

Text: Habakkuk 1:1-17

Title: Thunderstuck With Injustice

Date/Place: The Road, 5/28/17, AM

## I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Opening illustration: After suicide bomber in England the other night I was thinking about the “injustice” of youth, teenagers being taken so young, and how you have the people that Willard Scott puts on the Smucker’s jelly jar rarely ever avow faith or holiness...
- B. Background to passage: Habakkuk began prophesying shortly before the fall of Jerusalem. He had seen the reforms of Josiah and the revival that followed, and now was witnessing a very corrupt, godless, government that was supposed to represent God. There was much political upheaval in the world at the time—Assyria was waning in power, the Babylonians were gaining, and Egypt was in the middle of it all. The courts were unjust, religion was a sham, government was corrupt, and it seemed that God was ignoring it all. All of these evil people were doing well when there was a good, just, and holy God on the throne of the universe not doing anything. So, He respectfully submits a complaint or burden to God about the matter. He was unlike other prophets that spoke to the people on God’s behalf, but spoke to God on the behalf of the righteous.
- C. Main thought: We are all looking for an answer to the problem of unjust prosperity.

## II. BODY

### A. **The Presentation of the Problem (v. 1-4)**

1. Habakkuk was terribly discouraged about what he saw happening in Jerusalem. He was probably a temple priest/musician, and in the temple when he had this conversation(s) with God. And it seems as though he had been lifting this up before God for some time. Maybe days, weeks, or years, fasting, praying, and doing all necessary to move God to action. He lists about six concerns that lead to four results. These results sound much like America. The heart of man is wicked, and together it is compounded. Israel was a theocracy, called out by God to be a holy nation before the world, to put on display God’s standards globally.
2. Psa 13:2, 37:7-9, 74:10, 94:3, Rev 6:10,
3. **Illustration:** a parenting book gave an illustration about how that some things are too heavy to understand for children, and how to explain that to them, like us and God, some things too heavy, Perhaps God keeps us ignorant because we are incapable of comprehending the answer. We remain ignorant of many details, not because God enjoys keeping us in the dark, but because we have not the faculties to absorb so much light... Faith means believing in advance what will only make sense in reverse. –Philip Yancy, “I have seen many striking answers to prayer and more than one that I thought miraculous. But they usually come at the beginning before conversion, or soon after it. As the Christian life proceeds, they tend to be rarer. The refusals, too, are not only more frequent; they become more unmistakable, more emphatic.” –C. S. Lewis,  
We need to understand that America is not the new Israel. We also need to remember that Paul said that in the last days evil will grow worse and worse. It is OK and right for us to pray for our nation, as the nation that honors God will be blessed. Worldwide nations and people continue to allow sin that didn’t used to be even spoken of to be flaunted openly and proudly. Advocating immorality on TV as normal, legalizing same-sex marriage, attempting to remove God from any public witness, legalizing recreational drug use, gambling in many shapes and forms, reducing life in the womb to personal convenience, are just a smattering of ways we see it in our society. Remember too that we are not simply moralistic in our Christian life, and lost people will act like it, but we can long for God to be honored, and brokenhearted when it’s not. Praying for our nation is a sign of love for it, we have been historically blessed by God. 2) Honesty is requirement for intimacy. Questioning is permissible in a respectful way. Remember that Habakkuk’s question was always founded on the character of God that He IS good all the time. And we are told to seek wisdom and bring our petitions unto Him. We are not always promised an answer, remember. In fact, sometimes, we couldn’t understand the reason. Sometimes unanswered prayer is what God uses to really draw us close to Himself.

