



**Habakkuk**  
**Jesus Christ, the God of My  
Salvation**

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**Meaning of the Name**

The name *Habakkuk* is an unusual one of uncertain origin; possibly it signified ardent embrace, from *habaq*, "embrace."

Some have suggested that it was the name of a garden plant which the Assyrians called *hambaququ*, but which cannot as yet be identified.

**F-L-I-G-H-T**

**F** – Habakkuk the prophet wrote this short book. Little else is known of him.

A reference to the Chaldean (pre-Babylonian) Empire in Habakkuk 1:6 indicates that Habakkuk probably wrote this book after the decline of the Assyrian Empire and prior to Nebuchadnezzar II's raid on Jerusalem. This puts the book's composition sometime between 612 and 605 BC.

**F-L-I-G-H-T**

**L** – Habakkuk represented God to the southern kingdom of Judah. He wrote as the priest he was, having a dialogue with God. Habakkuk's dialogue warned that "the Babylonians are coming," a reminder to those who merely profess belief that God is active and aware of their arrogance and ready with an answer they won't like.

F-L-I-G-H-T

I -

- Faith Tested (1)
- Faith Taught (2)
- Faith Triumphant (3)

F-L-I-G-H-T

**G** – Habakkuk is one of the most important writings in all of Scripture—so much so that one of its verses is cited multiple times in the New Testament as a central tenet of the gospel. The great doctrinal books of Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews all refer to, mention, or build on the famous verse “the just shall live by faith” (2:4), using it to point to the all-important truth that Jesus justifies his people by their faith in the finished work he did on the cross.

F-L-I-G-H-T

**H** – Habakkuk lived during the reign of King Josiah (640-609 BC). Several significant cultural and religious events happened around this time: Josiah’s religious reforms (622 BC), the fall of Nineveh (612 BC), and Babylon’s attack on Jerusalem (605 BC), among others. Josiah’s religious reforms were largely unsuccessful; much of the nation continued in idolatry and corruption, the two major sins Habakkuk addressed in his book. Habakkuk prophesied at the same time as Nahum, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, and Obadiah.

F-L-I-G-H-T

**T** – **Habakkuk reminds us to ask God the right questions.** In times of trouble, it’s so much easier to ask “*How* can I get out of this?” rather than “*What* can I get out of this?” Our tendency to avoid suffering at all costs can blind us to the all-important truth that our loving, sovereign Lord works all things – even the very worst of things – together for our good.

### F - L - I - G - H - T

**T** – **Commit your problems to God.** When life is beating you up and you don't understand what's happening and what to do, get in God's Word and remind yourself of what you know to be true – that God is good, righteous, full of grace, loving – and he wants the best for you. **Train your heart to wait on the Lord.** In times of trial, respond the same way as Habakkuk: *"I will stand at my watch...I will look to see what he will say to me"* (2:1). Be vigilant in watching for God's hand in your circumstances.

### F - L - I - G - H - T

**T** – He will see you through the worst of times because he has already taken care of the most important thing: where you will spend eternity. **God can handle your tough questions.** Approach him with honesty and faith, but not with the expectation that he owes you a response. Faith is not supposed to silence all your doubts so that you will never struggle with them again; faith is meant to make you sure of God and confident of his care.

### Dialogue of Habakkuk

- **Heading** (1:1)
- **Habakkuk's lament** (1:2-4): How long must the unjust triumph?
- **The Lord's response** (1:5-11): Justice is on the way!
- **Habakkuk's response** (1:12-2:1): You call this justice?
- **The Lord's response** (2:2-20): Justice will indeed prevail in due time.
- **Habakkuk's response** (3:1-19): *"I have heard...I will rejoice!"*

### Six Terms Describing Judah's Society

- "violence"
- "injustice"
- "wrong"
- "destruction"
- "strife"
- "conflict"

Habakkuk pictured the law as "paralyzed." The laws God had established to govern the socioeconomic life of the covenant community were being ignored, causing the law to be incapacitated, as it were.

### Identity of “Wicked” in Ch. 1

- Assyrians?
- Babylonians?
- The unjust within Judah?

Jeremiah, a contemporary of Habakkuk, also exposed and lamented the injustice that characterized Judah at this time (Jer. 7:3-6; 9:1-6; 12:1-4; 15:10; 20:7-8; 22:3,13-17)

### Five Stanzas of Funeral Song in Ch. 2

- 2:6b-8
- 2:9-11
- 2:12-14
- 2:15-17
- 2:18-20

Each of the first four stanzas begins with “**woe**,” a cry of mourning heard at funerals. The term also appears within the final stanza.

### Two Parts of Report in Ch. 3

- **Verse 3-7** speak of the Lord in the third person and picture his march from the south
- **Verses 8-15** the prophet directly addresses the Lord as he recalls what the report said about him

References to the Lord trampling the sea with his horses bracket the unit.

### Three Parts of Prayer in Ch. 3

- 1) **Petition** asking the Lord to renew his mighty historical acts and to temper his anger with mercy (3:1-2).
- 2) **Report** of a theophany in which the Lord comes as a mighty warrior and annihilates his enemies (3:3-15).
- 3) **Song** of confidence in which the prophet declares his faith in God’s ability to protect him through the difficult times to come (3:16-19).