

**BOOK OF HABAKKUK  
HABAKKUK'S BURDEN  
HABAKKUK 1:1-4**

**Introduction**

Habakkuk was a Prophet of God who lived in the Southern Kingdom of Judah and was a contemporary of the Prophet Jeremiah. Habakkuk's name means **"to embrace"** which certainly fits the tone of **his love for God** and for **his fellow countrymen** that we sense in him here.

Habakkuk is considered the prayer warrior among the Prophets of the LORD such that he is often called **"The Praying Prophet."** Habakkuk was a servant of God who was in touch with God! In fact, we will see this distinctly when we get to **Chapter 3** that begins with the words: **"A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet..."**

At the time of his writing this Prophecy, the Northern Kingdom of Israel had already ignored God's warnings to them and had been conquered by Assyria and taken into captivity. Unfortunately Judah had not learned anything from the LORD's dealings with her sister Israel and her sin!

This is described by Jeremiah the Prophet in **Jeremiah 5:6-11**.

So, Habakkuk lived during the time that **Judah had been repeatedly warned by God to repent or judgment was coming!** When her reaction was to turn a deaf ear to the LORD, the LORD allowed her to be conquered by the Chaldeans (i.e. Babylonian Empire!) and her people carried away into captivity for 70 years!

As the book opens, we can see here that Habakkuk was a man who **struggled with the evil that he saw abounding around Him in Judah. That's what we want to see tonight in these few verses.**

**When we see that things in our society that are out of control, that do not appear fair or just, and that are increasingly ungodly and wicked, it can be a test to our faith in God as Believers.** Our heart cries out to the LORD wondering if He sees and cares. That's where Habakkuk was in his life!

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**LET'S READ THE FIRST 4 VERSES** as we look at **HABAKKUK'S BURDEN.**

The Book of Habakkuk opens with these words:  
*"The **burden** which Habakkuk the prophet did see."*

We are not left to wonder what was going on in the mind of Habakkuk. He was **wrestling here with an extremely perplexing burden!**

**A heavy weight was upon him! It was a *burden* that both confused him and consumed him!**

As we said, Habakkuk's name simply means **"to embrace."** That is exactly what he did with this **burden.** He embraced it! He made it personal! We might say that **it consumed him! Have you ever been consumed with a burden in your life?**

**Habakkuk's Burden, His Complaint If You Will, Was Two-Fold:**

**I. THERE WAS THE BURDEN OF JUDAH'S ACTIONS!(Vs. 2-4)**  
Much of his **burden** was due to the fact that, as he looked around him, his nation, the nation of **Judah was full of violence, iniquity, destruction, strife, and contention!**

**All kinds of sin, immorality, and vice were rampant!** Those who ruled were **slack and slothful** to do anything about enforcing the laws. The little **judgment** that was happening was **wrong judgment. Justice was nowhere to be found!**

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**Does any of that sound familiar at all?** We have a similar situation in our own dear country right now don't we! **Lawlessness is being allowed to abound** in our land on a daily basis! As we see what is taking place right now, it is saddening to those of us who love our nation!

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**Violence** is rampant...**sin and iniquity** abound...**destruction** is being allowed to take place unrestrained...**strife** and **contention** are on every hand as people seem to find more and more to offend them each day...and **true justice** cannot be found...that which is good is called evil and that which is evil is called good! And sadly, there appears to be no letup in sight or anyone in authority doing anything significantly to quell what we see!

If you are burdened for our land like I am, then you very well might can sense where Habakkuk is coming from here!

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Habakkuk was consumed with a **burden** for his own people. He was consumed with both **the social and spiritual decay** which had befallen his land and his people.

These were GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE! But they had drifted so far away from Him that He was about to bring harsh judgment on them from a heathen nation. (That's another problem that Habakkuk was dealing with, but that's for another message!)

To Habakkuk, there seemed to be no one else that felt the way he did! He took them personally, and he allowed them to consume him.

