

- I. Habakkuk
 - a. Purpose: We will look at the authorship, purpose and other aspects of the book of Habakkuk so we would be more familiar with this part of the Bible and yearn to study it for ourselves
 - b. Authorship
 - i. About Habakkuk
 - 1. Little is known about this prophet.¹
 - 2. The name Habakkuk means “fold one’s hand” or “embrace.”²
 - 3. Habakkuk mentioned the Babylonians in the book as coming to attack Judah which would make this book during the seventh century BC.³
 - 4. Since Habakkuk was talking about the coming attack from the Babylonian it is best to see Habakkuk as ministering in Judah.
 - ii. Reasons why it is written by Habakkuk
 - 1. Reasons why it is written by Habakkuk 1: It was to Habakkuk that the oracle of God of **chapter 1-2** came to in this book: “*The oracle which Habakkuk the prophet saw.*” (**Habakkuk 1:1**)
 - 2. Reasons why it is written by Habakkuk 2: It was the prayer of Habakkuk that **chapter 3** record: “*A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, according to Shigionoth.*” (**Habakkuk 3:1**)
 - c. Purpose
 - i. According to John Walton: “The purpose of the book of Habakkuk is to examine the issue of God’s justice on a national plane. The question at hand in the theodicy (the justification of God’s ways with humanity) was, How can a just God use a wicked nation like Babylon as his instrument for punishment?”⁴
 - ii. According to J. Ronald Blue: “In the dark days of Jehoiakim’s reign just before the Babylonian Captivity, the Prophet Habakkuk penned an unusual message of hope and encouragement for God’s people. Through doubts and confusion reign when sin runs rampant, an encounter with God can turn those doubts into devotion and all confusion into confidence.”⁵
 - d. Structure
 - i. Shorter outline⁶
 - 1. Habakkuk's Perplexity (1)
 - 2. Habakkuk's Problems (2)
 - 3. Habakkuk's Prayer/Praise (3)
 - ii. Longer outline⁷
 - 1. Superscription (1:1)

¹ J. Ronald Blue, “Habakkuk” in *Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: Victor), 1505.

² J. Ronald Blue, “Habakkuk” in *Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: Victor), 1505.

³ J. Ronald Blue, “Habakkuk” in *Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: Victor), 1506.

⁴ John Walton, “Habakkuk” in *A Survey of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), 659.

⁵ J. Ronald Blue, “Habakkuk” in *Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: Victor), 1507.

⁶ Richard Mayhue, *Ordination Practicum Syllabus* (Sun Valley, California: Self-Published for The Master’s Seminary), 87.

⁷ Mark Rooker, “The Book of Habakkuk” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Locations 16389-16402.

2. Questions and Answers (1:2-2:5)
 - a. Why Do the Wicked Prosper? (1:2-4)
 - b. God Will Send the Chaldeans (1:5-11)
 - c. Will God Use the Wicked Chaldeans? (1:12-17)
 - d. The Righteous Will Live by His Faithfulness (2:1-5)
3. Five Woes on Babylon (2:6-20)
 - a. Woe to the Violent Extortioner (2:6-8)
 - b. Woe to the Greedy (2:9-11)
 - c. Woe to the Murderer (2:12-14)
 - d. Woe to the Drunkard (2: 15-17)
 - e. Woe to the Idol-maker (2:18-20)
4. Habakkuk's Prayer (3)
 - a. Habakkuk's Petition (3:1-2)
 - b. The Lord's Appearing (3:3-15)
 - c. Habakkuk's Confidence (3:16-19)
- e. Closer look at Habakkuk (section by section summary)
 - i. Questions and Answers (1:2-2:5)
 1. The book begins with Habakkuk crying out to God concerning the evil he has seen in his country (1:2-5)
 2. The response from God is that God will bring a Babylonian army (1:6-11)
 - a. **Verse 9a** says “*All of them come for violence*” in reference to the Babylonian army. The Hebrew word for violence is *hamas* and is the same one that appears in **verse 2** in reference to Judah. Violence is returned with violence.
 - b. **Verse 7b** says “*Their justice and authority originate with themselves*” in reference to the Babylonian army. The same Hebrew word for justice is the same one that appears in **verse 4** in reference to Judah not upholding violence. It is a return of injustice for injustice.⁸
 3. **Verse 12-17** record Habakkuk’s response to this revelation of God using the Babylonians to judge Judah.
 - a. This section records Habakkuk telling God how violent the Babylonians were.
 - b. In essence Habakkuk’s complaint is summarized in **verse 13b**: “*Why are You silent when the wicked swallow up Those more righteous than they?*”
 4. Then Haggai waited in a guard post for God to respond (2:1)
 5. God responds by telling Habakkuk to write down the contrast between the proud and the righteous in **Habakkuk 2:2-5**.
 - a. Here we see the famous statement “*But the righteous will live by his faith.*” (**Habakkuk 2:4b**).

⁸ Mark Rooker, “The Book of Habakkuk” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Locations 16415-16417.

- b. The word for Faith here usually has the sense of moral firmness⁹
 - c. But in the context it has the sense of trusting in God since the phrase “*the righteous will live by his faith*” is in contrast with the first half of **Habakkuk 2:4** which states: “*Behold, as for the proud one, His soul is not right within him*” and the opposite of one proud in oneself is trusting in God.
 - ii. Five Woes on Babylon (**2:6-20**)
 - 1. Here we see God will also judge the Babylonians for their sins.
 - 2. Recall the woes we mentioned earlier in the structure discussion.
 - 3. Here we also see another irony: The Babylonian's idols overlaid with silver and gold are utterly lifeless (**2:19**). And they are contrasted to the living God in verse 20.¹⁰
 - iii. Habakkuk's Prayer (**3**)
 - 1. In **Habakkuk 3:1-2** Habakkuk ask God be merciful in the mist of His wrath.
 - 2. Then **Habakkuk 3:3-6** describes God's approach and its effects.¹¹
 - 3. **Habakkuk 3:7-15** describes God's victory over His enemy.¹²
 - 4. **Habakkuk 3:16-19** ends the book with Habakkuk’s trusting in God.
 - 5. As Mark Rooker describe the ending: “His cry of "How long?" at the beginning of the book (1: 2) has been transformed into "I must quietly wait" for the day of distress in the conclusion (**3:16**).”¹³
- f. Place of this book in the Canon
 - i. This book is like Job in addressing the issue of trusting in God with bad things happening.
 - 1. Note both books in the end calls us to trust in God even when we don’t understand.
 - 2. Also God’s way is mysterious yet God is still glorious and not evil or bad.
 - ii. Recall the famous statement “*But the righteous will live by his faith.*” (**Habakkuk 2:4b**).
 - 1. This is repeated and used in the New Testament in **Galatians 3:11**, **Romans 1:17** and **Hebrews 10:38**.¹⁴
 - 2. The importance of faith is not just a New Testament invention but has its root in the Old Testament.

⁹ Walter Kaiser, *The Promise-Plan of God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), 196.

¹⁰ Mark Rooker, “The Book of Habakkuk” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Locations 16428-16429.

¹¹ Mark Rooker, “The Book of Habakkuk” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Locations 16436-16437.

¹² Mark Rooker, “The Book of Habakkuk” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Locations 16436-16437.

¹³ Mark Rooker, “The Book of Habakkuk” in *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville, B&H Publishing), Kindle Locations 16443-16444.

¹⁴ Walter Kaiser, *The Promise-Plan of God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), 194.