the ramparts; I will look to see what he will say to me, and what answer I am to give to this complaint. Then the LORD replied: 'Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay. 'See, the enemy is puffed up; his desires are not upright—but the righteous person will live by his faithfulness.' Habakkuk 2:1-4

Here Habakkuk says he will be the watchman and wait for the answer, maybe by now Habakkuk has learned to be patient, as he awaits God's response to his question regarding God's using an unholy nation like Babylon to discipline His own people.

We have to admire Habakkuk's honesty with God, He simply couldn't understand why God allowed His own people to suffer.

## GOD'S ANSWER

God answers Habakkuk in the form of a vision, He says, 'write the revelation down' which means the revelation will have its time. The whole revelation needed to be written down, not just for Habakkuk's sake but for the sake of the nation. The nation needed to understand that God was working in and through this unholy nation and so, when they eventually returned from captivity, they could read what God was doing in and through His own people.

God also tells him to write it down and make it 'plain on tablet', which is a reference to writing in capital letters, so that's it's easy to read, advertise it like a notice board, the whole nation needs to read this, so that they too would understand what God was going.

The vision was related to things in the future and had its ‘appointed time’ but its fulfilment was coming without delay. There’s a sense of urgency about proclaiming the message of the vision because it concerned not only the Babylonians but also God’s people. The time for Israel being a nation is coming to an end and the time for the Babylonians to come and take God’s people into captivity is about to begin.

The good news is that this captivity would only last seventy years, [Jeremiah 25:11](#). Judgement may not be as immediate as Habakkuk wants it to be, but it’s coming, [2 Peter 2:7](#) / [2 Peter 3:8-12](#).

God says that all the unrighteous will be punished regardless of who it is, He will dish it out on His own scale because God knows when the time is right but the righteous will live by his faith, [Romans 1:17](#) / [Galatians 3:11](#) / [Hebrews 10:38](#). God’s people would certainly need faith to be able to walk by faith when they get captured and taken into captivity, it’s time to trust God like never before, [Romans 8:28](#).

The Hebrew word for faith is, ‘emunah’ means stability. The idea of stability is spoken of in [John 15:5](#) where Jesus speaks about remaining in Him and bearing much fruit. James speaks of faith as more than just mental knowledge that God exists, [James 2:14-16](#).

‘Indeed, wine betrays him; he is arrogant and never at rest. Because he is as greedy as the grave and like death is never satisfied, he gathers to himself all the nations and takes captive all the peoples. ‘Will not all of them taunt him with ridicule and scorn, saying, ‘Woe to him who piles up stolen goods and makes himself wealthy by extortion! How long must this go on?’ Will not your creditors suddenly arise? Will they not wake up and make you tremble? Then you will become their prey. Because you have plundered many nations, the peoples who are left will plunder you. For you have shed human blood; you have destroyed lands and cities and everyone in them.’ Habakkuk 2:5-8

Notice how God personifies the Babylonians’ drunken behaviour, He uses the words, ‘him’ and ‘he’. This is used to describe how they went about conquering other nations. God isn’t speaking about how evil wine is, He’s speaking about the evil effects of wine on the Babylonians themselves.

They are arrogant and never at rest, and everyone knows that people with alcohol problems rarely stay in one place, they never take responsibility for their own actions. The Babylonians were always on the move, conquering nation after nation, never happy with their lot. Just like an alcoholic, they can never have enough wine, they are never satisfied.

As death is never satisfied with enough dead, so the Babylonians are never satisfied with enough conquests.

## **THE JUDGMENT UPON THE BABYLONIANS FOR NEVER BEING SATISFIED**

Here we find the first woe which is in relation to never being satisfied. In the text, we find the first of five woes to ‘him’. This is in reference to the Babylonians who wanted to expand their kingdom by going about conquering other nations and taking everything, they could along the way, they didn’t care what they did, and they certainly didn’t show any mercy towards their enemies.

They are like bankers who give out loans but charge extortionate amounts of interest, the abuse those they have conquered by demanding a heavy tribute. God says the Babylonians will reap what they sow, those they mistreated and didn’t show mercy to, will one day return the compliment, [Isaiah 33:1](#), what they have done to others, will be done to them, Obadiah.

