

**Habakkuk asks God, why do the wicked prosper?** Minor Prophets Dec.10 and 17, 2023

**Main point:** figuring out how it is that God can be good, while evil succeeds in the world.

**Summary of the Book of Habakkuk:**

Habakkuk, our eighth minor prophet presentation in our ‘God-theater,’ features a prophet in an extended dialogue with God! Habakkuk was a decent man who was anguished over societal sins. Habakkuk saw his nation filled with sin and Babylon rising, yet God seemed inactive and unconcerned! As in all 12 minor prophets, ‘judgment unto restoration’ is found here. While judging all nations, God would take action “...*for the salvation of Your people, for the salvation of Your anointed...*” (3:13) Habakkuk ends by offering hopeful praise. (3:16-19)

**The man Habakkuk and the times in which he was living and writing:**

- The name ‘Habakkuk’ means ‘embrace,’ used like ‘clasp/wrestle/grapple/dispute.’
- wrote ~ 625-587 BC, as God brought down Assyria, & was *raising up* Babylon. (1:6)

**Well-known quotes, embedded in Habakkuk:**

- “...*You are of purer eyes than to see evil and cannot look at wrong...*” (1:13)
- “...*if it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come...*” (2:3)
- “...*the righteous shall live by his faith...*” (2:4) See Rom. 1:17, Gal. 3:10, Heb.10:38
- “...*earth...filled...the knowledge...glory...the LORD, as waters cover the sea...*” (2:14)
- “...*the LORD is in His holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before Him.*” (2:20)
- “...*in the midst of the years revive it...in wrath remember mercy...*” (3:2)
- “...*though...there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD...*” (3:17-18)
- “...*He makes my feet like the deer’s...*” (3:19)

**Outline of Habakkuk:**

Introduction (1:1)

Chat #1, between prophet and God (1:2-11)

Question #1: O holy God, how can You tolerate sin in Judah? (1:2-4)

Answer #1: God will send the enemy army from Babylon! (1:5-11)

Chat #2, between prophet and God (1:12 –2:5)

Question #2: O holy God, how can You tolerate sin in the world? (1:12--2:1)

Answer #2: God will punish the wicked and save the righteous. (2:2-5)

Poem: a ‘war oracle’ of 5 visions of God’s judgment against a wicked oppressor. (2:6-20)

plunderer plundered (2:6-8)

conqueror shamed (2:9-11)

builder undone (2:12-14)

shameless shamed (2:15-18)

idolater silenced (2:19-20)

→ Lesson: the wicked will not always prosper!

Song of trusting and accepting (3:1-19)

The prophet praying for God’s help in upcoming troubled times. (3:1-2)

Reminder to bewildered: God is a warrior who has previously won big. (3:3-15)

The prophet learned to live by his faith, and to give hopeful praise. (3:16-19)

No, the wicked don’t prosper: when it seems that way, remember God rules & will take action.