

MORNING SERMON OUTLINE

PRAY FOR THE CHURCH

Habakkuk 1:1-4, Isaiah 62:6,7

Let's spend a few weeks with the Prophet Habakkuk. He struggled with things that concern many of us (or should, if they don't), and God led Him to an increased understanding that strengthened his faith and gave him peace in the face of serious woes.

A few facts about Habakkuk: He was a prophet of the LORD (1:1), and also evidently a member of the Temple choir/orchestra (3:19). What he complains of in 1:2-4 and what the LORD says in response in 1:6,7 most likely place him in the early years of the reign of King Josiah – before people could foresee that Babylon would become a great world power and a deadly threat to Judah, and after nearly 60 years of Judah's sliding down and down in spiritual and moral decline under wicked kings (Manasseh & Amon - 2 Kings 21).

1. What Habakkuk saw:

the Church in revolt against the Lord

Habakkuk's work – perhaps a leader of the Levitical choir in the Temple – had him constantly coming into contact with horrid abominations:

- the idols to Baal, fertility goddesses, the stars – in the Temple courts;
- the altars where worshipers, even kings, sacrificed their own sons.
- the witchcraft, sorcery, seances.
- the power & wealth of king, court, aristocracy – & their indifference to justice. - NO! their corrupt use of their power to crush the poor.
- the lying, the violence, the persecution of any righteous believers in the LORD who dared to speak against these evils.

57 years of wicked rulers promoting evils & trampling God's Law – and no dramatic intervention from the LORD. Result: no more fear of God, or as Jeremiah said (6:15, 8:12), no shame!

2. What Habakkuk did:

The Lord's prophet prayed for God to intervene.

Habakkuk prayed: "O LORD, help!" And he kept praying for some time – until his praying turned into the complaining of verses 2-4.

"How long, O LORD, will I call for help, and You will not hear?"

"Lord, You aren't doing anything. The problem is not just the wicked, but also that You let them get away with it! And I suffer as a result."

Habakkuk was a man of true faith.

So He did not take his complaint to others as an act of rebellion.

He took it to God in honest prayer, desiring the holy God to right.

3. Do we see what Habakkuk saw & what we should do?

Our country – once a "Christian nation" in its own eyes – now sunk to moral & spiritual depths our grandparents could not have imagined possible.

Worse – the condition of the Christ's church(es)!

"Worse" because the church *is* God's covenant people & entrusted with His Word.

Isaiah 62:6,7: Pray & pray & pray for Christ's church to be revived – with boldness & persistence (not complaint), through Christ our Priest.