‘Woe to him who builds his house by unjust gain, setting his nest on high to escape the clutches of ruin! You have plotted the ruin of many peoples, shaming your own house and forfeiting your life. The stones of the wall will cry out, and the beams of the woodwork will echo it.’ Habakkuk 2:9-11

## THE JUDGMENT UPON THE BABYLONIANS FOR BEING GREEDY

Here we find the second woe which is in relation to covetousness. Unlike other nations, Babylon wasn't an empire that grew because of the hard work of its own people, it grew because of all the things they plundered. The Babylonians used the stones which were taken from previous battles to build their own houses.

There's no doubt they felt invincible in their 'high nest', they felt that their army was so powerful that no one could bring them down. One thing they forgot about was they were absolutely hated by the nations around them and so, it was only a matter of time before those nations would rise up against them. We know this was the case because later the Medes and Persians went up against them and totally destroyed the city of Babylon.

The very materials, the stone and the beams, they plundered from the cities they conquered, would cry out for revenge. We remember that Jesus speaks of the stones crying out, [Luke 19:20](#) and we remember that Peter tells us that Christians are living stones, [1 Peter 2:4-6](#).

## THE JUDGMENT UPON THE BABYLONIANS FOR THEIR CRUELTY

‘Woe to him who builds a city with bloodshed and establishes a town by injustice! Has not the LORD Almighty determined that the people's labour is only fuel for the fire, that the nations exhaust themselves for nothing? For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.’ Habakkuk 2:12-14

Here we find the third woe which is in relation to cruelty. The judgment here is the same as the one Jerusalem received, [Micah 3:10](#) and the same as the one Jehoiakim received, [Jeremiah 22:13](#) / [Jeremiah 22:17](#).

The Babylonians were going to be condemned because they were building their empire on the lives of others. God says that all the effort it took for the Babylonians to build their empire, is eventually going to go up in smoke, their efforts were a waste of time and for nothing. They will be judged for it and so, once again we're reminded that God is working on things and His glory shines through it all.

Some believe that phrase, 'the earth being filled with knowledge' possibly has a Messianic meaning, [Daniel 2](#) / [Daniel 7](#) / [Matthew 28:18-20](#).

## THE JUDGMENT UPON THE BABYLONIANS FOR THEIR DRUNKENNESS

‘Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbours, pouring it from the wineskin till they are drunk, so that he can gaze on their naked bodies! You will be filled with shame instead of glory. Now it is your turn! Drink and let your



nakedness be exposed! The cup from the LORD's right hand is coming around to you, and disgrace will cover your glory. The violence you have done to Lebanon will overwhelm you, and your destruction of animals will terrify you. For you have shed human blood; you have destroyed lands and cities and everyone in them.' Habakkuk 2:15-17

Here we find the fourth woe which is in relation to drunkenness. The Babylonians were inhumane, they had no respect for other people, and they played with the people they conquered. But God says the same thing will happen to them.

The effects of wine in the hands of a drunkard are used to describe the craziness of the Babylonians. Everyone knows that the stronger the alcohol they drink, the faster they get drunk and lose their senses.

If you've ever been to a wedding where there's a lot of alcohol on offer, it doesn't take long for someone to get drunk and try to become the centre of attention. They think they're being funny, but people are actual laughing at them, not with them because of their drunken behaviour.

God is saying, here is a picture of someone giving someone else a drink with the purpose of getting them drunk. This is what the Babylonians were doing metaphorically, they made the nations around them drunk so that they could expose their nakedness and once they did, they took full advantage of them by conquering them and raiding their cities for their wealth.

The Babylonians were violent and idolatrous but now it's judgement time for the Babylonians who did nothing but oppress the nations around them. It's time for them to face 'the cup', which is the outpouring of God's wrath, [Jeremiah 25:15](#) / [Isaiah 51:17ff](#). It's time to reap what they had sowed.

Lebanon was famous for its mighty trees which stood strong, like everything else around them, the Babylonians cut them down to build their own empire, [Isaiah 14:8](#).

