

A quill pen with a white shaft and a dark, pointed nib lies horizontally across a piece of aged, yellowed paper. The paper has a textured, fibrous appearance and some darker spots. The quill's feathers are dark and fan out to the right.

THE MAJOR
MESSAGE

OF THE MINOR
PROPHETS

Dr. Gregg Marutzky

Habakkuk: Doubts & Questions

MAJOR
STUDIES

FROM THE

minor prophets

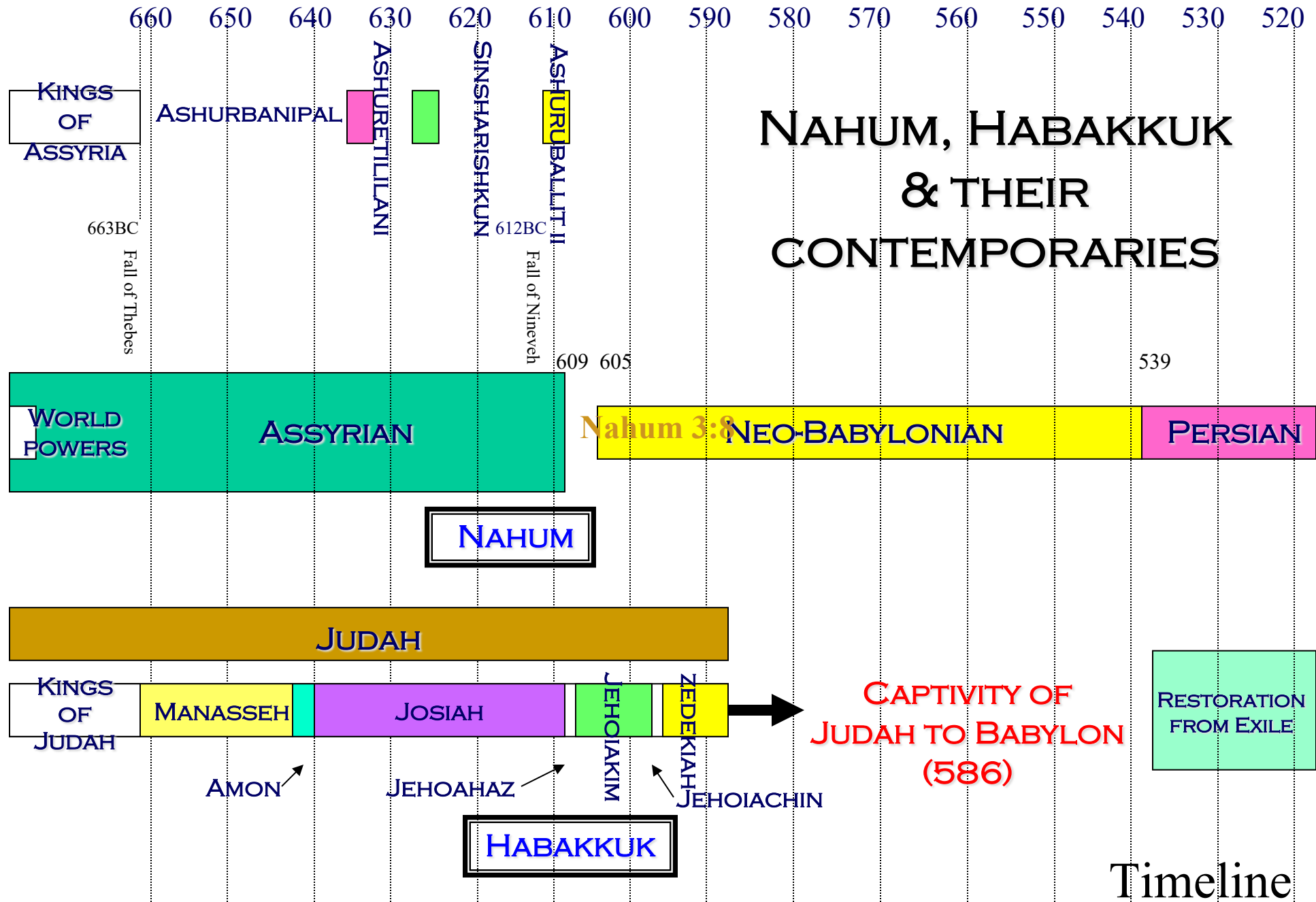
Dr. Gregg Marutzky

Habakkuk

Doubts & Questions

Author & Background

- ✦ Habakkuk was a prophet for the Southern Kingdom of Judah around 607 BC before the exile of the people to Babylon beginning in 605 BC and the destruction of Jerusalem. Habakkuk's name means "embrace or cling."
- ✦ The book describes Habakkuk questioning God for his judgment against Judah. Initially, Habakkuk questions why God is not dealing with the widespread evil and wickedness.



NAHUM, HABAKKUK & THEIR CONTEMPORARIES

NAHUM

HABAKKUK

Timeline

Wrestling With God

✦ **Habakkuk means to: “embrace” or to “wrestle”**

✦ **The oracle that Habakkuk the prophet received.
Habakkuk 1:1**

✦ **Oracle “massa”: an utterance, a doom, a burden**

✦ **HABAKKUK’ S DRIVING QUESTION Why is GOD not fair?**

HABAKKUK'S PROBLEMS W/ GOD

- ✦ YOU DON'T SEEM TO CARE- *UNCONCERNED*
- ✦ YOU AREN'T DOING MUCH WHEN YOU COULD- *INACTIVE*
- ✦ WHAT YOU ARE DOING DOESN'T SEEM FAIR- *INJUSTICE*

Author & Background

- ✦ God answers Habakkuk and describes how he intends to use the Babylonians to judge God's people. Habakkuk has a problem with God using the wicked to deal with the chosen people. Habakkuk struggles with how God is being God.
- ✦ The book of Habakkuk is about **EVIL**. This book is about where did evil come from and **why** is it tolerated. Habakkuk is a very relatable book for us because we all deal with doubts, unanswered questions, and evil in the world.

Key Verses

