

HABAKKUK: Lord, How Long?

"The righteous shall live by faith."

Habakkuk means "Embrace," "to caress." Luther said, "Habakkuk has a right name for his office. For Habakkuk means a heartener, or one who takes another to his heart and his arms, as one soothes a poor weeping child, telling it to be quiet."

AUTHOR: (1:1) says, "The oracle which Habakkuk the prophet saw." Nothing is known about his personal life except from the last line we may surmise that he was a member of the Levitical choir. It reads, "For the choir director, on my stringed instruments."

DATE: It is thought that he prophesied during the reign of Jehoiakim during the Babylonian invasion of Judah in 605 B.C. Daniel and others were taken captive at this time. If this dating is correct then Habakkuk was the final voice of God to Judah before she was taken into captivity by the Babylonians.

PURPOSE: Habakkuk announces the coming punishment of Judah by being deported to Babylon. Judah had become a degenerate, ungodly and idolatrous nation by the time of Habakkuk (1:3).

THEME: The righteous shall live by faith.

KEY VERSE: 2:4; quoted in Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38. This is the heart of God's answer to Habakkuk's questions, and is central to the message of the New Testament. The just shall live by faith.

KEY WORDS: Lord, how long? why?

METHOD: He uses a dialogue between himself and God. He asks questions that trouble the mind of men and lets Jehovah furnish the answers. How do you reconcile a bad world with a holy God?

STYLE: Habakkuk's prayer possesses great grandeur in its poetical conceptions, and manifests unusual sublimity of expression. The basic nature of the book is poetical. It is full of fine imagery, and solemn in its threatening tone. It is also musical, logical, lofty, and profound. "Chapter 3 is a great psalm of praise scarcely equaled anywhere in the O. T." (Ryrie).

Give God a chance to speak to you. The faith that asks questions asks them in the secret place. It asks them of God. Faith in God asks questions of God. Don't hide your questions from Him. Give Him an opportunity to speak.

Title: Introduction to Habbakuk

Series: A Look at the Book

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