

# HABAKKUK—QUESTIONING GOD

When I get to heaven I am going to have some serious questions for God!” Have you ever thought this? Habakkuk not only thought this, he asked God. He didn’t wait until heaven, he asked them while living. And not just some questions of the curious kind, but the “*What are you doing, Lord?!*” variety. It is clear that Habakkuk is troubled by the evil in this world and that he knows God has promised that He will make all things right. His problem includes things like:

*What’s taking so long?*

*How can God stand by and allow evil to win the day?*

*Why does God tolerate such injustice?*

*Why did God make such an evil place as earth?*

Habakkuk seems to skate dangerously close to complaining, yet God doesn’t reprove him. He patiently listens to his questions and responds with answers that seem at first blush unfathomable. Habakkuk follows up with a second series of questions that God once again hears out and emphatically answers. This leads Habakkuk to prayer and praise. God alone can resolve all the evil and its ramifications throughout all the earth as entirely as He will. His strength was never lacking; His glory was merely hidden, to be revealed in His timing.

“O Lord,  
how long shall I cry for help,  
and you will not hear?  
Or cry to you “Violence!”  
and you will not save?”

*Habakkuk 1:2*

## TIME LINE

2,000BC	1,000-930BC	930BC	734-701 BC	605-539 BC	539-400BC	500BC-0	3BC-30AD	30AD-?
Covenant (Abraham)	United Kingdom (David)	Divided Kingdom	Assyrian Judgment	<b>Babylonian</b> <b>Exile</b> (Jehoiakim)	Initial Restoration Period	Expanded Exile Period	New Restoration	Kingdom Inaugurated Continuing

Habakkuk’s life and ministry seem to coincide with Jehoiakim’s reign (609-598 BC) making him a younger contemporary of Jeremiah.

## PAINFUL QUESTIONS

The oracle that Habakkuk the prophet saw.

<sup>2</sup> O Lord, how long shall I cry for help, and you will not hear?

Or cry to you “Violence!” and you will not save?

<sup>3</sup> Why do you make me see iniquity, and why do you idly look at wrong?

Destruction and violence are before me; strife and contention arise.

<sup>4</sup> So the law is paralyzed, and justice never goes forth.

For the wicked surround the righteous; so justice goes forth perverted.

## THE LORD BEGINS TO ANSWER

<sup>5</sup> “Look among the nations, and see; wonder and be astounded.

For *I am doing a work* in your days that you would not believe if told.

<sup>6</sup> For *behold*, I am raising up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation,  
who march through the breadth of the earth, to seize dwellings not their own.  
<sup>7</sup> They are dreaded and fearsome; their justice and dignity go forth from themselves.  
<sup>8</sup> Their horses are swifter than leopards, *more fierce than the evening wolves*; their horsemen press proudly on.  
Their horsemen come from afar; they fly like an eagle swift to devour.  
<sup>9</sup> They all come for violence, all their faces forward. They gather captives like sand.  
<sup>10</sup> At kings they scoff, and at rulers they laugh.  
They laugh at every fortress, for they pile up earth and take it.  
<sup>11</sup> Then they sweep by like the wind and go on, guilty men, whose own might is their god!”

### **SECOND ROUND OF PAINFUL QUESTIONS**

<sup>12</sup> Are you not from everlasting, O Lord my God, my Holy One?  
We shall not die.  
O Lord, you have ordained them as a judgment, and you, O Rock, have established them for reproof.  
<sup>13</sup> You who are of purer eyes than to see evil and cannot look at wrong,  
*why do you idly look at traitors and remain silent* when the wicked swallows up the man more righteous than he?  
<sup>14</sup> You make mankind like the fish of the sea, like crawling things that have no ruler.  
<sup>15</sup> He brings all of them up with a hook; he drags them out with his net;  
he gathers them in his dragnet; so he rejoices and is glad.  
<sup>16</sup> Therefore he sacrifices to his net and makes offerings to his dragnet;  
for by them he lives in luxury, and his food is rich.  
<sup>17</sup> Is he then to keep on emptying his net and mercilessly killing nations forever?

### **GOD IS INCREDIBLY PATIENT WITH US.**

It is astonishing to me that God would even tolerate our questions, let alone patiently answer them. He certainly doesn't have to answer to us! Yet, time after time He lovingly invites us to come into His holy presence and ask Him our questions. The Psalms are filled with questions, doubts, and yes, even complaints.

### **WHAT DO YOU DO WITH YOUR QUESTIONS, DOUBTS, & COMPLAINTS?**

Take them to the Lord. Be honest with Him. Express your confusion, worries, griefs, and fears. He is big enough to handle them. As we read in First Peter, chapter five:

<sup>6</sup> Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, <sup>7</sup> casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.