*THERE WAS THE BURDEN OF JUDAH'S ACTIONS...*

**II. THERE WAS THE BURDEN OF THE LORD'S INACTION!**

Habakkuk, the man of God, was troubled as to why it appeared that God was allowing all of this to go on without stepping in and intervening somehow! (*Vs 2-3*)

Sometimes we can wonder the same thing as well! But, did you know that even when the LORD just allows sin to continue, that in itself is a judgment from Him! (See *Proverbs 1:24-33*)

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*Proverbs 5:22—“His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.”*

*Proverbs 11:3, 5— “3 The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them...5 The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.”*

*Jeremiah 2:19—“Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord GOD of hosts.”*

**The LORD Didn't Appear To Be Listening To Habakkuk's Prayers!**

*Habakkuk 1:2—“O LORD, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear! even cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save!*

But listen, even though Habakkuk wasn't handling too well the way that the LORD appeared to be handling (or, in Habakkuk's mind, not handling) certain things, **the LORD was being longsuffering with His people!**

*Psalm 86:15—“But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.”*

*2 Peter 3:9—“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”*

Habakkuk wondered how long he would have to cry out to the LORD before the LORD was going hear Him and intervene!

Most, if not all of us know what it is like to be consumed with a **burden** at some point in our lives, don't we?

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There are some here tonight who are carrying a heavy *burden* or even multiple *burdens* right now!

And when we pray repeatedly about our *burdens* and those *burdens* aren't lifted, we can begin to think that the LORD doesn't care and, if we're not careful, we can even get an attitude against the LORD!

*(e.g. Asaph in Psalm 73:1ff; 77:1-9)*

*Burdens* can come our way in many different ways...It might be:

1. The *burden* of grief and loneliness because of the passing of a loved one.
2. The *burden* of an erring child or grandchild.
3. The *burden* of a lost loved one.
4. The *burden* of a situation at work or school.
5. The *burden* of family issues (many different types).
6. The *burden* of a scarred conscience from one's past.
7. Or some other *burden* that I haven't touched on.

Our *burdens* may or may not be the same in **nature** or **degree** as someone else's *burden*, but they can bear down on us like a lead weight! Some of that has to do with our emotional makeup! We each are uniquely different! Some can bear more than others.

When burdens come our way, if we don't take them to the LORD and leave them there, then they may *"eat us alive"*.

We know what that's like, don't we!

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We go to bed with our *burdens*; we wake up with them; we go to work with them; we go out shopping with them; we come home with them; we eat with them, and then we go to bed with them again in what can become a relentless cycle that we don't want to be in, but find ourselves helpless to do any different!

When that happens, our *burdens* can affect EVERY aspect of our lives and usually not in a good way!

*(e.g. On more than one occasion I have seen the death of a child affect one of the parents in such a way that it affects their other children, it affects their spouse, it affects their other relatives, it affects their friends, and it affects their ability to function!)*

*Verse 1* describes this *burden* as one which *"Habakkuk the prophet did see."* In other words, this was not only a *burden* which Habakkuk sensed in his heart, it was a *burden* which he saw with his eyes!

It was before him everyday.  
Everywhere he looked he saw the **plight** of his people.  
Everyday he lived he saw the **problems** of his people.

It was something that was relentless. He carried it with him day after day after day. It was continually with him!

Habakkuk knew that the kingdom of Judah was rapidly deteriorating! Habakkuk sensed the dire nature of the problem!

Habakkuk saw the problem, but he couldn't understand why God appeared to sit idly by and do nothing allowing things to continue to deteriorate like they were.

Sometimes what the Lord reveals to a man of God can be weighty!

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(e.g. I can identify with Habakkuk in this because some messages the LORD gives me are harder to preach than others because of the **nature of the message** and/or the **nature of people.**)

**Conclusion**

So, in conclusion tonight:

We need to be like Habakkuk in being **burdened** for what we see going on in this world and more particularly in our nation!

We may not understand all of what the LORD is doing or why He is allowing what He is allowing in our land!

We may even wonder where the LORD is and when He is going to intervene on our behalf and take us out of here!

What should we do? Well, a certain verse comes to mind:

*2 Chronicles 7:14—“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”*

So what about the other burdens that we are carrying tonight?

Look at what the Psalmist David penned in ***Psalm 55:1-8, 16-19a, 22*** as he was burdened!

*Psalm 27:14—“Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.”*

*Psalm 37:5—“Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.”*

*Psalm 62:8—“Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah.”*