

## **Habakkuk**

The oracle of God which Habak'kuk the prophet saw. O LORD, how long shall I cry for help, and thou wilt not hear? Or cry to thee "Violence!" and thou wilt not save? Why dost thou make me see wrongs and look upon trouble? Destruction and violence are before me; strife and contention arise.

5 So the law is slackened and justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous, so justice goes forth perverted. 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. For lo, I am rousing the Chalde'ans, that bitter and hasty nation, who march through the breadth of the earth, to seize habitations

10 not their own. Dread and terrible are they; their justice and dignity proceed from themselves. Their horses are swifter than leopards, more fierce than the evening wolves; their horsemen press proudly on. Yea, their horsemen come from afar; they fly like an eagle swift to devour. They all come for violence; terror of them goes before them. They gather captives like sand. At kings

15 they scoff, and of rulers they make sport. They laugh at every fortress, for they heap up earth and take it. Then they sweep by like the wind and go on, guilty men, whose own might is their god! Art thou not from everlasting, O LORD my God, my Holy One? We shall not die. O LORD, thou hast ordained them as a judgment; and thou, O Rock, hast established them for

20 chastisement. Thou who art of purer eyes than to behold evil and canst not

look on wrong, why dost thou look on faithless men, and art silent when the wicked swallows up the man more righteous than he? For thou makest men like the fish of the sea, like crawling things that have no ruler. He brings all of them up with a hook, he drags them out with his net, he gathers them in  
5 his seine; so he rejoices and exults. Therefore he sacrifices to his net and burns incense to his seine; for by them he lives in luxury, and his food is rich. Is he then to keep on emptying his net, and mercilessly slaying nations for ever? I will take my stand to watch, and station myself on the tower, and look forth to see what he will say to me, and what I will answer  
10 concerning my complaint. And the LORD answered me: "Write the vision; make it plain upon tablets, so he may run who reads it. For still the vision awaits its time; it hastens to the end--it will not lie. If it seem slow, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not delay. Behold, he whose soul is not upright in him shall fail, but the righteous shall live by his faith. Moreover,  
15 wine is treacherous; the arrogant man shall not abide. His greed is as wide as Sheol; like death he has never enough. He gathers for himself all nations, and collects as his own all peoples." Shall not all these take up their taunt against him, in scoffing derision of him, and say, "Woe to him who heaps up what is not his own--for how long? --and loads himself with pledges!"  
20 Will not your debtors suddenly arise, and those awake who will make you

tremble? Then you will be booty for them. Because you have plundered many nations, all the remnant of the peoples shall plunder you, for the blood of men and violence to the earth, to cities and all who dwell therein. Woe to him who gets evil gain for his house, to set his nest on high, to be safe from the reach of harm! You have devised shame to your house by cutting off many peoples; you have forfeited your life. For the stone will cry out from the wall, and the beam from the woodwork respond. Woe to him who builds a town with blood, and founds a city on iniquity! Behold, is it not from the LORD of hosts that peoples labor only for fire, and nations weary themselves for nought? For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. Woe to him who makes his neighbors drink of the cup of his wrath, and makes them drunk, to gaze on their shame! You will be sated with contempt instead of glory. Drink, yourself, and stagger! The cup in the LORD's right hand will come around to you, and shame will come upon your glory! The violence done to Lebanon will overwhelm you; the destruction of the beasts will terrify you, for the blood of men and violence to the earth, to cities and all who dwell therein. What profit is an idol when its maker has shaped it, a metal image, a teacher of lies? For the workman trusts in his own creation when he makes dumb idols! Woe to him who says to a wooden thing, Awake; to a

dumb stone, Arise! Can this give revelation? Behold, it is overlaid with gold  
and silver, and there is no breath at all in it. But the LORD is in his holy  
temple; let all the earth keep silence before him. A prayer of Habak'kuk the  
prophet, according to Shigion'oth. O LORD, I have heard the report of thee,  
5 and thy work, O LORD, do I fear. In the midst of the years renew it; in  
the midst of the years make it known; in wrath remember mercy. God came  
from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. His glory covered the  
heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. Selah His brightness was like  
the light, rays flashed from his hand; and there he veiled his power. Before  
10 him went pestilence, and plague followed close behind. He stood and  
measured the earth; he looked and shook the nations; then the eternal  
mountains were scattered, the everlasting hills sank low. His ways were as of  
old. I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction; the curtains of the land of  
Mid'ian did tremble. Was thy wrath against the rivers, O LORD? Was thy  
15 anger against the rivers, or thy indignation against the sea, when thou didst  
ride upon thy horses, upon thy chariot of victory? Thou didst strip the sheath  
from thy bow, and put the arrows to the string. Selah Thou didst cleave the  
earth with rivers. The mountains saw thee, and writhed; the raging waters  
swept on; the deep gave forth its voice, it lifted its hands on high. The sun  
20 and moon stood still in their habitation at the light of thine arrows as they

sped, at the flash of thy glittering spear. Thou didst bestride the earth in  
fury, thou didst trample the nations in anger. Thou wentest forth for the  
salvation of thy people, for the salvation of thy anointed. Thou didst crush  
the head of the wicked, laying him bare from thigh to neck. Selah Thou  
5 didst pierce with thy shafts the head of his warriors, who came like a  
whirlwind to scatter me, rejoicing as if to devour the poor in secret. Thou  
didst trample the sea with thy horses, the surging of mighty waters. I hear,  
and my body trembles, my lips quiver at the sound; rottenness enters into  
my bones, my steps totter beneath me. I will quietly wait for the day of  
10 trouble to come upon people who invade us. Though the fig tree do not  
blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the  
fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd  
in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my  
salvation. GOD, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like hinds' feet,  
15 he makes me tread upon my high places. To the choirmaster: with stringed  
instruments. \*

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