Habakkuk 2:4 *“See, the enemy is puffed up; his desires are not upright—but the righteous person will live by his faithfulness.”*

Habakkuk 3:17-19 *“Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior. The Sovereign LORD is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to tread on the heights.”*

Habakkuk Outline

- ✦ **Habakkuk 1:1-17** Questioning the Prevalence of Evil
– Habakkuk's Doubts and Complaints – **God has a Plan!**
- ✦ **Habakkuk 2:1-20** Wait – Saved by Faith – **Justice Will Be Done** – **God is Righteous!**
- ✦ **Habakkuk 3:1-19** Psalm of Praise – **Trust** – **Faith** – **God is Good**

Habakkuk's First Complaint

Habakkuk 1:1 Oracle/Revelation to Habakkuk a prophet and priest.

Habakkuk 1:2 *"How long, LORD, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, 'Violence!' but you do not save?"* Habakkuk is frustrated that God has not answered his prayers. Wickedness was unchecked from Habakkuk's perspective. **Have you ever thanked God for an unanswered prayer?**

WHY?

Habakkuk 1:3 *“Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrongdoing? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds.”* Our fundamental question is often, *“Why?”* We are confused by our experiences, circumstances and by those things from our perspective that do not make sense to us. We must remember, **Our ways are not God’s ways!**

God is Sovereign

Habakkuk 1:4 *“Therefore the law is paralyzed, and justice never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted.”* Habakkuk's problem is injustice. Where was God's righteousness and judgment upon the wicked. Wickedness seemed to prevail. Habakkuk 1:5 *“Look at the nations and watch—and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told.”* God promised Habakkuk that he had a plan that would impact the nations. God accounts for all the nations and not just the Hebrews.

WONDER & AWE

✦ **Utterly Amazed** (tamahh): a sudden alarming amazement, to be astonished, to marvel.

