

# Outline of Habakkuk

May this outline of Habakkuk assist you as you investigate the pages of God's letter to you. And may you discover His message to you as you study.

Habakkuk was an early contemporary of Jeremiah, most likely prophesying from 609-606 B.C. He prophesied immediately before Judah went into captivity in 605 B.C. to Babylon. We might call Habakkuk the questioning prophet. He posed two questions, one in 1:2-4 and one in 1:12-17. The answer of the LORD came in 1:5-11 and in 2:2-20. The book ends with a magnificent prayer/song of Habakkuk in chapter 3.

We know almost nothing about Habakkuk. According to Jewish tradition, he was a priest of the tribe of Levi. The apocryphal book *Bel and the Dragon* states that he was a prophet whom the angel of the LORD transported to the den of lions in Babylon to feed Daniel and then immediately returned him back to Judah. I think that little credence should be given to this story.

Judah, at the time of the prophecy, had only recently lost good king Josiah and was then ruled by Jehoiakim. There is a close parallel between Jeremiah 22:13-23 and Habakkuk 2:5-19. Jehoiakim did evil in the sight of the LORD (2 Kings 23:37; 2 Chronicles 36:8). Habakkuk looked around and saw the violence, the iniquity, the plundering, the strife, the lack of justice, the wicked surrounding the righteous, and it troubled him. The book begins with a question of ongoing wickedness and ends with one of the most admirable works of praise in Scripture.

The book, like Nahum, is a great one for teaching about God. Look at the lessons:

1. God does not always immediately answer, even his prophets (1:2)
2. God's answers sometimes are unbelievable (1:5)
3. God is from everlasting (1:12)
4. God is the prophet's personal Holy One (1:12)
5. God is the Rock (1:12)
6. God is of purer eyes than to behold evil (1:13)
7. God's glory shall be known in all the world (2:14)
8. God is in His holy temple, let the earth keep silent (2:20)
9. God comes to save His own (3:3, 13)
10. The earth shall be full of His praise (3:3)
11. He is powerful (3:4-7)
12. He has anger (3:8, 12)
13. He is sufficient by Himself (3:17-18)
14. He is the prophet's strength (3:19)

**Date:** 609-606 B.C.

The prophecy seems to portend the near, but not immediate, coming of Babylon. There was wickedness in the land. Good king Josiah died in 609 B.C. For three months Jehoahaz reigned and then he was deposed by the Egyptians. Thereafter, Jehoiakim became king and he reigned for 11 years. He was evil and the nation followed his evil ways.

Babylon came against Jerusalem in 605 B.C. and took Daniel and others into captivity. Thus, we think that Habakkuk prophesied between 609 B.C. and 606 B.C.

The book is divided into three chapters. We may outline it as follows:

### **I. The Puzzlement of Habbakuk chapter 1**

- A. 1st question 1:2-4
- B. God's answer 1:5-11
- C. 2nd question 1:12-17

### **II. The Pronouncement of the LORD (pivotal verse 2:1) chapter 2**

- A. It shall come to pass 2:2-4
- B. The riddle of woe to the proud 2:5-20
  - 1. Woe to him who increases what is not his 2:5-8a
  - 2. Woe to him who covets evil gain 2:9-11
  - 3. Woe to him who builds a town with evil 2:12-14
  - 4. Woe to him who gives his neighbor drink 2:15-17
  - 5. Woe to him who speaks to idols 2:18-20

### **III. The Prayer of Habbakuk chapter 3**

- A. A great opening 3:2 (This is the response Habakkuk portends in 2:1)
  - 1. Fear
  - 2. Petition for life, instruction, and compassion
- B. God Comes 3:3-5
  - 1. From Teman and from Mount Paran (from the south). The Babylonians came from the North, God comes from the opposite direction.
  - 2. With glory and power 3:3b-5
- C. God stands and surveys 3:6-11
- D. God marches 3:12-15
- E. The prophet trembles at God's awesome judgment 3:16
- F. Faith triumphs 3:17-19

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**Key Idea:** The just shall live by faith 2:4

**Key Passage:** 2:7

**Key Lesson:** Believe God