## THE JUDGMENT UPON THE BABYLONIANS FOR THEIR IDOLATRY

'Of what value is an idol carved by a craftsman? Or an image that teaches lies? For the one who makes it trusts in his own creation; he makes idols that cannot speak. Woe to him who says to wood, 'Come to life!' Or to lifeless stone, 'Wake up!' Can it give guidance? It is covered with gold and silver; there is no breath in it.' The LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him.' Habakkuk 2:18-20

Here we find the fifth woe which is in relation to idolatry. This is the way God sees idolatry, dead idols are better than they are, Jeremiah and Isaiah also speak about this, [Jeremiah 10:15](#) / [Jeremiah 51:18](#) / [Isaiah 40:18-20](#) / [Isaiah 41:7](#) / [Isaiah 42:17](#) / [Isaiah 46:5-7](#).

There is no value in an idol made by human hands, to think that people trust them, even though they can't hear or speak shows us how depraved the Babylonians were in their religious beliefs.

In effect, when someone speaks to an idol, they imagine the idol is speaking back to them, but the truth is the idol worshippers are only answering themselves, in their own minds. God is basically saying that idol worship is foolishness, it's stupid.

Notice that 'the Lord is in His holy temple', God is reminding them that, unlike those idols, He exists, and He reminds all those who are faithful that He is in control and He is working for the good of His people, [Romans 8:28](#) / [1 Corinthians 10:13](#) / [Revelation 21:4](#).

Remember His people were about to be taken into captivity and they needed to know that God was in control, it was part of His plan.

When God comes in judgement against a nation, all the other nations should sit back and watch and listen. They need to watch out and make sure they are being faithful to God, so the same won't happen to them.

## APPLICATION

We must never fall into the trap of thinking it's wrong to ask questions of God, if we didn't ask God questions about what's happening in our lives or the world around us, there would be something wrong. Surely this tells us that we care about what's going on, it helps us realise that most of the time we don't understand God and His ways, Isaiah 55:8-9.

We live in a world that likes to 'feel' and 'experience' religion, we live in a world where people want something they can touch and see before they will believe.

Even in the religious world today people have the same mentality, but God says, 'the righteous shall live by faith', Romans 1:17 / Galatians 3:11 / Hebrews 10:38, they will 'live by faith and not sight', 2 Corinthians 5:7.

## CHAPTER 3

'A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet. On shigionoth. LORD, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, LORD. Repeat them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy.' Habakkuk 3:1-2

In this final chapter, we read Habakkuk's prayer in the form of a song, where he asks God to intervene in the affairs of the nations.

It's taken some time, but he finally understands, as much as humanly possible that God is actually working in and amongst the nations for the benefit of His own people. In his prayer, he basically asks God to go ahead and do what needs to be done.

No one knows what the word, 'Shigionoth' actually means but some believe it's referring to some kind of musical instrument or musical term with the idea of a wild dance rhythm, Habakkuk 3:19.

Standing in awe of God certainly brings about fear which in turn should bring about obedience. This was the main problem the nation of Israel had, they lacked a fear of the Lord and as a result of having no fear, they got involved in all kinds of evil, including idolatry.

In fact, they had strayed so far away from the Lord, that it forced God to discipline His people by sending them into captivity so that when they were freed from captivity, He could fulfil the blessing He promised Abraham, Genesis 12:1-3.

Habakkuk asks God to remember those who would come out of captivity and hence asks God to be merciful towards them. Even though God acts in judgment we can always be sure His judgment comes with mercy.

'God came from Teman, the Holy One from Mount Paran. His glory covered the heavens and his praise filled the earth. His splendour was like the sunrise; rays flashed from his hand, where his power was hidden. Plague went before him; pestilence followed his steps. He stood, and shook the earth; he looked, and made the nations tremble. The ancient mountains crumbled, and the age-old hills collapsed—but he marches on forever. I saw the tents of

Cushan in distress, the dwellings of Midian in anguish. Were you angry with the rivers, LORD? Was your wrath against the streams? Did you rage against the sea when you rode your horses and your chariots to victory? You uncovered your bow, you called for many arrows. You split the earth with rivers; the mountains saw you and writhed. Torrents of water swept by; the deep roared and lifted its waves on high. Sun and moon stood still in the heavens at the glint of your flying arrows, at the lightning of your flashing spear. In wrath you strode through the earth and in anger you threshed the nations. You came out to deliver your people, to save your anointed one. You crushed the leader of the land of wickedness, you stripped him from head to foot. With his own spear you pierced his head when his warriors stormed out to scatter us, gloating as though about to devour the wretched who were in hiding. You trampled the sea with your horses, churning the great waters. I heard and my heart pounded, my lips quivered at the sound; decay crept into my bones, and my legs trembled. Yet I will wait patiently for the day of calamity to come on the nation invading us.' Habakkuk 3:3-16