A wooden boardwalk path made of horizontal planks leads from the bottom center towards the top center of the image. The path is illuminated from above, creating a bright glow at its end. The surrounding area is a dark, dense forest with many ferns and other plants, all rendered in a dark, almost black color palette. The overall atmosphere is mysterious and serene.

Live by Faith

Habakkuk

Babylonian Wrath

Habakkuk 1:6 *"I am raising up the Babylonians, that ruthless and impetuous people, who sweep across the whole earth to seize dwellings not their own."* God shocked Habakkuk with the plan to use the Babylonians to bring judgment upon the Israelites.

Habakkuk 1:7-11 describe the ruthlessness of the Babylonians which confused Habakkuk. The prophet thought judgment should come from someone more righteous than those judged.

Habakkuk's Second Complaint

Habakkuk 1:13 *“Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrongdoing. Why then do you tolerate the treacherous? Why are you silent while the wicked swallow up those more righteous than themselves?”* How could God use a group more wicked than the unrighteous Hebrews to exercise God's judgment upon his people. The point should not be- “How is God disciplining us?” Rather- “What do I need to change to end the punishment?” We often hang our defensiveness on how we were disciplined and the pain of suffering consequences instead of repenting of our sin that brought on the discipline.

Trust God

Habakkuk 2:1 *"I will stand at my watch and station myself on the ramparts; I will look to see what he will say to me, and what answer I am to give to this complaint."* Habakkuk is confused regarding God's plan so he chooses to go up into a tower and wait. When we are doubting and skeptical we need to be patient, watch and wait. God eventually reveals himself thus wait upon the Lord. Habakkuk 2:2-3 *"Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it lingers, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay."* God does not answer Habakkuk directly but trust him!

Watch & Wait!



"I will stand on my guard post And station myself on the rampart; And I will keep watch to see what He will speak to me, And how I may reply when I am reproved."

Habakkuk 2:1

Faith Over Doubts

Habakkuk 2:4 *“See, the enemy is puffed up; his desires are not upright—but the righteous person will live by his faithfulness.”* The righteous must live by faith to be saved. (See also- **Romans 1:17**, **Galatians 3:11**, **Hebrews 10:38**). The lesson is to not put faith in your doubts but rather to have faith and doubt your doubts.

Habakkuk 2:20 *“The LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him.”* God is **Sovereign** and in control. **Silence and Trust!**

Living by Faith

Romans 1:17- *“For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed —a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”* **Galatians 3:11-** *“Clearly no one who relies on the law is justified before God, because “the righteous will live by faith.”* **Hebrews 10:38-** *“But my righteous one will live by faith. And I take no pleasure in the one who shrinks back.”*

Habakkuk: Embracing God's Plan

Chapters 1–2				Chapter 3		
Punishment of Babylon				Praise Song		
Habakkuk's Perplexity				Habakkuk's Praise		
God's Actions Challenged				God's Actions Commended		
Faith Troubled				Faith Triumphant		
Problem				Resolution		
Habakkuk	God	Habakkuk	God	Habakkuk		
Why aren't you judging Judah's sin, God?	I will judge Judah with the Babylonians!	But can you use a nation more wicked than Judah?	Sure, but I will judge them too.	In wrath remember mercy.	Our God is an awesome God!	I will wait patiently for Babylon's judgment and rejoice in God.
1:1-4	1:5-11	1:12–2:1	2:2-20	3:1-2	3:3-15	3:16-19
Judah						
c. 607-605 BC						

Five Warnings to the Wicked

- 1.(2:6) Greed and Aggression**
- 2.(2:9) Exploitation and Extortion**
- 3.(2:12) Violence**
- 4.(2:15) Immorality**
- 5.(2:19) Idolatry**

Faith: Trust & Obey

What do you do when what you see with your eyes is so different than what you believe in your heart?

