

I. **NAME AND PERSONALITY OF THE PROPHET.**

- A. The name *Habakkuk* means “clasp” or “embrace.”
- B. The prophet’s name appears nowhere in Scripture except in this book. His home is unknown. We know nothing of his occupation or family.
- C. Habakkuk addresses God on behalf of the Judean people. This is reversed from other books in that in them, God through the prophet addresses the people. Habakkuk is unique in this respect.
- D. He foretold the catastrophe which was about to come and lived to see it happen.

II. **DATE OF THE BOOK AND OF THE PROPHET.**

- A. Chapter 1, verse 6 is our only clue to dating the book.
- B. The book can be dated between 612 and 606BC. Assyria had fallen in 612BC and the first oppression (exile) of Judah was in 605.
- C. The Babylonians were in power at the time of the book.
- D. Habakkuk is a contemporary of Jeremiah.

III. **OUTLINES OF THE BOOK OF HABAKKUK.**

A. Simple outline:

I. Watch and See.

God’s judgment is upon wicked Judah, through the Chaldeans. (1:1-2:3).

II. Stand and See.

God’s judgment is upon the Chaldeans, the ungodly world power (2:4-20).

III. Kneel and See.

A prayer for compassion in the midst of judgment (3:1-19).

B. Supplemental outline:

I. Habakkuk’s First Question and God’s Reply (1:1-11).

A. Title of the Book (1:1).

B. Question: Why does God tolerate sin among his people? (1:2-4).

C. Reply: God is raising up the Chaldeans to punish the wrong-doers (1:5-11).

II. Habakkuk’s Second Question and God’s Reply (1:12-2:20).

A. Question: How can God use the ungodly Chaldeans to punish His own people? (1:12-2:1).

B. Reply: The Chaldeans shall be punished in turn (2:2-20).

1. The contrast between pride and faith (2:2-5).

2. Five woes pronounced on Chaldea (2:6-20).

a. Woe upon the lust for conquest (2:6-8).

b. Woe upon covetousness (2:9-11).

c. Woe upon building of cities with blood (2:12-14).

d. Woe upon intoxication and violence (2:15-17).

3) Woe upon idolatry (2:18-20).

III. Habakkuk’s Prayer (3:1-19).

A. A petition for mercy (3:1-2).

B. Confidence based on the past (3:3-15).

C. The prophet’s faith expressed (3:16-19).

#### IV. THE THEME AND MESSAGE OF THE BOOK OF HABAKKUK.

- A. The theme of the book is: **The universal supremacy of God's judgment on the wicked.**
- B. The message of the book is two-fold:
  - 1. **Faithfulness is a guarantee of permanency.**
  - 2. **Evil is self-destructive.**
- C. The fact that God was about to use a pagan people who were even more wicked than the Jews, to punish the Jews, forms the basis of the book.
- D. A great lesson of the book for our learning is: The value of honest doubt.

#### V. PRACTICAL LESSONS OF PERMANENT VALUE.

- A. In every crisis God can be trusted.
- B. Evil has within itself the germs of death.
- C. We can see and understand God only when we rise above the fog of human doubt.
- D. The real purpose of religion is not to have all doubts solved, but to be sure of God.
- E. In dealing with doubt, God invites us to turn to Him and wait for His answer.

#### VI. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS.

- A. What problems were solved when you became a believer? What new problems have you faced since you became a believer?
- B. What do you usually do when you are struggling with problems? What do you think you should do?
- C. God gives Habakkuk a revelation instead of an explanation. What is the difference?
- D. What answer did Habakkuk expect to hear as he waited on the Lord (1:5-11)? When have you cried to the Lord and He answered in a way you were not expecting?
- E. Have you ever wondered how a good and holy God could allow something? If so, when? What were the circumstances?
- F. In Habakkuk 1:13, we see a timeless question. What answer would you give to someone who was wrestling with this?
- G. What can hold us back from proclaiming a warning to those who are ignoring God?
- H. What does it mean to "live by faith" (2:4)?
- I. What is the definition of an idol? What are some examples today? What are the similarities and differences between a carved wooden idol in a temple and the idol of materialism?
- J. What is a current challenge in your life that requires faith?
- K. How does God reveal His glory today? That is in your own experience?
- L. How can we rejoice when circumstances are difficult? How can we help others who don't seem to be able to rejoice?