

"THE PROPHET WHO CHALLENGED GOD"
(HABAKKUK)

Often it is hard to understand God's ways. One asks God, "why is this happening to me?" It was hard for Habakkuk to understand God's actions concerning Judah.

I. THE TIMES:

1. Habakkuk had seen Judah in her glory and now he was watching her crumble and fall.
2. Tyranny, strife, open sin, idol worship and oppression of the poor was everywhere.
3. It looked like Judah would be involved at any moment.

II. THE MAN:

1. Habakkuk was a prominent citizen and was respected by the city leaders.
2. He was a man of great faith but could not understand God's actions.
3. He was familiar with the writing of Amos, Hosea, Micah, and Isaiah.
4. He was a student of God's Word.
5. He watched people a lot and knew much about life.
6. Somehow, he could not reconcile a bad world and a good God.

III. THE BOOK: Written as a form of conversation between himself and God.

1. Habakkuk makes a passionate protest (1:2-4); Why all the injustice?
2. God's first Answer to his protest (1:5-11): Look farther down the road, beyond current events. See how God is already working to bring justice.
3. The Moral problem Habakkuk sees (1:12-17): How can a righteous God allow such wicked enemies to hurt Judah? He challenges God to defend His actions.
4. Habakkuk makes an important decision (2:1): As things crumble around him, Habakkuk decided to wait on God and trust Him.
5. God gives a second answer to Habakkuk's Protest (2:2-4): God admits the wickedness of Judah's enemies but the situation requires patience. Righteousness and justice will eventually win out.

6. A Series of Five Woes (2:5-20)

1. Woe to those who lust after material gain (5-8).
2. Woe to those who are controlled by selfishness (9-11).
3. Woe to those who steal and destroy cities (12-14).
4. Woe to those who attend heathen banquets where God is dishonored (15-17).
5. Woe to those who worship stupid idols (18-20).

7. An Anthem of Praise (2:1-19): Habakkuk finally understands that only a tiny part of God's divine plan can be seen at any time. Man must wait for God.

IV. LESSONS OF VALUE:

1. God welcomes sincere questions.
2. Some things just cannot have a single, direct answer.
3. God can be trusted, no matter what.
4. The short-sighted, quick view is more often the wrong view.
5. God's actions can be seen and understood when one rises above doubt.
6. In dealing with doubt, God invites man to turn to Him and wait for His answer.
7. 2:4, 2:12, 2:14, 2:20.