Five Woes to the Wicked

(Vs. 2:6) *“Woe to him who piles up stolen goods and makes himself wealthy by extortion! How long must this go on?”* **Greed and Aggression**

(Vs. 2:9) *“Woe to him who builds his house by unjust gain, setting his nest on high to escape the clutches of ruin!”* **Exploitation and Extortion**

(Vs. 2:12) *“Woe to him who builds a city with bloodshed and establishes a town by injustice.”* **Violence**

(Vs. 2:15) *“Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbors, pouring it from the wineskin till they are drunk, so that he can gaze on their naked bodies!”* **Immorality**

(Vs. 2:19) *“Woe to him who says to wood, ‘Come to life!’ Or to lifeless stone, ‘Wake up!’ Can it give guidance? It is covered with gold and silver; there is no breath in it.”* **Idolatry**

5 WOES

- GREED (2:6-8)
- EXPLOITATION (2:9-11)
- VIOLENCE (2:12-14)
- IMMORALITY (2:15-17)
- IDOLATRY (2:18-20)

The Prophecy of Habakkuk



Palms of Praise

Habakkuk 3:2 *“LORD, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, LORD. Repeat them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy.”* Habakkuk claims God’s promises and calls on God to be Lord.

Habakkuk 3:6 *“He stood, and shook the earth; he looked, and made the nations tremble. The ancient mountains crumbled and the age-old hills collapsed—but he marches on forever.”* God is in control and will exercise his judgment in his own time.

Judgment

Habakkuk 3:12-13 "In wrath you strode through the earth and in anger you threshed the nations. You came out to deliver your people, to save your anointed one. You crushed the leader of the land of wickedness, you stripped him from head to foot." **Judgment**

Habakkuk 3:16 "I heard and my heart pounded, my lips quivered at the sound; decay crept into my bones, and my legs trembled. Yet I will wait patiently for the day of calamity to come on the nation invading us." Habakkuk waited patiently, accepted judgment.

Trusting God

Habakkuk 3:17-18 “Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior.” Without evidence maintain faith in God until he acts. *Habakkuk 3:19* “The Sovereign LORD is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to tread on the heights.” Statement of faith and trust on God!

Trusting God

Habakkuk 3:17-19 “Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior. The Sovereign Lord is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer he enables me to tread on the heights.”

Stand in Awe!

✦ *Habakkuk 3:20* “The LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him.” God is Sovereign and in control. Question God but maintain faith.

✦ *Silence and Trust!*

Trusting God

Romans 1:17- "For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed — a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith." Galatians 3:11- "Clearly no one who relies on the law is justified before God, because "the righteous will live by faith." Hebrews 10:38- "But my righteous one will live by faith. And I take no pleasure in the one who shrinks back."

Habakkuk: Embracing God's Plan

Chapters 1–2				Chapter 3		
Punishment of Babylon				Praise Song		
Habakkuk's Perplexity				Habakkuk's Praise		
God's Actions Challenged				God's Actions Commended		
Faith Troubled				Faith Triumphant		
Problem				Resolution		
Habakkuk	God	Habakkuk	God	Habakkuk		
Why aren't you judging Judah's sin, God?	I will. I'll judge Judah with the Babylonians!	But can you use a nation more wicked than Judah?	Sure, but I'll judge them too.	In wrath remember mercy.	Our God is an awesome God!	I'll wait patiently for Babylon's judgment and rejoice in God.
1:1-4	1:5-11	1:12–2:1	2:2-20	3:1-2	3:3-15	3:16-19
Judah						
c. 607-605 BC						

Trusting God

Psalm 13:1-3

1 How long, O LORD ? Will you forget me forever?

How long will you hide your face from me?

2 How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart?

How long will my enemy triumph over me?

3 Look on me and answer, O LORD my God.

Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death

Trusting God

What do you do when what you see with your eyes is so different than what you believe in your heart?

HABAKKUK'S REACTION: A deeply committed believer can express simultaneous questions and faith!

Trusting God

- 1. It is OK to question, complain and doubt since God's ways above our ways.***
- 2. Maintain faith in a good, fair, just, merciful God while you wrestle with questions.***
- 3. Be patience until God acts and then be in awe of our Creators marvelous deeds.***
- 4. Doubt your doubts but claim your truth and live by the promises of God.***



HABAKKUK

WHEN GOD SEEMS UNFAIR