## B. **The Compounding of the Problem (v. 5-11)**

1. God answers kinda. He never really tells Habakkuk why or how long. In fact, He simply makes the whole situation worse by telling that He is raising up a meaner and more godless people called the Babylonians to punish the Assyrians, the Egyptians, and the Israelites. He is like “WHAT! Are you crazy?!” This is one of those situations where you expect one answer and get something that you totally weren’t looking for.
2. Isa 55:9, Jer 29:11-14,
3. **Illustration:** this is like going to the mechanic because you think you have a problem with one part of the car, and he calls, there are many more wonderful things broken on your car. In the 1975 World Series, in which NBC captured Carlton Fisk, jumping up and down, waving his arms, trying to coax his hit to stay fair. It did—for a home run. That colorful close-up would have been missed had the cameraman followed the ball with his camera, as was his responsibility. But the cameraman inside the Fenway Park scoreboard had one eye on a rat that was circling him. So instead of focusing the camera on the ball, he left it on Fisk.
4. We must be careful what we ask of God. This can apply to non-man-made situations as well. We must remember that God sees things with a global and eternal perspective. Your life, even though very precious to God, is fairly insignificant in global history. We must remember to think in the big picture scheme of things. Bad things in life may be the seed to mighty works that God will do. Is it OK not to like God’s plan very much as long as we submit to it, and we trust Him to bring about the best results from it? Even though initially we may not enjoy it, we should find ourselves content with the satisfaction that we find in God, rather than our circumstances. That will be difficult. The backdrop of the cross is our perspective, as well as our strength. Christ came to put on our pain and suffering. This also testifies to the greatness of God, and His ability to do things that seem wrong and bring about his purposes. We can also see the loving caring hand of a Father in discipline of His children.

## C. **The Preliminary Conclusions (v. 12-17)**

1. Three truths are found in the words of Habakkuk. First, the Sovereignty of God is noted even in catastrophe and discipline. He is big enough to be able to use all these things, and wise enough to have a good reason for it all. Secondly, the mystery of God is noted in the questions that are left unanswered. Many whys hows, and how longs are still left open. Finally, the holiness of God and the relative scale of righteousness by which we usually judge ourselves. Habakkuk continues to address God by name, as wholly other all through his complaint. No one deserves the grace and mercy of God, no one! He is so unlike us that we should put our hands over our mouths when we prepare ourselves to speak.
2. Rom 11:33-36, Job 11:7, Ps 36:6, Dan 4:35
3. **Illustration:** Exhausted, he eventually managed to build a rough hut and put his few possessions in it. But then one day, after hunting for food, he arrived home to find his little hut in flames, the smoke rolling up to the sky. The worst had happened; he was stung with grief. someone I was reading this week described God as a puzzle that you think you can work, then when you come to the end, there is a piece missing, and you can’t see all the picture without that piece, and they reminded us that God is the puzzle with lots of pieces missing, not important ones. the one cocaine dealer extolling the virtue of his business over and against other dealers, “God’s first interest is not in our prosperity or political power. He prefers to destroy us (in the hope of eventually accomplishing his greater purpose) rather than to see us prosper in a political security while chasing after our own whims. The lesson of God’s people is that God is not primarily committed to the peace, security, and prosperity of his people.”
4. God’s first purpose is to exalt His name in all the earth, so that people will believe and be saved. God is doing things when it doesn’t look like He is doing things. He is always in the business of working behind the scenes, and instructing us that the way things look is not always what they seem. Know that you will never have God figured out. Don’t box Him in as to how He does or will do things. Whatever God does it right! He is bound by character never to do anything that would deserve blame, and thus we should be cautious with our words and thoughts. The final and most significant of the thoughts that we can draw from this first chapter is its parallel to the gospel. God doing the most inexplicable by sending his own son to unjustly bear the wrath, punishment, and suffering for wicked men—the gospel.

### III. CONCLUSION

- A. Closing illustration: It was 1818 in France, and Louis, a boy of 9, was sitting in his father's workshop. The father was a harness-maker and the boy loved to watch his father work the leather. "Someday Father," said Louis, "I want to be a harness-maker, just like you." "Why not start now?" said the father. He took a piece of leather and drew a design on it. "Now, my son," he said, "take the hole-puncher and a hammer and follow this design, but be careful that you don't hit your hand." Excited, the boy began to work, but when he hit the hole-puncher, it flew out of his hand and pierced his eye! He lost the sight of that eye immediately. Later, sight in the other eye failed. Louis was now totally blind. A few years later, Louis was sitting in the family garden when a friend handed him a pine cone. As he ran his sensitive fingers over the cone, an idea came to him. He became enthusiastic and began to create an alphabet of raised dots on paper so that the blind could feel and interpret what was written. Thus, Louis Braille opened up a whole new world for the blind—all because of an accident
- B. Recap
- C. Invitation to commitment

#### Additional Notes

- **SO WHAT???**