

HABAKKUK - A STUDY GUIDE

THE CENTRAL QUESTION:

What does this book/story say to us about God?

This question may be broken down further as follows:

- a. Why did God do it/allow it?
 - b. Why did He record it for our study?
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1. Habakkuk is unique among prophets in that his entire book seems to be a dialogue between Habakkuk and God. Who do you think initiated this dialogue and why? What does such a book say to us about God?
2. What do you think the beings in the rest of the universe thought as they watched generation after generation going by and things getting progressively worse and worse? Wouldn't it be natural for them to say to God, "Why are you wasting Your time with these people? Why don't You just let them go?" (2 Chronicles 36:15,16; Hosea 4:17; 11:8)
3. Is it true that if God really told us what He is doing, we wouldn't believe it? (Habakkuk 1:5) Could such a thing be true in our day? How does this fit with Daniel 9:19—"For your sake, O my God, do not delay, because your city and your people bear your Name?" (Compare 2 Kings 19:34; 20:6; Psalms 25:11; Isaiah 37:35; 48:9-11; Jeremiah 14:7,21; Ezekiel 20:9)
4. What is the meaning of the last phrase of Habakkuk 2:4—"the just shall live by faith?" (Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38) What does it mean in context here? What do you think Paul was thinking when he used it? What did it mean to Martin Luther when he started a reformation with it? If we understand what faith really is, doesn't this imply that even in our time, as we see things going from bad to worse, to even worse, that those who are truly righteous people will look back to the evidence they already have about God's trustworthiness and live by trust (faith) in God?
5. When do you think the fulfillment of Habakkuk 2:14 (Compare Isaiah 11:9) will take place—"For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea?" (NIV) When do you think Habakkuk expected it to be fulfilled?
6. Did the prophets have a clear understanding of the impotence of idols? (see Psalms 115:1-8; Isaiah 44:9-20; [1 Kings 18:25-29|Bible:1Kin.18:25-29]) If it is folly to worship anything created (Romans 1:20-23) what kind of folly is it to worship something you have created yourself? (Habakkuk 2:18-19)
7. Does the book of Habakkuk suggest that God may in some way be losing control? Is it possible that He might not be able to actually carry out what He has said? Notice Habakkuk 2:20—"The way we worship says a lot about the kind of God we worship! "Be patient, wait, God is still in control!" What kind of God would give us such a message? Did Baal talk like this? Molech? Dagon? Did these "gods" demand quiet reverence and careful evaluation of what it meant to worship them? (See 1 Kings 18:25-29)
8. When God finally felt it was necessary to allow His children to be punished, why did He allow what appeared to be the most wicked nations of the times (Assyrian and Babylon) to come and do the punishing?
9. Could you comfortably agree with Habakkuk's conclusion in Habakkuk 3:16-19?

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