In the KJV, we find the word, 'selah' in [Habakkuk 3:3](#) / [Habakkuk 3:9](#) / [Habakkuk 3:13](#), this word in the psalms means to pause, this corresponds with the last verse of [Habakkuk 3:19](#). This is a song of past glories, things God has done for His people in the past.

This is Habakkuk responding to God's second answer, the unrighteousness within God's people must be taken care of. He sees that God will take care of all the evil he sees in the country.

Notice that God is pictured as coming from Teman and Paran to deliver His people, He comes in a great storm cloud, causing the earth to shake and tremble. This is possibly referring to the parting of the Red Sea, and or the crossing of the Jordan, [Exodus 14](#) / [Joshua 3](#), but whatever it's speaking about, it's pointing to God's power.

Notice also the reference to the sun and moon, this could be a possible reference to [Joshua 10](#) when time stopped for Joshua so he could win the battle. Again, this is pointing to God's power and if God did that back then, then He could do it again.

The calamitous picture of the natural world Habakkuk gives us depicts the greatness of God. In other words, if God's coming causes so much calamity, then He's more than capable of delivering His people in the future.

Habakkuk's response to all this was so great that his 'heart pounded', his 'lips quivered,' 'decay crept into his bones', and 'his legs trembled,' in other words, he was overwhelmed and in awe of God's power, to the point of collapsing mentally and no doubt spiritually. If God's presence can cause such disturbance in the things that He created, then certainly He can control all that man does on the earth.

Habakkuk learned to trust God and wait patiently for Him to work things out for the benefit of His people. Amidst all the turmoil and trouble, there is some kind of comfort for God's people, God is in control, God would send them into captivity, but God will free them later, once they had been disciplined and learned from their mistakes.

## **THIS IS WHAT HABAKKUK HAS CONCLUDED:**

1. Babylon will judge Judah.
2. If God is behind Babylon, then Judah will need to help, salvation.
3. Only God can help Judah.

'Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes 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, yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Saviour. The Sovereign LORD is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to tread on the heights. For the director of music. On my stringed instruments.' Habakkuk 3:17-19

As we come to the end of the book, we can't help but notice the difference in Habakkuk's thinking, it's clear his faith in God is growing despite the circumstances, [Philippians 4:4](#) / [1 John 5:4](#).

What Habakkuk is describing here is what the land looked like when the Babylonians went around invading the nations, people would starve, people would die because of them, and they would leave the land in such a condition that it would be impossible for anyone to live there anymore.

But even still, Habakkuk will rejoice in the Lord and be joyful, [Job 13:15](#) / [Daniel 3:18](#). He will remain faithful to God and rely on God's strength instead of his own.

The 'feet of a deer' is probably the most skilled feet in the animal world when we think about the terrain, they live in. Habakkuk now believes that no matter how hard things get, no matter how rough his circumstances feel, he won't fall and stumble to the ground. His faith is now totally in God.

## APPLICATION

God's patience with Habakkuk is very humbling, He allowed him to grow in his faith and taught him to be patient.

As Christians, we often think that some Christians aren't growing, but some Christians take a little longer than others and some can only digest a little of God's Word at a time. We too must be patient with them, as God is with us, as we all have a lot of growing to do, [2 Peter 3:18](#).

## CONCLUSION

If we learn anything from Habakkuk it's this, although at first, He didn't understand why God can use an evil nation like Babylon to punish His own people, he went on to see the bigger picture.

Judah needed to be disciplined for her unfaithfulness and God was going to use the Babylonians to carry this out. They needed to learn from their past mistakes so that God would later free them from their captivity. It's interesting because Israel never committed idolatry again after they were freed from captivity.

When Habakkuk finally understood what God was doing and why he had peace of mind and would go on to rely on God for the rest of his life. For Habakkuk, faith really was his victory.

'This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.' 1 John 5:4