



HABAKKUK

**Fed Up with Injustice:
Habakkuk's First Complaint
(Habakkuk 1:1-4)**

From last week's sermon . . .

- Northern Kingdom (Israel) fell to Assyrians in 721 B.C.
- Habakkuk: a prophet in Southern Kingdom (Judah) c. 600 B.C.
- The rise of the Babylonian Empire: defeated Assyrians in 612 B.C. and Egypt in 605 B.C.
- (Despite religious reforms by King Josiah who ruled Judah 640-609 B.C.) the unrighteousness by Jewish leaders is widespread
- Habakkuk's oversized influence on the Apostle Paul and Martin Luther
- Themes of ***Patience, Perspective, and Plans*** discussed last week
- Book of Habakkuk is structured similarly to a Psalm of Lament

The Structure of a Psalm of Lament

Psalm 13 exemplifies a Psalm of Lament

1. A questioning of God: “how long” will speaker’s crisis continue? (1-2)
2. Petitions God to rescue from enemies (3-4)
3. Statement of confidence in God based on His past actions (5a)
4. A vow to praise God going forward (5b-6)

Psalm 13 exemplifies a Psalm of Lament

1. A questioning of God: “how long” will speaker’s crisis continue? (1-2)

“How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?

How long will you hide your face from me?

How long must I take counsel in my soul

and have sorrow in my heart all the day?

How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?”

Psalm 13 exemplifies a Psalm of Lament

2. Petitions God to rescue from enemies (3-4)

“Consider and answer me, O Lord my God;
light up my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death,
lest my enemy say, ‘I have prevailed over him,’
lest my foes rejoice because I am shaken.”

Psalm 13 exemplifies a Psalm of Lament

3. Statement of confidence in God based on past actions (5a)

“But I have trusted in your steadfast love;”

Psalm 13 exemplifies a Psalm of Lament

4. A vow to praise God going forward (5b-6)

“my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.
I will sing to the LORD,
because he has dealt bountifully with me.”

Habakkuk's Frustration

- A questioning of God: “how long” will speaker’s crisis continue?
- Worn out by the injustice around him
- The evil prosper
- The innocent are harmed
- The prayers of the righteous seem to go unanswered

The invasion of Ukraine and the bombing of hospitals by the Russian military



How long?

- ² 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)
- Legitimate complaints rather than shallow whining
- The awful silence of God’s non-answer

It seems so obvious . . .

- ³ 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. (Habakkuk 1:3)
- The situation is too obvious not to notice
- And yet God does not seem to answer

Deeper problems . . .

- ⁴ So the law is paralyzed,
and justice never goes forth.
For the wicked surround the righteous;
so justice goes forth perverted.
- The wicked have so much power they can simply ignore the laws
- Even the laws themselves have been corrupted (Whoever has the power can write the laws to favor themselves.)
- Others follow the lead of those with power

Will You Trust God Anyway?

- Even when the wicked prosper?
- Even when the wicked go unpunished?
- Even when you are slandered?
- Even when you deserve to win?
- Even when others less deserving are rewarded but you are overlooked?
- Even when your prayers go unanswered?
- Do you trust the Lord even when you don't know why?

Let Us Pray

